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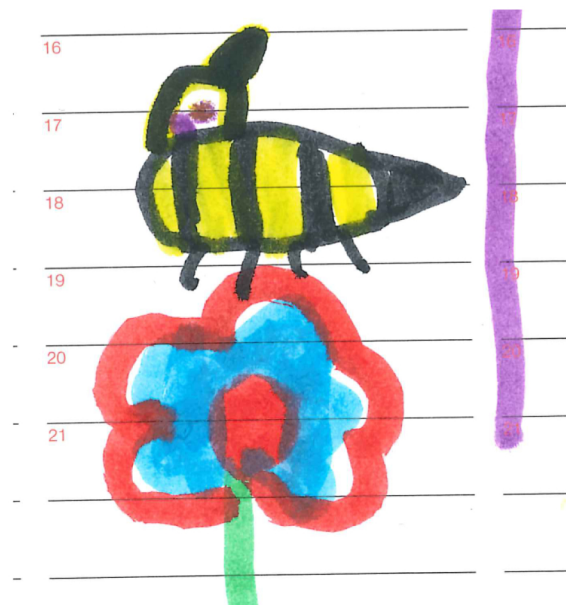


National-American Association  
for Multicultural Education

## Convegno Internazionale – *International Conference*

# Educazione e Counselling interculturale nel mondo globale *Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World*

A cura di - *Edited by:* Agostino *Portera* & Stefania *Lamberti*



(Benjamin Portera, 4 years old)

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## INDICE (INDEX)

Introduzione.....	p. 3
<i>Introduction</i> .....	p. 5
Saluto Prof. Corsi .....	p. 7
Programma ( <i>Program</i> ).....	p. 9
<b>1. Globalizzazione: sfide e opportunità - Challenges of Globalization</b>	
Bauman Z., <i>“Liquid Modern Challenges to education”</i> .....	p. 19
Kania A., <i>“Dilemmas of democracy. Between neo-populism and neo-liberalism”</i> .....	p. 42
Basch L., <i>“The globalisation of fear and the construction of the intercultural imagination”</i> .....	p. 47
<b>2. Educazione e competenze interculturali - Intercultural Education and Competences</b>	
Portera A., <i>“Intercultural Competence in Education, Counselling and Psychotherapy”</i> .....	p. 52
Gundara J., <i>“Global World and civilisational knowledge: civic engagement, intercultural dimensions.”</i> ..	p. 67
Frabboni F., <i>“L’indilazionabile volo della pedagogia dall’emisfero boreale all’australe. E ritorno.”</i> ..	p. 83
Sirna C. - Terranova C., <i>“Competenze interculturali e mondo del lavoro: la mobilità nelle imprese multinazionali come sfida alla costruzione identitaria”</i> .....	p. 88
Sleeter C., <i>“Multiculturalism and Education for Citizenship in a Context of Neoliberalism”</i> .....	p. 95
Sharan Y., <i>“What Can Cooperative Learning Contribute to the Intercultural Classroom?”</i> .....	p. 107
Sharan Y., Preconference experimental Workshop <i>“Expanding cooperative learning through group investigation”</i> .....	p. 116
Alessandrini G., <i>“Verso una possibile fioritura umana: ‘agentività’ e sviluppo secondo Martha Nussbaum”</i> .....	p. 117
Bastos G. - Da Conceição Tomé M., <i>“Find the Other through books: Children’s literature and intercultural education”</i> .....	p. 126
Bertolani J., <i>“Eccomi Pronto: a preventative-developmental curriculum to promote self-directed learning in Italian primary schools”</i> .....	p. 137
Betro R., <i>“Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools”</i> .....	p. 142
Bonfanti T., <i>“Nutrition, between physiology and psychology”</i> .....	p. 167
Bossio F., <i>“Educazione e persona nella complessità. Itinerari di pedagogia interculturale tra identità, alterità e riconoscimento.”</i> .....	p. 174
Brøndum T., <i>“Memory culture and learning amongst students at Danish colleges of education”</i> ..	p. 184
Cernesi C., <i>“Costruzione di relazioni e educazione interculturale”</i> .....	p. 193
Cestaro M., <i>“Competenze di mediazione interculturale per educare alla cittadinanza in contesti plurali”</i> .....	p. 203
Cima R. - Fleury R. - Muraca M., <i>“Quale intercultura? Sguardi e contributi dall’America Latina e dall’Africa Sub-Sahariana”</i> .....	p. 212
Costa Afonso C., <i>“Language Learning and Oral Traditional Stories as tools to promote Intercultural Education”</i> .....	p. 219
D’Elisa C., <i>“An intercultural approach to supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer/ Questioning (LGBTQ) students in secondary schools: Lessons from Ontario, Canada”</i> .....	p. 227
Danilkina N., <i>“Meeting business inside a University”</i> .....	p. 243
Deluigi R., <i>“Migrant traces and welcoming places: from educational context to pedagogical reflection”</i> .....	p. 246

Dusi P. - Palaiologou N., <i>"Second generation of migrant students in Greece and Italy: description and perspectives"</i> .....	p. 253
Dusi P. - González Falcon I. - Alfonso Lopez M.A., <i>"Children from Elsewhere and their Integration in Italian Primary School"</i> .....	p. 263
Ennis M., <i>"Language as the Core of Intercultural Learning: An Integrated Approach to Language, Culture and Communication in the FL-Classroom"</i> .....	p. 271
Escarbajal Frutos A. - Guidetti B., <i>"Competenze interculturali nelle professioni socio-educative in Spagna: il caso di Murcia"</i> .....	p. 292
Feuerverger G., <i>"Auto-Ethnographic Reflections on the Immigrant and Refugee Experience in an Inner-City High School in Toronto"</i> .....	p. 304
Fomicheva A., <i>"Shift in motivation in Jigsaw classroom based on theory of self-perception"</i> .....	p. 312
Foppa Pedretti C. - Milani M., <i>"Gestione dei conflitti, educazione alla cittadinanza e promozione socio-culturale: il ruolo del Cooperative Learning"</i> .....	p. 315
Foppa Pedretti C., <i>"Dialogo interreligioso ed educazione alla cittadinanza e alla pace a partire da Gerusalemme"</i> .....	p. 323
Giusti M., <i>"Possibilità di una didattica laboratoriale interculturale a partire dalla Convenzione internazionale sui Diritti per l'infanzia"</i> .....	p. 333
Guthrie C.E. - Candidate M.A., <i>"Popular Culture as a Site of Critical Pedagogy: A New Soundtrack for Intercultural Learning"</i> .....	p. 343
Hartung R., <i>"Quality of Schools in the Migrational Society: 'Qualification for Intercultural Coordinations in Hamburg' - a new way for intercultural opening of schools?"</i> .....	p. 356
Kavouri M., <i>"Rick's café network 'An insider's view: The importance of being in a network'"</i> .....	p. 364
Kavouri M., <i>"L'importanza delle TIC nella formazione interculturale degli insegnanti"</i> .....	p. 370
Kowalchuk D.L., <i>"The Face of Privilege: One Canadian Principal's Reflections on Leading for Interculturalism"</i> .....	p. 378
Lamberti S., <i>"Cooperative learning nutrimento per ghiande ridicolmente minuscole: proposte d'azione"</i> .....	p. 396
Malusà G. - Tarozzi M., <i>"Elementi di efficacia del Cooperative Learning nell'educazione interculturale: uno studio di caso longitudinale nella scuola primaria."</i> .....	p. 403
Malusà G. - Tarozzi M., <i>"Qualità e equità in contesti interculturali. Una Grounded Theory critica nel primo ciclo d'istruzione."</i> .....	p. 415
Mancila I., <i>"Listening to students from migrant background. Some notes from research."</i> .....	p. 427
Mantovani G. - Surian A. - Mahmud M. - Greco C., <i>"Storia globale e storia dell'altro. Decostruire la presunzione di superiorità morale."</i> .....	p. 438
Martina V., <i>"La figura dell'adulto facilitatore nell'approccio della Philosophy for Children: un medium dell'educazione democratica, riflessiva e valoriale"</i> .....	p. 446
Maviglia D., <i>"Il valore del dialogo in Paulo Freire come fondamento dell'educazione interculturale"</i> ....	p. 455
Messetti G., <i>"Bambini e famiglie di altre culture: rappresentazioni e pratiche educative nei servizi dell'infanzia"</i> .....	p. 465
Miháliková B. - Katreniaková E., <i>"Empirical Mirror of Inclusive Education in the Slovak Republic in the International Context of IEA PIRLS Study"</i> .....	p. 471
Moehrke D. - Perselli V., <i>"The time for "recognising" intercultural learning has come"</i> .....	p. 479

Pacifico M.F., <i>“Educazione interculturale e integrazione scolastica in calssi multiethniche attraverso l’apprendimento cooperativo”</i> .....	p. 491
Parthenis C. - Tseliou E., <i>“Educational inclusion, study of educational exclusion, equitable education and social acceptance of children of Roma origin in a globalized world, throughout the intervention of the Project: ‘Education of Roma Children’ – Qualitative and quantitative data.”</i> .....	p. 513
Pizzi F., <i>“Unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy. Reception and integration strategies”</i> .....	p. 531
Prata Gomes M. - House A.F., <i>“Free2Choose_Create. (Re)thinking about practical dilemmas in Human Rights – WORKSHOP”</i> .....	p. 539
Praxmarer M.F., <i>“Educazione interculturale e integrazione scolastica in calssi multiethniche attraverso l’apprendimento cooperativo”</i> .....	p. 547
Provenzano M., <i>“Dirigere contesti scolastici multiethnici tra managerialità e leadership autentica”</i> .....	p. 563
Rodell Olgaç C., <i>“Challenging grand narratives in teacher education”</i> .....	p. 574
Rogalska-Marasińska A., <i>“Multicultural Challenges at the Door of Polish Schools. What is the Level of Polish Teachers’ Intercultural Competence?”</i> .....	p. 580
Sanchez-Mazas M. - Mechi A., <i>“From biases to socio-cognitive flexibility: A training program for teaching in intercultural school settings.”</i> .....	p. 593
Sándor S., <i>“Representations of intercultural society in Central-Europe”</i> .....	p. 605
Selmo L. - Orsenigo J., <i>“Quale democrazia nel tempo attuale? Teoria e pratica per la costruzione di una società attiva e multiculturale”</i> .....	p. 613
Striano M. - Camhy D.G. - Moryión F.G. - Glaser J. - Oliviero S., <i>“Growing up Global through Cosmopolitanism as Education”</i> .....	p. 621
Surian A. - Mantovani G. - Mahmud M. - Greco C., <i>“Storia e intercultura come incontri di sguardi. Esempi di pratiche laboratoriali collaborative”</i> .....	p. 630
Tarozzi M., <i>“Educating teachers for social justice in intercultural context”</i> .....	p. 642
Trojnikova E., <i>“Continuous intercultural education in multiethnic region: definition of goals”</i> .....	p. 653
Troyanskay S., <i>“Educational museum as a tool of developing university multicultural space”</i> .....	p. 659
Vettore L. - Gangemi M., <i>“La medicina partecipativa, frutto della sintesi tra due culture.”</i> .....	p. 662
Virgilio F. - Stefanel S., <i>“Il curriculum dalla parte delle radici: partire dagli studenti per costruire cittadinanza”</i> .....	p. 668
Wenzler-Cremer H., <i>“Learning from each other – dealing with diversity – gaining intercultural competence”</i> .....	p. 678
Wilbur G., <i>“An Equity Culture Framework for Inquiry, Agency, and Community”</i> .....	p. 685
Wilbur G., <i>“Intercultural communication to competence: Adult student inquiry through global travel”</i> .	p. 701
Wisiak U.V. - Hannich H.J. - Riedel J., <i>“Social and Behavioural Aspects in a MSc Curriculum in Migrant Health, including multicultural, multireligious aspects and their health/ mental health impact”</i> .....	p. 709
<b>3. Counselling e psicoterapia interculturale - Intercultural Counselling and Psychotherapy</b>	
Bojuwoye O., <i>“Inter-relationship of culture, illness and healing - prospects for integration of cultural psychotherapies”</i> .....	p. 718
Khan A.H., <i>“Islamic cultural tradition in the caribbean region: opportunities and challenges to integration with western-oriented cultural healthcare practices”</i> .....	p. 728
Khan A.H., <i>“A healing ministry model among caribbean Christmas for healthcare delivery: a critique”</i> .....	p. 734

Moletsane M., <i>“Traditional healing in South Africa: integration of african and western cultural practices and opportunities”</i> .....	p. 741
Sodi T., <i>“The Integration of Indigenous and traditional knowledge and healing practices into psychology and psychotherapy”</i> .....	p. 751
Ballarin P., <i>“Dinamiche psicosociali e assistenza terapeutica ai rifugiati e richiedenti asilo: l’importanza del lavoro di gruppo con gli operatori.”</i> .....	p. 760
Betti M., <i>“Lesbiche e gay in psicoterapia: le caratteristiche dell’approccio rogersiano, partendo da alcune riflessioni su stereotipi, gruppi sociali e strumenti di potere.”</i> .....	p. 767
Bianchini, <i>“Vorrei tornassero le rose”</i> .....	p. 778
Cento M., <i>“La Teoria centrata sulla persona e la psichiatria transculturale: una ricerca complementarista”</i> .....	p. 798
Changkakoti N., <i>“Weaving a meaningful narrative: reconciling cultures in an ethnopsychiatric setting”</i> .....	p. 809
Chen S. - Rinaldo R.A., <i>“The relationship between mindfulness and self-esteem: a cross cultur study”</i> ..	p. 818
Ciatta B., <i>“Diventare madri in terra straniera. Donne africane nella svizzera tedesca: difficoltà e risorse”</i> .....	p. 847
Cocchetta P., <i>“Verso la ricerca di senso nella realtà schizofrenica di un africano”</i> .....	p. 855
De Cesare G., <i>“Elementi di pedagogia interculturale”</i> .....	p. 863
Fernández Alameda M., <i>“Il contatto gestaltico: il modello integrativo tra spiritualità, psicoterapia e counselling. Un’esperienza di avvicinamento alla pedagogia del professionista della relazione di aiuto”</i> p.	881
Fernández Alameda M., <i>“Contact gestalt: the integrative model between spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling. An experience of approach to the pedagogy of the relationships of support professional”</i> .....	p. 892
Franzini Tlbaldeo R., <i>“Responsibility towards diversity. An educational proposal for the enhancement of democracy: the intercultural relevance of Lipman’s ‘philosophy for children/community’”</i> .....	p. 906
Gagliano F. - Farolfi F., <i>“Quale incontro tra cultura di appartenenza e tendenza attualizzante? Esperienze di lavoro clinico con bambini e adolescenti”</i> .....	p. 916
Galli E. - Manara D.F. - Alberti L. - Nestola P. - Sperlecchi S. - Zanini L., <i>“Cause strategie di gestione dei conflitti interculturali tra infermieri e utenti. Uno studio fenomenologico-ermeneutico in un contesto italiano”</i> .....	p. 926
Georgiadou L., <i>“‘You luke like them!’: on learning from negotiating difference and power asymmetries in intercultural interviews in the field of counselling”</i> .....	p. 936
Grimaldi F. - Wittenberg L. - Carlino G., <i>“Bisogni di salute nella relazione interculturale. Uno studio su soggetti migranti che si rivolgono ai Servizi Socio-Sanitari”</i> .....	p. 953
Jaramillo L. - Soto Cabrera L., <i>“Confini e sfide nel lavoro con clienti nel campo interculturale”</i> .....	p. 965
Jaramillo L. - Soto Cabrera L., <i>“Boundaries and challenges in supporting multicultural clients”</i> .....	p. 969
Kariotaki S., <i>“Lost in translation: a bilingual therapist process to acknowledge her limitations working in her second language and learning from them...”</i> .....	p. 973
Logashenko Y. - Torpov P., <i>“Ethnocultural peculiarities of youth’s representations about the social-legal activity”</i> .....	p. 982
Malatino V., <i>“La primavera araba a Lampedusa: riflessione su un fenomeno di immigrazione di massa”</i> .....	p. 989

Mattera A. - De Cesare G. - Parisi M. - Diodati A., <i>“Il monitoraggio delle attività psicosociali nei Centri di Accoglienza per migranti: la necessità di una efficace supervisione”</i> .....	p. 994
McNeilly K.D., <i>“School experiences of Canadian adolescents with lesbian, gay and bisexual-identified parents”</i> .....	p. 1000
Menoni E., <i>“Processi che ‘sostengono la vita’ in ospedale. Un’esperienza di counselling interculturale secondo il modello integrativo EAIE”</i> .....	p. 1018
Perri A., <i>“Creating a community of empathetic learners in the classroom: the role of dramatic play”</i> ..	p. 1031
Romoli D., <i>“Il counselling interculturale di gruppo in una comunità per l’infanzia: un’esperienza basata su un modello clinico integrativo”</i> .....	p. 1043
Ruocco M. - Vestri A., <i>“Non dimentichiamole. Servizio di sostegno alle famiglie di persone detenute nella C.C. di Prato ‘Maliseti’”</i> .....	p. 1052
Sansone N., <i>“Mamme in attesa, una costruzione condivisa”</i> .....	p. 1060
Santorum, <i>“Minori migranti: prima raccolta dati e riflessioni operative”</i> .....	p. 1068
Swazo R. - Celinska D., <i>“Cutting hedge practices to teach multicultural competence in counselling psychology and education: teaching abroad or on campus?”</i> .....	p. 1083
Unterrichter R.E., <i>“Nuove famiglie... bisogni diversi”</i> .....	p. 1100
Unterrichter R.E., <i>“Famiglia come, integrazione multicultura: un’esperienza di comunità concreta”</i> .	p. 1117
Zapparoli M., <i>“Per una psicoterapia socialmente sostenibile”</i> .....	p. 1129
<b>4. Abstracts</b> .....	<b>p. 1145</b>

## Educazione e Counselling interculturale nel mondo globale

Agostino Portera, Roy Moodley e John P. Portelli

Il nuovo millennio ha portato diversi cambiamenti che hanno ingenerato riduzione delle distanze tra le persone, forti legami tra aree geografiche diverse, una grande mobilità, interdipendenza e nuovi e diversificati flussi migratori. Nell'era della globalizzazione, i nuovi scenari collegati all'interdipendenza, al progresso tecnologico e alla rivoluzione delle tecnologie dell'informazione, sembrano aver condotto ad una profonda crisi economica, ambientale, politica, sociale e culturale non solo all'interno delle nazioni, ma nelle relazioni tra stati e persone di diversa origine culturale. Nel tempo postmoderno, tale crisi riguarda tutti gli aspetti della vita umana (famiglia, scuola, lavoro, politica, ecologia, *mass media*, ecc.) ma si evidenzia in particolare in una crisi educativa: com'è possibile educare senza conoscere i contenuti e, specialmente, gli obiettivi? La crisi educativa si manifesta anche nel disuguale accesso al sistema scolastico ed universitario, ridefinito per incontrare i bisogni/esigenze del mercato e che, per tale ragione, beneficia solamente una minoranza di studenti, un'*élite* privilegiata. Oggigiorno gli studenti sono considerati come oggetti (Nussbaum 2010) anziché come agenti di cambiamento e portatori d'opportunità.

In aggiunta, la crisi riguarda tutti i settori del *social welfare*, in particolare il *counselling* e la psicoterapia. Da un setting caratterizzato da similitudini culturali fra counsellor e cliente, si assiste a forte differenze in termini di comunicazione, strategie, emozioni e comportamenti. Com risultato, soprattutto in Paesi con lunga esperienza migratoria, Come Stati Uniti, Canada o Australia, sono stati sviluppati molti approcci diversi, con nomi differenti, con numerose implicazioni sul piano pratico e teorico (Moodley (2004).

Per superare la crisi di valori e di governabilità nell'era della globalizzazione, del pluralismo e della complessità sociale, è necessario investire nell'educazione. È necessario ed urgente superare il principio neoliberale della neutralità statale sostituendolo con gli obiettivi della equità e responsabilità sociale. Al medesimo tempo, ciò comporta il ripensamento dei contenuti, dei metodi e degli obiettivi. La sfida consiste nell'andare oltre tutte le forme passate e presenti di dogmatismo, colonialismo, etnocentrismo e nazionalismo senza cadere nella trappola del relativismo morale (niente funziona), dello spontaneismo e della standardizzazione (*un'unica taglia per tutti*). Nonostante siano necessari imperativi etici, fondati sui diritti umani, la mentalità della standardizzazione e del deficit riproducono nuove forme di colonialismo e di condizioni oppressive (McMahon & Portelli, 2012). In questo senso, la risposta migliore a questa situazione sembra essere l'approccio *interculturale*, un'autentica rivoluzione (Portera 2011, Portera 2013).

D'altro canto, nel mondo postmoderno, vi è la necessità di acquisire nuove competenze sia nell'educazione familiare e scolastica, sia nel settore del *counselling* e della psicoterapia. Nel tempo dell'interdipendenza, oltre alle competenze specifiche nelle singole discipline, v'è altresì bisogno di *competenze interculturali* (CI) a livello cognitivo, emotivo e relazionale che dotino i cittadini dell'abilità di agire in contesti di complessità linguistica e culturale. Le CI permettono di gestire la diversità in modo tale che ci sia arricchimento per l'individuo e per la società nel suo insieme.

Tuttavia, sia il concetto di educazione interculturale sia il termine competenze interculturali, sono sovente fraintesi e richiedono una definizione più precisa. Soprattutto sul concetto di CI, nonostante la vasta letteratura internazionale (soprattutto anglofona), rimangono ancora molte lacune e limiti: fraintendimenti, differenti concezioni a livello terminologico, semantico ed operativo, applicazioni erranee in educazione ed in ambito formativo, ed un uso impreciso, riduttivo e spesso incorretto della valutazione delle CI.

Lo scopo principale della presente conferenza mondiale può essere trovato nell'analisi del presente contesto, nonché dell'educazione interculturale e delle CI, con relativi rischi e opportunità correlati ad esse da diverse prospettive, anche disciplinari. Forse per la prima volta può essere fatto un primo passo nell'andare oltre le barriere non solo nazionali, culturali e linguistiche, ma anche disciplinari. Gli studenti, ma anche i professionisti dei diversi settori (in particolare quelli con *background* educativo, psicologico e sociologico) avranno l'opportunità di incontrarsi per condividere idee, teorie ed esperienze pratiche. Forse non riusciremo a raggiungere la meta, ma l'importante sarà lo stesso viaggio: le opportunità di incontro, di conoscenza emotiva e personale, il contatto, il dialogo, l'interazione.

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## Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World

Agostino Portera, Roy Moodley and John P. Portelli

The new millennium has brought many changes which have led to a reduction in distances between people, stronger ties between different geographical areas, greater mobility, more interdependence, and new and diversified migration flows. In the age of globalisation, the new scenarios related to interdependence, technological advancement and the revolution in information technologies, seems to have given rise to profound economic, environmental, political, social, and cultural crises, not only within nations, but also in the relations between states and persons of different cultural origin. In postmodern times like ours, such crises, are of concern to all aspects of human life (family, school, work, politics, ecology, mass media, etc.), but in particular to educational institutions and processes: How is education possible without knowing and critically examining its goals, content and procedures? The educational crisis is also manifest in unequal access to universities and a school system that is being redefined to meet solely business needs, and therefore benefits only a minority of students, a privileged *elite*. Students are now considered to be objects (Nussbaum 2010) rather than agents of change and possibilities.

In addition, the crisis concerns all fields involved with social welfare, most of all counselling and psychotherapy. From a context characterized by cultural similarity between counsellor and client, we now see great differences between practitioner and patient in terms of communication strategies, emotion, values and behaviour. In response, mainly in countries with a longer experience with immigration, like the United States, Canada or Australia, several new methods have been created in recent decades, under many different names, and with different practical and theoretical implications (Moodley 2004).

In order to overcome the crisis of values and governability, in the age of globalisation, with its pluralism and social complexity, it is necessary to invest in *education*. It has become necessary and urgent to overcome the neoliberal principle of the neutrality of the state, and to replace it with the goals of equity, care and social responsibility. In the meantime it is crucial to rethink education goals, methods, content, and policies. The challenge is to go beyond all past and current forms of dogmatism, colonialism, ethnocentrism and nationalism without falling into the trap of moral relativism (anything goes), spontaneism, and standardisation (*one-size-fits-all*). While ethical imperatives based on human rights are necessary, the mentality of standardization and deficit reproduces new forms of colonialism and oppressive conditions (McMahon & Portelli, 2012). In this sense, a very appropriate answer to the new situation seems to be found in *intercultural* approaches, an authentic revolution (Portera 2011; Portera 2013).

On the other hand, in the postmodern world, there is a necessity for the acquisition of new competencies both in family or school education, and the field of counselling and psychotherapy. In a time of interdependence, in addition to the specific disciplinary competences, there is also a need for *intercultural competences* (I.C.) at the cognitive, emotional and relational levels which endow citizens with the ability to operate in linguistically, politically, and culturally complex contexts. I.C. allow one to manage diversity in a manner that enriches both the individual and society as a whole.

However, both the concept of intercultural education and the term intercultural competences, are often misunderstood and require more precise definition and unpacking. Especially regarding the concept of intercultural competences, despite the vast international literature (mostly in English), there still remain many gaps and limitations: misunderstandings, different conceptions at the terminological, semantic and operative level, erroneous application in education, counselling and vocational training, and the imprecise, reductive, and often incorrect use of established measures of I.C.

The main scope of this international conference is to critically analyse the current context and situation of intercultural education and I.C. with all the challenges and possibilities of dealing with different perspectives. Perhaps for the first time, we can realize a first step towards going beyond national, cultural and linguistic barriers but also disciplinary ones. Scholars, but also practitioners from different contexts (in particular with an educational, philosophical, psychological and sociological background) will have the opportunity of coming together to share ideas, theories and practical experiences. We may not reach the destination, but what matters is experiencing and learning from the journey itself, that is, from: the opportunity of encounter, interaction, and dialogue; of the cognitive, emotional, personal knowledge, and social and political predicaments.

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SALUTO Prof. Michele Corsi

## IL FUTURO DELLA PEDAGOGIA MONDIALE TRA INNOVAZIONE E INTERNAZIONALIZZAZIONE

È con vivissima soddisfazione, e con autentico compiacimento anche personale, che porto il saluto più grato e cordiale dell'intera Società Italiana di Pedagogia come dell'intera Consulta Nazionale di Pedagogia, che aduna tutte le società scientifiche italiane di ambito pedagogico, storico-pedagogico, didattico, tecnologico-multimediale e di pedagogia speciale, a questo importantissimo e strategico Convegno internazionale che onora la pedagogia mondiale e, per quello che mi riguarda più da presso, la pedagogia italiana.

Riconoscendo pieno merito, per l'idea che lo sostiene e per la realizzazione che oggi ne segna l'inizio, all'amico e collega prof. Agostino Portera, alla cui responsabilità e al cui indiscusso prestigio dobbiamo questo magistrale dispiegamento di altissime personalità come di contributi e relazioni di assoluto valore ermeneutico e progettuale.

E, con lui, alle colleghe e ai colleghi veronesi del Dipartimento di "Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia" diretto dalla professoressa Luigina Mortari, che hanno collaborato e reso possibile la sua migliore ed efficiente organizzazione.

Un saluto grato e cordiale che si estende naturalmente a tutti i convegnisti presenti e, in forma del tutto speciale, ai Keynote Speakers e ai Main Presenters.

Autentiche celebrità mondiali, i Keynote Speakers, la cui popolarità e il cui indiscutibile credito scientifico, al pari dei loro molteplici studi e ricerche di altissima risonanza, hanno varcato da tempo i luoghi della loro appartenenza accademica per diventare patrimonio comune e internazionale.

Autorità e opinion leader di particolarissima considerazione che provengono, costoro, da quattro continenti e da nazioni quali il Canada, la Germania, la Gran Bretagna, l'India, Israele, Malta, gli Stati Uniti e il Sud Africa. Cui si aggiunge, in un ruolo non sicuramente marginale, l'Italia. Ed è, questo, un vanto per la nostra patria e, nondimeno, per la pedagogia italiana. Convinto come sono, tanto da ripeterlo ormai con insistente tenacia, che il futuro della pedagogia del nostro Paese è possibile solo in una più ampia, e totalmente abbracciata, prospettiva internazionale. Che vale già, al presente, per i colleghi più anziani delle nostre discipline. Ma che a maggior ragione deve valere da subito, e con modalità da far crescere ulteriormente, per i più giovani che le hanno scelte quale cifra distintiva del loro impegno professionale e di vita.

Così pure i Main Presenters, la cui origine rinvia a un numero stragrande di nazioni come l'Austria, Cipro, la Danimarca, la Francia, la Grecia, il Messico, la Polonia, il Portogallo, la Russia, la Serbia, la Slovacchia, la Spagna, lo Sri Lanka, la Svezia, la Svizzera, l'Ucraina, l'Ungheria. E, ancora, il Canada, la Germania, la Gran Bretagna, l'India, Israele, gli Stati Uniti e il Sud Africa. Insieme, anche su questo versante, a numerosi colleghi italiani di valore, provenienti da 12 importanti sedi universitarie nazionali quali Bologna, Foggia, Messina, Milano Bicocca, Milano Cattolica, Padova, Palermo, Roma 3, Trento, Venezia "Cà Foscari", Verona e Udine.

Uno straordinario concerto di voci internazionale, intercontinentale e mondiale, dunque, che rende questo Congresso un'assoluta e memorabile eccellenza.

Al pari dell'argomento e dell'articolazione contenutistica di questa prestigiosissima assise.

L'educazione interculturale, innanzitutto, quale risposta pedagogica e civile, di piena cittadinanza democratica, a un mondo globalizzato, che vogliamo che sia, fundamentalmente, quello delle persone e dei loro inalienabili diritti, e non soltanto, o unicamente, quello dei mercati e dell'alta finanza.

L'aver poi collegato questo tema all'altro indicatore essenziale di senso e di ricerca, diagnostico e prognostico, del counselling, della terapia e della psicoterapia.

Con l'allargamento, infine, di entrambi questi eccezionali parametri ai campi della salute, della spiritualità come della religione, dei valori, del genere e dell'orientamento sessuale, dell'appartenenza etica e di classe, delle disabilità come della democrazia e della cittadinanza, dell'equità sociale, del cooperative learning e del libero movimento degli studenti.

Che rendono tutte assieme, queste dimensioni e siffatte prospettive, il Convegno, che oggi si apre, una "novità" di grandissima portata nell'indagine scientifica e nel colloquio tra pari, corali ed esaustivi.

Così da rispondere in pieno al bisogno pure di una pedagogia italiana che, mentre non può abbandonare i filoni storici della sua più antica e gloriosa tradizione di ricerca, deve farsi più attenta alla contemporaneità, non già per un malinteso nuovismo a tutti i costi, ma perché compresa del fatto che l'educazione è un cristallo complesso a 360°, da indagare in ogni suo aspetto, singolo e interconnesso, senza esclusioni o pregiudizi.

Se, allora, innovazione e internazionalizzazione devono essere le cifre distintive del presente e del futuro della pedagogia del nostro Paese, come accade da tempo in buona parte del mondo pedagogico, questo Convegno può essere davvero "salutato" come una pietra miliare del cambiamento che ci attende, e che non può essere ulteriormente rinviato e disatteso.

Grazie.

**Michele Corsi**

Presidente della Società Italiana di Pedagogia  
Coordinatore della Consulta Nazionale di Pedagogia

## Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World Conference

*Verona, Palazzo della Gran Guardia April 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>*

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event*</b>
<b>3:00 - 6:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Pre-conference Seminars - Seminari pre-conferenza</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An Equity Culture Framework for Inquiry, Agency, and Community – Gretchen <b>Wilbur</b> (De Paul University, USA)</li> <li>- Transformative Movement, Mindfulness and Meditation – Kellie <b>Kirksey</b> (Cleveland Clinic Foundation, USA), Andrea <b>Farenga</b> (Marshall University, USA)</li> <li>- Expanding cooperative learning through group investigation (<i>Sviluppare il Cooperative Learning attraverso i gruppi di ricerca</i>) Yael <b>Sharan</b> (GRIP Group Investigation Projects, Israel) (English-Italian)</li> <li>- Cooperative Learning per lo sviluppo dell'intelligenza emotiva e sociale: fondamenti neuroscientifici - Giorgio <b>Albertini</b> (IRCCS, Italy), Agostino <b>Portera</b> (CSI; University of Verona), Stefania <b>Lamberti</b> (CSI; University of Verona)</li> <li>- Therapeutic relationship (<i>L'alleanza di lavoro</i>) Adam <b>Horvath</b> (Simon Fraser University, Canada) (English-Italian)</li> </ul>
<b>6:00 - 6:30 pm</b>	<b>Registration - Iscrizioni</b>
<b>6:30 - 8:00 pm</b>	<b>Welcome Cocktail - Cocktail di benvenuto</b>

### MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> April

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>8:00 - 9:00 am</b>	<b>Registration - Iscrizioni</b>
<b>9:00 - 9:30 am</b>	<p><b>Opening Greetings - Saluti</b></p> <p>Alessandro <b>Mazzucco</b> (Rector University of Verona); Julia <b>O'Sullivan</b> (Dean, OISE, University of Toronto); Luigina <b>Mortari</b> (Director of the Department of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology, University of Verona); Anna <b>Leso</b> (Municipality of Verona); Vinicio <b>Ongini</b> (on behalf of Italian Ministry of Education); Michele <b>Corsi</b> (President of Siped); Fabrizio <b>Consorti</b> (President fo SIPEM).</p>
<b>9:30 - 11:00 am</b>	<p><b>Keynote Presentation – Relazioni plenarie</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liquid Modern Challenges to Education (<i>Le sfide della modernità liquida all'educazione</i>) Zygmunt <b>Bauman</b> (University of Leeds, UK)</li> <li>- Intercultural Competence in Education, Counselling and Psychotherapy (<i>Competenze interculturali nell'educazione, nel counselling e nella psicoterapia</i>) Agostino <b>Portera</b> (CSI, University of Verona)</li> </ul>
<b>11:00 - 11:30 am</b>	<b>Break - Pausa</b>
<b>11:30 - 1:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Guest speaker:</b> Ricordi di mio fratello Paolo (<i>Organised Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering</i>) Rita <b>Borsellino</b> (Member of European Parliament, Bruxelles)</p> <p>Introduction: Agostino <b>Portera</b> (CSI, University of Verona)</p> <p><b>Keynote Presentation – Relazioni plenarie</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Therapeutic Relationship in Cross-Cultural Therapy (<i>La relazione terapeutica nella terapia cross-culturale</i>) Adam <b>Horvath</b> (Simon Fraser University, Canada)</li> </ul> <p>Introduction: Alberto <b>Zucconi</b> (IACP, Rome)</p>
<b>1:00 - 2:00 pm</b>	<b>Launch break - Pausa pranzo</b>
<b>2:00 - 4:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Panel: Diversity in Therapy Panel: diversità in psicoterapia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The integration of Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge and Healing Practices into Psychology (<i>L'integrazione delle conoscenze della tradizione indigena e delle pratiche di cura in psicologia</i>) Tholene <b>Sodi</b> (University of Limpopo, South Africa)</li> <li>- How are Traditional Knowledges used in Western Counselling and Psychotherapy? (<i>Come sono usate le conoscenze tradizionali nel counselling e nella psicoterapia occidentale?</i>) Suzanne <b>Stewart</b> (University of Toronto)</li> <li>- Fundamentals of Counselling and Psychotherapy with Sexual and Gender Minority Clients (<i>I fondamenti del counselling e della psicoterapia con i soggetti LGBTQQ</i>) Roy <b>Gillis</b> (University of Toronto)</li> </ul>

	<p>- Psychotherapy Considered in a Cultural Competent Framework (<i>La psicoterapia considerata alla luce di un framework culturale competente</i>) Ted <b>Lo</b> (Hong Fook Mental Health Association), Kenneth <b>Fung</b> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>- The Trouble with Intercultural Counselling and Psychotherapy in a Time of Diversity (<i>I problemi del counselling e della psicoterapia interculturale in tempi di incertezza</i>) Roy <b>Moodley</b> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>Chair: Suzanne <b>Stewart</b> (University of Toronto)</p>
4:00 - 4:30 pm	<p><b>Break &amp; Poster Session - Pausa e Sessione Poster</b></p> <p>- Centre for Intercultural Studies (CSI), Barbara <b>Guidetti</b> &amp; Marta <b>Milani</b> (University of Verona)</p> <p>- Rick's Café Network a view from inside - Maria <b>Kavouri</b> &amp; Miguel <b>Prata Gomes</b> (Rick's Café Network)</p> <p>- La cura del disagio psicologico dei minori migranti e delle loro famiglie – Enrica <b>Santorum</b><sup>1</sup> (ULSS20 Verona, Italy)</p> <p>- Presentazione del Rapporto Nazionale sugli alunni con cittadinanza non italiana - Vinicio <b>Ongini</b> (on behalf of Italian Ministry of Education)</p>
4:30 - 6:00 pm	<p><b>Paper Session 1</b></p> <p>- Bisogni di salute nella relazione interculturale, <i>Floriana <b>Grimaldi</b></i> (IACP, Roma)</p> <p>- Per una Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile, <i>Matteo <b>Zapparoli</b>, Anna Maria <b>Silingardi</b></i> (Associazione DoveSeiTu, Mantova)</p> <p>- Nuove famiglie bisogni diversi, <i>Richard Eugen <b>Unterrichter</b></i> (A.P.B.P.S. Association, Trento)</p> <p>- L'arricchimento reciproco tra la TCP e la Psichiatria Transculturale, <i>Marianna <b>Cento</b></i> (IACP, Roma)</p> <p><b>Paper Session 2</b></p> <p>- The Relationship between Mindfulness and Self-Esteem, <i>Siyin <b>Chen</b></i> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>- Creating a Community of Empathetic Learners in the Classroom: The Role of Dramatic Play, <i>Amanda <b>Perri</b></i> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>- Nutrition between physiology and psychology, <i>Thierry <b>Bonfanti</b></i> (psychotherapist, Trento)</p> <p><b>Paper Session 3</b></p> <p>- Dual Interventions amongst the Muslim Diaspora, <i>Yusuf <b>Humair</b></i> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>-Lost in Translation, <i>Sophia <b>Kariotaki</b></i> (University of Manchester)</p> <p>- An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Canadian Adolescents with Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual-Identified Parents, <i>Kenneth <b>McNeilly</b></i> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>- Deconstructing Stereotypes and Prejudice by Enhancing Reflectivity, <i>Roberto <b>Franzini Tibaldeo</b></i> (Sant'Anna School, Pisa)</p> <p><b>Paper Session 4</b></p> <p>- 'You look like them!', <i>Lorena <b>Georgiadou</b></i> (University of Edinburgh, UK)</p> <p>- A Relational Approach to Cross-Cultural Practice, <i>Jason <b>Brown</b></i> (Western University, Canada)</p> <p>- Counseling in a Collectivistic Culture, <i>Marina <b>Chibisova</b></i> (Moscow University)</p> <p>- Boundaries and Challenges in Supporting Multicultural Clients, <i>Lina <b>Jaramillo</b></i> (Counsellor, Torino), <i>Luvia Soto <b>Cabrera</b></i> (Associate psychologist and coach, Torino)</p> <p>- Trauma Considerations for the First Nations Peoples of Turtle Island, <i>Kimberly <b>Hart</b></i><sup>2</sup> (University of Manitoba, Canada)</p>

<sup>1</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: F. **Borgognoni**, E. **Burbi**, A. **Castioni**, F. **Feltrin**, L. **Maccagnan**, S. **Mirandola**, R. **Zampieri**, M. **Brighenti** (ULSS20 Verona, Italy).

<sup>2</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Michael A. **Hart**, Gladys **Rowe** (University of Manitoba, Canada).

	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Role of Humanities in preparing teachers for Heterogenous Schools, <i>Davide <b>Zoletto</b> (Università di Udine)</i></li> <li>- Learning Design in Transnational Educational Groups, <i>Juliana Elisa <b>Raffaghelli</b>, Umberto <b>Margiotta</b> (Università Cà Foscari Venezia)</i></li> <li>- Generationpulse <i>Belle <b>Liang</b> (Boston College, USA)</i></li> <li>- The relationships between intercultural education methods and international and interdisciplinary concepts, <i>Veronica <b>La Regina</b><sup>3</sup> (ISU, Strasbourg)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 8</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fondamenti neuroscientifici del CL, <i>Giorgio <b>Albertini</b> (IRCCS, Roma)</i></li> <li>- CL nutrimento per ghiande ridicolmente minuscole: proposte d'azione, <i>Stefania <b>Lamberti</b> (University of Verona)</i></li> <li>- Elementi di efficacia del CL nell'educazione inter-culturale, <i>Giovanna <b>Malusà</b>, Massimiliano <b>Tarozzi</b> (Università di Trento)</i></li> <li>- Counselling educativo-interculturale e integrazione scolastica attraverso il CL, <i>Maria Francesca <b>Pacifico</b> (Roma)</i></li> </ul>
6:10 - 7:30 pm	<p><b>Workshops</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cutting Edge Practices to Teach Multicultural Competences, <i>Roberto <b>Swazo</b> (Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, USA), Dorota <b>Celinska</b> (Roosevelt University, USA).</i></li> <li>- Il curricolo dalla parte delle radici, <i>Flavia <b>Virgilio</b> (Università di Udine), Stefano <b>Stefanel</b> (School Principal, Udine).</i></li> <li>- What are your 'Delicious Moments'?, <i>Mami <b>Ishii</b> (Integrated Mental Health, Canada), Ted <b>Lo</b> (Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Toronto).</i></li> <li>- Famiglia come integrazione multiculturale, <i>Richard Eugen <b>Unterrichter</b> (APBP - SP Association, Trento).</i></li> <li>- Book Presentation: Noi domani. Un viaggio nella scuola multiculturale, <i>Vinicio <b>Ongini</b> (MIUR - Italian Ministry of Education).</i></li> <li>- Book Presentation: Scusi l'ortografia, ma sa com'è, sono polacco io, <i>Marcella <b>Cecchini</b> (I.T.C.S. Lorgna – Pindemonte, Verona).</i></li> </ul>

Evening: - Zygmunt **Bauman**: Conversation on Education  
 - Mami **Ishii**, Ted **Lo**, Thierry **Bonfanti**: A Dinner of Delicious Moments

## TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> April

Time	Event
9:00 - 11:00 am	<p><b>Panel: La Pedagogia Interculturale in Italia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- L'indilazionabile volo della pedagogia dall'emisfero boreale all'australe e ritorno (<i>The Fly of Pedagogy from Boreal to Austral Hemisphere</i>) Franco <b>Frabboni</b> (Università di Bologna, Italy)</li> <li>- Le competenze interculturali nel lavoro educativo (<i>Intercultural Competences in Education</i>) Milena <b>Santerini</b> (Università Cattolica di Milano)</li> <li>- Le problematiche interculturali della società italiana (<i>Intercultural Troubles in the Italian Society</i>) Francesco <b>Susi</b> (Università degli Studi Roma Tre)</li> <li>- Sconfinamenti per incontrare mondi plurali (<i>Cross Fonderie for Meeting Plural Worlds</i>) Franca <b>Pinto Minerva</b> (Università di Foggia, Italy)</li> <li>- Competenze interculturali nel mondo del lavoro (<i>Intercultural Competences in Business Field</i>) Concetta <b>Sirna</b> (ASPEI, Italy)</li> </ul> <p>Chair: Agostino <b>Portera</b> (CSI, Università di Verona)</p>
11:00 - 11:30 am	<p><b>Break &amp; Poster Session - Pausa e Sessione Poster</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Associazione Poiesis (Verona, Italy)</li> <li>- Exploring how different teacher perspectives on cultural difference are translated into teaching practice – Danijela S. <b>Petrovic</b><sup>4</sup> (University of Belgrade, Serbia)</li> <li>- Competenze di mediazione interculturale per educare alla cittadinanza – Margherita <b>Cestaro</b> (Università di Padova, Italy)</li> <li>- The Face of Privilege – Donna <b>Kowalchuk</b> (OISE, Toronto)</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: A. **Bukley**, C. **Welch** (ISU, Strasbourg).

<sup>4</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: B. **Leutwyler**, C. **Mantel** (IZB/PHZ, Switzerland), B.M. **Dimitrijevic** (University of Belgrade, Serbia), B. **Zlatkovic** (University in Nis, Serbia).

11:30 - 1:00 pm	<p><b>Parallel Session 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senso d'identità, appartenenza razziale e percezione dei valori personali, <i>Giuseppe Crisafulli (IACP, Roma)</i></li> <li>- Non dimentichiamo <i>Mario Ruocco, Aurora Vestri (IACP, Roma)</i></li> <li>- Cosa accade quando l'altro 'non sente' ciò che 'sento', <i>Antonella Fornaro (Scuola di Analisi transazionale, Roma)</i></li> <li>- L'influenza dell'identità di genere sull'empatia e sull'intelligenza emotive, <i>Carlo De Amicis, Eufrazio Perez-Navío (Asociación Espanola de Counselling, Spain)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Metacognizione e interculturalità, <i>Alessandra La Marca (Università di Palermo)</i></li> <li>- Possibilità di una didattica laboratoriale interculturale, <i>Mariangela Giusti (Università Milano-Bicocca)</i></li> <li>- Una ricerca sull'educazione interculturale nell'Unione Europea, <i>Marco Catarci (Università Roma Tre)</i></li> <li>- Sull'incompetenza interculturale degli operatori nei servizi per la tutela dell'infanzia, <i>Carlotta Saletti Salza, Leonardo Piasere (Università di Verona)</i></li> <li>- Quale intercultura?, <i>Rosanna Cima<sup>5</sup> (Università di Verona)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educazione Interculturale e costruzione di relazioni, <i>Claudio Cernesi (Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia)</i></li> <li>- Lo spirito di iniziativa e l'Imprenditorialità, <i>Fiorino Tessaro, Barbara Baschiera (Università Cà Foscari, Venezia)</i></li> <li>- Competenze di mediazione interculturale, <i>Margherita Cestaro (Università di Padova)</i></li> <li>- L'importanza dell' ICT nella formazione degli insegnanti, <i>Maria Kavouri (Aim Network, Ferrara)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quale incontro tra cultura di appartenenza e tendenza attualizzante?, <i>Federica Gagliano, Francesca Farolfi (Psychotherapist, Firenze)</i></li> <li>- Divenire madri in terra straniera, <i>Beatrice Ciatta (Università di Lucerna, Switzerland)</i></li> <li>- La primavera araba a Lampedusa, <i>Vincenza Malatino (AUSL 6 Palermo)</i></li> <li>- Vorrei tornassero le rose, <i>Beatrice Bianchini (C.S.F. Enaip Veneto, Verona)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Challenging grand narratives in teacher education, <i>Christina Rodell Olgaç (Södertörn University, Sweden)</i></li> <li>- New Realities, New Conversations, <i>Kelly-Ann Miller (OISE, Toronto)</i></li> <li>- Early childhood education programs from an Intercultural perspective, <i>Dasha Shalimo (OISE, Toronto)</i></li> <li>- Multicultural Challenges at the Door of Polish Schools, <i>Aneta Rogalska-Marasinska (University of Lodz, Poland)</i></li> <li>- Developing intercultural competences in practice, <i>Maria Giovanna Onorati (University of Aosta Valley), Furio Bednarz (ECAp, Switzerland)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quale democrazia nel tempo attuale?, <i>Laura Selmo, Jole Orsenigo (Università Milano-Bicocca)</i></li> <li>- La figura dell'adulto facilitatore nell'approccio della Philosophy for Children, <i>Valentina Martini (Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia)</i></li> <li>- Il valore del dialogo in Paulo Freire, <i>Domenica Maviglia (Università di Messina)</i></li> <li>- Dialogo interreligioso ed educazione alla cittadinanza e alla pace, <i>Caterina Foppa Pedretti (Università di Verona)</i></li> <li>- <i>Juan Fernandez Sierra (Universidad de Almeria, Spain)</i></li> </ul>
1:00 - 2:00 pm	<b>Launch break - Pausa pranzo</b>

<sup>5</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Reinaldo Matias Fleuri (Università Federale di Santa Caterina, Brasil), Mariateresa Muraca (Università di Verona).



2:00 - 4:00 am	<p><b>Panel: multicultural and intercultural education in theory and practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The globalization of fear and the construction of the intercultural imagination (<i>La globalizzazione della paura e la costruzione dell'immaginario interculturale</i>) Leslie <b>Bash</b> (Leo Baeck College, UK)</li> <li>- Multiculturalism and Education for Citizenship in a Context of Neoliberalism (<i>Multiculturalità ed educazione alla cittadinanza in un con-testo di neoliberalismo</i>) Christine <b>Sleeter</b> (California State University, USA)</li> <li>- Urban Education, Place/Space as Social Products and Code Words and Social Justice (<i>Educazione urbana, luogo/spazio come prodotto sociale, codice e giustizia sociale</i>) Carl <b>Grant</b> (University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA)</li> <li>- Intercultural Competence and Global Leadership (Competenze interculturali e leadership globale) Milton J. <b>Bennet</b> (Intercultural Development Research Institute, USA)</li> <li>- Cooperative Learning and the Culturally Sensitive Classroom (<i>Cooperative Learning e classi culturalmente sensibili</i>) Yael <b>Sharan</b> (GRIP Group Investigation Projects, Israel)</li> </ul> <p>Chair: Leslie <b>Bash</b> (Leo Baeck College, UK)</p>
4:00 - 4:30 am	<p><b>Break &amp; Poster Session - Pausa e Sessione Poster</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gruppo Studio-Ricerca-Formazione Cooperative Learning (CSI, University of Verona)</li> <li>- Il monitoraggio delle attività psicosociali nei centri di accoglienza ministeriali per migranti,</li> <li>- Agnese <b>Mattera</b><sup>6</sup> (Croce Rossa Italiana)</li> <li>- Measuring Intercultural competence – Yulia <b>Fedyakina</b> (UdSU, Russia)</li> <li>- Qualità e equità in contesti multiculturali – Giovanna <b>Malusà</b>, Massimiliano <b>Tarozzi</b> (Università di Trento)</li> </ul>
4:30 - 6:00 pm	<p><b>Paper Session 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lesbiche e gay in psicoterapia, <i>Maurizio <b>Betti</b> (IACP, Roma)</i></li> <li>- Studio sulle cause del conflitto interculturale tra infermieri e utenti con background culturali differenti, <i>Emanuele <b>Galli</b> (Università San Raffaele, Milano)</i></li> <li>- Mamme in attesa, <i>Nadia <b>Sansone</b> (Scuola di Analisi transazionale, Roma)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Verso una possibile fioritura umana, <i>Giuditta <b>Alessandrini</b> (Università Roma Tre)</i></li> <li>- Orientamenti interculturali, <i>Massimiliano <b>Fiorucci</b> (Università Roma Tre)</i></li> <li>- Educating teachers for social justice, <i>Massimiliano <b>Tarozzi</b> (Università di Trento)</i></li> <li>- Storia globale e storia dell'altro, <i>Giuseppe <b>Mantovani</b>, Alessio <b>Surian</b> (Università di Padova, Italy)</i></li> <li>- Storia e intercultura come incontri di sguardi, <i>Alessio <b>Surian</b><sup>7</sup> (Università di Padova).</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education and training of adults, <i>Sofia Marisa <b>Alves Bergano</b> (Escola Superior de Educação de Bragança, Port)</i></li> <li>- The integration of migrant youth in Catalonia, <i>Ruth <b>Vilà Baños</b><sup>8</sup> (University of Barcelona)</i></li> <li>- Growing up Global, <i>Maura <b>Striano</b><sup>9</sup> (Università di Napoli)</i></li> <li>- Language Learning and Oral Traditional Stories, <i>Clarisse <b>Costa Afonso</b> (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal)</i></li> <li>- Auto-Ethnographic Reflections on the Immigrant and Refugee Experience, <i>Grace <b>Feuerverger</b> (OISE, Toronto)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Mindful Therapist, <i>Rosana <b>Zammit</b>, Janine <b>Snook</b> (University of Toronto)</i></li> <li>- Transformative Movement, Mindfulness and Meditation, <i>Kelly <b>Kirksey</b> (Cleveland Clinic Foundation, USA), Andrea <b>Farenga</b> (Marshall University, USA)</i></li> <li>- Weaving a meaningful narrative, <i>Nilima <b>Changkakoti</b> (University of Geneva)</i></li> <li>- Traditional Healing and Spirituality, and Medicine, <i>Oksana <b>Vinnichenko</b> (Ternopil University, Ukraine), Abraham <b>Khan</b> (OISE, Toronto)</i></li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: A. **Diodati**, M. **Parisi**, G. **De Cesare** (Croce Rossa Italiana).

<sup>7</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Marwa **Mahmoud**, Damiano **Razzoli** (Centro Interculturale Mondinsieme, Italy).

<sup>8</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Esther Luna **González**, M. Àngels **Marín**, Olga **González** (University of Barcelona).

<sup>9</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Felix Garcia **Moryión** (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), Daniela **Camhy** (Karl-Franzens University, Austria), Jen **Glaser** (The Israel Center for Philosophy in Education, Israel), Stefano **Oliviero** (Università di Napoli Federico II).

	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Memory culture and biographical learning, <i>Tine Brondum</i> (University of Southern Denmark)</li> <li>- Unaccompanied immigrants minors in Italy, <i>Fabrizio Pizzi</i> (University of Cassino, Italy)</li> <li>- Empirical Mirror of Inclusive Education in the Slovak Republic, <i>Barbora Miháliková</i> (National Institute for CEM, Slovak Republic)</li> <li>- Educational inclusion, <i>Christos Parthenis, Eirini Tseliou</i> (University of Athens, Greece)</li> <li>- Immigrants and social interaction, <i>Luís António Pardal</i> (Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal)</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Cultures in Europe, <i>Peter Praxmarer</i> (Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano)</li> <li>- Children from Elsewhere and their Integration in Italian Primary School, <i>Paola Dusì<sup>10</sup></i> (University of Verona)</li> <li>- Motivation in Jigsaw classroom, <i>Anastasia Fomicheva</i> (Moscow State University, Russia)</li> <li>- Popular culture as a site for intercultural learning, <i>Christine E. Guthrie</i> (OISE, Toronto)</li> <li>- The implication of Multicultural and Intercultural Education for Lesbian Gay Transgender Queer and Questioning People, <i>Rita Betto</i> (OISE, Toronto)</li> </ul>
6:10 - 7:30 pm	<p><b>Workshops</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A cultural expedition into Psychotherapy, <i>Kenneth Fung</i> (University of Toronto), <i>Ted Lo</i> (Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Toronto).</li> <li>- Toward an Integrated Model of Language Pedagogy and Intercultural Education, <i>Michael Ennis</i> (University of Bozen and the University of Cincinnati).</li> <li>- Caffè Dibattito Interculturale, <i>Thierry Bonfanti</i> (psychotherapist, Trento).</li> <li>- Mentor Migration Project, <i>Hildegard Wenzler-Cremer, Susanne Bráunger</i> (Freiburg University, Germany).</li> <li>- Book Presentation: <i>Intercultural and Multicultural Education: Enhancing Global Interconnectedness</i>, (Routledge) <i>Agostino Portera, Carl A. Grant Jagdish Gundara</i>.</li> <li>- Find the Other through books, <i>Glória Bastos, Maria da Conceição Tomé</i> (CEMRI/ Univ Aberta, Portugal).</li> </ul>

Evening Concert: Massimo **Bubola**

### WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> April

<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>
9:00 - 10:00 am	<p><b>Keynote– Relazioni plenarie:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dilemmas of Democracy. Between Neo-populism and neo-liberalism (<i>Dilemmi della democrazia. Tra neo-populismo e neo-liberalismo</i>) Aleksandra <b>Kania</b> (University of Warsaw, Poland)</li> <li>- Current Intercultural Issues within the Global Context (<i>Problematiche interculturali nel contesto globale</i>) Jagdish <b>Gundara</b> (University of London)</li> </ul> <p>Chair: Agostino <b>Portera</b> (CSI, University of Verona)</p>
10:00 - 11:00 am	<p><b>Keynote Session: Embodied Knowledge, Counselling and Psychotherapy – Viaggi in orizzonti culturali diversi, counseling e Terapia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Re) figuring bodies – (Re) inventing selves (<i>Ridefinire i corpi e reinventare il sé</i>) Mervat <b>Nasser</b> (King’s College, UK)</li> </ul> <p>- Embodied Journeys in Diverse Cultural Landscapes and Counseling (<i>Viaggi in orizzonti culturali diversi e counselling</i>) Niva <b>Piran</b> (University of Toronto)</p> <p>Chair: Niva <b>Piran</b> (University of Toronto, Canada)</p>

<sup>10</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Immaculada **Gonzalez Falcon** (Universidad de Huelva, Spain), Maria Angeles **Alfonso** (Universidad de Cadiz, Spain).

11:00 - 11:30 am	<p><b>Break &amp; Poster Session - Pausa e Sessione Poster</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuous intercultural education in multiethnic region– Ekaterina <b>Trojnikova</b> (Udmurt State University, Russia)</li> <li>- Ethnopsychological peculiarities of youths’ representations about the social-legal activity Yuliya <b>Logashenko</b>, Pavel <b>Toropov</b> (Immanuel Kant Baltic federal University, Russia), Ludmila <b>Pochebut</b> (Saint Peterburg State University, Russia)</li> <li>- Pedagogical Educational Museum – Svetlana <b>Troyanskaya</b> (Udmurt State University, Russia)</li> <li>- Meeting business inside a university – Natalia <b>Danilkina</b> (Immanuel Kant State University, Russia)</li> </ul>
11:30 - 1:00 pm	<p><b>Paper Session 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Persone senza “casa”, Paolo <b>Ballarin</b> (<i>Cooperativa Laimomo, Bologna</i>)</li> <li>- Un’esperienza di counselling in un contesto multiculturale ospedaliero, Ezio <b>Menoni</b> (<i>Istituto di Psicoterapia Integrata, Firenze</i>)</li> <li>- Intercultura in consultorio, Paolo <b>Ferraris</b> (<i>Consultorio Familiare, Genova</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Verso la ricerca di senso nella realtà schizofrenica di un africano, Pamela <b>Cocchetta</b> (<i>IACP, Roma</i>)</li> <li>- Oriente e Occidente si diedero la mano, Wissya <b>Santoni</b> (<i>IACP, Roma</i>)</li> <li>- Etnopsichiatria e psicopatologia: un incontro tra sciamano e psichiatra, Giuseppe <b>Dattola</b> (<i>IACP, Roma</i>)</li> <li>- Il contatto gestaltico: il modello integrativo tra spiritualità, psicoterapia e counselling, Mario Fernández <b>Alameda</b>, Carlo <b>De Amicis</b> (<i>Asociación Española de Counselling, Spain</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contextual Factors that Influence the Career Decision, Priya <b>Mani</b> (<i>University of Manitoba, Canada</i>)</li> <li>- Weaving a meaningful narrative, Nilima <b>Changkakoti</b> (<i>University of Geneva</i>)</li> <li>- Psychosocial and familiar functioning of children from polygynous and monogamous families – Al-<b>Krenawi</b> (<i>Ben-Gurion University, Israel</i>)</li> <li>- Yoga and the “Shadow”, Ajit <b>Pyati</b> (<i>Western University, Canada</i>)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From biases to sociocognitive flexibility, Margarita <b>Sanchez-Mazas</b>, Aneta <b>Mechi</b> (<i>University of Geneva</i>)</li> <li>- Quality of Schools in the Migrational Society, Regine <b>Hartung</b> (<i>Hamburg institute, Germany</i>), Rita <b>Panesar</b> (<i>BQM, Germany</i>)</li> <li>- Intercultural Communication to Competence, Gretchen <b>Wilbur</b>, Nancy <b>Morgan</b> (<i>De Paul University, USA</i>)</li> <li>- Living Conditions of Roma Children, Erzsébet <b>Rákó</b> (<i>University of Debrecen, Hungary</i>)</li> <li>- Second generation of immigrant students in Greece and Italy, Paola <b>Dusi</b> (<i>University of Verona</i>), Nektaria <b>Palaiologou</b> (<i>University of Western Macedonia, Greece</i>)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Giuseppe <b>Milan</b> (<i>Università di Padova, Italy</i>)</li> <li>- Bambini e famiglie di altre culture nei servizi dell’infanzia, Giuseppina <b>Messetti</b> (<i>Università di Verona</i>)</li> <li>- La “medicina partecipata”, Luciano <b>Vettore</b> (<i>SIPeM, Verona</i>), Michele <b>Gangemi</b> (<i>Società Italiana di Counselling Sistemico, Italy</i>)</li> <li>- Competenze interculturali nelle professioni socio-educative in Spagna, Andres <b>Escarbajal Frutos</b> (<i>University of Mursia, Spain</i>), Barbara <b>Guidetti</b> (<i>Università di Verona</i>),</li> <li>- Educazione e persona nella complessità Francesco <b>Bossio</b> (<i>Università della Calabria Italy</i>).</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 7/8</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tracce migranti e spazi di partecipazione, Rosita <b>Deluigi</b> (<i>Università di Macerata, Italy</i>)</li> <li>- Eccomi Pronto Curriculum, Jessica <b>Bertolani</b> (<i>Università di Verona</i>)</li> <li>- Nascere in Italia da genitori stranieri, Francesca <b>Rapanà</b> (<i>Università di Trento</i>)</li> <li>- Dirigere contesti scolastici multi-etnici, Maria <b>Provenzano</b> (<i>Università degli Studi di Palermo</i>)</li> </ul>
1:00 - 2:00 pm	<p><b>Launch break - Pausa pranzo</b></p>

2:00 - 4:00 am	<p><b>Panel: Integrating Traditional Healing into Counselling and Psychotherapy – Guarigione tradizionale in counselling e terapia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inter-Relationships of Culture. Health, Illness, Healthcare and Healing: Prospects for the Integration of Cultural Psychotherapeutic Practices (<i>Relazioni tra culture. Salute, malattia, cura e guarigione: prospettive per l'integrazione delle pratiche psicoterapeutiche culturali</i>) Olaniyi <b>Bojuwoye</b> (University of the Western Cape, South Africa)</li> <li>- Traditional Healing in South Africa (<i>Guarigione tradizionale in Sud Africa</i>) Mokgadi <b>Moletsane</b> (University of the Western Cape, South Africa)</li> <li>- A Healing Ministry Model among Caribbean Christians for Health Care Delivery (<i>Un modello pubblico di guarigione per l'assistenza sanitaria tra cristiani caraibici</i>) Abraham <b>Khan</b> (University of Toronto)</li> <li>- Families in a Diverse Society (<i>Famiglie in una società diversa</i>) Tony Sam <b>George</b> (Christ University, India)</li> <li>- Delicious Moments (<i>Momenti deliziosi</i>) Mami <b>Ishii</b> (Integrative Mental Health, Canada), Ted <b>Lo</b> (Hung Fook Mental Health Association, Canada)</li> </ul> <p>Chair: Olaniyi <b>Bojuwoye</b> (University of the Western Cape, South Africa)</p>
4:00 - 4:30 am	<p><b>Break &amp; Poster Session - Pausa e Sessione Poster</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language education – Farida <b>Mingazova</b> (Udmurt State University, Russia)</li> <li>- Pedagogical conditions of a forimirovaniye of cross-cultural education – Elena <b>Belkova</b> (Udmurt State University, Russia)</li> </ul>
4:30 - 6:00 pm	<p><b>Parallel Session 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Religiosity and Self-Regulation in an Adolescent Sample, Claire <b>Barnes</b> (<i>University of Toronto</i>)</li> <li>- A Healing Ministry Model among Caribbean Christians for Health Care Delivery Abraham <b>Khan</b> (<i>University of Toronto</i>), Oksana <b>Vinnichenko</b> (<i>I.Ya. Horbachevsky University, Ukraine</i>)</li> <li>- Incorporating Spirituality and Traditional World - Nicole <b>Elliott</b>, Suzanne L. <b>Stewart</b> (<i>University of Toronto</i>)</li> <li>- Buddhist Counselling - Chomphunut <b>Srichannil</b> (<i>University of Edinburgh, UK</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Parallel Session 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stories are all that we are, Gladys <b>Rowe</b> (<i>University of Manitoba, Canada</i>)</li> <li>- Client Experiences of Islamic Traditional Healing, Yusuf <b>Humair</b> (<i>University of Toronto</i>)</li> <li>- Through Indigenous eyes, Michael Anthony <b>Hart</b>, Kimberly <b>Hart</b>, Michael <b>Hart</b> (<i>University of Manitoba, Canada</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valutazione e gestione dello stress nei volontari di Croce Rossa Italiana, Gessica <b>De Cesare</b><sup>11</sup> (<i>Croce Rossa Italiana, Roma</i>)</li> <li>- Ascolto attivo e competenze interculturali, Agnese <b>Mattera</b><sup>12</sup> (<i>Croce Rossa Italiana, Roma</i>)</li> <li>- Lingue diverse parlano di maternità, Elena <b>Faini</b> (<i>IACP, Roma</i>)</li> <li>- Un'esperienza di Counselling di gruppo, Denni <b>Romoli</b> (<i>Istituto per l'Integrazione Teorica, Firenze</i>)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Paper Session 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents and teachers becoming partners, Tania <b>Ogay</b><sup>13</sup> (<i>University of Fribourg, Switzerland</i>)</li> <li>- Student's linguistic club in the Udmurt State University, Eduard <b>Khakimov</b>, Marina <b>Siraeva</b> (<i>USU, Russia</i>)</li> <li>- Costruire competenze interculturali nel Child and Family Welfare Services, Silvio <b>Premoli</b> (<i>Università Cattolica, Milano</i>)</li> <li>- A mediated intercultural education, Luisa <b>Zinant</b> (<i>University Udine</i>)</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Alessandra **Diodati**, Claudia **Battafarano**, Daniela **Fioravanti**, Cristiana **Russo**, Francesca **Vietti**, Agnese **Mattera** (*Croce Rossa Italiana, Roma*).

<sup>12</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: A. **Diodati**, A. **Anbardan**, L. **D'Anci**, G. **Ficadu Mana**, D. **Manetta**, G. **De Cesare** (*Croce Rossa Italiana, Roma*).

<sup>13</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Loana **Cettou** (*University of Fribourg, Switzerland*), Angelika **Toth**, Vije **Franchi** (*University of Geneva, Switzerland*).

	<p><b>Paper Session 6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social and Behavioural Aspects in a MSc Curriculum in Migrant Health, <b>Ursula Viktoria Wisiak</b><sup>14</sup> (Medical University Graz, Austria)</li> <li>- Toward an Integrated Model of Language Pedagogy and Intercultural Education, <b>Michael Ennis</b> (University of Bozen and the University of Cincinnati)</li> <li>- Interpreter and language Issues in Intercultural Work, <b>Sarah Maiter, Ramona Alaggia</b> (York University, Canada)</li> <li>- Socially Interactive Teachers, <b>Antoine Gambin</b> (OAF, Malta)</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper Session 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Representations of intercultural society in Central Europe, <b>Szerepi Sándor</b> (University of Debrecen, Hungary)</li> <li>- The time for “recognising” intercultural education has come, <b>Diana Moehrke</b> (Grafton College, UK), <b>Victoria Perselli</b> (Kingston University, UK)</li> <li>- Listening to students from migrant background, <b>Iulia Mancila, Juan J. Leiva Olivencia</b> (University of Málaga, Spain)</li> <li>- A review of student voice initiatives, <b>Natasha Jamal</b> (OISE, Toronto)</li> </ul>
6:10 - 7:30 pm	<p><b>Workshops</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Embodied Journeys in Diverse Cultural Landscapes and Counselling, <b>Niva Piran</b> (OISE, Toronto).</li> <li>- An intercultural approach to supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer, <b>Carla Letizia D’Elia</b> (OISE, Toronto).</li> <li>- Intercultural Counselling Training in Afghanistan, <b>Lucia Berdondini, Sandra Grieve</b> (University of Strathclyde, UK).</li> <li>- Book Presentation: Riflessioni a lume di candela - meditazione e autoesplorazione, <b>Pierpaolo Patrizi</b> (Caritas Bolzano).</li> <li>- Free2Choose, <b>Miguel Prata Gomes</b> (PFSE, Portugal).</li> <li>- La gestione dei conflitti attraverso il CL, <b>Caterina Foppa Pedretti, Marta Milani</b> (University of Verona).</li> </ul>

Evening: **Gala dinner** at Rubiani restaurant

### THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup> April

<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>
9:00 - 11:00 am	<p><b>Keynote – Relazioni plenarie:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intercultural Education and Student Engagement: The Challenges and Possibilities of Critical-Democracy (<i>Educazione interculturale e coinvolgimento degli studenti. Sfide e possibilità della democrazia critica</i>) <b>John P. Portelli</b> (OISE, Toronto)</li> <li>- Race, Language and Globalization: what can “Global Hip-Hop Nation” Teach us about Citizenship (<i>Razza, linguaggio e globalizzazione: che cosa può insegnarci il “Global Hip-Hop Nation” sulla cittadinanza</i>) <b>Awad Ibrahim</b> (University of Ottawa, Canada)</li> <li>- Genres of the Human 2: After Settler Colonialism, Anti-Black racism towards the Future of a New Human (<i>Generi di umanità seconda: post-colonialismo, razzismo contro i neri; verso il futuro di una nuova umanità</i>) <b>Rinaldo Walcott</b> (OISE, Toronto)</li> <li>- Hospitality in Education: A Universal Ethic for Particular Contexts (<i>Ospitalità in educazione: un’etica universale per contesti particolari</i>) <b>Claudia Ruitenberg</b> (University of British Columbia, Canada)</li> <li>- Critically-Engaging, Intercultural Dialogues in Neoliberal times (<i>Coinvolgimento critico, dialogo interculturale nel neoliberalismo</i>) <b>Carmel Borg</b> (University of Malta, Malta)</li> </ul> <p>Chair: <b>John P. Portelli</b> (OISE, Canada)</p>
11:00 - 11:30 am	<b>Break - Pausa</b>

<sup>14</sup> Additional Presenters/Relatori aggiunti: Hans Joachim **Hannich**, Jeannette **Riedel** (Medical University Graz, Austria).

<b>11:30 - 11:50 am</b>	<p><b>Keynote Presentation – relazione plenaria</b></p> <p>- International Education and Intercultural Learning/Assessment (<i>Educazione internazionale e valutazione dell'apprendimento interculturale</i>) Darla K. <b>Deardorff</b> (Duke University, USA) (Video Conference)</p>
<b>11:50 - 1:30 pm</b>	<p><b>Final Round Table – Tavola rotonda conclusiva</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jagdish <b>Gundara</b> (University of London UK)</li> <li>- Roy <b>Moodley</b> (OISE, University of Toronto, Canada)</li> <li>- Christine <b>Sleeter</b> (California State University, USA)</li> <li>- John P. <b>Portelli</b> (OISE, University of Toronto, Canada)</li> <li>- Mervat <b>Nasser</b> (King's College, UK)</li> </ul> <p>Chair: Agostino <b>Portera</b> (CSI, University of Verona, Italy)</p>

\* All the Talks from the plenary sessions will be translated into Italian or English.  
Tutte le relazioni delle sessioni parallele saranno tradotte in italiano o inglese.

## LIQUID MODERN CHALLENGES TO EDUCATION

By Zygmunt Bauman

Stephen Bertman<sup>1</sup> coined the terms ‘nowist culture’ and ‘hurried culture’ to denote the way we live in our kind of society. Apt terms indeed – and such as come particularly handy whenever we try to grasp the nature of the liquid–modern human condition. We may say that more than for anything else, this condition stands out for its (thus far unique) *re-negotiation of the meaning of time*.

### From Linear to Pointillist Time

Time in the liquid–modern ‘society of consumers’ era is neither cyclical nor linear, as it used to be in other known societies of modern or pre–modern history. It is *pointillist* instead – broken up into a multitude of separate morsels, each morsel reduced to a point ever more closely approximating its geometrical idealization of non–dimensionality. As we surely remember from school lessons in geometry, points have no length, width or depth: they exist, one is tempted to say, *before* the space and time; both space and time are yet to begin. But like that unique point which, as the state–of–the–art cosmogony postulates, preceded the ‘big bang’ that started the universe, each point is presumed to contain an infinite potential to expand and the infinity of possibilities waiting to explode if properly ignited...

Each time–point is believed to be pregnant with a chance of another ‘big bang’, though this time on much more modest, ‘individual universe’ scale – and the successive points continue to be believed to be so pregnant, regardless what might have happened to the previous ones and despite the accumulating experience showing that most chances tend to be wrongly prejudged, overlooked or missed, that most points prove to be barren, and most stirrings are still–born. A map of pointillist life, has it been charted, would have looked like a graveyard of imaginary or unfulfilled possibilities. Or,

depending on the point of view, like a cemetery of wasted chances: in a pointillist universe, the rates of infant mortality and miscarriages of hopes are very high.

Precisely for that reason a 'nowist' life tends to be a 'hurried' life. The chance which each point might contain will follow it to its grave; for *that* particular, *unique* chance, there will be no 'second chance'. Each point might have been lived-through as a new beginning, but more often than not the finish would have come right after the start, with pretty little happening in between. Only an unstoppably expanding multitude of new beginnings may – just may – compensate for the profusion of false starts. The vast expanses of new beginnings believed to be waiting ahead – the points whose 'big bang potential' has not yet been tried and so remains thus far un-discredited – allows to salvage the hope from the debris of premature endings or, rather, stillborn gambits.

In the 'nowist' life of the avid consumer of new *Erlebnisse*, the reason to hurry is not the urge to *acquire* and *collect*, but to *discard* and *replace*. There is a latent message behind every commercial, promising new unexplored opportunity of bliss: no point in crying over spilt milk. Either the 'big bang' happens right now, at this very moment and at the first try, or loitering in that particular point makes sense no longer; it is time to move to another point.

In a society of producers now receding into the past (at least in our part of the globe), the advice in such a case would have been 'try harder'; but not in the society of consumers. Here, the failed tools are to be abandoned rather than sharpened and tried again with a greater skill, more dedication and better effect. And so should be abandoned the appliances that stopped short of delivering the promised 'full satisfaction', as well as the human relationships that delivered a 'bang' not exactly as 'big' as expected. The hurry ought to be at its most intense when one is running from one point (failed, failing, or about to start failing) to another (yet untried). One should be wary of Faust's bitter lesson: of being cast in hell when wishing the moment – just because it was a pleasing one – to last forever...



What, given the infinity of promised and assumed opportunities, makes the flow of time pulverized into an aggregate of ‘points’ a most attractive novelty, one that could be sure to be learned gladly and practiced with zeal, is the double promise: of pre-empting the future, and of disempowering the past. Such double act is, after all, the ideal of liberty.

The promise of emancipating actors from the choice-limiting constraints, particularly resented for their nasty habit of growing in volume and stiffening over time as the ‘past’ expands devouring ever greater chunks of life, coming together with the promise to deny the future its similarly discomforting propensity to dash the hopes and devalue successes lived in the present, augur between themselves a complete, unrestrained, well-nigh absolute freedom. Liquid-modern society offers such liberty to the degree unheard of, and downright inconceivable, in any other society on record.

Let us consider first the uncanny feat of disabling the past. It boils down to just one, but truly miraculous change in human condition: the facility of being ‘born again’. From now on, not just the cats can live nine lives. In one abominably short visit on earth, bewailed not that long ago for its loathsome brevity and not radically lengthened since, humans – just like the proverbial cats – are now offered to squeeze many lives, the endless series of the ‘new beginnings’. Being ‘born again’ means that previous birth(s), together with their aftermath, has (have) been annulled; it feels like the arrival of always dreamt of, though never before experienced, divine-style omnipotence (Leon Shestov, the eminent Russian-French existentialist philosopher, thought the potency to annul the past – to cause, for instance, that the crime of forcing Socrates to drink hemlock was never committed – to be the ultimate sign of God’s omnipotence). The power of causal determination can be disarmed, and the power of the past to cut down the options of the present can be radically limited, perhaps even abolished altogether. What one was yesterday, would no longer bar the possibility of becoming someone totally different today.

Since each point in time is, let's recall, full of potential, and each potential is different and unique, the number of ways in which one can be different is genuinely uncountable: indeed, it dwarfs even the astonishing multitude of permutations and mind-boggling variety of forms and likenesses which the haphazard meetings of genes have managed thus far and are likely in the future to produce in human species. It comes close to the awe-inspiring capacity of eternity, in which, given its infinite duration, everything may/must sooner or later happen and everything can/will be sooner or later done. Now, that wondrous potency of eternity has been packed into the not-at-all-eternal span of a single human life.

Consequently, the feat of defusing and neutralizing the power of the past to reduce the subsequent choices, and so to severely limit the chances of 'new births', rob eternity of its most seductive attraction. In a 'pointillist' time of the liquid-modern society, *eternity no longer is a value and an object of desire*; or rather what was its value and what made it an object of desire has been excised and *grafted onto the moment*. Accordingly, the late-modern 'tyranny of the moment' with its precept of *carpe diem*, replaced the pre-modern tyranny of eternity with its motto of *memento mori*.

### **Chasing Elusive Identity**

That transformation stands behind the new centrality accorded in the present-day society to the preoccupations with 'identity'.

Though remaining an important issue and absorbing task since the early-modern passage from the 'ascription' to the 'achievement' society, 'identity' has now shared the fate of other life-pursuit and underwent the 'pointillization' process. Once a 'whole-life' project coterminous with the life-span, it has turned now into an attribute of the moment. It is no longer 'once designed and forever build', but intermittently, and ever anew, assembled and dissembled – each of the two apparently contradictory

operations carrying equal importance and equally absorbing. Instead of demanding an advance payment and a life-long subscription with no cancellation clause, the manipulation of identity is now an activity akin to the ‘pay as you watch’ (or ‘as you phone’) facility. It is still a constant preoccupation, but now split into a multitude of exceedingly short (and with the progress in marketing techniques, ever shorter) efforts fully within the capacity of even a most fleeting attention; a series of sudden and frenetic spurts of no pre-designed, and even predictable succession – but instead with effects following comfortably closely and quickly the beginning.

The skills required to meet the challenge of liquid-modern manipulation of identity are akin to those of a juggler, or – more to the point – to the artfulness and dexterity of a prestidigitator. Practicing of such skills has been brought within reach of the ordinary, round-of-the-mill consumer by the expedient of *simulacrum* – a phenomenon, in the memorable Jean Baudrillard’s description, similar to psychosomatic ailments, known to cancel the distinction between ‘things as they are’ and ‘things as they pretend to be’, or ‘reality’ and ‘illusion’, true state of affairs and its simulation. What once was viewed and suffered as an interminable drudgery calling for mobilization and onerous straining of all and any of the ‘inner’ resources, can be now accomplished with the help of the purchasable, ready-to-use contraptions and gadgets, at a modicum expenditure of money and time (though of course the attractiveness of an identity composed of bought trappings rises in proportion to the amount of money spent; most recently also with the length of waiting, as the most prestigious and exclusive designer shops introduce waiting lists – clearly for no other purpose except enhancing the distinction with which the waited-for tokens of identity endow their buyer. As Georg Simmel pointed out long time ago, values are measured by the sacrifice of other values required to obtain them, and delay is arguably the most excruciating of sacrifices members of the society of consumers may be required to accept).

Annulling the past, ‘being born again’, acquiring a different self, reincarnating as ‘someone completely different’... These proposals are difficult to

refuse. Why to work on self-improvement with all the strenuous effort and painful self-sacrifice such toil requires? Why to send good money after bad? Is not it cheaper, and quicker, and more thorough, and more convenient, and easier to achieve, to cut the losses and start again – to shed the old skin, spots, warts and all, and buy a new one? There is nothing new in seeking escape when things get really hot; people tried that at all times. What is new is the dream of *escaping from own self* – and the conviction that making such dream a reality is within reach; not just an option within reach, but the easiest option, most likely to work in case of trouble; a short-cut, less cumbersome, less time-and-energy consuming, and so all-in-all a cheaper option.

Joseph Brodsky, the Russian-American philosopher-poet, vividly described the kind of life guided by trust invested in this kind of escape. For acknowledged losers, like the ‘flawed consumers’ (the poor eliminated from the consumerist game), the liquid-modern variety of social outcasts – the sole form of escape from oneself (from being tired of oneself, or as Brodsky prefers, from being *bored*) is alcoholic or drug addiction: ‘In general, a man shooting heroin into his vein does so largely for the same reason you buy a video’ – Brodsky told the students of Dartmouth College in July 1989; this is as far as flawed consumers, the social rejects barred the entry to the more refined and ostensibly more effective (but also more expensive) escape routes, can go. As to the potential haves, which the Dartmouth College students aspire to become, they need not stop at buying a new video... They may try to live out their dream.

You’ll be bored with your work, your spouses, your lovers, the view from your window, the furniture or wallpaper in your room, your thoughts, yourselves. Accordingly, you’ll try to devise ways of escape. Apart from the self-gratifying gadgets mentioned before, you may take up changing jobs, residence, company, country, climate, you may take up promiscuity, alcohol, travel, cooking lessons, drugs, psychoanalysis...

The haves may indeed pick and choose their ways of escape with the uncountable number on offer. And they are likely to be tempted to try as many as they can afford, one by one or all together, since what is much less likely is that any of them

will indeed deliver that freedom from ‘boredom with oneself’ which they promise to bring:

In fact, you may lump all these together, and for a while that may work. Until the day, of course, when you wake up in your bedroom amid a new family and a different wallpaper, in a different state and climate, with a heap of bills from your travel agent and your shrink, yet with the same stale feeling toward the light of day pouring through your window...

Andrzej Stasiuk, an outstanding Polish novelist and insightful analyst of contemporary human condition, suggests that ‘the possibility of becoming someone else’ is the present-day substitute for the now largely discarded and uncared-for salvation or redemption. ‘It is highly probable’, he suggests, ‘that the quantity of digital, celluloid and analogue beings met in the course of a bodily life comes close to the volume which eternal life and resurrection in flesh could offer’.

Applying various techniques, we may change our bodies and re-shape them according to different pattern... When browsing through glossy magazines, one gets the impression that they tell mostly one story – about the ways in which one can re-make one’s personality, starting from diets, surroundings, homes, and up to rebuilding of psychical structure, often code-named a proposition to “be yourself”.

Sławomir Mrożek, a Polish writer of a world-wide fame and a man with a first-hand experience of many lands and cultures, compares the world we inhabit to a market-stall filled with fancy dresses and surrounded by crowds seeking their ‘selves’... One can change dresses without end, so what a wondrous liberty the seekers enjoy can go on forever... Let’s go on searching for our real selves, it’s smashing fun – on condition that the real self will be never found. Because if it were, the fun would end...

If happiness is permanently within reach and if reaching it takes but a few minutes needed to browse through the yellow pages and to pull the credit card out of the wallet, then obviously a self that stops short or reaching happiness can’t be ‘real’ – not really the one that spurred the self-seeker to embark on the voyage of self-discovery. Such fraudulent self needs to be discarded on the ground of its ‘non-authenticity’, while the search for the real one should go on. And there is little reason to stop searching if one can be sure that in a moment another moment will duly arrive, carrying new promises and bursting with a new potential.

## Smarting under the Tyranny of the Moment

In a book under telling-it-all-title<sup>2</sup>, Thomas Hylland Eriksen picks up the ‘tyranny of the moment’ as the most conspicuous feature of contemporary society and arguably its most seminal novelty:

The consequences of extreme hurriedness are overwhelming: both the past and the future as mental categories are threatened by the tyranny of the moment... (E)ven the “here and now” is threatened since the next moment comes so quickly that it becomes difficult to live in the present’.

A paradox indeed, and an inexhaustible source of tension: the more voluminous and capacious becomes the moment, the smaller (briefer) it is; as its potential contents swell, its dimensions shrink. ‘There are strong indications that we are about to create a kind of society where it becomes nearly impossible to think a thought that is more than a couple of inches long’<sup>3</sup>. But contrary to the popular hopes beefed up by the consumer market promises, changing one’s identity, were it at all plausible, would require much more than that.

While undergoing the ‘pointillization’ treatment, the moment is thereby cut off on both sides. Its interfaces with both the past *and* the future turn into gaps – hopefully unbridgeable. Ironically, in the age of instant and effortless connection and the promise of being constantly ‘in touch’, communication between the experience of the moment and whatever may precede or follow it needs to be permanently, and hopefully irreparably, broken. The gap behind should see to it that the past is never allowed to catch up with the running self. The gap ahead is a condition of living the moment to the full, of abandoning totally and unreservedly to its (admittedly fleeting) charm and seductive powers – something that wouldn’t be feasible were the currently lived-through moment contaminated with the worry about mortgaging the future. Ideally, each moment would be shaped after the pattern of the credit card use, a radically de-personalized act: in the absence of a face-to-face intercourse it is easier to forget, or rather never to think in the first place, of the unpleasantness of repayment.

No wonder the banks, eager to get cash moving and so earning yet more money than it would while laying idle, prefer their clients fingering credit cards instead of visiting branch managers.

Following Bertman's terminology, Elżbieta Tarkowska, a most prominent chronosociologist in her own right, develops the concept of 'synchronic humans'<sup>4</sup> – who 'live solely in the present', who 'pay no attention to past experience or future consequences of their actions' – a strategy which 'translates into absence of bonds with the others'. The 'presentist culture' 'puts premium on speed and effectiveness, while favouring neither patience nor perseverance'.

We may add that it is such frailty and apparently easy disposability of individual identities and inter-human bonds that are re-presented in contemporary culture as the substance of individual freedom. One choice that such freedom would neither recognize, grant, nor allow, is the resolve (or indeed the ability) to persevere in holding to the once constructed identity, that is in the kind of activity which also presumes, and necessarily entails, the preservation and security of the social network on which that identity rests while actively reproducing it.

### **Drown in the Information Deluge**

The speed that casts the prospect of taming and assimilation of innovations beyond the ordinary human's capacity must overshoot any target made to the measure of the already recorded demand. New products appear as a rule first, and only then seek their applications; many of them travel to the dumping site without finding any. But even the lucky few products which managed to find/conjure up a need, a desire or a wish for which they might demonstrate to be, or eventually become relevant, soon tend to succumb to the pressure of 'new and improved' products (that is, products that promise to do all they could do, only quicker and better – with an extra bonus of doing a few things which no consumer as yet thought of needing and intended

to buy) well before their working capacity meets its preordained end. Most of life aspects and life-servicing gadgets grow, as Eriksen points out, on *exponential rate* – whereas in all cases of exponential growth a point must be reached when the offer exceeds the capacity of the genuine or contrived demand; more often than not, that point arrives before another yet more dramatic point – the point of the natural limit to supply – will have been reached.

Such pathological (and eminently wasteful) tendencies of all and any exponentially growing production of goods and services could be conceivably spotted in time, recognized for what they are and perhaps even manage to inspire remedial or preventive measures – if not for one more, and in many ways special, exponential process, resulting in *excess of information*. As Ignazio Ramonet calculates<sup>5</sup>, during the last 30 years more information has been produced in the world than during the previous 5000 years, while ‘a single copy of the Sunday edition of the New York Times contains more information than a cultivated person in the eighteenth century would consume during a lifetime’. Just how difficult, nay impossible to absorb and assimilate, and so endemically wasteful, such volume of information is – one can glean for instance from Eriksen’s<sup>6</sup> observation that ‘more than a half of all published journal articles in the social sciences are never quoted’. That many articles are never read by anyone except the ‘anonymous peer reviewers’ and copy editors. It is everybody’s guess how small is the fraction of the articles’ contents that ever manages to find their way to the social-sciences discourse.

‘There is far too much information around’ – Eriksen concludes.<sup>7</sup> ‘A crucial skill in information society consists in protecting oneself against the 99.99 per cent of the information offered that one does not want’. We may say that the line separating meaningful message, the ostensible object of communication, from background noise, its acknowledged adversary and obstacle, has all but disappeared. In a cut-throat competition for the scarciest of scarce resources – the attention of would be consumers – the suppliers of would-be consumer goods desperately search for the scraps of



consumers' time still lying fallow, for the tiniest gaps between moments of consumption that still could be hopefully stuffed with more information, hoping that some section of those at the receiving end of the communication channel, would in the course of their desperate searches for the bits of information would come by chance across the bits which they don't need yet the suppliers wish them to absorb, and then would be sufficiently impressed to pause or slow down to absorb them rather than the bits they sought. Picking up fragments of the noise and converting them into a meaningful message is by and large a random process. 'Hypes', those products of the PR industry meant to separate 'desirable objects of attention' from the non-productive (read: unprofitable) noise (like the full-page commercials announcing a premiere of a new film, launching of a new book, the broadcasting of a heavily subscribed by the advertisers TV show, or an opening of a new exhibition), serve to divert for a moment, channel and condense in one direction the continuous and desperate, yet scattered search for 'filters'—focusing attention, for a few minutes or a few days, on a selected object of consuming desire.

Moments are few, however, by comparison with the number of contenders, in all probability, multiplying at an exponential pace. Hence the phenomenon of 'vertical stacking' – a notion coined by Bill Martin<sup>8</sup> to account for an amazing stock-piling of music fashions, as gaps and fallow plots were all filled to the brim and over-flown by the ever rising tide of supplies, while the promoters had to feverishly struggle for stretching them beyond capacity. The images of 'linear time' and 'progress' were among the most prominent victims of the information flood. In the case of popular music, all imaginable retro styles found themselves crowded in one limited span of music-fans' attention together with all conceivable forms of recycling and plagiarism counting on the short span of public memory to masquerade as latest novelties; but the case of popular music is just one manifestation of a virtually universal tendency that affects in equal measure all areas of life serviced by the consumer industry. To quote Eriksen once more<sup>9</sup>:

Instead of ordering knowledge in tidy rows, information society offers cascades of decontextualized signs more or less randomly connected to each other...

Put differently: when growing amounts of information are distributed at growing speed, it becomes increasingly difficult to create narratives, orders, developmental sequences. The fragments threaten to become hegemonic. This has consequences for the ways we relate to knowledge, work and lifestyle in a wide sense.

The tendency to a 'blasé attitude' toward 'knowledge, work and lifestyle' (indeed, towards life as such and everything it contains) had been noted by Georg Simmel, with astonishing foresight, already at the start of the last century<sup>10</sup>, as surfacing first among the residents of 'metropolis' – the big and crowded modern city:

The essence of the blasé attitude consists in the blunting of discrimination. This does not mean that the objects are not perceived, as is the case with the half-wit, but rather that the meaning and differing values of things, and thereby the things themselves, are experienced as insubstantial. They appear to the blasé person in an evenly flat and grey tone; no one object deserves preference over any other...

All things float with equal specific gravity in the constantly moving stream of money.

Something like a fully-fledged version of the tendency Simmel spotted and described, so to speak, *avant la lettre* – an ever more salient phenomenon strikingly similar to that discovered and dissected by Simmel under the name of 'blasé attitude' – is currently discussed under a different name of 'melancholy'. Writers to use that term tend to bypass Simmel's augury/foreboding while going yet further back to the point where the ancients, like Aristotle, left it and the Renaissance thinkers, like Ficino or Milton, rediscovered and re-examined. In Rolland Munro's rendering<sup>11</sup> the concept of 'melancholy' in its current use 'represents not so much a state of indecision, a wavering between the choice of going one way or another, so much as it represents a backing off from the very divisions'; it stands for a 'disentanglement' from 'being attached to anything specific'. To be 'melancholic' is 'to sense the infinity of connection, but be hooked up to nothing'. In short, 'melancholy' refers to 'a form without content, a refusal from knowing just *this* or just *that*'. I would suggest that in the idea of 'melancholy' stands in the last account for the generic affliction of the consumer, *homo eligens* by behest of the consumer society, resulting from the fatal coincidence of the compulsion/addiction of choosing with the inability to choose. To repeat after Simmel, it stands for

the in-built transitoriness and contrived in-substantiality of things that surf with the same specific gravity over the tide of stimulations; in-substantiality that rebounds in the behavioural code of consumers as indiscriminate, omnivorous gluttony – that most radical, ultimate form of hedging the bets and the last-resort life strategy – considering the ‘pointillization’ of time and the non-availability of the criteria that would allow to separate the relevant from the irrelevant and the message from the noise.

### **From Ballistic to Smart Missiles**

It took more than two millenia, since the ancient Greek sages invented the notion of *paidea*, for the idea of ‘life-long education’ to turn from an oxymoron (a contradiction in terms) into a pleonasm (akin to a ‘buttery butter’ or ‘metallic iron’...) Though that remarkable transformation has occurred quite recently – in the last few decades, under the impact of the radically accelerated pace of change in the social setting in which both principal actors of education, the teachers and the learners alike, needed to act.

The moment they start moving, the direction of ballistic missiles and the distance of their travel have been already decided by the shape and the position of gun-barrel and the amount of gunpowder in the shell; one can calculate with little or no error the spot on which the missile will land, and one can choose that spot by shifting the barrel or changing the gunpowder dose. Such qualities of ballistic missiles made them ideal weapons to use in a positional warfare – when the targets stayed dug into their trenches or bunkers and the missiles were the sole bodies on the move.

The same qualities make them however useless once the targets invisibly to the gunner start to move – particularly if they move faster than missiles can fly, and even more so if they move erratically, in an unpredictable fashion that plays havoc with all preliminary calculations of required trajectory. A smart, intelligent missile is needed then – a missile that can change its direction in full flight depending on changing

circumstances, one that can spot immediately the target's movements, learn from them whatever needs and can be learned about the target's current direction and speed – and extrapolate from the gathered information the spot in which their trajectories may cross. Such smart missiles cannot suspend, let alone finish the gathering and processing of information as it travels – as its target never stops to move and to change its direction and speed, and plotting the place of encounter needs to be constantly updated and corrected.

We may say that smart missiles would follow the strategy of 'instrumental rationality' though so to speak in its liquidized, fluid version; that is, dropping the assumption that the end is given, steady and immovable for the duration and so only the means are to be calculated and manipulated. Even smarter missiles won't be confined to a pre-selected target at all but will choose the targets as they go. They would rather be guided by the consideration of what is the most they can achieve given their technical capacities and of which potential targets around are such as they are best equipped to hit. This would be, we may say, the case of 'instrumental rationality' in reverse: targets are selected as the missile travels, and it is the available means that decide which 'end' will be eventually selected. In such case the 'smartness' of the flying missile and its effectiveness would benefit from its equipment being of a rather 'generalistic' or 'uncommitted' nature, un-focused on any specific category of ends, not overly adjusted to the hitting a particular kind of target.

Smart missiles, unlike their ballistic elder cousins, *learn as they go*. So what they need to be supplied with initially is the *ability* to learn, and learn fast. This is obvious. What is less visible, though no less crucial than the skill of quick learning, is however the ability to instantly *forget* what has been learned before. Smart missiles wouldn't be smart were they not able to 'change mind' or revoke their previous 'decisions' with no second thought and regret... They should not overly cherish the information they acquired and on no account should they develop a habit of behaving in a way that information suggested. All information they acquire ages rapidly and instead

of providing reliable guidance may lead astray, if not promptly dismissed. What the ‘brains’ of smart missiles must never forget is that knowledge they acquire is eminently *disposable*, good only until further notice and of only temporary usefulness, and that the warrant of success is not to overlook the moment when acquired knowledge is of no more use and needs to be thrown away, forgotten and replaced.

Philosophers of education of the solid–modern era saw teachers as launchers of ballistic missiles and instructed them how to assure that their products will stay strictly on the pre–designed course determined by the initially triggered momentum. And no wonder; ballistic missiles were at the early stages of the modern era the topmost achievement of human technical invention. They served flawlessly whoever might have wished to conquer and master the world as it then was; as Hilaire Belloc confidently declared referring to the African natives, ‘Whatever happens, we have got / The Maxim Gun, and they have not’ (Maxim gun, let’s recall, was a machine to launch great numbers of ballistic bullets in a short time, and was effective only if there were very many such bullets at hand). As a matter of fact, though, that vision of the teacher’s task and the pupil’s destiny was much older than the idea of ‘ballistic missile’ and the modern era that invented it – as an ancient Chinese proverb, preceding the advent of modernity by two millennia but still quoted by the Commission of the European Communities in support of its programme for ‘Lifelong Learning’ at the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, testifies: ‘When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees. When planning for life, train and educate people’. It is only with the entry into the liquid–modern times that the ancient wisdom has lost its pragmatic value and people concerned with learning and the promotion of learning known under the name of ‘education’ had to shift their attention from the ballistic to the smart missiles.

Harvard Business School professor, John Kotter<sup>12</sup>, advised his readers to avoid being entangled in long–term employment of the ‘tenure track’ sort; indeed, developing institutional loyalty and becoming too deeply engrossed and emotionally engaged in any given job, swearing a long term, not to mention a life–long commitment,

is ill advised when ‘business concepts, product designs, competitor intelligence, capital equipment and *all kinds of knowledge* [italics added – Z.B.] have shorter credible life spans’.

If the pre-modern life was a daily rehearsal of the infinite duration of everything except mortal life, the liquid-modern life is a daily rehearsal of universal transience. What the denizens of the liquid-modern world find out quickly is that nothing in that world is bound to last, let alone last forever. Objects recommended today as useful and indispensable are tend to ‘become history’ well before settling for long enough to turn into a need and a habit. Nothing is believed to stay here forever, nothing seems to be irreplaceable. Everything is born with a brand of imminent death and emerges from the production line with a ‘use-by date’ label printed or presumed. Construction of new buildings does not start unless permissions have been issued to demolish them when the time do pull them apart comes as it surely will, and contracts are not signed unless their duration is fixed or their termination on demand is made easy. Few if any commitments last long enough to reach the point of no return, and only by accidents decisions, all of which deemed to bind ‘for the time being’, stay in force. All things, born or made, human or not, are until-further-notice and dispensable. A spectre hovers over the denizens of the liquid-modern world and all their labours and creations: the spectre of superfluity. Liquid modernity is a civilization of excess, redundancy, waste and waste-disposal. In a succinct and pithy formulation of Ricardo Petrella<sup>13</sup>, the current global trends direct ‘economies towards the production of the ephemeral and volatile – through the massive reduction of the life-span of products and services – and of the precarious (temporary, flexible and part-time jobs),’

The great Italian sociologist, Alberto Melucci, used to say<sup>14</sup> that ‘we are plagued by the fragility of the presentness which calls for a firm foundation where none exists’. And so, ‘when contemplating change, we are always torn between desire and fear, between anticipation and uncertainty’. Uncertainty means *risk*: un-detachable companion of all action and a sinister spectre haunting the compulsive decision-makers

and choosers—by necessity that we are since, as Melucci pithily put it, ‘choice became a destiny’.

As a matter of fact, to say ‘became’ is not entirely correct, as humans were choosers as long as they were humans. But it can be said that at no other time the necessity to make choices was so deeply felt and choosing has turned so poignantly self-conscious since conducted under conditions of painful yet incurable uncertainty, of a constant threat of ‘being left behind’ and of being excluded from the game and barred return for failing to rise up to the new demands. What separates the present-day agony of choice from discomforts that tormented the *homo eligens*, the ‘man choosing’ at all times, is discovery or suspicion that there are no preordained rules and universally approved objectives that may be followed absolving thereby the choosers for the adverse consequences of their choices. Such reference points and guidelines as seem trustworthy today are likely to be debunked tomorrow as misleading or corrupt. The allegedly rock-solid companies are unmasked as the figments of accountants’ imagination. Whatever is ‘good for you’ today may be reclassified tomorrow as your poison. Apparently firm commitments and solemnly signed agreements may be overturned overnight. And promises, or most of them, seem to be made solely to be betrayed and broken. There seem to be no stable, secure island among the tides. To quote Melucci once more – ‘we no longer possess a home; we are repeatedly called upon to build and then rebuild one, like the three little pigs of the fairy tale, or we have to carry it along with us on our backs like snails’.

In such a world, one is compelled therefore to take life bit by bit, as they come, expecting each bit to be different from the preceding ones and calling for different knowledge and skills. A friend of mine living in one of the UE countries, a highly intelligent, superbly educated, uniquely creative person with full command of several languages, a person who would pass most tests and job interviews with flying colours, complained in a private letter of the ‘labour market being frail like gossamer and brittle like china’. For two years she worked as a free-lance translator and legal

advisor, exposed to a full measure of the usual ups and down of market fortunes. A single mother, she yearned however for a more regular income and so opted for steady employment with salary cheque every month. For one and a half years she worked for a company briefing the budding entrepreneurs on the intricacies of the EU law, but as new adventurous businesses were slow in coming the company went promptly bankrupt. Another year and a half she worked for the Ministry of Agriculture, running a section dedicated to the development of contacts with the newly independent Baltic countries. Come the next election, and the new government coalition chose to ‘subsidiarize’ that worry to private initiative and so decided to disband the department. The next job lasted only half a year: the State Board of Ethnic Equality has followed the pattern of governmental hands–washing exercise and declared redundant...

Never before Robert Louis Stevenson’s memorable verdict – ‘to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive’ – sounded truer than it does now in our liquidized and fluid modern world. When destinations move places and those that don’t lose their charm faster than legs can walk, cars drive or planes fly – keeping on the move matters more than the destination. Not to make a habit of anything practiced at the moment, not to be tied up by the legacy of one’s own past, wearing current identity as one wears shirts that may be promptly replaced when falling out of fashion, scorning past lessons and disdaining past skills with no inhibition or regret – are all becoming the hallmarks of the present–day, liquid–modern life politics and attributes of liquid–modern rationality. Liquid–modern culture feels no longer a culture of learning and accumulating like the cultures recorded in the historians’ and ethnographers’ reports. It looks instead a *culture of disengagement, discontinuity, and forgetting*.

In what George Steiner called ‘casino culture’, every cultural product is calculated for maximal impact (that is, for breaking up, pushing out and disposing of the cultural products of yesterday) and instant obsolescence (that is, shortening the distance between the novelty and the rubbish bin and so wary of outstaying its welcome and quickly vacating the stage to clear the site for the cultural products of tomorrow).



The artists who once identified value of their work with their eternal duration and so struggled for perfection that would render all further change all but impossible, now put together installations meant to be pulled apart when the exhibition closes or happenings that will end the moment the actors decide to turn the other way, wrap up bridges until traffic is restarted or unfinished buildings until the building work is resumed, and erect or carve 'space sculptures' that invite nature to take its toll and to supply another proof, if another proof is needed, of the ludicrous brevity of all human deeds and shallowness of their traces. No one except TV quiz competitors is expected, let alone encouraged, to remember yesterday's talk-of-the-town, though no one is expected, let alone allowed, to opt out from the talk-of-the-town of today.

Consumer market is adapted to the liquid-modern 'casino culture' which in turn is adapted to that market's pressures and seductions. The two chime well with each other and feed on each other. Not to waste their clients' time nor pre-empt their future and yet unpredictable joys, consumer markets offer products meant for immediate consumption, preferably a one-off use, rapid disposal and replacement, so that the living space won't stay cluttered once the currently admired and coveted objects fall out of fashion. The clients, confused by the mind-boggling variety of offers and vertiginous pace of their change, can no longer rely on the facility to learn and memorize – and so they must (and do, gratefully) accept the reassurances that the product currently on offer is '*the thing*', the '*hot thing*', the '*must have*' and the '*must be seen (in or with) thing*'. The hundred-years-old Lewis Carroll's fantasy turned now reality: 'it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!' So where does this leave the learners and their teachers?

## From One-off to Life-long Education

More to the point, in the liquid-modern setting education and learning, to be of any use, must be continuous and indeed life-long. No other kind of education and/or learning is conceivable; 'formation' of selves or personalities is unthinkable in any other fashion but that of an on-going and perpetually unfinished re-formation.

Given the continuing convergence of two overwhelming trends that shape the power relations and the strategy of domination in liquid-modern time, the prospects of the twisted and erratic itinerary of market developments being straightened up and so 'Human Resources' calculations being made more realistic are poor at best, and most probably nil. In liquid-modern setting 'manufactured uncertainty' is the paramount instrument of domination, whereas the policy of *precarisation*, to use Pierre Bourdieu's term (a concept referring to the ploys resulting in the situation of the subjects becoming more insecure and vulnerable and therefore yet less predictable and controllable), fast becomes the hard core of the domination strategy. Market and 'planning for life' are at loggerheads, and once state politics surrenders to the guidance of 'economy' understood as free play of market forces, the balance of power between the two is switched decisively to the advantage of the first.

### Empowered, disabled?

This does not augur well for the 'empowering of citizens', named by the European Commission as the primary objective of lifelong learning. By widespread consent, 'empowerment' (a term used in the current debates interchangeably with that of 'enablement') is achieved when people acquire ability to control, or at least significantly influence the personal, political, economic and social forces by which their life trajectory would be otherwise buffeted; in other words, to be 'empowered' means to be *able to make choices and act effectively on the choices made*, and that in turn

signifies the *capacity to influence the range of available choices and the social settings in which choices are made and pursued*. To put it bluntly, genuine ‘empowerment’ requires not only the acquisition of skills that would allow to play well the game designed by others, but also of such *powers* as would allow to influence the game’s objectives, stakes and rules; not only personal, but also the *social* skills.

‘Empowerment’ requires building and rebuilding of inter-human bonds, the will and the ability to engage with others in the continuous effort to make human cohabitation into a hospitable and friendly setting for mutually enriching cooperation of men and women struggling for self-esteem, for the development of their potential and the proper use of their abilities. In short, one of the decisive stakes of life-long education aimed at ‘empowerment’ is the *rebuilding of the now increasingly deserted public space* where men and women may engage in a continuous translation between individual and common, private and communal interests, rights and duties.

‘In light of fragmentation and segmentation processes and increasing individual and social diversity’ writes Dominique Simon Rychen<sup>15</sup>, ‘strengthening social cohesion and developing a sense of social awareness and responsibility have become important societal and political goals’. In the workplace, in immediate neighbourhood and in the street we mix daily with others who, as Rychen points out, ‘do not necessarily speak the same language (literally or metaphorically) or share the same memory or history’. Under such circumstances, the skills we need more than any other in order to offer the public sphere a reasonable chance of resuscitation, are the skills of interaction with others – of conducting a dialogue, of negotiation, of gaining mutual understanding and of managing or resolving conflicts inevitable in every instance of shared life.

Let me re-state what has been stated at the beginning: in the liquid-modern setting, education and learning, to be of any use, must be continuous and indeed life-long. I hope we can see now that one, though perhaps the decisive reason for which it must be continuous and life-long is the nature of the task we confront on

the shared road to ‘empowerment’ – a task which is exactly like education should be: continuous, never ending, life long.

Consumer is an enemy of the citizen... All over the ‘developed’ and affluent part of the planet signs abound of people turning their backs on politics, of growing political apathy and loss of interest in the running of the political process. But democratic politics cannot survive for long the citizens’ passivity arising from political ignorance and indifference. Citizens’ freedoms are not properties acquired once for all; such properties are not secure once locked in private safes. They are planted and rooted in the socio-political soil which needs to be fertilized daily and which would dry up and crumble were it not attended day in day out by the informed actions of knowledgeable and committed public. Not only the *technical* skills need be continually refreshed, not only the *job-focused* education need be life-long. The same is required, and with a yet greater urgency, by the education in *citizenship*.

Most people would agree today without much prompting that they need refresh their professional knowledge and digest new technical information if they wish to avoid ‘being left behind’ and don’t wish to be thrown over the board of the fast accelerating ‘technological progress’. And yet a similar feeling of urgency is conspicuously missing when it comes to the catching up with the impetuous stream of political developments and the fast changing rules of political game.

In a landscape of ignorance, it is easy to feel lost and hapless – and easier yet to be lost and hapless without feeling. As Pierre Bourdieu memorably remarked – he who has no grip on the present wouldn’t dream of controlling the future. Ignorance leads to the paralysis of will. One does not know what is in store, has no way to count the risks. For the authorities impatient with the constraints imposed on the power-holders by a buoyant and resilient democracy such ignorance-incurred impotence of the electorate and the widespread disbelief in the efficacy of dissent and unwillingness of getting politically involved are much needed and welcome sources of political capital: domination through deliberately cultivated ignorance and uncertainty is

more reliable and comes cheaper than the rule grounded in the thorough debate of the facts and protracted effort to agree on the truth of the matter and on the least risky ways to proceed. Political ignorance is self-perpetuating, and the rope plaited of ignorance and inaction comes handy whenever the voice of democracy is to be stifled or its hands tied.

We need the life-long education to give us choice. But we need it even more to salvage the conditions that make choice available and within our power.

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<sup>1</sup> See Stephen Bertman, *Hyperculture: The Human Cost of Speed*, Praeger 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Tyranny of the Moment: Fast and Slow Time in the Information Age*, Pluto Press 2001, pp.2-3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.VII.

<sup>4</sup> Elżbieta Tarkowska, 'Zygmunt Bauman o czasie i procesach temporalizacji', in *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 3/2005, pp.45-65.

<sup>5</sup> See Ignazio Ramonet, *La Tyrannie de la communication*, Galilée 1999, p.184.

<sup>6</sup> *Tyranny of the Moment*, p.92.

<sup>7</sup> *Tyranny of the Moment*, p.17.

<sup>8</sup> See Bill Martin, *Listening to the Future: The Time of Progressive Rock 1968-1978*, Feedback 1997; quotation that follows, p. 292.

<sup>9</sup> *Tyranny of the Moment*, pp.109, 113.

<sup>10</sup> Georg Simmel, *The Metropolis and Mental Life*, here quoted in 1950 Kurt Wolff's translation, as reprinted in *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities*, ed. by Richard Sennett, Appleton-Century-Crofts 1969, p.52.

<sup>11</sup> Rolland Munro, 'Outside Paradise; Melancholy and the Follies of Modernization', *Culture and Organization* 4/2005, pp. 275-89.

<sup>12</sup> John Kotter, *The New Rules*, New York, Dutton 1995, p.159.

<sup>13</sup> Ricardo Petrella, 'Un machine infernale', *Le Monde diplomatique* June 1997, p.17.

<sup>14</sup> See Alberto Melucci, *The Playing Self: Person and Meaning in the Planetary Society*, Cambridge UP 1996, pp.43ff. This is an extended version of the Italian original published in 1991 under the title *Il gioco dell'io*.

<sup>15</sup> Dominique Simone Rycher, 'Lifelong Learning – but learning for what?\*', in *LLinE* 1/2004, pp.26-33.

Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania

### **Dilemmas of democracy. Between neo-populism and neo-liberalism**

In the last decades of the 20th Century the notion of democracy acquired the role of a symbol for the highest achievement in the story of political systems. However, at the start of the 21st Century it is the concepts of democracy deficit and democracy in crisis that prevail in political discourse.

The meaning imputed to the concept of democracy departs considerably from its ancient Greek origin and prototype. From its Greek etymology a model is derived of democracy as the power of the people, complemented by the quality of being **for** the people (that is being exercised in the interests of the people) as well as being carried **by** the people. Each attempt to identify “the people” as simultaneously the subject and the object of democracy or to define the way in which power needs to be carried reveal however the ambivalences and antinomies endemic to such a definition of democratic politics.

In Athenian democracy (VI-IV C. B.C.) “demos”, or people, meant the totality of free (adult, male) fully legally entitled citizens, constituting according to various estimations 11 – 30 percent of the population. Aristotelian typology of the forms of government opposed democracy, as a form of majority rule, to aristocracy or oligarchy, as a rule by minority, and tyranny (autocracy) as a rule of one ruler, or ochlocracy as a rule of mob deprived of citizens’ education. It also included analyses of the basic principles, virtues and vices of each form, as well as tensions and conflicts accompanying their rise and fall. The essential principles of democracy, according to Aristotle, were freedom of citizens, justice, and equality: „a fundamental principle of the democratic form of constitution is liberty ... they assert this as the aim of every democracy. But one factor of liberty is to govern and be governed in turn; for the popular principle of justice is to have equality according to number, not worth, and if this is the principle of justice prevailing, the multitude must of necessity be sovereign and the decision of the majority must be final and must constitute justice, for they say that each of the citizen ought to have an equal share; so that it results that in democracies the poor are more powerful than the rich, because there are more of them and whatever is decided by the majority is sovereign” <sup>1</sup>. The antinomies between two basic principles of democracy –

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle. *Politics* (Book 6, Part II)

freedom and equality – are objects of both theoretical discourse and practical-political experimenting since the times of Aristotle to this very day.

John Dunn, a British leading specialist in the history and theory of democracy, examining three related but separate notions: democracy as a word, a concept, and tangible models and policies, wrote: “The word on its own retains some degree of determinacy (even in transliteration), although this blurred appreciably as soon as it was translated into languages beyond Greek, and continues to blur further as the cultures of the societies which adopt it into their own vocabulary alter over time. ... No one ... really knows what the world’s current population believes democracy to be, though ... political scientists have been making varyingly disciplined and insightful attempts to find out, both within individual countries and comparatively within and across political blocs, for some time”.<sup>2</sup>

Successive „tides of democracy” did not only increase the number of countries described as democratic (according to the Freedom House, 116 states of the total of about 200 could be ascribed as democratic) and the percentage of citizens endowed with political rights, but also the set of entitlements associated with the notion of democratic rights. In the result, contradictions, conflicts and paradoxes endemic to democratic system also grew in number.

To the most important among the above belongs the subject – object antinomy in the condition of demos or people, simultaneously ruling and being ruled. In a direct democracy, that antinomy finds its partial resolution in the personal participation in the decision-making process of all those whom the decision affect, and/or by rotation of offices charged with the execution of what has been decided. In large, mass societies practicing indirect, representative democracy, power of the people is reduced however to the choice of delegates empowered with legislative or executive authority. The gap between the rulers and the ruled as well as their mutual estrangement are thereby growing unstoppably.

As Ivan Krastev pointed out: “Democracy – meaning the self-government of equals – is now universally valued, it is institutionalized in more than three-fifth of the world’s states and it is demanded and straggled for by large movements in the remaining two-fifth. ... The paradoxical outcome of the triumph of democracy is that two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall there is a growing dissatisfaction with existing democratic regimes ... The triumph of democracy turned to be also its crisis. ... The global survey *The Voice of the*

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<sup>2</sup> Dunn J. „Democracy as spectre, dream and reality”, in: V. Inozemtsev and P. Dutkiewicz (eds.). *Democracy versus Modernization. A Dilemma for Russia and for the World*. London: Routledge. 2011, p. 21.

People, conducted by Gallup International, suggests an intriguing paradox: while democracy is universally accepted as the best form of government, the citizens of democratic societies in many cases, and in particular in the case of Central and Eastern Europe, are not only more critical than those living in non-democratic societies, but they also tend to believe that their voices matter less in the way their countries are governed. ...Trust in democratic institutions (including elections) is steadily declining. The political class is viewed as corrupt and self-interested”<sup>3</sup>. Krastev explains this paradox as the effect of a growing discrepancy between political reality of democratic regimes and the justification by the adherents of democracy its superiority in terms of speeding economic growth and modernization, growing well-being, rising educational levels, equality, efficient governance and peaceful international relations. Disenchantment with democracy results from a failure of the promises that the introduction of free elections, the adoption of a liberal constitution, and freedom of speech can solve all social problems by itself.

Results of surveys of the evolution of attitudes to the changes deemed to be required by the political system, to the feeling of “having a say” in politics, and the general knowledge of political processes, carried out by “the European Values Study” in 1990-1999-2008 reveal similar paradoxes and contradiction between the relatively high acceptance of democracy and changes in the evaluation of its functioning in Poland<sup>4</sup>. They show stability of the anti-democratic attitudes and the sense of political alienation (expressed by over two-third of the population), and a relatively low esteem awarded to the government of the country and public administration – but also a relatively high level of expectancies regarding the state’s responsibility towards its citizens, such as ensuring full employment, access to education, health-care and minimal wage, minimizing income inequalities, stimulating economic development, or protecting natural environment. At the same time, the findings show Poles tending to favour freedom over equality; they also demonstrate the pro-free-market, liberal and right-wing attitudes fluctuating together with the change in party-political rule. These seemingly incoherent attitudes express contradictions and tensions between the basic principles of democracy, but also reflect the conflict between liberal and populist political orientations related to imbalance between these principles.

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<sup>3</sup> Krastev I. „Democracy and dissatisfaction”, in: V. Inozemtsev and P. Dutkiewicz (eds.). *Democracy versus Modernization. A Dilemma for Russia and for the World*. London: Routledge. 2011, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Jasińska-Kania A. (Ed.) *Wartości i zmiany*. (Values and changes). Warszawa: Scholar. 2012.



Liberalism and populism, in their “classic” forms, were opposed as economic and political ideologies. While liberalism, as an ideal type, emphasises the principle of freedom and the constitutional rights that guarantee the liberties of people, “advocates the principle of a universalistic, elective and contractual bonds between free and rational individuals, populism has usually been associated with a romantic, organic, naturalist conception of the social order”<sup>5</sup>, which is also collectivist and often strongly nationalistic. Populism emphasises equality and unity of the people, and the concept of democracy as an expression of the general will of the people.

As a political ideology populism considers society to be ultimately separated into two *homogenous and antagonistic* groups, “the pure people” versus “the corrupt elite”<sup>6</sup>. “Populists not only accuse political elites of abusing their position of power instead of acting in the interests of the general public, but they go even further to argue that there is a conspiracy of elites against the people. ..., since populism appeals to simple rules that are derived from the “common wisdom of the people”, its rhetoric is often embellished with reference to local tradition”, religion and national culture (as opposed to the alleged “cosmopolitanism” of the elites)<sup>7</sup>. It appeals to all those who feel themselves being victims, excluded from and deprived of benefits of modernization, the economic development and transition to democracy by the corrupted and immoral elites. In addition, populists need a charismatic leader, who most often has an authoritarian, dictatorial, and paternalistic predisposition, who claims to communicate directly with the people – being from the people himself; who uses demagogic slogans stirring up various resentments, fears and hopes; and who proposes simple and quick solutions to difficult social and political problems. According to Margaret Canovan, “populism exploits this gap between promise and performance in democracy”<sup>8</sup>. Although some scholars argue that “populist are often difficult to identify because frequently the

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<sup>5</sup> Armony V. *Populism and neo-populism In Latin America*. 2005. [www.cccg.umontreal.ca](http://www.cccg.umontreal.ca)

<sup>6</sup> Mudde C. *Populist Radical Right Parties In Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Wysocka O. “Populism in Poland: In/visible Exclusion”, in: Freeman L. (ed.) *In/visibility: Perspectives on Inclusion and Exclusion*. Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows’ Conferences, vol.26, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Canovan M. „Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy”. *Political Studies*, Vol.47, No 1, p.12. 1999.

political rhetoric used by mainstream politicians also has populist elements – i.g. empty promises and anti-establishment character”<sup>9</sup>.

However, political scientists and sociologists studying the current resurgence of populism, that re-emerged in several countries, particularly in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe, in the wake of drastic and all-encompassing neo-liberal reforms, are looking for explanations of linkages between neo-populism and neo-liberalism, arguing that “neoliberalism itself tends to stir up populist tendencies in society”<sup>10</sup>. They find it not only in the opportunistic and manipulative nature of both approaches using a common populist rhetoric as the instrument of a political strategy in order to gain and maintain power, but also explore the ideological connections between neopopulist discourse and the neoliberal conception of society and the individual. Kurt Weyland says: “neopopulism and neoliberalism are both antiorganizational in their majoritarian or individualistic bent, respectively. In their conception of democracy, they stress counting numbers (‘one citizen, one vote’) as the main criterion and in principle, refuse to recognize special weight, such as the economic clout of business groups”<sup>11</sup>. These affinities have allowed neo-liberals and neo-populists to coincide in their targeted sources of mass support (unorganized and marginalized strata ...), their efforts to centralize power at the apex of the state (a top-down approach to impose economic reforms), and their capacity to elicit popular support by promising to avert much greater damage caused by the economic crisis.

Neither neo-populism nor neo-liberalism introduce any alternative to democracy, both are exploiting the same capital of popular anxiety and discontent. There is little chance that this capital will be exhausted as the causes of anxiety and discontent – inequality and the estrangement between the rulers and the ruled – continue to exist and grow. Conflicts and connections between neo-populism and neo-liberalism reappear on the political scenes in such different countries as Central Europe and Latin America, but also spread to other continents, therefore becoming a truly global problem. This new composition on political stage create a need to rethink the strategy of developing education enabling to face up to new political realities.

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<sup>99</sup> Wysocka, op.cit.

<sup>10</sup> Armony V., op.cit. p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Weyland K. „Neopopulism and neoliberalism In Latin America: unexpected affinities”. *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 1996, Vol. 31, No 3, p. 9.

## The globalisation of fear and the construction of the intercultural imagination

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### Introduction

I should like to open this paper with an assertion of an important, though by no means exclusive, dimension of intercultural education. Centrally, it concerns the interpenetration of social and cultural boundaries through what Jurgen Habermas (2003) has termed communicative action. It is a difficult task beset by obstacles of the mind framed within sets of taken-for-granted assumptions about the world, often as a consequence of deeply held, existential fears, from a consciousness of individual mortality through to communal insecurity. In this context, modern industrialised warfare ensured a coalescence of fears, concentrated in a collective anxiety, around fifty years ago, that the imminent destruction of the world as a result of thermo-nuclear conflagration was a distinct possibility.

More lately, fear has centred upon threats to 'civilisation' from those apparently bent upon the infliction of a world order designed to undermine modernity, democracy and liberty. Elsewhere, fear is manifested in the mutuality of distrust existing between peoples whose lives have been shaped by competition, war, domination and imperialism. The institutionalisation of fear on a global scale brings a kind of comfort to the fearful, but less so to the feared, since it can justify political positioning and posturing as well as the conservation of ethnocentrism and the erection of cultural and national walls and fences. Globalised fear enters into national discourses with common cause against immigration, cultural pluralism, religious tolerance, multilingualism, and so on.

In order to confront this globalisation of fear, to engage with ourselves as well as with others, demands the construction of what we might term the intercultural imagination. John Lennon's song may be thought unduly naïve and romantic but nonetheless, despite a more realistic view of human relations than that which captured the minds and hearts of many young people in the West during the late 1960s, was a protest against cynicism. Intercultural education must therefore embrace hope and the imagination, but in association with reason, understanding and knowledge. It is grounded in a capacity for critical pragmatism, an appreciation for an educational project based on a global concern for equity and justice and for the establishment of the basis of unfettered, rational communication between peoples. The construction of the intercultural imagination is an ongoing process which we might find in diverse educational settings in various countries, in many primary and secondary school classrooms as well as in progressive initial teacher education programmes. It is a process which demands more than the attainment of the usual pedagogical competences; it requires a process of engagement with hope - and with fear.

### Engagement with fear

The globalisation of fear is mirrored by the fear of globalisation. Alongside various political responses (e.g. the anti-capitalist and occupy movements) the latter is manifested in a revival of national and ethnicised discourses, and in other-worldly utopian and millenarian ideologies. The gap between,

say, the quest of a giant multinational oil company to maximise profits through attempts to secure exploration and drilling rights juxtaposes with the attempts of local populations to defend land ownership, while the onward march of deforestation rubs up against last-ditch moves to preserve traditional ways of life, language and religion. Counter-globalisation ideologies at the macro level can, at the extremes, translate into fanatical ethno-religious movements working at regional and local levels, exploiting social and economic divisions to produce new hegemonies. For example, witness the recent events in Mali where militias, apparently representing politicised Islam as an alternative hegemonic modality, acted in opposition to what was perceived to be the power of Western-oriented globalisation (though, arguably, also in opposition to locally-defined forms of Islam). However, the globalisation of fear goes well beyond the concerns for globalisation as such. It is, I would argue, a somewhat amorphous socio-historical phenomenon reacting to the amorphous and often imagined constellation of phenomena to be feared.

Accordingly, I shall attempt to avoid the territory of the psychologist, therapist or counsellor in raising the issue of fear. My perspective focuses on fear as a socio-historical phenomenon manifested institutionally, nationally, ethnically, among peer groups – and in the dynamics of schooling. Since antiquity fear has been institutionalized as part of the apparatus of the state in the form of armies, militias, policing agencies, and so on. Of course, it has not been put quite like that, rather the institutionalization of fear has been noted as the repository of the legitimate use of force, a necessary dimension of the state, as claimed by Max Weber (1978, 56). In this sense, we are initiated into a culture of fear from a relatively early age, as we progressively engage with institutional authority figures: parents, teachers, doctors, etc. – and, later in life, employers and bureaucrats, while at the same time, we are being educated about wars, conquest and defeats. Less formally, we encounter institutional and structural prejudice and racism in everyday life, as we learn to fear our neighbours, the dubious residents of social housing estates, those with disabilities, those with different skin pigmentation, those who dress differently, law-breakers, and so on. Peer conventions define in-groups and out-groups, generating fear on the part of those who perceive themselves to be in a subordinate position. I am sure you have all got the picture by now.

It may not be possible to eliminate institutionalized fear altogether. Arguably, it would have dysfunctional consequences, undermining one of the central foundations of the state. It is commonly accepted that, in the absence of societal consensus, in respect of values and normative action a healthy dose of fear provides the basis for sanctions against those who might otherwise violate laws and conventions. Authoritarian political leaders know only too well that fear provides the glue for the maintenance of power, exemplified by Stalin who was said to have remarked that he preferred his people to be loyal out of fear rather than conviction since convictions could change but fear remained.

We might wish to lend credibility to the view that the acquiescence of ordinary people in the actions of the Nazi German state was largely a product of a fear of the disintegration of the country coupled with a fear of seeming to be disloyal to a charismatic leader, rather than an outright fear of the Jews. Whether or not that was the case, such fears were inevitably directed towards the Jews such that their persecution and the events of the Holocaust could habitually be justified or at the very least rationalised. The point is that the objects of fear are as much constructed as are the fears themselves: ghosts and demons are real enough for those who believe in their existence. Here, I want to reach across to the field of the sociology of deviance and to the work, some decades ago, of

Stan Cohen who died earlier this year, famed for having popularised the term ‘moral panic’. Cohen (1980) used this term to suggest a state of institutionalised fear created in the wake of acts of deviance ‘amplified’ (by press and TV), especially on the part of groups of young people (mostly male) noted for particular styles of dress, modes of behaviour and social interaction in early 1960s Britain. Such amplification feeds back into the actions of people, as ‘deviant’ groups internalise the fears expressed by the ‘normal’ majority and begin to live up to their ascribed label as ‘folk devils’, as Cohen put it, thus contributing to an ever increasing spirality in action and reaction. In the context of intercultural relations, moral panics abound locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, as groups, imagined or otherwise, are subject to the process of demonisation.

### **The discourse of securitisation**

Fear feeds political cultures, a staple of the media, and a justification for a failure to engage with the practical issues characterising life in culturally diverse societies. Nowhere is this more clearly experienced than in the post 9/11 concern for security. We see this in the routine search procedures at airports and, in many countries at entrances to shopping malls, through to the fences and sophisticated alarm systems prevalent in the gated communities of the wealthy. We are aware of the convoluted questioning process met by travellers seeking to pass border controls. We cannot avoid the notices to be aware of suspicious packages, unattended baggage and so on in public places and public transport conveyances. The accompanying discourse has itself become routinised, thus contributing to a new taken-for-granted reality for many who were previously habituated to social interaction relatively unencumbered by a lexicon of fear. The irony is, however, that the discourse of securitisation has taken hold of many countries precisely as a consequence of intercultural penetration and the permeability of boundaries (see: Bash and Gundara, 2012, 390).

### **Challenging fear and constructing the intercultural imagination**

It is no accident that in employing the term ‘imagination’ in this paper I am nodding in the direction of the American sociologist, C. Wright Mills. His seminal work ‘The Sociological Imagination’, in influencing more than one generation of post-war sociologists, has demonstrated that a focus on the process of theorisation needs to be closely connected with a concern for the betterment of human lives. In the same way that the sociological imagination “....enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society...” (Mills, 1970, 12) so the tools and products of social science can be used not only to understand the distinctiveness of human groups but also to construct imagined intercultural futures.

The central task for educators is not to gloss over the fears which have taken hold of large sections of societies over recent decades and to promote a naive, utopian picture of an intercultural future shaped by peace and harmony. Rather it is to enable learners to engage positively with fear, to examine it, and to challenge it as a global phenomenon. The first steps in this process involve a recognition, at the level of the classroom, of its reciprocal character. We should not be surprised if children in Jewish schools in Israel and children in Palestinian schools on the West Bank share similar kinds of fears, just as children in Protestant schools and children in Catholic schools in Northern

Ireland might also share similar kinds of fears. Only the objects of fear will differ in a process of negative exchange. Indeed this mutuality of fear helps to sustain separateness and a taken-for-granted view that any move towards interculturality is not only unrealistic it is also undesirable. This may be argued in the case of Jewish schools in Israel and Palestinian schools on the West Bank and, perhaps to a lesser extent, in the case of the segregated Jewish and Arab schools inside Israel.

Progress on the road to interculturality, in my view then, demands a leap in the imagination. Not one normally to cite from the American genre of self-help literature, I shall take Susan Jeffers' clichéd imperative to "feel the fear and do it anyway" and apply it to intercultural education. Last November I participated at a conference on multiculturalism and education in Nazareth, the largest Arab city in Israel, which brought together educators from across ethnic and religious divides. A dominant theme at the conference, introduced by Tony Gallaher, from Queens University in Belfast, was that of the possibility of 'shared schooling', an innovative educational practice with parallels in the context of Jewish and Arab schools in Israel. Gallaher was sufficiently realistic to accept that segregated schools would remain for the foreseeable future in Northern Ireland and therefore to make progress in intercultural engagement requires engagement of the imagination. Student and teacher exchanges, together with curricular intervention, are ways of attempting to encourage interculturality through a confrontation with divergent ways of seeing. The Israeli psychologist, Dan Bar-On, has highlighted the difficulties encountered in the confrontation between Palestinian Arab and Jewish positions in Israel:

....Each side perceives itself as a minority and the victim of its fellow. The Jews perceive Israeli Arabs as being part of the larger Middle Eastern context and feel surrounded by a sea of hate. The Palestinians perceive themselves as a weak minority in the face of the Jewish-Israeli power with which they have grown up....

(Bar-On, 2008, 161)

Through Bar-On's work with Israeli Jewish and Israeli Palestinian-Arab youth, he was able to demonstrate that while the nation building process was thought to be a necessary aspect of Israel's early history it was inevitable that it would merely mask the mutuality of fear and distrust which existed from the very inception of the state. Moreover, simply by exposing the anger and fear through Jewish-Palestinian encounters, while stripping away the mask of the fiction of national cohesion, this would not necessarily result in intercultural embrace. On the contrary, a period of 'disintegration' is sometimes seen to be necessary, to construct/re-construct separate narratives which give voice to distinct perspectives. Such perspectives may have been obscured by a hegemonic narrative which in the case of Israel is fundamentally asymmetrical in relation to the Jewish and Palestinian Arab populations. This signals a fundamental issue which is sometimes sidelined in intercultural education discourse: that of power differentials.

Intercultural imagination requires a much broader and deeper engagement with power differentials mediated through layered relationships between groups and individuals. It demands a commitment to communicative action which reaches towards the discourse of the other, often buried beneath a veneer of superficial 'civilised' dialogue and outright non-communication. The mutual fears existing between peoples, perhaps counter-intuitively, are generated and exacerbated as much by what is not said and by the absence of overt hostility as by forthright disputation and open conflict.

Employing the intercultural imagination means reaching beyond what often counts as culture and cultural differences and turning towards more structural features of people's lives: wealth and income inequalities, housing and health issues, educational injustice (see, for example, Gorski, 2012). In this context, communicative action focuses rather more on the pragmatics of everyday life than on areas beset by ethnicised rhetoric, nationalistic myths and religious dogma.

As a final comment, one strategy for engaging with a reduction of globalised fear is to move, paradoxically, towards an educational process which aims at 'de-culturalisation'. By this, I mean a move away from the conventional reification of culture where misunderstandings, tensions and conflicts are held to be the products of fixed cultural distinctions (see: Bash, 2012). At the local level, individuals and groups frequently encounter one another in arenas where is reciprocity (such as retail transactions, the use of local amenities) and conflict (competition over space, housing, etc.). At the level of the classroom, the intercultural imagination means a (re-)engagement around issues which are of educational significance, drawing upon the actual, and often recurring, experiences of students, but without seeking the false refuge of 'culture'. Quite like, it will entail an engagement with structural issues of an economic or political kind and, in the eyes of many, it might be a somewhat risky venture. It is difficult to see how this can be avoided if intercultural education is ultimately concerned with communicative action in the pursuit of greater equity and social justice.

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## Intercultural Competence in Education, Counselling and Psychotherapy

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### *Abstract.*

The present time of globalisation, interdependence and living in a multicultural society records a period of opportunities and crisis mainly in educational institutions. Especially schools and families seem to be unable to cope with such revolutionary changes. In addition, the crisis concerns all fields involved with social welfare, most of all counselling and psychotherapy. This contribution will analyse the possible answers both in education, but also in counselling and psychotherapy. The basis of the analysis is provided by a literature analysis and a deep empirical research, through focus group and semi-structured interviews, aimed to develop a theoretical model of Intercultural competence, with implications at the practical-operative, methodological and vocational levels.

### 1. Introduction

The new millennium has brought many changes which affect the human being in its entirety. All communities around the world now depend on persons that they have never met before. This seems to bear out McLuhan's prophecy in 1962 of the advent of the "global village" due to the spread of mass media, improved information technology, remarkable geo-political changes affecting nation states, the establishment of new markets, etc. These extensive changes imply a reduction in distances between people, stronger ties between different geographical areas, greater mobility, more interdependence, and new and diversified migration flows. Due to the increasing disparities between rich and poor countries, the longevity of dictatorial regimes, human rights violations, and wars and deportation in many parts of the world, a reduction in migration is not expected in the near future (Bauman, 1977; Soros, 1988).

On the other hand, in the age of globalisation, the radical changes related to interdependence, technological advancement and the revolution in information technology, seems to have led to profound economic, environmental, political, social, and cultural crises, not only within nations, but in the relations between states and persons of different cultural origin. In post modernity, such crises, which are also caused by the subversion of authority, the polyphony of axiological messages and the fragmentation of experience, concerns all aspects of human life (family, school, work, politics, environmental issues, mass media, etc.), but in particular results in an educational crisis: how is education possible without knowing its content and, especially, its goals? The educational crisis is also manifest in unequal access to universities and a school system that is being redefined to meet business needs, and therefore benefits only a minority of students, a privileged *elite*. Students are now considered to be objects (Nussbaum 2010). In addition, the crisis concerns fields such as counselling and psychotherapy.

In order to overcome the crisis of values, governability and of choosing, it is no longer possible to invest in so-called «progress» (which has often driven humanity backwards, encouraging a process of dehumanization), nor is it possible to invest in more consumption and economic growth (given the finite nature of the world). In the age of globalisation, with its pluralism and social complexity, it is necessary to invest in *education*. It has become necessary and urgent to overcome the neoliberal principle of the neutrality of the state, and to replace it with the goals of care and social responsibility. It should also be known that stressing the importance of education in the postmodern world implies rethinking contents, methods and goals. The challenge is to go beyond all past forms of dogmatism, ethnocentrism and nationalism without falling into the trap of moral relativism (anything goes), spontaneism, and standardisation (*one-size-fits-all*). In this



sense, the best answer to the new situation seems to be found in *intercultural* approaches, or the authentic pedagogical<sup>1</sup> revolution (Portera 2011; Portera 2013).

In the main time, there is a necessity for the acquisition of new competencies not only in family or in schools, but in all areas of human existence: «Globalization is de-territorialising the skills and competencies it rewards, thereby generating powerful centripetal forces on what students the world over need to know» (Suarez-Orozco, Qin-Hilliard 2004, p. 6). In a time of interdependence, in addition to the specific disciplinary competences, there is also a need for competences at the cognitive, emotional and relational levels which endow citizens with the ability to operate in linguistically and culturally complex contexts. *Intercultural competences* (IC) allow one to manage diversity in a manner that enriches both the individual and society as a whole.

However, both the concept of intercultural education (IE) – first coined in the US in the 30s (McGee Banks, 2011) and then “reinvented” in Europe in the 80s – and the term IC – used since the 40s mainly in the military and business fields – are often popularly misunderstood and requires more precise definition<sup>2</sup>. Especially regarding the concept of IC, despite the vast international literature (mostly in English<sup>3</sup>), there still remain many gaps and limitations: misunderstandings, different conceptions at the terminological, semantic and operative level, erroneous application in education and vocational training, and the imprecise, reductive, and often incorrect use of established measures of IC.

Given this situation,, the present paper first defines the concept of IC using a model based on a review of literature and an empirical study. The paper then reflects on the consequences of this model for education, counselling and psychotherapy.

## 2. A Model of Intercultural Competence: Research Results

The goal of the research project carried out by the Centro Studi Interculturali in Verona (Portera 2013a) was to develop a theoretical model of IC founded upon the existing literature and empirical data and with implications at the practical-operative, methodological and vocational levels.<sup>4</sup> The first phase consisted of a critical analysis of the – especially English, but also Italian language - literature regarding IC. The conclusions drawn from the literature reviews were used to develop a grid of indicators to define IC. In the second phase, “privileged operators” (practitioners with intercultural work experience) in specific fields – education, business, law, healthcare, and cultural mediation – were consulted within the framework of a qualitative study, using focus groups (of about two hours and divided by sector) and semi structured interviews about “critical incidents” they had encountered and the “successes situations” they had had (about 10-15 interviews). In certain cases the method of participant observation was employed to study the operators on the job and the findings were then analyzed and discussed in the focus groups.

The analysis of the literature revealed that the personal, social and cultural dimensions of IC are still open. Many models have been developed to define IC (Milhouse 1993; Martin, Hammer e Bradford 1994; Bradford, Allen e Beisser 2000; Nichols e Stevens 2001; Byram 2003; Hajek e Giles, 2003; Byram, Kim, Cartwright, Asay e D’Andrea, 2003; Deardoff 2006, 2008; Prechtel e Lund 2007, Fantini 2007; Arasaratnam 2008), but they are mainly all Anglo-Saxon models, and individualistic approaches oriented toward a western point-of-view. Most of the models are oriented toward multicultural pedagogy (the goal of which is knowledge and peaceful coexistence) and some are transcultural approaches (in their focus on the promotion of human rights and universal values), while very few are real “intercultural” that see the opportunity of encounter, dialogue and interaction. In the Italian (pedagogical) literature, the concept of IC is quite recent, and either

<sup>1</sup> The term pedagogy is utilized in the European sense of a theoretical reflection on educational approaches (Portera, 2006; 2011).

<sup>2</sup> For more details about the development of intercultural education both in the USA and in Europe and for clarification of the terms multicultural and intercultural education, see Grant & Portera 2011.

<sup>3</sup> For a literature overview, cfr. Fantini 2007, Deardorff 2009.

<sup>4</sup> In this context, I prefer to use the term formation (or education), rather than *training*, which reminds to the military or sports preparation (see also Portera, 2011; Gundara, 2000)

uncritically references the English literature or fails to describe the competences in a systematic and complete manner.

Based on the results of the literature review, the empirical study and the focus groups, it seems prudent to present a working model of IC.

First of all, IC could be defined as a set of abilities, knowledge, attitudes and skills, that allow one to appropriately and effectively manage relations with persons of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Based on evidence from the research sectors investigated in the empirical study (education, business, law, healthcare, and cultural mediation) the following elements emerged as particularly relevant.

<p><b>Knowledge</b> (<i>Sapere</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness of the cultural self;</li> <li>- knowledge of one's own culture and that of others (context, roles, impact, point of view, peculiarities);</li> <li>- verbal-linguistic, non verbal and paraverbal knowledge (better if in multiple languages).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Attitude</b> (<i>saper essere</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- flexibility, sensitivity, curiosity;</li> <li>- openness to the new and different;</li> <li>- ability to listen, converse and confront;</li> <li>- attention to "other," via sharing and cooperation;</li> <li>- emotive and social ability (intra and interpersonal intelligence);</li> <li>- patience, motivation, decentralization;</li> <li>- acceptance, empathy and congruence;</li> <li>- management of uncertainty.</li> </ul>	<p><b>skills</b> (<i>Saper fare</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- linguistic and communicative abilities (thinking, listening, dialogue);</li> <li>- acceptance, empathy and congruence;</li> <li>- observation, analysis and interpretation;</li> <li>- relational abilities (values new situations, building stable relationships and cooperative and inclusive groups);</li> <li>- mediation, conflict management.</li> </ul>
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In light of the literature review it seems very difficult to define competences in general and IC in particular. Consequently, the following model does not purport to be exhaustive, nor does it take into account all the individual competences, especially considering the heterogeneity across all sectors analysed during research. With the urgent necessity to develop models with practical application in mind, the intention is to provide a firm theoretical foundation (terminological and semantic aspects) and concrete guidelines for operators in multicultural contexts. In addition, this model intends to inspire further research and discussion on these fascinating professional fields, which are predestined to become of increasing strategic importance, considering the increasing rate of globalisation and global interdependence.

After many attempts (and in consideration of the benefits and limitations of any visual representation), the following model was developed to represent intercultural competence:

Fig. 1. Intercultural Competences



As can be seen from Fig. 1., it is not possible to clearly distinguish between competences in general and IC in particular. With this in mind, the base of the model consists of the personal competences that arise in various *Theories of the Person*, including for instance *Pascal's Tetragram* (1669), which implies that competences simultaneously stand in opposition and complement one another: doubt (uncertainty, contradiction, criticism), reason (scientific, experimental thinking), faith (a belief in things for which there is no evidence), and religion (a bond with transcendent ideas); the theory of *Multiple Intelligences* (Gardner 1993), which expands upon the Piagetian model and includes, in addition to linguistic and logical-mathematics intelligence, also musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial, intrapersonal, and interpersonal intelligences; the *Quality of Life* theory (Albertini 2000), which views certain skills to be fundamental to personal well-being: physical and mental health, motor skills, language, adaptive abilities (procedural learning, like walking, biking, swimming), and behavioural abilities; and the theory of *Fundamental Human Needs*, which according to a study that expands upon Maslow's theory (Portera 1998, 2005, 2008) claims that meeting these needs is determinant for a healthy personality development and the creation of intra and interpersonal relationships; the most important needs are: physical wellbeing, social relationships, separation, positive emotional regard, deep understanding, congruence, trust, structure, active participation (influence on the external world), and continuity (not denying part of oneself to be accepted).

In addition, following the models of A. Fantini (2005; 2007) and D.K. Deardoff (2006), as well as the reflections of J. Delors (2005), the competences have been divided into Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes: a) under the category “*sapere – Knowledge*” appear all codified knowledge, notions, and information of both general and specialist nature that a person has learnt through formal study, as well as all the informal knowledge internalized during one's life time. b) the “*Saper fare - Skills*” category includes all competences related to the ability to apply and utilize knowledge by means of physical and/or mental abilities for the execution of a task, such as skills for problem solving or management of conflicts; c) with “*sapere essere - attitude*” are understood all personal,

psychological and socio-cultural dispositions which facilitate (or permit) effective performance. Attitudes allow one to understand the context of all human activity and facilitate interpersonal relations. It should be stressed, however, that the division between *Attitudes* and *Skills* was made only for the sake of simplicity, as the model understands all competences as being interdependent parts of a dynamic whole.

For this reason, Fig. 2., highlights the *interactive aspects* of IC. In the middle is positioned the *Area of the Self* which contains the *Fundamental Human Needs* (Portera 1995, 1998, 2008), the theory of *Quality of Life* (Albertini, 2000), *Pascal's Tetragram* and the theory of *Multiple Intelligences* (Gardner 1993). Based on the results of the empirical study conducted by the Centro Studi Interculturali and previous studies (see above), this area also includes the competences of *saper essere (attitude)*: openness, *sensitivity*, decentralization, curiosity, humility, flexibility (management of emotions and new situations), respect, responsibility, critical thinking, acceptance, empathy and congruence. Around the Area of the Self, in an interactive manner (represented with arrows that should in fact link all areas, see Tab. 3.), are positioned the categories of *Knowledge*: awareness of the cultural self, knowledge of one's own culture and the culture of others (including context, social roles, impressions, point-of-view, peculiarities), verbal-linguistic, nonverbal and paraverbal knowledge (best if in multiple languages), disciplinary knowledge (especially Philosophy, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology and Pedagogy), and multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge. The category of the *saper fare* (commonly known as *skills*), includes linguistic (multiple languages) and communicative (critical thinking, listening, speaking) skills. Also important are the abilities of observation, analysing and interpreting subjective and empirical reality, and establishing positive social relationships, which implies the ability to evaluate new situations, to build stable and trustful relationships, to cooperate, and to form open and inclusive groups. Especially in professional contexts (e.g. education, counselling and therapy), competences, like acceptance (of the new and the foreign), empathy and congruence are needed for effective cultural mediation and the management of stereotypes, prejudice and conflicts. Also significant for the development and application of the competences is the *External Environment* (the dimensions of time, space and social context in which one encounter and interact with others), as well as the category of *Interpersonal Relations*: relationships, and how mood impacts encounter, dialogue, confrontation and interaction.

**Fig 2. Interactive Modell of Intercultural Competences**

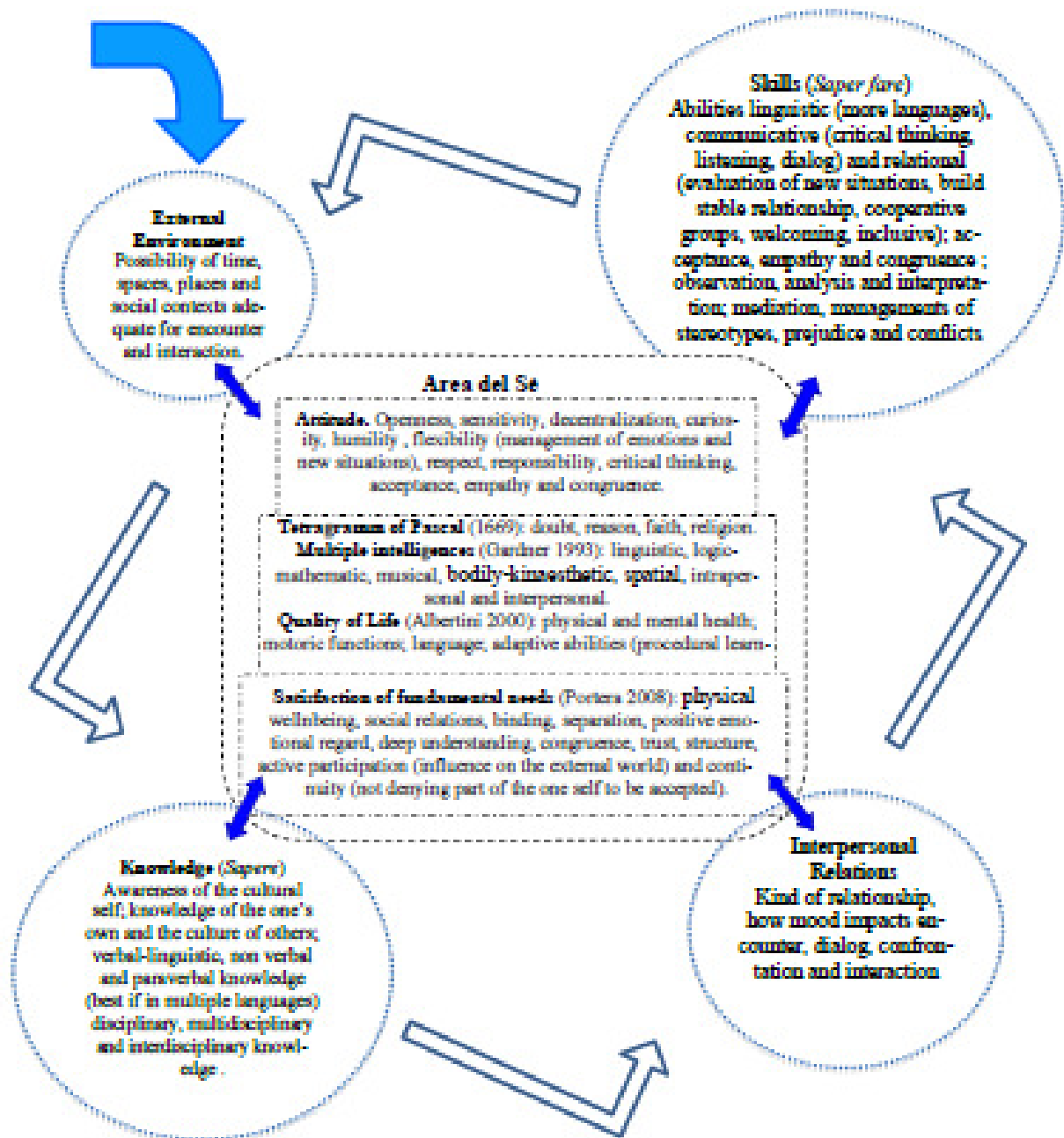
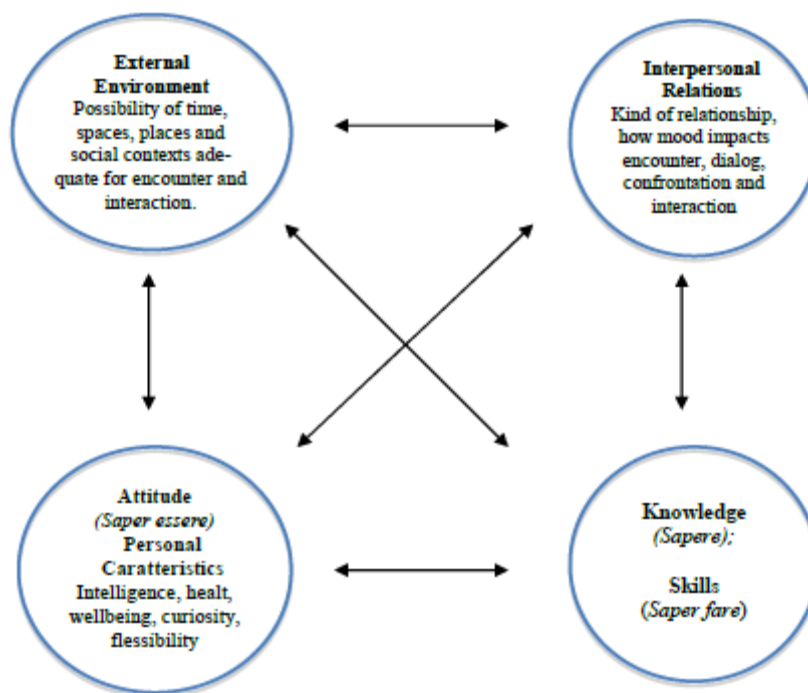


Fig. 3. Intercultural Competence: area of the Self

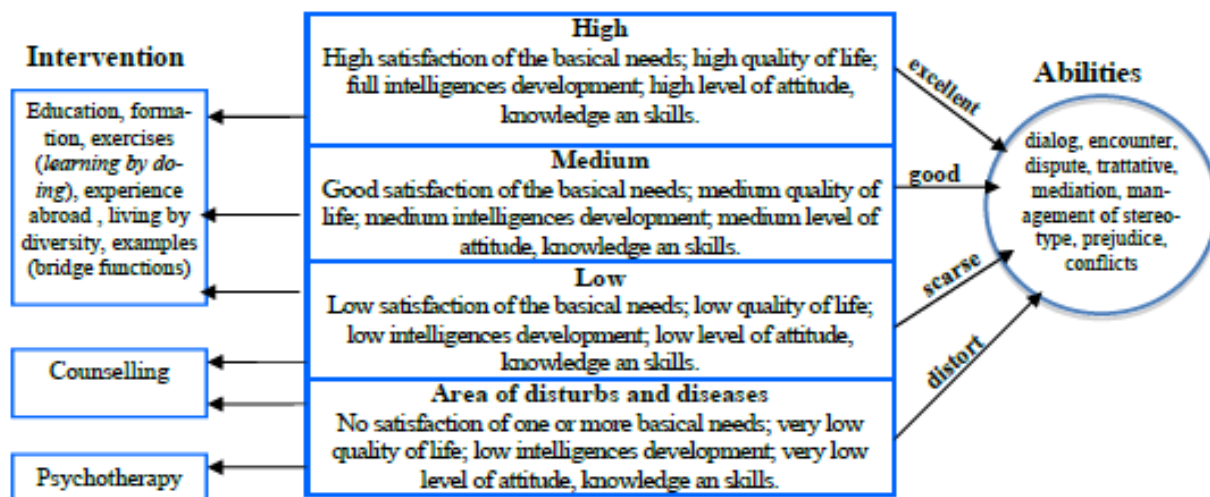


The present model has the following fundamental characteristics:

- It is not possible to distinguish IC from competences *tout court*: which means that as intercultural pedagogy could be considered the best educational response to global society, all personal competences can be used to facilitate intercultural relations as intercultural pedagogy could be considered as the best educational response to the global society, and that all personal competences can be used to facilitate intercultural relations;
- IC includes both innate personality traits and acquired characteristics, like flexibility, openness, empathy or curiosity (see also Fantini 2005);
- the individual competences that comprise IC form a dynamic whole in that all competences are interdependent and because it is not possible to separate attitudes from skills;
- IC is complex and multidimensional (it is often not enough to know the language and the culture of others), and its acquisition involves a long and dynamic process which takes on the shape of a spiral; it implies traversing multiple dimensions (see also Dearsdorff 2008);
- The acquisition and development of IC is a continuous process, which starts at the personal level and spreads to the interpersonal level, and has both internal (adaptation, flexibility, empathy) and external (appropriate communication and behaviour) implications (see also Dearsdorff 2009, p. 480);
- IC is also dependent upon the social context: the more the context improves (i.e. the better the interpersonal relations, and the more time spent building relationships), the greater the benefits for wellbeing, self development and the development of the related competences (see also Albertini, 2000);
- Although most competences are acquired in childhood, IC can be developed at any age, especially in formal contexts (family, schools, vocational courses), but also in informal contexts (travel abroad, everyday interpersonal interaction);
- sometimes IC can appear in a contradictory manner (e.g. acceptance vs. congruence and assertiveness);
- IC is best acquired via interaction with educators or persons with greater IC (as they can serve as a bridge by offering examples and models).

Finally, it is important to stress another essential principle. The acquisition and development of IC emerge as a long, dynamic process, which spans one’s entire life. Where many scales in fact measure *performance*, rather than real *competence* (Fantini 2005), in reality all competences vary due to a combination of personal (self), relational and situational (stress, crises) factors. As one develops IC he or she has both positive and negative experiences. As a result the process is not one of linear growth, but also involves phases of stagnation or regression.

Fig. 4. Levels of Intercultural Competences



As demonstrated in Tab. 4, the acquisition of IC requires not only adequate education and vocational courses, but also constant practice, experience abroad, contact with otherness, and role models. Persons with very low IC may require special counselling, while those with particular disorders or diseases may require therapy. Generally speaking, despite the situational and relational factors, whether or not someone is able to cope with the emotional, cognitive and behavioural differences that arise during encounters with people from different cultural backgrounds depends on the individual’s level of IC. If the level is high, the person will be able to use appropriate strategies to manage dialogue, interaction, disputes and mediation, and thereby promote positive interpersonal and social “spirals,” which can contribute to personal and social development and enrichment.

### 3. Intercultural Competences in Education

The intercultural approach to education developed in Europe in the 80s represents the most appropriate intervention for discovering, respecting and coping with all forms of cultural diversity (Portera 2011; 2013). In democratic and pluralistic times, intercultural education is the most suitable model for understanding and coping with different customs, traditions, faiths and values. It constitutes a Copernican revolution since: a) both identity and culture are no longer viewed as rigid structures, but as dynamic processes in constant evolution; b) diversity, otherness, emigration, and life in a complex and multicultural society are no longer seen as risks factors, but as opportunities for enrichment and growth. A person from a different ethnic group and with a different culture poses a positive challenge, a chance for discussion and the study of values, norms and patterns of behaviour. The intercultural approach stands between universalism (a transcultural approach which focuses on common cultural values like basic human rights) and cultural relativism (a multicultural approach which underlines differences), as it takes into consideration both opportunities and limitations, but transcends and synthesises them, thereby creating improved chances of dialogue, exchange and interaction. Whereas multiculturalism aims to get to know and tolerate people from different cultures, living peacefully *side by side*, the prefix *inter-* implies relationships, interaction, and exchange between groups. Intercultural education rejects immobility and hierarchy; it seeks to encourage dialogue and relationship on equal terms, so that individuals do not feel obligated to

sacrifice important aspects of their cultural identity. It is based on the direct exchange of ideas, principles and behaviours, on a comparison of concepts and shared discovery.

Intercultural education helps to identify both the risks of globalisation and multicultural societies, and the new opportunities for exchange between people of different origins and for developing new and more efficient forms of communication. As intercultural education takes into consideration both the common objectives of all human beings and the peculiarities of the single person, it goes beyond the acknowledgment of the dignity of all individuals (a basic principle of transculturalism), and the multicultural axioms of respect of difference or peaceful coexistence (which is of course a desirable outcome, in light of the wars and injustices in many parts of the world). Intercultural education aims not only to help people live equally by respecting differences, It endows persons with skills and abilities to manage diversity positively on the basis of common norms and rules.

Applying the principles of IE and IC in education gives rise to many opportunities:

- a) First of all it becomes possible to minimize *intolerance*, cultural discrimination and xenophobia. In order to really understand Other it is necessary to recognise and to overcome the barriers and obstacles caused by stereotypes and prejudices. Since prejudice is not a born trait but is acquired during early childhood (Allport 1954, p. 7), public school teachers play an important role in determining whether students become closed-minded and intolerant or open to cultural diversity and respectful toward those who are different. Teachers can transmit their own prejudices not only through their own comments and behaviour, but also by establishing an atmosphere of intolerance and ethnocentrism in the classroom.
- b) An intercultural school should be considered a place of privilege where *education teaches pluralism, justice and respect for roles and boundaries* . IE and IC are indissolubly linked to the concepts of pluralism and democracy in that they foster respect and solidarity between all human beings (regardless of nationality, religion, ethnicity or language) and inhibit social exclusion and the oppression of certain groups by other groups. IE and IC cannot be realised without clear and mutually agreed upon rules, without laws. Especially in the education system, the need for youth to express the multiple layers of their personal identity should never lead to spontaneism nor to cultural relativism, nor to permissivism. On the contrary, especially in a multicultural context it is necessary to know the “rules of the game”, the educational goals to achieve, and to allocate the appropriate educational resources and implement the appropriate methods.
- c) Adopting IE and teaching IC in schools is in tune with *peace education and conflict management*. Peace education should not be misunderstood as the absence of conflict (the eternal peace of the cemetery), not as a hollow talking point in diplomacy, not as an “anything goes” policy, nor as the masochistic expression: *mors mea vitae tua*. Instead, it consists of teaching the active ability to manage conflict. In schools it is necessary to be aware of the meaning of all conflicts, as the way in which conflicts are perceived, experienced and managed varies greatly across cultures. Since it is impossible to eliminate all forms of conflict, (especially in a multicultural society) it is therefore necessary to learn to manage conflict, without recourse to violence, vandalism or other expressions of rage. Aggressiveness should not be reduced to a mere “negative impulse”, because as long as it is properly channelled and conveyed, it allows the subject to affirm his or herself in the physical and social environments.
- d) In intercultural schools IE and IC allow students to recognise and cope with their *emotions and feelings*. In multicultural societies the well-being of citizens is greatly dependent on the opportunity to grow up in communities founded on positive beliefs, with shared values, and in which there are strong and deep bonds between all members of the community. The term *emotion* implies an impulse to act (latin *movere*, move; and *e* from). According to D. Goleman (1996), emotive intelligence is a *meta-ability* which determines the extent to which one benefits from all other intelligences. In schools it is necessary to promote emotional bonds



between pupils and develop the ability to recognize and to communicate emotions and feelings, including those which Western cultures consider to be negative (like sadness, anger, and fear), so that they might be exploited in other contexts.

- e) In intercultural schools IE and IC imply an education toward *understanding, listening, democratic dialogue, and interaction*. These underlying principles of IE are also facilitate an education toward *morality, altruism and responsibility*. Perhaps one of the greatest problems in a complex society is that people no longer value each other, which is manifest in people's desire for unilateral (egoistic) self-realisation and absolute freedom, in their diminished respect for human dignity, and in their abated sense of equity, justice, co-participation, and solidarity. To combat such dangerous "progress", in addition to civic and citizenship education, at it is necessary to introduce moral education in schools (Russ, 1997), as well as the golden rule of «the gift of oneself to other» (Ricouer, 1997). In light of globalisation and increased interdependence, in order to better manage fundamental personal, political and social freedoms, it is necessary to adhere to the principles of care and *responsibility* (Jonas, 1979).

In order to obtain these goals in democratic globalized societies, there is a desperate need for education and vocational courses which are based on the ideas of IE and IC.

#### 4 IC in Counselling and Psychotherapy

Globalisation and increasing linguistic and cultural diversity have led to new challenges in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy. From a context characterized by cultural similarity between counsellor and client, we now see great differences between practitioner and client in terms of communication strategies, emotion, values and behaviour. In this case the key risk is the application of narrow and rigid methods that do not account for the personal experience and sensitivity of the client.

In response, mainly in countries with a longer experience with immigration, like the United States, Canada or Australia, several new methods have been created in recent decades, under many different names, and with different practical and theoretical implications. In his critic analysis, R. Moodley (1999) describes trends in the aforementioned countries as an autonomous discipline: „Multicultural Counselling and psychotherapy“. Some of the many different approaches and labels in this movement include: Cross-cultural (Pedersen), Transcultural (d'Ardenne and Mahtani), Culturally different (Sue and Sue), Intercultural (Kareem and Litdewood), and Multicultural (Pedersen, Pope-Davis and Coleman). Some of the methods, like Ethnopsychiatry (Devereux) and Ethnopschotherapy (Nathan), new Cross-cultural Psychiatry (Litdewood) and Transcultural Psychiatry (Cox), emphasize the need to consider and understand cultural und ethnic differences in counselling and therapy, while other methods, such as the so-called Afrocentric (Hall), Blackfeminist (Pankhania), Antiracist (Moodley) and „race and culture“ (Lago and Thompson), have deemed the client's development of an „ethnic consciousness“ as the basis of treatment. Other practitioners, like Atkinson and Morten, and Sue, Cross, Helms, and Ponterotto, or Sabnani have developed this field further. In some cases „race and racial identity“ [sic<sup>5</sup>] has become the most relevant aspect of therapy with „minority patients“. Further contributions have come from Vontress, who has created a „cross-cultural therapeutic modality“, based on Existentialism, or from McLeod, who argues that the success of treatment is dependent upon „deconstructing the racial, cultural and ethnic identities of clients from minority communities“.

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<sup>5</sup> In the awareness of the common origin of *all* human beings, I avoid to use the word races: the only race on earth is the human race (Lewontin, 1984)

As it is difficult to make sense of the many tendencies, it may be useful to organize these models into four different categories: metacultural, transcultural, multicultural and intercultural.<sup>6</sup>

1. *Metacultural* counselling and therapy encompasses approaches that do not consider cultural differences at all. In my opinion there is a fundamental error in such methods, as all personal relationships –especially in the case of therapy– alter the culture of all involved parties.
2. *Transcultural* approaches to counselling and therapy stress common cultural standards and universal laws and values (in the tradition of the French Revolution, Kant or Bobbio). These models deserve more attention and consideration, because many have long traditions and solid theoretical foundations, as is the case with cross-cultural psychology or transcultural psychiatry (Devereux, Nathan). Nevertheless, even if these approaches have many advantages, on closer analysis they are marked by several limitations and misconceptions. Employing such approaches, a counsellor or therapist could maintain a homogeneous picture of the world, where in reality the world is very heterogeneous and fragmentary (the danger is that one could consider his or her own norms and values to be universal). Because as humans we cannot escape our own cultural biases, especially in the privileged position of counsellor or therapist practitioners run the risk of imposing their own norms, values and patterns of thought on their patients.
3. *Multi- or Pluricultural* approaches focus on real differences, with the aim of mutual understanding and respect. These counselling and therapy models –mostly developed in the USA–, have many advantages. For instance, the aforementioned Afrocentric, Blackfeminist or Antiracist methods promote the formation of an „ethnic consciousness“ and also a strengthening of personal and cultural identities. But these models have certain limitations as well. For instance, considering the extent of globalisation and global interdependence: do therapists then need to know about all cultural differences? Or should counselling and therapy be practiced just in monocultural (national) settings? And what about people from multicultural families, or clients who frequently travel? Further, models which stress only cultural differences risk minimizing or ignoring many other important aspects, like transcultural emotions, risk factors or social disorders (living as a minority, isolation, financial problems). They also risk misdiagnosing pathological behaviour (e.g. hyperactivity or depression) as a cultural difference.
4. *Interkultural* models, which were developed in European education allows to evaluate identity and culture as dynamic and continuous processes (Portera 2011). Moreover, otherness, to be a foreigner or immigrant living in pluralistic and multicultural societies is no longer considered a risk factor for social disorders or mental illness, but as opportunities for both personal and social enrichment and growth. Interaction between persons of different cultural backgrounds is seen as opportunity for encounter, confrontation and reflection on differences in values, norms and behaviour. Epistemologically speaking, the intercultural approach stands between universalism (which stresses similarities) and cultural relativism (which stresses differences) and synthesises the two positions (considering the strengths and limitations of both extremes). The prefix “inter” emphasises *interaction* between two or more people and the resulting opportunity for change, (Abdallah-Preteuille 1990). In counselling and therapy, the intercultural approach overcomes the idea of static and hierarchical cultures and considers otherness and the foreign as and opportunity for dialogue, confrontation and encounter. In praxis the goal is to raise awareness of both similarities (i.e. a transcultural approach) and differences (i.e. a multicultural approach), but places more emphasis on contact and interaction. Clients of different cultural origin are neither directly nor indirectly forced to renounce important aspects of their cultural identity (which could in fact lead to certain disorders, Portera, 1991, 1995, 1999). Additionally, counsellors and psychotherapist, who – whether conciously or unconsciously – have their

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<sup>6</sup> The criteria of these division are related with the development and a previous semantic distinction (see also Portera 2011; e art gwg)

own (rigid) cultural concepts, ideas and stereotypes, could likewise have the opportunity to encounter different ways of thinking. As a result, counselling and therapy become a dynamic interactive process by which the cultural perspectives of all involved parties are relativised, thereby offering the possibility for personal enrichment and development, not only for the client, but also for the practitioner.

## 5 Intercultural Person-Centred Counselling and Therapy

In order to determine which methods of counselling and therapy are best in an intercultural approach, it is necessary to consider concrete cultural differences. Based on past research (Portera, 1995, 1999, 2010; Pfeiffer 1994), the following differences are important to mention:

- *Concepts of self and identity*: people from Mediterranean cultures (but also in Asian and Islamic countries) define their identity not as the “Self” or “I”, but in terms of “We” as they are more collectivist (family, friends, community);
- *Understandings of illness* are also cultural specific; in some countries psychological disorders are defined as being somatic; many people still have superstitious beliefs and do not even know western psychological nor psychopathological categories;
- *Expectations of therapists*: therapeutic treatments and the doctor-patient relationship are determined by cultural attitudes; for example many clients from southern Europe or northern Africa expect an asymmetric relationship: “the doctor knows everything and will quickly make me healthy again”;
- *Socio-economic situation*: after deportation, flight, or (forced) migration, many clients experience not only loneliness, but also discrimination, hostility, and an overall negative social and economic situation, as well as an unrealistic vision of the future, which very often result in unrealistic expectations and ideas regarding the host country.

Considering all these differences, the person-centred approach, seems to not be very practical for patients of different cultural backgrounds. Behavioural-constructivist or psychoanalytic methods might seem more appropriate. Support for this view comes from the fact that in the USA and Canada Rogers’s theories and „multicultural counselling“ seems to have taken on many different forms through the 1990s (Moodley 2004, 19). Laungani (1999, 146) underlined that „client-centered therapy and counselling runs into serious problems not only among the indigenous members of Western society but more importantly among the members of ethnic minorities“. Most client-centred practitioners demonstrate little interest in multicultural approaches. Only very few, (e.g. Holdstock, 1993 or Patterson 2000) have tried bridge the gap between the theories. Also many proponents of multicultural approaches are specifically highly critical of C. Rogers’s person-centred approach: “The positive philosophy of Rogers is applauded by many of a multicultural orientation, but the nature of Rogerian methods -slow reflection and a lack of action and immediate problem solving- seems inappropriate for multicultural clients. The tendency for existential-humanistic counselling to ignore person-environment transactions in daily practices also can be a major limitation. The intense preoccupation with the individual and free choice is at times incompatible with a more environmentally oriented and contextually aware approach” –which led to the conclusion:- “the existential-humanistic philosophic tradition does not speak to multicultural concerns” (Ivey et al. 2002 258). One of the strongest critics came from Rogers’s colleague and friend, Maureen O’Hara (1996, 286): “there are aspects of it [Person-Centred Therapy] that, whether consciously or unconsciously, serve to preserve, maintain, and protect the interests of the Eurocentric, patriarchal Judeo-Christian world”. In another context she affirmed: “There were times that not even the empathic genius of Carl Rogers could bridge die gap and reconcile die fundamental differences in ‘world view’ [...] ‘construction of reality’ [...] ‘ways of knowing’ [...] between Rogers -a famous, powerful, successful, upper-middle-class, white American male- and myself -a young, unknown immigrant, working-class, white English female” (O’Hara, 1996: 185).

Many other “multiculturalist” authors can be found who considered Rogers’s methods to be eurocentric or racist (Moodley 1999).

I am of a totally different opinion.

A second goal of the aforementioned longitudinal study (Portera 1995, 1997, 2008), which expanded upon Maslow’s theory of *Fundamental Human Needs*, was to take a person-centred approach to the *Causes of Mental Disorders* (Portera, 1998, 1999, 2010). The study pointed out that unconditional regards and understanding of the person-centred approach first developed by C. Rogers (both on the part of the therapist and the patient) can become the basis for developing an awareness of and satisfying their many basic needs. Although it is true that not all conflicts and disorders can be treated and resolved in this way, it is also certain that a *circulus vitiosus* can often transform into a *circulus virtuosus*. In addition, there are other fundamental variables that determine the success of treatment (such as empathy and congruence) and which are especially important in intercultural settings and in the context of an intercultural approach.

In the final years of his life, C. Rogers himself considered the extension of the person-centred model as one of the most important challenges. Many counsellors and therapists around the world seem to have heeded his advice and expanded the approach to multicultural and/or cross-cultural contexts (see, Lietaer, Rombauts and Van Balen, 1990; Mearns and Thorne, 2000; Patterson, 2000; Cain, 2002; Wilkins, 2003; Moodley, 2004).

In the final years of his life, C. Rogers also offered a few practical examples of what he had in mind. He led cross-cultural *encounter groups* in South Africa, Mexico, Russia and the USA. It is perhaps relatively unknown that Rogers conducted his own multicultural sessions. There are even two video recordings that document Rogers’s psychotherapeutic sessions with a „black client“, recorded by J. Whiteley (1977) and published under the title „Carl Rogers Counsels an Individual“ („Right to be Desperate” and „On Anger and Hurt“). In the session „Right to be Desperate”, the client says (C11) “...I didn’t find anybody that allowed me to be Desperate, that could understand some of the things that I did and wanted to do”. Rogers later comments (V3) „I can let him feel desperate. Friends and family cannot allow this. It is important that someone can really permit it”. In this session it becomes clear that the client, through the verbalisation of his feelings, becomes aware that for him discrimination and *interracial conflict* is more painful than his Leukaemia. In his critical analysis of the film, R. Moodley (2004, 24-32) argues that Rogers shows an “uncharacteristic directness”. Rogers does not give much consideration to the client’s discrimination and his social exclusion; he shows little interest for the cultural differences in that session: a white therapist from the dominant culture and in a position of high status and a black client from a lower social class. Eight years later, in the video recording in 1985, “Carl Rogers Meets with a Black client”, C. Lago and J. Clark (2004, 148) recognize Rogers’s “growing awareness and sensitivity to issues of race and culture”.

Building upon these observations, I think that the person-centered model is very appropriate for clients of different cultural backgrounds. The opportunity to extend one’s own identity and self-image (Rogers, 1986) allows the clients to examine interiorised experiences that have been denied, repressed, or distorted. This process can give rise to personal growth and enrichment. On the other hand there are a few *limitations* which make it necessary to make some adaptations: the methods of the person-centred model are very culturally situated (North America and Northern Europe); a lack of directness might be misunderstood by some clients as a lack of interest or of professionalism; there is a little consideration for the real living conditions of the clients (racism, exclusion, discrimination); in many cases disorders arise not only as a result of incongruence between self and experience because financial, psychological and social problems are interconnected; certain concepts like the “ego” and “self-actualisation” are not universal (as some cultures are more accustomed to the idea of a “collective ego” and “group-actualisation”).

In consideration of the advantages and limitations, the person-centred model needs to be further adapted and expanded. As C. Rogers (1986, p. 12) states «There is only one way in which a person-centred approach can avoid becoming narrow, dogmatic, and restrictive. That is through studies [...] which open new vistas, bring new insights, challenge our hypotheses, enrich our theory,

expand our knowledge, and involve us more deeply in an understanding of the phenomena of human change». In a time of globalisation and interdependence, I think that combining intercultural theories and the person-centred model offers the best chance to prevent a “narrow, dogmatic, or restrictive” approach.

### *Final thoughts*

In conclusion, I would like to stress the importance and urgency of combining educational, counselling and psychotherapeutic models with the theoretical considerations of intercultural education and intercultural competences. Especially for professionals who work in fields that offer services to the community (education, social services, healthcare, mediation), but also in businesses or government agencies, intercultural training is necessary (and research needs also to be conducted in other fields like the military and sports). Such courses need to borrow insights from the fields of communication, mediation and conflict management, but most importantly (which is currently not the case) they need to be founded on the theories of intercultural education.

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**UNIVERSITY OF VERONA,  
PALAZZO DELLA GRAN GUARDIA,  
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CONFERENCE: EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD.**

**PAPER;**

**GLOBAL WORLD AND CIVILISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE: CIVIC  
ENGAGEMENT, INTERCULTURAL DIMENSIONS.**

**Jagdish S. Gundara**

There is currently a fair amount of discussion about issues of civic engagement and the curriculum in an increasingly globalised world. A fair amount of discussion about these issues takes place in the context of globalisation but even the most enlightened initiatives which take account of universal principles still revolve around the nation. In Britain the issues are generally about the ‘National Curriculum’ and issues of citizenship which have received a fair amount of attention tend to assert the national British context and apart from gestures towards the ‘global’ there are very few substantive changes to take cognisance of the more broadly based and universal basis of knowledge. Recently, the Minister of Education, Michael Gove has announced that the history curriculum will be changed to reflect a more narrowly English history. It will replace the previous curriculum which included aspects of Black history, the US Civil Rights Movement and Mughal India within the history curriculum at the secondary school. (The Independent, London. 26-8-2008) Cannadine, Sheldon and Keating (2011) suggests young people need to acquire a historical perspective within a broad framework so that they have an understanding of the wider world.

**Intercultural and Civic Education: Historical Legacies of Difference**

Intercultural and civic engagement raise a complex set of issues at the present time. In Bosnia, attempts to develop intercultural understandings and common citizenship entail bringing Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian children into the same school. There is, however, no agreement on a locally developed curriculum or common set of textbooks because the

memories of the three groups are very different and they use curricula and textbooks developed by an external agency called the Atlantic College. Work undertaken in Kosovo by Jack Peffers and me from the University of London for UNICEF demonstrated similar problems in agreeing on a common curriculum between all the groups in Kosovo, including the Albanian and Serb communities.

The contention of this paper is that the biologically derived versions of the nation of ‘blood and soil’ only tell a narrow and singular version of the story of nation states. The substantive historical and contemporary realities necessitate the telling of much broader stories which are inclusive of good citizenship values derived from diverse sources in complex multicultural societies. In order to achieve this it is necessary to negate the powerful legacies of the dominant groups who have used brutal power to provide long term legitimacy of their control based on notion of ‘civilising the natives’.

The Spanish thinker Sepulveda justified the right to intervene in Amerindian societies because of their barbarity. Las Casa’s on the other hand purported that evil existed everywhere and that therefore there was no theological justification for interference. This sixteenth century debate has continued for five centuries and as a consequence has barbarised both the brutalisers and the brutalised and led massive intercultural conflicts. (I. Wallerstein: 2006: 16-21))

The second decade of the twenty first century is an opportune moment to take stock of these negative legacies and develop new and different intellectual and academic discourses. In the absence of this happening the very grave inequalities as a consequence of deep racism and sexism will continue to corrode the progressive developments which are universal humanistic and nurture ‘seige mentalities’ which will in turn lead to the entrenchment of multiply divided ‘seige communities.’ There is as such, no evidence from within the humanities, the social sciences or pure scientific research including the genome studies that there is a concept of ‘race’. Concepts of ‘race’ are social constructs and have no basis in the domain of education or within societal contexts. Therefore, these issues have no basis whatsoever in the in teaching and learning about civic engagement, especially if they relate to notions of belonging on the grounds of ‘blood and soil.’

In England, citizenship education was introduced in secondary schools in 2002 and, according to a OFSTED<sup>1</sup> Inspectorate Report, only a minority of schools have embraced it with any enthusiasm and the quality of the lessons is considered inadequate (*The Guardian*, 9-28-06). The Inspectorate may, however, have only a partial understanding of why intercultural

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<sup>1</sup> OFSTED stands for the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It is the non-ministerial government department of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England.



and citizenship education in the country is inadequate: another aspect could simply be the learners' lack of interest. Their underlying concerns may range from being disengaged from the fissiparous tribes of electronically engaged members of the body politic and not being susceptible to the modern politics defined by 'control freakery'. They also might have inflated career expectations and at the same time confront the grim realities that large numbers of young people face.

In Japan, a series of pronouncements by the previous prime minister Kaizumi in 2005 promised 'never to take the path of war' but Shinzo Abe the Liberal Democratic Party Prime Minister intended to follow a more nationalistic course and to revise the US-imposed pacifist constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education which was enacted in 1947 as a basis for post-war schooling in order to emphasize moral values, patriotism, and tradition (*The Guardian*, 9-27-06). After facing charges for corruption he is back in office.

These examples- taken from the Balkans, England and Japan—raise some difficult issues in three different countries. These include questions about the nature of intercultural education civic engagement in comparative contexts. Is a nationally based understanding of local and central government and human rights sufficient? If one moves to the next level of regions, are the Eurocentric (Bernal 1987), Indo-centric (Chaudhuri 1990), and Sino-centric (Hamashita 1988) memories, histories, and understandings of the past a sufficient basis for civic education and engagement? Would such narrow national, regional learning about citizenship not in turn raise the spectre of Afro-centrism (Asante 1987), Islamo-centrism (John Voll 1994), or other 'centrisms' at the continental and global levels because of the diasporas of African, Muslim, and 'other' peoples? The attempt therefore, is not to replace one type of centrism with another, which reinforces centric intellectual tunnel visions, but to develop a more holistic and non-centric formulation of issues about the substance of intercultural and civic education.

At one level, the rise of 'siege mentalities' and singularized identities of communities based on religious, ethnic, tribal or linguistic loyalties, as well as the negations of nation-state and social class identities, may partly be a result of the discontinuities, binary/oppositional memories and mentalities that may have been informed by past experiences of servitude or slavery, and colonial and imperial legacies that have become extenuated with the rise of economic globalization. However, histories and societal development are not necessarily one-dimensional or negative: issues of intercultural understandings and civic engagements are based on struggles that can embody positive aspects of struggles and memories. However, at this level, too, one is again confronted with complex issues of how to accord legitimacy to the

multiple identities and the discourses based on the progressive struggles of the subaltern groups.

Normally in most nation states civic values are based on the dominant and largely nationalistic stories of belonging to the polity. These are largely exclusive of groups which have been subdued or conquered and therefore are not inclusive of all the good values of all groups which constitute a polity. Samir Amin (1997) suggests the process of de-linking from the dominant and exploitative global negative forces of neoliberal economics. It is being argued here that such a de-linking must also be accompanied by a process of linking or bridging (Putnam 2000) with the progressive forces and struggles that form part of the current agendas for constitutionally based civic and human rights.

A significant part of the content of these agendas is a result of struggles by serfs, peasants, slaves, indentured labour, agricultural and industrial workers, and universally oppressed women against subjugation. While the exceptional nature of each oppression or genocide is recognized, the educational challenge is to determine how the divides and differences can be used to develop shared understandings and common struggles. In the absence of these shared understandings, Freud's concerns about the 'narcissism of small differences' come into play, deepening the divides between groups.

During the UNICEF project conducted in Kosovo, referred to earlier, the issue of singular group identities was raised with different communities, and some members claimed that narrow 'ethnic' or 'racial' identifications exist because they were part of 'human nature'. This is too complex an issue to discuss here but it needs to be stressed at the outset (as stated earlier in this paper) that there is no scientific basis or evidence concerning the notion of 'human nature'. If such a thing did exist, then any ideas about intercultural and citizenship education in the context of contemporary schooling stand no chance of succeeding. Hence, a focus on immutable human nature negates the possibilities of unravelling either the historical legacies or current realities of inequalities, and detracts from the positive dimensions of human history and progressive struggles for equality, civic and human rights.

The challenge for intercultural and civic education and engagements is how to recognize 'bonding' within a group and use this as a basis for bridging or linking with other groups on a sustained basis (Putnam and Feldsten 2003: 280-1). This is important at the present time because most diverse societies have become increasingly fragmented and individuals 'bowl alone' whereas, it is necessary to re-connect isolated individuals, groups and communities through active citizenship engagements so that people can 'bowl together' in safe democratically organised communities.

Furthermore, these issues are not only a prerogative of Eurocentric notions of the ‘modern world system’ (1974) as articulated earlier by Wallerstein. He has subsequently recognised the limitations of Eurocentric universalis and reviews three aspects of the structure of knowledge in the modern world: the modern university system, the epistemological divide between the so-called two cultures, and the special role of the social sciences. He states: ‘all three were essentially nineteenth-century constructions. And all three are in turmoil today as a consequence of the structural crises of the modern world systems.’ (I. Wallerstein: (2006) p. 59) These changes are part of a universal repertoire and do not pertain only to the ‘West’, which is perceived as constituting the ‘centre’ and at a distance from the ‘peripheries’. The content of these issues and their implications of how civic and human rights can be taught and learned, and the resulting knowledge can help create a clearer understanding of the newer, changing but substantive realities within a community or a society. They can also enable young people to be actively involved in civic activities within local communities and the larger polity. Herein, there is also a major role for public and social policies, including those concerning education (not schooling) and the need to recognize the issue of differences, diversities, and commonalities at the global level.

### **Developing Inclusive Globalism**

Many national communities embody notions of particularism as well as those of universalism. Educators and others have an important role in examining these complex notions, both real and imaginary, to analyse the myths, feelings, understandings, and concepts that underlie these differences, and to develop rational ways of dealing with the resultant dilemmas. Can educators, for instance, pool civilizational knowledge in ways that do not polarize peoples but help to develop more syncretism, which can then inform the educational process and civic education differently?

### **From the Cultural Revolutions Founding the Tributary Era to Interfaith Dialogue**

The first universalist phase in civilisational development based on the development of ideologies of major religions can be described as the millennium that extended from the fifth century BC to seventh century AD, when the great religions of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam were founded, and the great Confucian and Hellenistic philosophies were formulated. It is also important to note that these River Valley Cultures were places where the ‘tools’ of science were also fashioned. These included the handling of ‘natural

materials and a degree of abstraction which resulted in writing and symbolism.’ (H.J.J. Winter: *Eastern Science*. John Murray. 1952) Hence, in both religious and scientific ways these systems affirmed the common dimension and destiny of all human beings, if only in the life beyond. As Samir Amin writes:

This declaration of a universalist vocation did not establish a real unification of humanity. The conditions of tributary society did not permit it, and humanity reformed itself into major tributary areas held together by their own particular universalist religion-philosophy (Christendom, Dar el Islam, the Hindu world, the Confucian world). It is still the case, however, that the tributary revolution, like all the great revolutionary moments in history, projected itself forwards and produced concepts ahead of its time (Amin 1997: 80).

While it can be accepted that these earlier movements form an important part of a set of universalistic norms and values, they also continue to present unresolved dilemmas during the contemporary period. Here one need to consider what is necessary from the perspective of the religiously diverse nation-states and regions to develop some inclusive norms that might allow these religions and philosophies to become part of progressive struggles that can lead to interfaith understandings. Hans Küng writes about the need for peace among nations being derived from dialogue between religions and nations. The dialogue between religions requires knowledge about their theological foundations and necessitates, according to Küng that three basic propositions be in place:

Hans Küng speaking after the events of 9/11 stated that: ‘attacking Iraq is likely to worsen the terrorist threat’

*Catholic New Times*, December 15, 2002

He summarized his view in four propositions: no peace among the nations without peace among the religions; no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions; no dialogue among the religions without common ethical standards; and finally, no peace without a common global ethic.

Hans Küng’s suggestion raises the whole issue of dialogue. First, such dialogues are nothing new. The Umayyad Caliphate which functioned in the eleventh-century Andalusia is an example of intercultural dialogue and cooperation between the southern Mediterranean rim and the North African region with the northern European part of the Mediterranean Sea. It represents the nature of an inter-cultural dialogue between Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Scholars like Al Kundi, Averroes, and Avicenna represent those who translated Aristotelian philosophy into Arabic; these texts were subsequently used for translations into Latin. The common sense understandings are the developments during the Renaissance were based direct translations from Greek texts into Latin. Yet, the work of these philosophers, scientists, and

thinkers was undermined by Islamic literalists and fundamentalists like Al Ghazzali, who was part of the Almohad dynasty and resonates with the Christian and Islamic literalists at the present time who are negating ideas of evolutionary science and substituting it with ‘essentialists’ Christian and Islamic versions of ‘science’.

Second, from an educational perspective, a dialogue among religions is insufficient: from the point of view of intercultural and civic education there is a need for a more substantive educational engagement. Educational initiatives and interfaith education are among the ways to engage with religions and their relationship to society. The challenge is how, in socially diverse societies, to build intellectually rigorous interfaith education, one that recognizes difference and diversity but also allows for the nurturing and the development of points of mutuality and similarity between faiths.

Many of the current religious strife’s are based on memories of wars, terror and persecution derived from religious particularisms and the specificities of their belief systems. Montaigne decries then fact that religious pluralism in France did not bring peaceful coexistence because bitter disputation between the Catholics and Huguenots and led to rhetoric’s of hate and was accompanied by vicious circle of violence. Montaigne states ‘All are alike in using religion for their violent and ambitious schemes and observes that ‘Christians excel at hating enemies.’ Other religions however, may not only equal the Christians but even surpass them in their capacities for hatred, viciousness and terror.

What kind of teacher education and support for teachers and schools can help to deal with these historically based politico-religious legacies? For a start it is a very difficult task for educators to give different versions of these stories because religious stories and imaginations are deeply engraved into the psyches of believers and therefore are not amenable to rational discussion or argument. Furthermore, interfaith initiatives that enhance mutual understandings also need to deal with issues of relations between believers of different faiths and those who are non-believers in today’s complex and diverse school populations.

One fruitful way inter-faith education initiatives maybe used by schools is the way in which some religions do not comprehend the divine. These religions and the doubts at the heart of Eastern Christianity, Orthodox Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sufi traditions in Islam constitute an important basis for dialogue and education.

While issues concerning religious instruction and ways of life may be considered as part of a community’s private and communal life, knowledge about faiths that circulates within the larger public domain and public institutions may also have an important role to play. Religious identities also are but one aspect of peoples multiple identities and the education

systems cannot only deal with them at the exclusion of other, and perhaps more important aspects of different identities of students. Many rational and sensible believers have turned their backs on their faiths because of the limitations and hatreds perpetrated by religions which are not matched by their capacities to constructively and substantively enhance inter-faith and inter-cultural understandings.

These complicated legacies of the hegemony of theological knowledge necessitate fresh thinking by different faiths. This is necessary because it can lead separate as well as collective religious renaissance. Faith communities cannot allow legacies of difference based on hierarchies and in egalitarian values especially against women to continue. Values of secular humanism are deeply ingrained in the consciousnesses of oppressed peoples who have struggled over centuries to acquire greater levels of equalities. Rejuvenated and religious renaissance of religions at the present time can help peoples who have uplifted themselves through popular political struggles as well as educators and schools to heal ancient wounds and negative legacies of the past which continue to be divisive during the contemporary period.

### **The Enlightenment and the Modern Period**

The second phase of the history of societies that can be used to inform civic and citizen education is that period following the Renaissance, to which the Mediterranean civilizations contributed. It was also the time of the conquest of the Americas by the Atlantic-facing European countries. One of the legacies of the conquests of the Americas is that after 1500 the Europeanization of the globe and the definition of the world from a Eurocentric perspective increased. Did the voyages of Columbus and Vasco da Gama divide the world or were they also a way of connecting the small European peninsula with the rest of the globe? If they are connective then how can the inequalities and unequal relations between and amongst the different regions be ironed out so that the connections establish greater levels of mutualities and solidarities across the regions.

During the Western Enlightenment, one of the important legacies that occurred in the wake of the Renaissance was a shift which from the purely religious to the secular domain and one of whose results was the idea of 'nation'. Enlightenment philosophy's social vision of society, and following the French Revolution, was based not on the ideas of some biological myth of ancestors but on the notions of a social contract—'a nation of free men [*sic*]'. This nation-state included Alsatians and Occitans, who did not speak French, as well as Jews. With the abolition of slavery in Santo Domingo, black African peoples were also considered to be 'citizens'.

Compared to the concept of secularism, religion occupied a very different dimension since it was seen as part of the tyranny of an *ancien regime*. As Amin states:

In forging the concept of ‘secularism’, it goes beyond religious toleration; it claims to rid the new nation of references to the past and sees Christianity as no more than a personal philosophical opinion like any other, not an ideological structure of society (S. Amin (1997): 81).

Here, the nation is not an affirmation of the particular but an affirmation and an expression of the universal. While the securing of human rights was one of the core objectives of the French Revolution, those rights were applied selectively, with women being denied full citizenship rights. The assimilation of ‘other’ peoples and the abandoning of local languages in favour of the French language were additional indicators that the nation-state was to take priority. The role of building the modern French nation around this new cultural and linguistic unity was assumed by the school system under the Republic.

The legacy of officially nullifying and overriding differences has had manifestations in the twenty-first century. In 2005 and 2006, French cities and in 2010 English cities were rocked by riots of young, poor, and disenfranchised young people who experienced institutionalised racism backgrounds. The challenge for educators is how to use this complex legacy of the universal and the particular; the local and the national which provides the substantive basis for intercultural understandings and accords equality of citizens within the currently unequal nation-state.

In the economically unequal societies the basis of difference is a barrier to developing the notions of similarity, so under those circumstances, what can be done to bring about greater levels of equality? In many contexts these inequalities have become inter-generational and have thwarted possibilities for improving socio-economic conditions through knowledge and skills provided by the school and the educational system.

The English bourgeois revolution of the seventeenth century was earlier than the French Revolution and was less radical. The domination by the English of the different peoples within the islands of Britain and Ireland also led to the loss of local languages and cultures. The role of the monarchy, aristocracy, and Protestant Reformation was based on compromises and a less assertive break with the past. In England, France, and Holland—where bourgeois revolutions had taken place—the changes in terms of the biological basis of the nation-state were different from those that continued to nurture the myths of ‘the nations of the mists’, i.e., of the remote past, which was sociologically referred to as ‘Gemeinschaft’. Given that there are many differences between England, France, and Holland the right to be different is

mutated by notions of the right to be similar. The modern forms of Enlightenment thought had been developed by cosmopolitans in the salons of Paris, London, Edinburgh, and Berlin.

### **Immigration Societies**

The French and American Revolutions have a lot in common since both were informed by similar ideas during this period of history. Both societies embody features of equality and inequality on various indices, including racial ones.

In immigration societies such as the United States, assimilation allowed subsequent groups to be incorporated into the cultural identity and imposed a fragment of Anglo-Saxon Protestant norms and these have become construed as the public political values of the American national culture. Hence, the American public and national story is not inclusive of the broader range of stories and diversities which are represented historically and contemporaneously within American society. Scholars (like Samuel Huntington) and commentators who cite the American national story as an example for other nation states have in fact misunderstood the narrow American story as being an inclusive broader story of the American polity and society.

At the more international level the United Nations University has launched a Research Centre under the rubric of Alliance of Civilisations in June 2011 and at the global level and for intercultural understandings is an important initiative to counteract the arguments of people like Huntington on the Clash of Civilisations.

The United States also accepted the right to be different, which further perpetuated the differences for the African-American and indigenous American peoples, who, being racially different, had been hierarchically positioned in an unequal society. This conceals the notions of the right to be similar based on principles of equity.

Samuel Huntington's notion of the 'clash of civilizations' at the global level was based on the dominant Anglo-Saxon values juxtaposed to those of the subordinated groups in the American polity. In educational terms this can be illustrated by the 1954 Supreme Court opinion written by Chief Justice Warren that 'separate is not equal'. The year 2008 marks the fifty-ninth anniversary of that Supreme Court decision, and yet the right to be similar and to be equal continues to be denied to African American students as well as to the Native American populations and the more recent Hispanic immigrants. Hence, the right to equality under the United States Constitution is not a reality for large numbers of American citizens, and exclusion due to racism manifests itself throughout American institutions and society.



This does not bode well for either equality or the possibilities of better intercultural understandings amongst very diverse and unequal groups in American society.

## **Socialism**

The socialists in the nineteenth century had to operate within the framework of the reactionary ideas of the past, the rise of nationalism within Europe, and, subsequently, within the larger colonial context. They attempted to strengthen the consciousness of solidarity within the subordinated social classes across the lines of nationalist ideologies and tried to optimize the equalities of rights and entitlements. In many cases it was the Eurocentric and messianic versions of socialism that informed struggles outside Europe.

From the period of the Enlightenment to the present time there have also been misplaced notions of progress with the development of pseudo-science and eugenics, with the most appalling consequences, been used against national minorities and ‘other’ groups in society. In other words the actualisations of socialist societies necessitated the ‘purification’ of the human stock and eradicate the mental and physical disabilities by shedding the weaker sections of society. In educational terms the concept of ‘defectology’ used in many socialist and communist states which stressed the genetic basis of intelligence of minority groups and use the majority or dominant nationality as a norm. Hence, groups like the Jews, Roma and other nationalities continue to face disastrous consequences in these states.

There are therefore, ways of being circumspect of ‘secular Western science’ as it was vulgarised by the Nazis, as one needs to be wary of vulgarised fundamentalist religions at the universal level.

One of the problems resulting from the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Yugoslav Republic was the acceptance of the right to be different which was carried to great lengths. Marxism went through a series of gradual developments under the Second and then the Third International broke from the ethno-centric perspective and placed anti-imperialism at the heart of strategies for struggle. However, the acceptance of the right to be different, common to the Third International, did not allow these states to deepen the notions of inclusive citizenship based on shared values.

## **National Liberation Movements and Bandung**

The colonial world was not directly exposed to the democratic values of the Enlightenment by the European colonial elite, including those of democratic political rights and secularism. Hence, it was the national liberation movements that had to confront the challenge of the values of universalism. This was reinforced by the fact that socialists in Europe were not able to shift their thinking beyond its Eurocentric origins.

The national liberation movements opted for the unity of peoples in the struggle against imperialism and for the constructions of the nation-state beyond ethnic or religious horizons. Those who were on the right invoked the nations shrouded in the ‘mists of time’, and these myths flew in the face of ethnic, religious, or linguistic diversity, harking back to the tributary systems of Hinduism, Islam, or the ideas of the biological and racial rather than the modern constitutional bases of for instance, the Arab nation. They were in this sense not very different from European nations, which also believed in mythic beginnings. The Janus-faced nature of the nation with ‘blood and soil’ on the one hand and the modern civic nation based on democratic constitutions on the other have continued as problems in the present.

There are also differences and divides within the national liberation struggles between the right and left, the centralists and the federalists, those who opted for multi-party political systems, and those who espoused unitary political party systems. Those nationalist leaders who subscribed to the progressive ideas were of the leftist tradition within the national liberation, and drew their inspiration from the philosophy of the Enlightenment.

These ideas and perspectives were not something that European elites and colonialists shared with progressive nationalists. For instance, the speech by Jawaharlal Nehru on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947 when India become independent included the following sentence: “And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for anyone of them to imagine that it can live apart.” (The Guardian, London 2007; Great Speeches of the 20<sup>th</sup> century No. 11 in series of 14) Nehru derives his ideas from Western, Indian and other sources from the colonised world and this syncretism of ideas do not have a purely European pedigree but result of struggles for freedom in different societies.

In addition to the recognition of diversity and difference at local and regional levels or in religious or linguistic terms, they have also stressed the notion of unity across these particularistic divides. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM was founded in 1961) which grew out of the Bandung Conference in Indonesia, in 1955, and made an important contribution towards the democratisation of the United Nations and to develop it into an instrument of justice and to develop it as an instrument for justice. NAM brought together the progressive and democratically oriented nation-states and lasted till about 1975. The Bandung proposals for ‘economic cooperation’ and for an international system to diversify their economic base led despite resistance of the Western powers to the formation of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD. The most powerful agreement at Bandung came over ‘cultural cooperation’ and condemned the cultural chauvinism of the imperialists and there was greater

unity on this than on issues of political economy. The UNESCO based studies by Claude Levi- Strauss and Marie Jahoda on the biological fiction of race led to twenty nine new states to condemn ‘racialism as a means of cultural suppression’ (V.Prasad: 2007. p. 45) and laid the foundations of what ultimately became the basis for intercultural exchange and cooperation and educational initiatives including the arts, culture, science and technology.

The movement was re-activated in Havana in the summer of 2006 and it is hoped that after Hugo Chavez’s recent death, where the cry was ‘We are all Chavez’ (The Guardian, London, 9-March 2913) that the movement will gather strength and become a force in progressive struggles of peoples around the world or if it will be suppressed by the major imperialist powers.

If societies within the rubric of this system are analysed in horizontal terms, they reflect vast reverses experienced by the national liberation movements, peoples, and the negation of citizenship rights across many countries of eastern, central, and southern Europe and the Southern Hemisphere, which present a major challenge for reinstating the intercultural understandings, citizenship and human rights of the masses. For hundreds of millions of peoples in war-torn, corrupt, and collapsed states across the globe, this is a distant dream.

The challenge for inclusive polities, deeper levels of intercultural and civic education is not only to engage with the retreats of the ideologies and religions of the tributary epochs, because these need to be deepened with the philosophy of the Enlightenment as well as the socialist movement and the progressive ideas of national liberation, as exemplified by the Bandung Movement.

The democratic practices organized around the notions of respect for difference need to be informed by the right to be similar. This is important to establish greater levels of mutualities and resemblances. These ought to bring about an erosion of the many injustices within and between societies and establish commonalities between and with struggles for equality and human rights globally. In order to help construct a new notion of ‘us’ and of shared belonging in European societies, progressive ideas from the Third World ought to become part of the ideas of inclusive citizenship in the body politic of Europe in the same way that Western ideas and ways of life have penetrated the Third World.

These issues present cumulative challenges to political systems and especially the education systems on how to socialise and educate young people who can live in diverse and unequal communities with a semblance of stability and intercultural amity. In this respect Mwalimu Nyerere, the former President of Tanzania practised statecraft which held the

diverse Tanzanian polity together. He was therefore known as Mwalimu, a Teacher. (M. Mamdani: 2012)

## **Contemporary Struggles and Solidarities**

Do the past and common struggles for equality, human and citizenship rights provide any basis for progressive struggles to work together and learn from each other? William Katz has uncovered the hidden history of the shared and common struggles of the African and Amer-Indian peoples from New England to Brazil. This history of relationship and collaboration between the reds and blacks remains largely unwritten. (See W. L. Katz: *Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage* (New York: Simon Pulse: 2005)

Subsequently, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States in the 1960s inspired the feminist movement in its struggle to obtain greater degrees of gender equality. While in the bourgeois national and global contexts this has helped certain classes of women, there are many millions more who are still at the margins of society. In the next stage, can these contemporary struggles lead to some sharing of learning from the past?

The year 2008 commemorated the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade, especially the trading in peoples of African origin, who were transported by force to the Americas in large numbers and to the Arabian Peninsula in smaller numbers. One of the challenges posed at the present time is how these events can mark issues of better intercultural relations and equality of citizenship, not only for the descendents of slaves but for the many millions more who are currently denied citizenship and human rights.

How can educators functioning in modern state systems establish commonalities and mutualities with those who have experienced other kinds of oppressions? As an example, the liberation of slaves led to the recruitment of indentured labour, largely from India to work in the plantation economies in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean region. Are there possibilities of connecting the struggles of these two peoples to attain equality, not only in the Americas, Australasia and Europe, but also feeding into the struggles of the first peoples in the countries where they were transported? Amerindian and Aboriginal peoples also suffered oppression and continue to wage isolated struggles without making connections with others who have fought similar battles. At the global level these struggles and solidarities are important forces to enhance intercultural understandings and unities.

There is also the massive movement of women who eke out a living in the globalized capitalist economies in the world. For every female executive there are multitudes of poorer women who migrate for work in factories and farms or as cleaners, caregivers, maids and sex

workers. This feminization of poverty represents a fundamental denial of citizenship and human rights. How can these millions upon millions of people be accorded their rights, and what can be learned from previous oppressions and struggles out of which new solidarities, similarities, and mutualities of interest can be established?

### **Concluding Section**

This contribution has pointed out the dichotomies which exist in most societies at the present time and the need to deal with inequalities into greater levels of equality; to turn the negative aspects of unities and diversities into more productive and creative aspects of these disconnected and polarised aspects of difference which are construed as deficits and unities which are interpreted as being assimilation. Hence, the notions of unities ought to include basic and fundamental rights of peoples and citizens and which vest them with rights and responsibilities.

This paper has raised challenges for intercultural education and for being active citizens in cohesive democratic contexts where people continue to struggle against hierarchies, inequalities and disenfranchisement. It also raises the issues of divides amongst peoples along gender, faith, social class and racial divides which the dominant groups and political institutions have failed to tackle in practical terms from the local, national to the global levels.

At the core of all these issues are ways in which the academe needs to universalise knowledge and shift away from dominant and ‘centric’ knowledge systems which have continued to provide singular and dominant versions of humanity and its histories. During this period of global transitions these separate realities and developments need to acquire multiple as well as universal legitimacies so that cohesive futures are based on more inclusive and realistic understandings of humanity.

Discussions about the intercultural curriculum within many countries including Britain cannot ignore these broader underpinnings of knowledge at the universal level. As mentioned earlier there are some attempts to make the history curriculum more inclusive of the knowledge of minority communities as well as the impact of slavery and colonialism. The issues raised in this paper have substantive implications for citizenship education but they do not appear to be currently taken on board by the national educational policy makers and educational institutions.

### **DEDICATION**

**This paper is dedicated to my former colleagues and friends who passed away recently P.LB (Bev) Woodroffe and Tuku Mukherjee.**

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**Franco Frabboni**

**L'INDILAZIONABILE VOLO DELLA PEDAGOGIA  
DALL'EMISFERO BOREALE ALL'AUSTRALE.  
E RITORNO.**

**(Abstract)**

**1.** Se osservata con lenti planetarie, la Pedagogia accusa un'antica gracilità epistemica. Le sue teorie pongono sì al centro il soggetto/Persona, ma limitatamente all'umanità - bianca, maschio, ricca, sazia - che abita le contrade boreali del Pianeta. Mai la Pedagogia cresciuta nei paesi dell'opulenza (occidentali) ha messo nel mirino, se non all'alba del terzo Millennio, l'umanità nera-femmina-povera-denutrita che popola l'altra metà della luna: i Paesi della sopravvivenza.

La causa del congenito strabismo della Pedagogia è che il suo capitale scientifico si è venuto accumulando tramite studi e ricerche condotte sull'umanità che popola il nord del Pianeta. Di più. Il suo patrimonio di Saggi è depositato soltanto negli scaffali dei Continenti occidentali.

**2.** Perché la Pedagogia è sollecitata ad alzarsi in volo dall'emisfero boreale per atterrare al più presto nell'emisfero australe?

Argomentiamo questo punto di domanda.

Il copioso scaffale della letteratura pedagogica intitola la Persona a punto di approdo della progettazione esistenziale della donna e dell'uomo.

*Attenzione però.* La metafora al "singolare" (la Persona) è assunta come monismo che allude al suo "plurale": le Persone. Una sorta di Arlecchino intercontinentale testimone di un acquerello di colori, di un mosaico di "diversità" di genere, di etnia, biofisiologiche e socioculturali.

A partire dal citato mosaico, la Pedagogia avverte oggi una crescente e preoccupante anoressia epistemica. Le sue accreditate teorie dell'educazione pongono sì al centro la progettazione della Persona, ma soltanto la donna e l'uomo che abitano le latitudini settentrionali e occidentali del Pianeta. Raramente, le teorie educative che conosciamo hanno posto nel mirino l'umanità della metà del Pianeta a sud/est dell'Equatore: colorata, povera, analfabeta. Per questo, la Pedagogia si trova al debutto del Duemila di fronte a un "bivio". A dover scegliere - a occhi aperti - tra due sentieri dell'Educazione.

**SENTIERO/1.** - E' quello di sempre. La strada che ha di fronte è asfaltata da una scienza dell'educazione etnocentrica e apollinea. Nell'odierna stagione storica - complessa, multiculturale, in/trasformazione - il primo sentiero si presenta senza vie d'uscita. Se dovesse proseguire lungo i suoi abituali *viottoli boreali*, la Pedagogia si trasformerebbe in un soprammobile, in un articolo d'antiquariato in vendita nei mercatini dell'usato.

**SENTIERO/2.** - E' del tutto inedito. Si delinea come il new-deal della riflessione e della progettazione pedagogica. Proprio perché é chiamata a inerpicarsi lungo sconosciuti *viottoli australi* diretti sulla cima di una Scienza/nuova. Lassù, se dotata di un telescopio predisposto a inquadrare l'umanità (boreale e australe) potrebbe anche indossare abiti da sera: *prescrittivi* per esplorare, per conoscere, per scoprire - e per danzare - su crinali/altri dell'educazione, su altri statuti ermeneutici. Sono frontiere esistenziali dove la Pedagogia settentrionale e occidentale non ha mai messo il nido.

Se intende optare per il sentiero/2, la Pedagogia dovrà porre nel suo portafoglio non solo la sua genetica carta d'identità occidentale (dal raggio/breve: costretta a teorizzare e a progettare traguardi formativi cifrati dalle grammatiche e dalle sintassi degli emisferi apollinei e ariani: ricchi e sazi), ma anche una inedita carta d'identità orientale e meridionale (dal raggio/lungo: capace di azzardare sguardi verso scenari poveri e denutriti del Pianeta). Meticcendosi, aprirà la strada a una scienza "maggiorenne" in tensione perenne al *superamento* (se necessario: alla trasgressione) dei modelli educativi conati e imposti dai Continenti dominanti a nord dell'Equatore. E'improcrastinabile il viaggio - mano nella mano - tra la Pedagogia settentrionale e la Pedagogia meridionale avvolte in un inedito mantello multiculturale. Vestite di stoffe/griffate che diano il piacere esistenziale dell'*andare-oltre*: verso cieli abitati dalle culture della diversità e della differenza.

Per concludere. La Pedagogia ha il compito di darsi ali planetarie se vorrà nobilitarsi a regina dell'educazione: una scienza a tutto-tondo, a trecentosessanta gradi. Evitando di rimpicciolirsi in una scienza-a-metà, dimezzata. In un ciclòpe dotato di un unico sguardo rivolto all'emisfero boreale nel quale campeggerà per sempre un soggetto/Persona ariano, apollineo e sazio.



**1.** La Pedagogia, se osservata con lenti planetarie, accusa un'antica gracilità scientifica. Le sue teorie pongono sì al centro il soggetto/Persona, ma limitatamente all'umanità - bianca, maschio, ricca, sazia - che abita le contrade boreali del Pianeta. Mai la Pedagogia cresciuta nei paesi dell'opulenza (occidentali) ha messo nel mirino l'umanità nera-femmina-povera-denutrita che popola l'altra metà della luna: i Paesi della sopravvivenza.

alfabetizzato,

La causa del congenito strabismo della Pedagogia sta è nata, per l'appunto, a nord dell'Equatore. Il suo capitale scientifico si è venuto accumulando tramite studi e ricerche condotte sull'umanità che popola il nord del Pianeta. Di più. Il suo patrimonio scientifico è depositato solamente negli scaffali dei Continenti occidentali.

**2.** Occorre sciogliere un ulteriore punto di domanda. Perché la Pedagogia è chiamata a intraprendere sollecitamente un viaggio verso spiagge dell'educazione lontane, sconosciute, inedite? Perché è sollecitata ad alzarsi in volo dall'emisfero boreale per atterrare al più presto nell'emisfero australe? Argomentiamo questi punti di domanda.

Il copioso scaffale della letteratura pedagogica intitola la Persona a punto di approdo della progettazione esistenziale della donna e dell'uomo.

Attenzione però. La metafora al "singolare" (la Persona) è assunta come monismo che allude al suo "plurale": le Persone. Parliamo dell'infinito arcipelago identitario dei soggetti/Persone che abitano il Pianeta a farsi paradigma ermeneutico dell'essere-nel-mondo. Una sorta di Arlecchino intercontinentale testimone di un acquerello di colori, di un mosaico di "diversità": differenze di genere, differenze etniche, differenze socioculturali, differenze biofisiologiche.

A partire dalla citata fenomenologia, la Pedagogia avverte oggi una crescente e preoccupante anoressia epistemica. Le sue accreditate teorie dell'educazione pongono sì al centro la progettazione della Persona, ma soltanto la donna e l'uomo che abitano le latitudini settentrionali e occidentali del Pianeta. Tendenzialmente, è la Pedagogia che ha chiamato le scienze dell'educazione delle contrade/boreali (a nord-ovest dell'Equatore) a redigere la carta d'identità esistenziale della Persona.

Mai le teorie educative - che conosciamo - hanno posto nel mirino l'umanità della metà del Pianeta a sud/est dell'Equatore: colorata, povera, analfabeta. Una presa di coscienza, dunque, che sta generando allarme

nella nostra comunità scientifica, consapevole che la Pedagogia si trova, al debutto del Duemila, di fronte a un “bivio”. A scegliere - a occhi aperti - tra due sentieri identitari della teoria/prassi in Educazione.

**SENTIERO/1.** - E' quello di sempre. La strada che ha di fronte è asfaltata da una scienza dell'educazione etnocentrica, apollinea, ariana. Nell'odierna stagione storica - complessa, multiculturale, in/trasformazione - il primo sentiero si presenta senza vie d'uscita. Se dovesse proseguire lungo i suoi abituali *viottoli boreali*, la Pedagogia/bianca si trasformerebbe in un soprammobile, in un articolo d'antiquariato in vendita nei mercatini dell'usato.

**SENTIERO/2.** - E' del tutto inedito. Si delinea come il new-deal della riflessione e della progettazione educativa. Proprio perché dovrà inerpicarsi lungo sconosciuti *viottoli australi* che salgono verso la cima di una Scienza/nuova: nella quale, probabilmente, dimorano altre teorie dell'educazione. Lassù, se dotata di un telescopio predisposto a inquadrare l'umanità (boreale e australe) potrebbe anche indossare abiti/scout da sera: *prescrittivi* per esplorare, per conoscere, per scoprire - e per danzare - su crinali/altri dell'educazione, su altri statuti pedagogici. Sono frontiere esistenziali dove la Pedagogia settentrionale e occidentale non ha mai messo il nido.

Per queste motivazioni, all'alba del Ventunesimo secolo occorre tirare per la giacca la Pedagogia che vive a nord dell'Equatore perché prenda consapevolezza che si trova dinanzi a una scelta improcrastinabile. Se continuare, lungo una strada apollinea, lungo l'angusto viottolo a lei *abituale* (ma senza vie d'uscita) oppure chiederle di avventurarsi per un *sentiero inedito*. Lungo il quale potrebbe incontrare un giardino chiamato Educazione dove - alla sua rotonda - troneggia un prato verde che profuma di un'inesausta voglia di esplorare, di conoscere e di scoprire frontiere/altre.

Parliamo dei mondi dell'educazione che la Pedagogia apollinea dovrà al più presto sorvolare. Per poi avventurarsi per i sentieri intitolati all'*incontro*, allo *scambio*, all'*ibridazione reciproca* tra la Pedagogia boreale e la Pedagogia australe. Soltanto meticcendosi potrà aprire la strada a una scienza “maggiorrenne”: in tensione perenne al *superamento* (se necessario: alla trasgressione) dei modelli educativi conati e imposti dai Continenti perennemente dominanti.

In quanto dispositivo/euristico (dinamico e trasfigurativo), la Pedagogia boreale dovrà necessariamente comunicare, con il cellulare, alla Pedagogia

australe la necessità di respingere - insieme - l'inaccettabile "idea" di una Formazione delle giovani generazioni rinchiusa nell'equazione Educazione "uguale" Integrazione nelle contrade di appartenenza. Con ciò tradendo l'ideale educativo dello sviluppo integrale della Persona nella molteplicità delle sue sfere evolutive. Per questo, ci sembra non più procrastinabile il viaggio - mano nella mano - tra la Pedagogia settentrionale e la Pedagogia meridionale avvolte in un inedito mantello multiculturale. Vestite di stoffe/griffate che sappiano dare il piacere esistenziale dell'*andare-oltre*: verso cieli punteggiati di stelle che illuminano il "possibile" che sta oltre i confini del presente e dell'attuale. Lassù, dove risiedono un domani e un'inattuale abitati dalle culture planetarie della diversità e della differenza.

Per concludere. La Pedagogia è chiamata a darsi ali planetarie se intende nobilitarsi a regina dell'educazione: una scienza a tutto-tondo, a trecentosessanta gradi. Mai più una scienza-a-metà, dimezzata: un ciclope dallo sguardo rivolto soltanto all'emisfero boreale dove campeggia un soggetto/Persona ariano, alfabetizzato e benestante.

## COMPETENZE INTERCULTURALI E MONDO DEL LAVORO:

la mobilità nelle imprese multinazionali come sfida alla costruzione identitaria  
di  
**SIRNA CONCETTA – TERRANOVA CHIARA**

### 1. La mobilità nel mondo del lavoro globalizzato: le imprese multinazionali

Per vivere nei nuovi contesti globalizzati, dove la realtà lavorativa e le condizioni di cittadinanza si modificano continuamente e radicalmente, non bastano più soltanto competenze tecniche specialistiche e linguistico-comunicative. E' divenuto urgente maturare anche nuove competenze interculturali critiche, necessarie per comprendere con adeguata consapevolezza e gestire con accortezza ed equilibrio la complessità e le dinamiche socio-culturali e politiche dei sistemi complessi all'interno dei quali si opera. Esserne privi significa esporsi al rischio di rimanere disorientati e frammentati o, peggio ancora, di diventare strumenti inconsapevoli di apparati violenti e logiche disumanizzanti.

Rileggere correttamente potenzialità e rischi impliciti oggi nelle nuove condizioni del fluido e complesso mondo del lavoro consente, infatti, non soltanto di tutelare fondamentali aspetti relazionali e dimensioni emancipative, ma anche di far emergere e valorizzare quelle energie positive solidali, pur sempre presenti ma troppo spesso sottaciute, che alimentano il vivere e l'agire umano nelle nuove complessità.

Per offrire uno spaccato di queste dinamiche, in questo contributo parleremo di una specifica categoria di lavoratori, i quadri intermedi ed il management di imprese multinazionali, di cui analizzeremo le problematiche socio-identitarie esperite nei luoghi di lavoro a motivo della loro condizione di particolare "nomadicità". Si tratta di persone che, a fronte di numerosi trasferimenti di sede, godono di una certa mobilità verticale aziendale e vivono in condizioni comparativamente migliori sul piano economico-finanziario rispetto agli altri lavoratori delle stesse imprese, generalmente appartenenti alla popolazione locale. Tuttavia, l'assenza di una rete sociale territoriale di riferimento stabile le espone a processi molto impegnativi e a disagi, sia sul piano psico-emotivo e socio-relazionale che su quello pratico-operativo e, pertanto, abbisognano di particolari strumenti e competenze per fronteggiarli.

Le imprese multinazionali, consapevoli del peso che le diversità culturali esercitano sui processi lavorativi in termini di produttività e di efficienza, cercano di sfruttarle a loro vantaggio, ad esempio utilizzando prevalentemente nel comparto manageriale dei lavoratori "stranieri" al territorio. Questi, infatti, trovandosi in una sede di residenza provvisoria, in mancanza di reti sociali consolidate (parentale, amicale, associativa, culturale, politica, religiosa, ecc.), diventano più disponibili ad investire tutte le proprie energie nell'azienda e nei processi lavorativi, senza distrazioni o particolarismi imputabili ad altri vincoli ed interessi. Per molti di questi lavoratori la sfera lavorativa rappresenta, di fatto, l'unica stabile appartenenza cui si sentono realmente e più stabilmente legati<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Da almeno un quarantennio diverse ricerche scientifiche hanno dimostrato come l'intensità dell'identificazione è influenzata anche dalla percezione del grado di reputazione positiva che l'azienda, e indirettamente anche i suoi membri, godono ma anche dalla soddisfazione lavorativa, dalla congruenza tra il lavoro attuale e quello ideale, dal *commitment* affettivo e dalle emozioni che l'accompagnano (Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1975). Sono queste, solitamente, le variabili che rafforzano l'intenzione del lavoratore di prolungare il proprio rapporto con l'organizzazione (Bergami, 2002). In contesti dove la tecnologia ed il mercato sono in costante evoluzione, puntare sul coinvolgimento e sulla partecipazione dei lavoratori è diventato vitale per lo sviluppo stesso

Ecco perché, quando si attuano processi di delocalizzazione, le imprese si preoccupano in primo luogo di valutare le caratteristiche socio-politiche e etno-culturali del paese in cui intendono spostare le proprie aziende, cercando di sfruttare le caratteristiche più peculiari della tradizione locale per migliorare i profitti aziendali. Altrettanta cura dedicano, però, alla selezione sia del personale locale, scelto in funzione delle competenze tecniche necessarie per svolgere il lavoro, sia soprattutto dei quadri intermedi e dei manager che, rappresentando l'azienda sul territorio, debbono conformarsi in tutto ai valori aziendali, modellandosi sullo *stile* proposto come proprio, indipendentemente dai luoghi in cui opererà, Scozia piuttosto che Ungheria, Germania piuttosto che Polonia, Olanda o Canada piuttosto che Serbia, Lituania o Corea.

A questi soggetti deterritorializzati, nuova categoria speciale di migranti privilegiati appartenenti a etnie, culture, religioni e lingue diverse, accomunati soltanto dalle specifiche competenze utili allo sviluppo aziendale, vengono offerti ampi spazi di autonomia e di partecipazione operativa in ambito lavorativo e la proposta di percorsi di identificazione ispirati a modelli transnazionali.

Si sta costruendo, in tal modo, una generazione di *tecnomigranti* tendenzialmente “apolide transnazionali”<sup>2</sup> che trovano la loro collocazione specifica nelle nuove geografie del lavoro dove valgono forme di appartenenza e linee di differenziazione nuove, non più collegate alla nazionalità ma basate soltanto sulle capacità, la professionalità e la fedeltà aziendale<sup>3</sup>.

## 2. Nuovi modelli identitari e di cittadinanza

Si è avviato un nuovo processo di stratificazione socio-culturale e politica, trasversale rispetto ai diversi stati nazionali, secondo il quale alle differenze di tipo etnorazziale e nazionale si sono sostituite quelle legate a precise competenze tecniche e comunicative e specifiche caratteristiche personali, prerequisiti necessari oggi per muoversi liberamente nei contesti globalizzati superando le barriere politiche nazionali.

Esiste un sempre più cospicuo drappello di soggetti intraprendenti, pronti ad affrontare le difficoltà connesse alla continua riorganizzazione della propria esistenza nei vari paesi in cui sono chiamati ad operare e che sanno muoversi con disinvoltura attraverso i vari confini nazionali. Godono di fatto di una “cittadinanza flessibile” e non si riconoscono più nella appartenenza culturale esclusiva al proprio paese di provenienza, ma vivono con distacco il tema dei confini nazionali e si collocano idealmente in una dimensione trasversale transnazionale.

L'antropologa Aihwa Ong, riferendosi al continuo attraversamento dei confini da parte di capitali e persone che caratterizza il nuovo capitalismo, parla di “*nuove latitudini della cittadinanza*” che si stanno riconfigurando sotto il peso delle forze economiche globali. Questi flussi trasversali, mentre creano nuovi “spazi economici”<sup>4</sup>, stanno provocando anche il sorgere

dell'impresa la quale, per potere innovarsi continuamente (*learning organization*), deve consentire loro di mantenere la propria identità e l'attitudine ad interagire criticamente con il gruppo (Kunda, 1992; Bertolotti, Cantarelli, Macrì, Tagliaventi, 2004; Harris, Kramer, 2005; Rossi, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Abbiamo coniato il termine di “apolide transnazionale” perché queste persone possono esercitare il loro diritto di voto nei loro paesi d'origine, ma spesso non lo fanno perché sono poco o nulla interessati alle dinamiche politiche ed agli esiti elettorali dei paesi di appartenenza. Sul tema del lavoro transnazionale connesso ai processi di delocalizzazione produttiva ormai si trova anche in rete una discreta letteratura che riguarda soprattutto i complessi aspetti giuridici ad esso connessi. Cfr. ad es. la rivista “ISL Igiene & Sicurezza del Lavoro”, mensile di aggiornamento giuridico e di orientamento tecnico, Ipsoa Editore ed il Dossier del sito <http://www.sanpaoloimprese.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> ONG A., *Da rifugiati a cittadini. Pratiche di governo nella nuova America*, Raffaello Cortina Ed., Milano 2005 (2003), p.352.

<sup>4</sup> ONG A., *op. cit.*, p. 350. La Ong, scrive “ Il termine *latitudine* evoca flussi trasversali che tagliano l'entità verticale dello stato-nazione, e forze globali che si intersecano in spazi economici strategici.... le latitudini della

di diversi regimi legali e di inedite combinazioni di diritti, privilegi e condizioni di lavoro che interessano sempre più larghe fasce di lavoratori in tutti i paesi.

Si va configurando cioè “un nuovo modello etico di cittadinanza non più basato sulla territorialità”, che costituisce un inedito spazio problematico in cui i diritti di cittadinanza sono parzialmente sradicati dalla nazione e la regolamentazione delle condizioni lavorative cede il passo alla *deregulation*. Conseguentemente, nei nuovi contesti globalizzati non si “può più dare per scontata una distribuzione equa dei diritti civili all’interno dei confini nazionali, né la possibilità di una società civile omogenea, né tanto meno una cittadinanza completamente inserita nello spazio politico”<sup>5</sup>

Urge, quindi, ripensare concetti come quelli di *cittadinanza*, *appartenenza*, *integrazione*, *diritti*, *confini* per tentare di capire come stiano cambiando e quali nuovi parametri di riferimento stiano emergendo per il mondo sociale, politico e lavorativo.

Diventa importante capire, cioè, che tipo di identità stanno costruendo questi nuovi e numerosi soggetti tecnomigranti transnazionali e deterritorializzati. Quali rischi identitari e sociali devono affrontare e quali prospettive si aprono nelle loro mobili esistenze? Quali appartenenze vivono e quali diritti/doveri esercitano nel loro continuo peregrinare? Come partecipano alla costruzione di nuovi atteggiamenti e mentalità ed in che misura i loro sforzi di mediazione vengono riconosciuti e capitalizzati nel processo verso l’unificazione socio-culturale e politica globale in atto?

Comprenderlo consentirebbe di orientare meglio gli sforzi sia in campo formativo che in quello socio-politico, per sostenere e potenziare gli effetti in termini di innovazioni positive, per prevenire ulteriori disagi e per evitare interventi dispersivi, inutili o controproducenti e, perfino, dannosi.

### 3. Il rifiuto dell’integrazione tra appartenenza eccentrica e ricerca di nuovi orizzonti

Variegate ed interessanti sono le storie di questi nuovi lavoratori tecnomigranti di successo, avanguardia in un mondo di precari qualificati e senza fissa residenza. Generalmente si tratta di storie intessute di tensioni, esigenze, speranze legate all’esperienza comune di nomadismo lavorativo, quindi quasi tutte finiscono con il delineare percorsi ed itinerari omologhi, connessi allo sviluppo di comuni caratteristiche psico-relazionali e socio-culturali.

Sono persone che, per cercare lavoro, hanno lasciato i luoghi in cui si è strutturata e sviluppata la loro storia familiare e personale e si sono trovati a spostarsi più volte all’estero, in realtà e contesti diversi da molti punti di vista (climatico, socio-culturale, linguistico, storico, organizzativo, ideologico, ecc. ) sollecitate/obbligate a *rinegoziare continuamente il proprio status*. Vivono in situazioni di stressante competizione, rischiando di essere risucchiate in un vortice che le condanna ad un perenne vissuto di estraneità rispetto a tutti i contesti extra-aziendali, di volta in volta diversi, in cui sono costrette a spostarsi.

Interagendo con società e culture diverse, sono costrette spesso ad utilizzare, sia nel lavoro che nella realtà familiare e sociale, lingue diverse spesso non coincidenti né con quella materna né

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cittadinanza implicano anche assenza di limiti ristretti (rappresentati dagli stati-nazione e dai regimi legali), flessibilità e la possibilità di combinare diverse combinazioni di diritti, privilegi e condizioni di lavoro in una geografia della produzione. Questi raggruppamenti di chance di vita disuguali vengono modellati da processi che trascendono i confini, ma che sono al tempo stesso altamente specifici e costituiscono situazioni particolari di assoggettamento. Mettendo in secondo piano e svalutando il lavoro all’interno della produzione, insieme al flusso di capitale di rete, le tecniche del neoliberalismo stanno frantumando le rivendicazioni di cittadinanza” (pp. 351-52) provocando la progressiva degradazione dei diritti civili e del lavoro.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem p. 357.

con quella del nuovo paese di residenza, che quasi mai hanno il tempo e la voglia di imparare adeguatamente.

Sono lavoratori particolarmente affidabili, allettati dalla possibilità di fare carriera all'interno di realtà multinazionali, disposti ad affrontare disagi e trasferimenti in nome di una soddisfacente autorealizzazione personale. A loro solitamente spetta il compito di organizzazione, supervisione, valutazione e sviluppo della operatività aziendale ma non partecipano alle decisioni politiche e gestionali dell'azienda, che subiscono senza possibilità di intervento. L'unica loro forza contrattuale è quella del bisogno che l'azienda avrà di persone in possesso delle loro competenze e delle loro caratteristiche personali, disponibili a sradicarsi e capaci di ricostruire in nuovi contesti la stessa struttura aziendale, riproducendone la filosofia e l'efficacia nel modo più efficiente possibile. Non di rado l'azienda, specie quella di servizi, quando decide di delocalizzare per un certo periodo (solitamente da tre a quattro anni), negozia al ribasso anche i contratti di lavoro e licenzia chi non accetta la proposta di trasferirsi nella nuova sede alle nuove condizioni.

Condizioni lavorative, queste, ben diverse rispetto a quelle valide nei decenni appena trascorsi, quando il maggior numero di migrazioni si concludeva spesso con un trasferimento definitivo in un altro paese e molto ristretto era il gruppo di coloro che avevano occasione di muoversi per continue missioni all'estero (dirigenti di organismi internazionali, diplomatici, top manager e imprenditori internazionali), mantenendo tuttavia sempre una sede di base stabile. Il che consentiva sempre lo spazio di un solido radicamento territoriale e di una stabilità e ricchezza di relazioni parentali e sociali!

Oggi la logica delle delocalizzazioni, aumentando la precarietà del lavoro, impedisce di fatto ogni tentativo di integrazione sociale su base territoriale ad un gruppo molto più numeroso di migranti senza la prospettiva di una possibile stabilità, come quelli di cui ci stiamo occupando, perché precarizza anche il loro senso di appartenenza ed il connesso esercizio di qualsiasi diritto e forma di partecipazione, spesso per l'intera esistenza. Ciò non comporta tuttavia per loro la perdita di ogni tipo di relazione familiare ed amicale né l'assenza assoluta di partecipazione ai processi ed agli eventi socio-culturali e politici dei paesi di riferimento: queste esperienze infatti, per quanto ridimensionate e modificate, continuano almeno in parte ad essere mantenute in vita, alimentate soprattutto facendo ricorso all'uso dei nuovi strumenti di comunicazione disponibili e della realtà virtuale (trasporti vari e collegamenti internet, telefonini, tv satellitare, social network, ecc.).

La delocalizzazione, generalmente in paesi meno sviluppati economicamente, rappresenta indubbiamente un momento di innovazione e di disagio allo stesso tempo. L'immissione di esperienze diverse in un paese provoca un confronto tra culture umane, culturali e lavorative diverse che risulta sicuramente molto interessante e, allo stesso tempo, fornisce anche l'occasione per mettere alla prova le competenze dei lavoratori più capaci, offrendo loro occasioni per una promozione nella carriera aziendale. Non mancano, però, per questi ultimi tanti disagi collegati sia allo stressante lavoro di reimpianto delle attività, sia al periodo più o meno lungo di adattamento al nuovo contesto. Il disagio è ancor più forte quando si tratta di soggetti sposati, costretti spesso a lasciare i legami della rete parentale ed amicale di riferimento, vincolati a sobbarcarsi di faticosissime peregrinazioni (laddove questo è compatibile con le nuove distanze) pur di non dilapidare e mettere in crisi i rapporti con il nucleo familiare.

I soggetti più giovani e con vincoli meno strutturati, di fronte alla opzione di un trasferimento e nell'impossibilità o indisponibilità del partner a seguirli, si trovano generalmente esposti alla scelta dilemmatica tra lavoro e affetto. In molti casi provano a trovare un altro lavoro pur di restare nel paese, soprattutto quando è il paese di nascita proprio o del partner, per mantenere il supporto della rete relazionale di riferimento. Nel caso, invece, in cui il paese da cui debbono allontanarsi sia per loro un paese ospite, generalmente sono più disponibili a seguire l'azienda

e, conseguentemente, anche i legami affettivi e sentimentali finiscono per illanguidirsi fino a spezzarsi<sup>6</sup>.

Nella nuova sede, spesso meno prestigiosa e più marginale da un punto di vista geo-politico, essi vivono inizialmente cercando di mantenere i pochi legami amicali tra i membri del gruppo di lavoro con i quali hanno condiviso il trasferimento: anche se di diversa provenienza nazionale, in certo qual senso questi diventano la nuova composita ‘famiglia’ di riferimento, quella con la quale confrontarsi e collaborare per superare l’inevitabile isolamento. La full immersion nella vita dell’azienda li porta a vivere il mondo del lavoro come una “bolla” rassicurante e protettiva, perché al suo interno essi padroneggiano quegli strumenti della comunicazione che, invece, spesso non funzionano nell’ambiente extra-aziendale, per le differenze culturali a volte molto rilevanti. Anche se la maggioranza di queste persone sono plurilingue, non di rado accade infatti che nei contesti di vita esterni al luogo di lavoro si sentano estranei, inermi ed incompetenti.

Successivamente il contatto quotidiano sia in azienda, con i nuovi lavoratori/cittadini locali, sia nei contesti extralavorativi, per il progressivo intensificarsi di nuove relazioni funzionali al soddisfacimento dei bisogni vitali, generalmente migliora la qualità della vita perché l’ambiente esterno viene vissuto progressivamente come meno ostile e più familiare. Pur tra le tante occasioni di *misunderstanding*, facendo tesoro delle difficoltà e degli errori, questi nuovi lavoratori nomadi imparano dall’esperienza diretta e prolungata con le diversità culturali non soltanto la difficile arte dell’adattamento e della flessibilità ma anche quella, ancor più complessa, della interpretazione/comprendimento e gestione delle diversità culturali.

Quasi sempre la maggioranza di loro, per la consapevolezza di non potersi radicare per molto tempo nei vari contesti in cui operano, non ha intenzione di *instaurare legami forti di integrazione* con la cultura locale, che pure si sforza di conoscere al meglio esplorandola e imparando a rispettarla. Soltanto quando nascono nuove esigenze familiari (conciliazione col lavoro del partner, presenza di figli, ecc.) le traiettorie di vita ed i progetti di integrazione stabile diventano conflittuali e a rischio di fratture.

Queste nuove forme di mobilità quasi *nomadica*<sup>7</sup>, che stanno diventando sempre più diffuse, creano per la fascia di persone interessate dal fenomeno un nuovo modo ambivalente di vivere la non stanzialità ed i processi di integrazione e di appartenenza. Tutto si gioca, infatti, su una dimensione spazio-temporale che influenza il segno, positivo o negativo, del vissuto definendolo in relazione alle necessità contingenti, alle opportunità ed alle intenzionalità dei singoli attori nei vari momenti del loro peregrinare. Imparano, cioè, dalla variabilità e precarietà dei loro vissuti, ad essere flessibili ed a “sfruttare” tutti gli spazi di comunicazione ed integrazione possibili, reali e virtuali, territoriali e transnazionali, affettivi e funzionali.

Superano meglio le ineludibili iniziali difficoltà coloro che, invece di isolarsi, riescono non soltanto ad ottimizzare i propri sforzi, ricreando ovunque piccoli nuclei comunitari, ma anche ad utilizzare come valida risorsa le proprie appartenenze plurime, che considerano sfaccettature importanti della loro itinerante identità.

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<sup>6</sup> Si registra, infatti, in questo gruppo di soggetti una alta percentuale di persone *single*, o con diverse esperienze plurifamiliari frammentate, difficili o fallimentari, spesso legate alle situazioni di trasferimento ricorrente ed al bisogno di ricostruire nuovi legami sentimentali, per superare la solitudine ed arricchire la rete relazionale all’interno dei nuovi contesti. Cfr. SIRNA C., *Famiglie ed educazione nella società dei processi migratori in “Pedagogia e vita”* A. 2011, giugno,

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. SIRNA C., MICHELIN SALOMON A., RUGGERI F., *Nomadismo familiare e scelte educative di fronte al cambiamento*, in F. CRISTANTE, M. CUSINATO, F. MORINO (a cura di), *Dentro la complessità delle famiglie. Scelte familiari tra crisi e risorse*, Giunti, 1999, pp.229-244.



#### 4. *Apoliticità e apolidia tra localismo e transnazionalità*

Anche sul piano giuridico e politico la posizione di questo gruppo di tecnomigranti risulta particolarmente interessante perché, proprio per le particolari condizioni di frontiera in cui si trovano ad operare, è rivelatrice di alcune linee di tendenza positive ma anche di potenziali rischi che stanno emergendo.

Vivendo e lavorando sempre a contatto con culture diverse, queste persone in genere non rimangono chiuse in una dimensione localistica e, anche se con un certo distacco, si informano sulle vicende politiche dei vari paesi che hanno un qualche riferimento con la loro realtà personale. Quasi mai votano nel paese di origine, del quale continuano a godere della cittadinanza, ma seguono con preoccupazione l'andamento delle decisioni politiche che potrebbero avere riflessi sul loro futuro (accantonamenti pensionistici, risparmi, assicurazioni, ecc.).

Pur sperimentando continuamente un certo *straniamento* rispetto alla società in cui vivono, cercano comunque il contatto con le varie realtà che incontrano, aperti alla prospettiva di nuovi orizzonti interculturali transnazionali, meno asfittici e più eticamente validi. Essendo nelle condizioni di sperimentare la *porosità* e attraversabilità dei confini e, soprattutto, la profonda comune umanità che ci lega al di là delle pur consistenti differenze culturali, riescono ad avere uno sguardo diverso e più *eccentrico* sulle caratteristiche e sui limiti delle culture nazionali meglio e prima dei soggetti *stanziali*.

A partire dalla loro esperienza di continua peregrinazione, spesso maturano una nuova forma di *apolidia* che, in contrasto con l'attrazione centripeta del localismo securitario<sup>8</sup>, li induce ad accettare la tensione innovativa verso la mondializzazione anche se, collateralmente, li disincentiva rispetto all'esercizio attivo della politica. La loro è una condizione che li porta a vivere questa *diaspora transnazionale* in modo spesso contraddittorio e conflittuale, da persone sempre in cammino, perennemente in crisi e "senza una casa" pur se con tante risorse. Perennemente costrette a riapprendere, comparare, ricostruire rimangono internamente scisse tra il *desiderio di autoaffermazione* personale, che il lavoro assicura loro pur se tra notevoli costi e fatiche, l'*insicurezza* per l'assenza di legami socio-familiari e di prospettive stabili, la *nostalgia* per il mondo perduto della comunità di origine, il *disagio*, legato al continuo sforzo di conoscenza e di adattamento alle tante diversità (comunicative, ideologiche, culturali, rituali, comportamentali, di stile, ecc.), la *curiosità* suscitata dai nuovi ambienti da esplorare ed il *piacere* eccitante della scoperta delle peculiarità inedite dei nuovi contesti.

Nel mondo del lavoro queste persone si trovano come in un osservatorio privilegiato ma allo stesso tempo rischioso. In esso hanno l'opportunità di crescere umanamente e professionalmente<sup>9</sup>, di prendere coscienza di sé e delle dinamiche esistenziali, relazionali e socio-culturali, di lavorare *con* e *sulle* differenze per sperimentarne, assieme alla problematicità, anche tutte le ricchezze, stando in prima linea nei processi produttivi ed innovativi. Analogamente, però, negli stessi contesti lavorativi è possibile apprendere atteggiamenti e comportamenti di tutt'altro segno (carrierismo, sfruttamento del potere connesso al ruolo, divertimento dispersivo, atteggiamenti arroganti e prevaricatori, insensibilità affettiva, instabilità sentimentale, disimpegno sociale e politico, ecc.) ed alienarsi progressivamente.

In particolare c'è il rischio che i lavoratori si accontentino di una realizzazione personale giocata tutta e soltanto nella appartenenza al tessuto lavorativo (successo nella carriera aziendale) e rinuncino ad una appartenenza sociale e politica di più largo respiro (impegno nelle battaglie di

<sup>8</sup> BAUMAN Z., *Communitas. Uguali e diversi nella società liquida*, Aliberti ed., Roma 2013.

<sup>9</sup> ROSSI B., *L'organizzazione educativa. La formazione nei luoghi di lavoro*, Carocci, Roma 2011; PORTERA A., *Introduzione*, in GUIDETTI B. (2008), *Educazione e Pedagogia interculturale in azienda*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2009.

civiltà e di giustizia), più onerosa da perseguire, che necessita di maggiore consapevolezza, coscienza storico-critica ed impegno etico di apertura ai problemi di tutti. E' il rischio di chi si riconosce in una "appartenenza senza partecipazione" perchè non è disposto a realizzare "una partecipazione anche senza appartenenza", non riuscendo a leggere la realtà in cui si muove alla luce anche dall'impegno sociale, etico e politico, segno di vera maturità umana e culturale.

A questi rischi sono esposti, ormai, non soltanto questi tecnomigranti ma tutte le persone che, non essendo adeguatamente attrezzate sul piano culturale e spirituale, oltre che su quello tecnico operativo, non riescono a fare dell'esperienza accomunante dell'impegno lavorativo quotidiano l'occasione per crescere assieme agli altri, imparando a comunicare e dialogare con i diversi, ad arricchirsi nell'ascolto, ad affrontare con serenità e senza pregiudizi la babele culturale in cui ormai siamo chiamati a destreggiarci.

Ecco perché urge oggi offrire a tutti, nei percorsi formativi, strumenti che rendano non soltanto tecnologicamente competenti ma anche culturalmente, psicologicamente e spiritualmente più attrezzati per un lavoro ed una vita sociale molto più problematica ma, anche, più dinamica e ricca di prospettive e potenzialità esperienziali.

Soltanto persone emotivamente e culturalmente meno fragili, storicamente e politicamente più consapevoli e aperte al dialogo potranno sopportare l'onere di questo traghettaggio verso nuovi modelli culturali e politici perché sapranno riconoscere e disinnescare le nuove tentazioni di colonialismo culturale, più o meno sotterranee, e riusciranno a mantenere sempre alta la tensione etica verso i valori di integrazione sociale, partecipazione democratica ed umanizzazione delle condizioni di vita di tutte le persone

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## Multiculturalism and Education for Citizenship in a Context of Neoliberalism

Christine Sleeter

Schools globally are finding immigration, as well as already-existing racial and ethnic diversity, to pose challenges. In part, this is an academic challenge (i.e., how to help diverse students to become academically successful, given a dominant national language and culture). It is also a social challenge involving citizenship preparation for a multicultural democracy.

The complexity of the social challenge can be illustrated with a controversy near my home. As a part of the process of opening a new elementary school, the school board of a predominantly Mexican-American school district selected what has become a highly controversial name for the school. In the U.S., citizens of school districts select school names, which often honor heroes. In this case, the school board selected the name of a Mexican American who lived during the 1800s. From the Mexican American community's perspective, he was a hero who protected Mexican land from white aggression and defended Mexican American culture, but was unjustly convicted of murder by an all-white jury. From the white community's perspective, he was a violent bandit and an inappropriate role model for students in a community that is plagued by gang violence. The controversy surrounding this issue raises a host of questions about citizenship, perspective, race and racism, who has the right to name reality, cultural citizenship versus political citizenship (Wozniacka, 2013).

For teachers in societies that are becoming increasingly diverse, the question becomes how to prepare their students as citizens who can engage with complex issues in a way that reflects equity and justice. Democracy and diversity are messy concepts that cannot be packaged up neatly; conflicts in experiences, points of view, histories, and specific interests cannot be reduced to standardized formulas and narratives, nor can their resolutions be reduced to steps to follow. Most teachers need help learning to analyze and guide students through difficult issues of public life, and cannot be expected to simply figure out how to do so on their own. Based on an analysis of citizenship education in the Netherlands, for example, Bron and Thijs (2011) noted a large gap between policy intentions and what teachers actually do. Further, based on a literature review of citizenship education in the U.S., Cotton (2001) noted that teachers are not only ill-prepared to teach it, but also to share power with students and to address controversial issues. In addition, citizenship curricula too often are poorly conceptualized, meaningless to students, shallow, textbook-bound, and disconnected from current local and global issues.

In what follows, I first consider what it means conceptually to connect multicultural education with citizenship education. Then I examine three central issues involved in planning multicultural citizenship curricula. Finally, I briefly illustrate what active multicultural citizenship education can look like for students at different age levels.

### *Multicultural Citizenship*

Multicultural education and citizenship education can be powerful when connected (Banks, 1997), but often they are not. Goal statements for citizenship education tend to be lofty but vague, giving little specific guidance (Cotton, 2001). Cosmopolitan citizenship, a concept stressing common humanity across national borders and cultural differences, also tends also to be vague, offering teachers too little guidance for how to link local concerns and identities with humanity as a whole (Osler, 2012). Diversity studies usually stress learning about the other rather than engaging with or learning to work in solidarity with diverse others. The ascendance of neo-liberalism makes even less straight-forward what it means to connect multiculturalism with citizenship.

Liberalism upholds individual rights, freedoms and private ownership of property within the rule of law. Citizenship conceptualized through liberalism emphasizes the relationship between individuals as citizens of nation-states and the official law-making process, focusing on rights and responsibilities such as voting, with the assumption that everyone has roughly equal opportunity to participate. Neo-liberalism, born in the context of reduced and stagnating fortunes of the super-rich during the 1940s and 1950s, links the rule of law with the needs of capital, prioritizing the market over citizenship and democracy. The result is, as Macedo, Dendrinos, and Gounari (2003) put it, “the market itself becomes tautonymous to democracy” (p. 114): shopping is equated with voting, and the “only form of agency available is to consume” (p. 133). Neo-liberalism linked with neo-conservatism becomes especially repressive when members of the far-right attempt to thwart democracy through means such as voter suppression or equation of unregulated campaign spending with free speech.

Simply adding diversity onto liberal or neoliberal conceptions of citizenship usually means adding identification with culture and community to the individual – nation-state relationship, acknowledging diverse sub-cultural identifications and commitments, as well as (perhaps) current impacts of past histories of exclusion, and claims to group rights that complement individual rights and national unity (Kymlicka, 1995). Such conceptions attempt to connect unity with diversity, and uphold civic equality among diverse individuals as a national value. Cultural differences are to be

tolerated respectfully, but people are to be treated the same. By teaching young people to acknowledge culturally diverse groups and to handle disagreement as well as the right to disagree, one assumes that societies can work toward civic equality of their citizens.

Liberal and neo-liberal conceptions of multicultural citizenship, however, are limited. First, individualistic conceptions of citizenship overemphasize the primacy of national identity and the nation-state, marginalizing those who have faced oppression historically. Dominant groups can usually equate national citizenship with their own racial or ethnic identity, an equation that is much less straightforward for marginalized groups and immigrants. For example, Ladson-Billings (2004) points out that while U.S. American identity is commonly equated with being white, many people of color, who have experienced long histories of oppression by whites, see little basis for solidarity with them, and therefore prioritize their own ethnic identity over a national identity. In addition, many people of color make citizenship commitments on the basis of common concerns people of color share globally, placing ethnic and international commitments above national commitments. Similarly, writing with reference to Italy, Love and Varghese (2012) draw attention to challenges of Black Italians, as well as children of immigrants, to be seen and treated as “real” Italian citizens. Further, the discourse of individual rights and responsibilities has paved the way for emphasizing individual responsibility for one’s own welfare and one’s ability to claim citizenship, thus divesting the nation-state and corporate leaders from concern for people’s wellbeing (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010).

Second, increasing transnational migrations due to globalization are resulting in more and more people who are legally, or at least functionally, transnational citizens, a status that global internet access facilitates. In the U.S., roughly eleven million undocumented immigrants who are citizens of another country (mainly Mexico) live and work due largely to globalization processes that have restructured rural economies elsewhere. Debates about citizenship and the law do not capture why people immigrate without papers and the realities they find themselves in as a result. Some authors and activists use the term “cultural citizenship” to refer to ways in which excluded or undocumented communities question, disrupt, and remap what it means to participate as a citizen (Benmayor, 2002). As Castles (2004) points out, “The idea of the citizen who spent most of his or her life in one country and shared a common national identity is losing ground” (p. 18). Not only are people relocating across borders on a massive scale, but transnational corporations, global organizations, international law, and regional configurations such as “European citizenship” are reducing national sovereignty (Hansen, 2000).

A third limitation of liberal and neo-liberal conceptions of multicultural citizenship is their reliance on fixed racial/ethnic and gender categories, which become taken for granted as natural, and their tendency to essentialize the culture that is connected with categories. Liberalism upholds protections against discrimination and provision of some level of common welfare, making use of and inscribing into law categories of people. For example, in the U.S., I am classified as white, which ascribes characteristics to me that supposedly differentiate me from people classified as Asian or African American. However, while categories themselves have been socially constructed, and are continually reconstructed in the context of struggle over material conditions, their material basis is lost when viewed as natural. Reddy (1999), for example, argued that the meaning of the South African racial category "Coloured" depends on who has the power to name. Although people of European descent tied racial categories to biology, those classified as "Coloured" are, by definition, not 100% some other category. But because over time racial categories structured access to resources, the category of Coloured acquired a material basis – it became “real.” But when challenging huge economic disparities that colonialism created, the category "Coloured" tends to fracture strategic identities people use politically: "black," "African," or "working class". Conceptions of multicultural citizenship must address complex “politics of culture and identity and the differential sources of solidarity across and within specific forms of identity” that people take up when struggling for justice (Torres, 1998, p. 423).

In contexts of nation-building, when culture is essentialized and tied with assumed biological categories, it excludes as well as includes who can be regarded as a citizen. Moon (2010), for example, points out that the one-blood and one-culture myth in Korea, constructed historically as a tool for nation-building, undermines the cultural and citizenship rights of transnational migrants, perhaps most poignantly in the case of international marriages in which non-Korean born wives struggle to be seen and treated as Korean citizens. Hansen (2000) makes a similar argument in his analysis of calls for European citizenship, which he notes is bolstered by an essentialized version of European culture, history, and civilization that excludes those of non-European ancestry, and those who are not Christian.

A fourth limitation of liberal and neo-liberal conceptions of multicultural citizenship is their failure to analyze how power is actually used, thereby allowing attention to formal participation structures and processes to substitute for active democratic processes, and attention to the needs of capital to replace development of democracy. Torres (1998) points out that social movements build on knowledge and experiences of ordinary people, constituting them rather than elected

representatives as problem-solvers. According to Hyslop-Margison and Sears (2006), following the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s in Europe, economic needs eclipsed democratic citizenship as appropriate objective for schooling, and “the role of citizen within this milieu became one of political conformity rather than political engagement since the neo-liberal social structure was dictated almost entirely by market logic” (p. 2). The interests of the nation were increasingly equated with interests of the corporate class, thus weakening democracy. For subordinate groups, however, the task is one of reclaiming power and participation through collectivist grassroots activism, rather than one of becoming included in systems run by the dominant group. Based on an analysis of the history of racial power in the U.S. and Brazil respectively, Ladson-Billings (2004) and Gonçalves e Silva (2004) show how formal participation structures were created in the context of exclusion and conquest, which dominant groups continue to use to further their own advantage. Conceptions of multicultural citizenship need to embrace collective action aimed at defending rights and claiming power using organic grassroots participation processes. Conceptions of multicultural citizenship must not only directly interrogate capitalism and its role in structuring inequality, but also consider collective democratic participation beyond individual participation in formal structures.

#### *Central Issues in Planning Multicultural Citizenship Education Pedagogy*

Multicultural citizenship education view as a political project of social justice that embraces a diverse public, and that links local with global struggles for equity and human rights, offers a potential counter-narrative to neoliberal education, and a rich framework for considering citizenship. Planning multicultural citizenship education, however, requires grappling with three central issues.

First, what is the relationship between citizenship and human rights? An international consensus panel in the U.S. recommended that the teaching of human rights should underpin citizenship education in multicultural nation-states (Banks, et al., 2005). Citizenship education and human rights education, however, are not the same thing. Hung (2012) explains that, to be a citizen and have rights of a citizen, one must be a member of political community. But community residents— who may be there legally or illegally -- are not necessarily citizens. Human rights (usually ground in the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights) are universal and do not depend on citizenship status, but are nonetheless routinely violated among marginalized peoples. Bajaj (2001) distinguishes among three models of human rights education for citizenship

that derive from different situations people experience in a diverse societies and points in time. Human Rights Education for global citizenship emphasizes national and international frameworks for rights, and the individual in relationship to the nation-state and global political order, deemphasizing affiliation commitments based on ethnicity, transnationalism, or other community configurations. Human rights education for coexistence emphasizes developing unity alongside diversity in culturally plural nation-states, building mutual understanding through contact, and respecting collective rights; it de-emphasizes concerns of the most marginalized communities, as well as the complex identities discussed earlier. Human rights education for transformative action emphasizes addressing historic and ongoing violations of rights through grassroots power mobilization aimed toward social justice, deemphasizing formalized processes as well as cultural assimilation within the nation-state.

A second issue is engaging students in grappling with diversity and power. How can working with diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity as well as immigration status, help students value democracy and learn to participate constructively? Many educators fear that opening up consideration of issues such as racism and exclusion will be emotional and divisive, particularly when the students themselves are diverse. Research on the impact of diversity experiences in higher education is helpful here. Researchers have studied democracy outcomes of higher education:

- citizenship engagement (the extent to which students are interested in trying to influence society and participate in the political structure),
- racial/cultural engagement (the extent to which students are willing to participate in activities that promote racial understanding),
- compatibility of differences (the extent to which students believe that diverse groups share some common values and can learn to handle conflict constructively), and
- perspective-taking (the ability to see the world from someone else’s perspective).

Researchers have found that university students gain in democracy outcomes when there is 1) opportunity for interaction among peers from different backgrounds, particularly informal interaction outside the classroom, and 2) inclusion of diversity in curriculum that is designed to teach explicitly about race and ethnicity (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002, p. 341). This body of research provides a helpful way forward for working with young people to help them connect active democracy with diversity.

Third, what pedagogical model(s) enable students to “learn about the ways in which people



in their community, nation, and region are increasingly interdependent with other people around the world and are connected to the economic, political, cultural, environmental, and technological changes taking place across the planet,” (Banks, et al., 2005, p. 11), while also only learning *about* democracy but learn how to practice it (Banks et al., 2005)? Attempts to prompt students to think about citizenship on multiple levels, and to learn how to participate in a democracy have pedagogical implications. One implication is the need to start local. In a study exploring the relationship between conceptualizations of citizenship education and pedagogy in the UK, Osler (2011) found that although policy documents stress teaching rights and responsibilities in relationship to the nation-state, teachers emphasized citizenship at the local level, mainly because students best learn citizenship when they become involved in local community projects. Further, it was not clear to the teachers how to connect students’ everyday lives with broad national citizenship, and teachers lacked materials that would help them make such connections. Indeed, Kahne and Sporte (2008) found that pedagogical processes focused directly on local problems and that open up dialog about controversial issues related to democratic processes had a positive impact on commitments to civic participation of students from low-income communities and communities of color.

Another implication is to involve students in democratic participation within the school and classroom. Cotton (2001) noted that researchers have “identified higher levels of democratic values among students in more democratic school environments” (p. 10) as well as in classrooms that demonstrate respect for student ideas and in which teachers use democratic processes. Researchers find considerable support for active learning, particularly strategies that engage students in discussion, role-playing and perspective-taking, projects such as letter-writing, mock trials, and other ways of engaging students directly in active democratic behaviors. Researchers emphasize the importance of critical thinking; too much civics education is centered on low-level mastery of facts, which, in an absence of critical thinking, does not teach students to analyze problems, sift through evidence, and make reasoned judgments about issues. The challenge of beginning at the local level is connecting students with broader community, national, and global political entities.

Taking these complexities and issues into consideration, what might an active multicultural citizenship education look like in practice?

### *Examples of Practice*

This framing suggests citizenship education as helping young people learn to name forms of injustice (as well as justice) in their own lives, and analyze their roots. It suggests helping them learn to grapple with tensions between cultural diversity, political rights, and human rights, and learn to hear multiple perspectives about complex social issues. Finally, it suggests engaging young people in active, collaborative democratic processes at the classroom, school, and community levels, in which they act on real equity issues they experience. What might classroom practice look like? Two examples follow.

*With young children*

Kathy (now retired) was a first grade teacher of Mexican immigrant students in a low-income community. A foundation of her practice was use of class meetings, which regularly provided space for discussion of student concerns, and students learned to take charge of problem-solving. Many problems students brought to class were interpersonal, but some were political. Kathy explained to me that children regularly hear adults discuss political issues at home and want to know more. She encouraged students to ask questions about such issues, believing that school is where questioning should be encouraged.

Kathy designed and taught an interdisciplinary thematic unit on Monterey County agriculture. She told me that, “agriculture directly affects the lives of my students. Out of my twenty students, most have at least one parent who is employed in agriculture or an agriculture-related industry such as vegetable packing. The parents’ income and work schedules are determined by the crops and the large companies which grow them” (Sleeter, 2005, p.112). Having grown up on a farm, she believed everyone should know where food comes from, and situate that knowledge within a vision of environmentally sustainable farms that ordinary people can afford. She was deeply concerned about “the conflict between what agriculture has become in this country and what it can be,” in which large corporations control agriculture and dominate “land use, water use and availability, pesticide use, and economic and political power.” She commented, “So many of my students’ parents work in agriculture, yet so few can be farmers” (Sleeter, 2005, p. 113). Within the unit, Kathy taught critical analysis of the political context in which students’ families lived and worked. For example, to compare large-scale corporate farms and small family farms, she invited a parent with experience working in agriculture in both the U.S. and Mexico to come and describe the nature of work in both places. The class studied the history and struggles of the United Farm Workers, particularly the work of local organizers, and immigration issues connected

with agriculture. Kathy brought a complex political analysis to the study of these issues. While she anticipated that students made most sense out of that which was familial and local, she periodically connected these local issues with broader concepts of citizenship, rights, immigration, and global economic restructuring, figuring that the political and citizenship education she taught in school complemented activist politics within the immigrant community.

*With secondary school students*

The Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) in Tucson, Arizona was part of a broader Mexican American/Raza Studies program. SJEP was a four-semester high school curriculum in history, government, and literature. It was based on a model of “critically conscious intellectualism” that has three components: 1) an academically rigorous curriculum that is standards-aligned, culturally and historically relevant to students, and focused on social justice issues, 2) critical pedagogy in which students develop critical thinking and critical consciousness, creating rather than consuming knowledge, and 3) authentic caring in which teachers demonstrate deep respect for students as intellectual and full human beings (Cammarota & Romero, 2009). One of its major purposes was to help Mexican American youth, most from very poor neighborhoods and some who were undocumented, to claim education as a tool to address problems and needs in their communities – in other words, to become educated activist citizens.

As Cammarota and Romero (2009) described, teachers utilized a “funds of knowledge” approach to gather knowledge from students’ homes. They documented cultural practices used for everyday survival, then integrated what they learned into curriculum. The curriculum used McIntyre’s (2000) three principles that guide participatory action research: (a) collective investigation of a problem; (b) the reliance on indigenous knowledge to better understand that problem; and (c) the desire to take individual and/or collective action to deal with the identified problem. Using qualitative research methods, students designed and carried out community-based research projects in which they gathered data about manifestations of racism in their school and community using social science theory to analyze patterns in their data, and proposed solutions to problems. Students gave formal presentations based on their research to the community, as well as to academic and youth conferences, and some of their recommendations led to actual changes. For example, one student’s research on the loss of language and culture in education led to engagement in language issues for his own immigrant community. Tucson schools addressed problems students documented such as replacing missing urinals in the boys’ bathrooms, repairing falling tiles in the

gym ceiling, and updating books in the library. Students also learned empathy for the struggles of those outside their immediate social group. In the context of protests around Ethnic Studies in Tucson, students learned “technological cultural citizenship” in which social networking media, such as texting, played a key role in student organizing efforts (Otero & Cammarota, 2011).

### *Conclusion*

The task of preparing students as citizens in diverse societies is complex, particularly under neoliberalism. Yet it is necessary to strengthening participatory democracy and giving substance to ideals of equity and justice. As educators, we have a choice: We can, by default, prepare young people to accept the status quo, or we can dive into the complicated and messy business of educating for multicultural citizenship. I believe that the latter is not only important, but infinitely more interesting than the former.

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## What Can Cooperative Learning Contribute to the Intercultural Classroom?

**Yael Sharan**

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The idea that one can learn best with another person is by no means a new one. There are many informal ways people come together to learn with and from one another every day. How can this be done efficiently and successfully in schools? Seeking to organize learners of all ages in well defined ways of learning together has brought about cooperative learning. Today cooperative learning (CL) is an “umbrella” pedagogy that includes a variety of methods, models and structures that enable people to learn together and come together to learn. It is based on heterogeneous groups, each with learners of different levels of ability, of different ethnicity, with varying interests and backgrounds. Each member of a group is responsible not only for his or her own learning but also for helping teammates learn. CL encourages the use of a variety of learning procedures - from short term activities to long term projects.

### **First, a bit of history**

On what basis can we claim that CL is appropriate for the intercultural classroom? Let’s remember that CL was born of great respect for individual differences and always viewed the classroom as heterogeneous. Even CL’s ancestry is heterogeneous - it was born to several "parents:" John Dewey, Herbert Thelen, and Martin Deutsch, to name a few, who provided both the theoretical and practical foundations of CL.

Dewey (1899/1943) emphasized the social nature of schools, and also tried to influence schools to embody the principles of democracy. That meant that students have a say about what to learn and how to go about learning. Dewey believed that students' interest in their studies would be stimulated when given the opportunity to bear responsibility for directing their learning. Research has shown that when learning is accompanied by intellectual and emotional involvement learners’ motivation is increased significantly.

Following Dewey’s belief that schools should not concentrate almost exclusively on the transmission of information, but rather develop a spirit of free communication and an interchange of ideas, CL encourages communication among students as well as between students and teachers, as an essential instrument of learning. Given that CL methods and models always include some form and degree of group interaction, lessons taught by the school of group dynamics, founded by Kurt Lewin, were applied to all forms of cooperative learning, whatever their primary theoretical orientation. Thanks to Lewin (1947) teachers today understand that they cannot ignore the social aspect of classroom life, regardless of the CL method or model they choose. From the group dynamics movement CL practitioners learned how to maximize the positive influence of relationships in the classroom for the benefit of the learning process.

The practical link between Dewey's and Lewin's theories and their application to classroom learning was forged by Herbert Thelen, who developed Group Investigation as a systematic inquiry strategy for students learning together in small groups. Thelen's design combines the view of learning as the conduct of inquiry by cooperative small groups with the principles of effective group management, so that groups can successfully solve problems and make decisions based on all group members' contributions and views (Sharan, S., Sharan, Y., & Tan, 2013; Sharan, Y. & Sharan, S., 1992; Thelen, 1981). GI is also compatible with constructivist cognitive psychology that asserts that individuals actively build their notions of reality out of their own experience. Learning *about* a subject is inadequate without providing the learner an opportunity to actively experience how knowledge is generated. Presenting information to students, or having them to read a passage from a book, does not transform the information into knowledge. Knowledge is what learners construct out of elements of information, feelings and experience, not something that exists in chunks in the external world to be swallowed whole.

Dewey's vision of education continually resurfaces in different inquiry-based learning models, such as Problem Based Learning (Hlemo-Silver & Barrows, 2006) and Comprehension and Collaboration: Inquiry Circles in Action (Harvey & Daniels, 2009). Each has a unique focus, yet all seek to develop thinking and decision-making skills in the process of inquiry, to provide students with opportunities for finding creative solutions to real life problems, and to enlist the use of appropriate technology, all of which are as vital to society today (Sahlberg & Oldroyd, 2010) as when Thelen initially shaped Dewey's ideas into Group Investigation.

Another significant "parent" of CL was the social psychologist Morton Deutsch, also a student of Lewin, who from the 1960s on studied cooperation and conflict. His research showed that groups are more productive when members are cooperative rather than competitive in their relationships. Cooperation, as opposed to competition, increases the groups' effectiveness in reaching its goals through the communication of ideas, coordination of efforts, helping behaviours, and pride in one's group.

Deutsch conceptualized the principle of positive interdependence, which is at the foundation of cooperative learning. This principle presupposes that the way social interdependence is structured determines the way persons interact, and determines the outcomes of their interaction (Johnson, D., Johnson, R. & Holubec, E., 1998). Positive interdependence is the basic element in all CL methods and procedures.

### **What Research Contributes to the Understanding of Cooperative Learning**

The systematic research and development of cooperative learning as a pedagogy began in the late 1960s and continues to this day. Researchers too numerous to name have conducted studies that proved CL's effectiveness in all aspects of classroom life. Strikingly, most researchers were also practitioners who contributed to the growing pool of cooperative methods and models. Research studies conducted in the 1960s and 70s examined the effects of every feature of the various methods and of CL in general: the effects on achievement, on social interaction, on cognitive processes, motivation, and



school organization. They studied the similarities and differences between methods; students' and teachers' perceptions of CL; the effects of CL strategies and methods on inclusion; group composition, size, discussion, task structure, helping behaviours, and so on. Today researchers continue to deepen our understanding of how CL affects students' and teachers' behaviour and learning, as well as the relationships within the classroom and within the school.

Researchers have begun to examine the way CL “travels” to various cultures and countries. Culture plays a significant role in the education process; it influences what people know and how they come by that knowledge. The large enrolment of Chinese students in New Zealand’s higher education sector, for example, has created the need to understand the relationship between students’ cultural orientation, their preferred learning style and cooperative learning (Baker & Clark, 2011).

If efforts to implement CL in schools mean that students are asked to communicate and learn in ways contrary to their traditional habits the results are often confusion and/or rejection of CL (Nguyen, 2006; Thanh, 2011). This has led some teachers to devise their own means of increasing students’ readiness to work in groups, as reported in two recent studies. Confronted by students’ resistance to heterogeneous pairing in a college in India, the teacher formed homogenous pairs instead and asked each pair to create a clay symbol of the bond between them. After working in homogenous pairs for a while students were more open to attempting heterogeneous grouping (Agashe, 2011). Fushino (2011) describes how Japanese students’ readiness for CL tasks in an English language classroom was established and improved by the practice of basic CL skills. Gradually these students became accustomed to asking for and providing help, requesting and giving feedback, and disagreeing politely, behaviours with which they were not familiar in school.

### **CL and the Intercultural Classroom**

When teachers stand in front of a classroom and look out at a sea of students who speak different languages or dialects and come from far away countries or counties, can they continue to teach what and how they've always taught - even CL? How can CL help teachers respond to the challenge of the intercultural classroom? Let’s examine a few of the ways culture affects learning and go on to describe the culturally sensitive CL classroom.

One of the dimensions by which a culture can be characterized is the degree to which it **avoids uncertainty** and the ways it seeks to do this. In cultures typified by what Hofstede (1986) calls “weak uncertainty avoidance,” with high tolerance of uncertainty or ambiguity, students feel comfortable in loosely structured learning situations and view intellectual disagreement as stimulating of cognitive development. Students from a Euro-American background adapt easily to this style, while those from a Latin or Southeast Asian background tend to expect the teacher to initiate communication and will speak up only when called upon for fear they'll say the “wrong” thing.

Students who grow up in societies typified by what Hofstede calls “strong uncertainty avoidance” – with low tolerance of uncertainty – generally prefer structured learning situations with precise objectives, detailed assignments and strict time frames. Students from a Confucian Heritage

Culture, for example, tend to feel more comfortable when told what they need to know and precisely how to prove what they have learned (Thanh, 2011).

Culture also affects **language use and narrative styles**. If the teacher's and the students' styles are different from each other, another challenge is added to classroom life. Imagine the gap between children from China who are used to reading signs that say: "Little grass is smiling lightly" and an American teacher used to seeing signs that bluntly say "keep off the grass." Another example of cultural difference in language use is the progression of stories--beginning, sequence of events, resolution, ending, which Western culture takes for granted. Indeed, learning a language requires learning how it organizes paragraphs and stories. For example, some Oriental writings develop a topic by tangential, indirect statements, while French and Spanish may digress or introduce extraneous materials. It is not uncommon to begin a Spanish business letter to a known associate by inquiring about the recipient's family and to end with elaborate thanks for past and future assistance. Unfortunately, by not being aware of differences in language use and narrative styles school literacy activities may threaten those linguistic elements most valued by a culture and which bind them together (Hedegaard, 2003).

Another cultural element that is helpful for teachers to be aware of is how culture has shaped patterns of **transmitting knowledge**. To the extent that these differ from the approaches typically used at school it may take children a while to learn new information easily. For example, will some children have to struggle to adjust to the teacher's sequential, linear ways of transmitting information that may seem to them disassembled and fragmented if they're accustomed to more holistic and intuitive ways? Not every mother rehearses with her children the list of things to be done to get ready for school or cautions the child that if he does x the result will be y. Some mothers tell stories that don't have clear time frames and teach their children by example.

How else does culture effect students' learning? Another relevant dimension of culture, studied by sociolinguists, is the kind of verbal **participation structures** it develops in its children. A teacher may plan an activity designed to have students speak up spontaneously and voice their opinions openly. Students from a Euro-American background adapt easily to this behaviour, while those from a Latin or Southeast Asian background may expect the teacher to initiate communication and will speak up only when called upon for fear they'll say the "wrong" thing. In some cultures students are used to nonverbal participation and may not volunteer comments to the group. Native Hawaiian students are not used to asking questions in school. Students from some Native American nations are used to patiently speaking in turns and won't eagerly raise their hands to interrupt a fellow student (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991).

### **The Culturally Sensitive CL Classroom**

When the classroom is viewed as an intercultural setting, children of various religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are "no longer regarded as a 'problem' or 'risk,' but as 'resources'" (Portera, 2008, p. 484). As of the 1960s, when CL emerged as a systematic pedagogy, CL procedures offer learners the opportunity to harness these various "resources" in an

environment respectful of all contributions to learning, in which learners will be more inclined to value themselves and others. The culturally sensitive CL classroom creates opportunities for the exchange of ideas, for a coming together of different viewpoints and for an appreciation for alternative ways of thinking.

The vast pool of CL teaching procedures offers teachers in the intercultural classroom ways to actively combine and involve their students' varied backgrounds and learning styles. There are specific CL methods and procedures that enable teachers to assign tasks that delegate learning roles so that each group member has an opportunity to do his or her share, thereby creating conditions that help students of different backgrounds and abilities gain status and acceptance among their peers (Cohen, 1994; Sharan, Y. & Sharan, S., 1992). With time and practice students and teachers realize that the different interests, backgrounds, values, and abilities of group members are in fact the group's greatest asset and enrich the class' pool of resources for expanding knowledge.

A striking feature of the intercultural classroom is that students often need help in finding meaningful connections between the curriculum and their personal worlds (Hedegaard, 2003; Kanu, 2007). Teachers who take the trouble to learn about their students' varied cultural traditions, linguistic and learning styles, and at the same time integrate CL methods and strategies in their teaching repertoire, can create a culturally sensitive CL classroom, where learning is made relevant for all.

**Building community.** At the core of this classroom is a sense of community, nurtured by activities that develop the interpersonal communication and helping skills required for learning together. This is one important step in the attempt to redress the loss of a sense of community that many immigrants feel in their new countries (Palaiologou, 2007). Creating a sense of community is a principle that has always been at the heart of the cooperative classroom. All CL methods integrate "teambuilding" activities that gradually build up the interpersonal communication, helping skills and sense of belonging required for learning together.

Building community has been stressed in CL classrooms precisely because most Western societies have lost the feeling of mutual responsibility and help. Ironically, in CL classrooms in New Zealand, for example, Maori children learned anew how to cooperate, a quality they had lost after having assimilated into the dominant competitive culture that gives priority to the individual and to working independently. The attempt to regain the loss of a sense of community is appreciated today even outside the classroom, in many organizations and businesses that emphasize teamwork and collaboration. It has even spread to today's virtual teams that also require a solid foundation of mutual trust and collaboration if they are to function effectively (Holton, 2001).

**Cooperative climate.** Together with a sense of community in the CL classroom teachers strive to create a cooperative climate. By highlighting the contribution diverse perspectives can make to learning, as when practicing simple strategies that invite multiple and diverse answers, like Think-Pair-Share or Roundtable, the teacher establishes a balance between individual, pair and

group work and a gradual and smooth transition from teacher directed learning to cooperative learning where acceptance of diversity is the norm.

**Cultural diversity in every subject.** Intercultural education is also concerned with what to teach. By highlighting the contribution diverse perspectives can make to learning, as when we use CL strategies that invite multiple and diverse answers, acceptance of diversity can become the norm in every subject. In fact, the traditional scope of a subject may suddenly seem quite narrow. It would be helpful – and even refreshing - for teachers and students to learn about the contributions that different ethnic groups or nationalities have made to their subject areas. They may be familiar with the achievements of select, high-profile individuals from a few ethnic groups in some areas, like Michael Jordan in basketball or Bruce Lee in the martial arts. But there is more to each culture than what is popularized on television or in movies.

Actually it is not necessary to go far a field: a rich and valuable resource for the study of cultural diversity is right there in the classroom. Teachers may make use of students' knowledge to bridge between their worlds and subject matter. For example, students' surnames, a concrete and diverse phenomenon, could be the catalyst for an inquiry into their sources and meanings. They could then go beyond the classroom to inquire into the origin of diverse street names and eventually expand the study to an investigation of how recent settlers in the area influenced changes in shops, various institutions, restaurants, etc. Here is social, geographical and historical content all in one that grows out of the cultural diversity in the classroom, stems naturally from students' reality, and is not added on in separate artificial patches.

But a word of caution - as much as teachers need to learn about the general characteristics of different cultures it is helpful to keep in mind that children don't come to school as official ambassadors of their countries of origin. We need to remember that every individual student is not an automatic product of culture, but one who actively interprets it in his or her own way. There are as many variations within a group as there are commonalities, and each individual manifests the characteristics of his or her cultural background differently. This is especially true of children who were not born in their ancestral country, and may have fragmented knowledge of their heritage or even of their heritage language. They certainly cannot be seen solely in light of the traits of their ancestral culture and may in fact have very complex identities. All the more reason for teachers to encourage and enable students to express what they do know, build on it, and seek ways to relate it to what they do not know (Gay, 2002; Tharp & Gallimore, 1991).

**Discover what is meaningful.** The intercultural classroom heightens the concern with students' and teachers' struggles to bridge any mismatch between students' culture and the culture of the teacher and the classroom. A teacher cannot discover what is meaningful to students by the traditional one-way communication from teacher to students, like a 'banker' (to borrow Paulo Freire's term), who "deposits" knowledge without taking time to explore the students' mindset.

One effective way is to gradually introduce cooperative learning procedures, from the simple to the more complex, which present students with meaningful and relevant content, with built in invitations to contribute a variety of resources and solutions. Whether in the context of the simplest CL procedures or the more complex, students learn by combining their own experiences and backgrounds with new information they find and are taught. Learning is negotiated in a respectful environment that allows students the time needed to learn how to make meaningful connections between their world and the world of school.

The wealth of research and practice in CL over the past 40 years allows us to confidently claim that ALL students benefit from learning this way. Yet the effect of CL is not automatic. As we all know, in any context just placing students in groups does not guarantee that they will work smoothly together; all the more so when there is a potential gap between teachers' and students' expectations and behaviours in the classroom (Sharan, 2010). It is essential to create a balance between judicious and gradual use of cooperative learning methods, and sensitivity to the multiple manifestations of diversity. When teachers build on these attitudes and practices they provide a safe environment in which students can create connections between their worlds and school. Hopefully the students' feelings of uncertainty will be transformed into a resource that enriches teaching and learning.

### **To sum up**

From the 1960s on the practice of CL has been found to be useful in all content areas and grade levels, and even beyond the classroom. It is worth noting that even in the world outside the classroom cooperation is acknowledged as a key to success. Vast numbers of people meet daily in organizations of one kind or another in which they work in committees or project teams that call for cooperation. Cases in point are the many Nobel laureates who attribute their achievements to team work (Baloche, 1998).

As CL spreads around the world it offers teachers the luxury of "shopping" in a CL supermarket "full of tempting "products." Teachers may learn several of the better known methods, models, and approaches and then go on to adapt what they learn to their own cultural contexts and needs, and eventually design procedures of their own. Today it is understood that the practice of cooperative learning is not to be solely identified with any single developer and that all cooperative learning methods, models, and approaches – even teacher generated - have their valuable place in the culturally sensitive classroom.

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Yael Sharan

## Expanding Cooperative Learning Through Group Investigation

Preconference Experiential Workshop

I. Introduction: Why develop an inquiring classroom community in general and in the intercultural classroom in particular?

Review of rationale and of stages of GI

II. Carrying out an investigation in groups: In what way is Group Investigation suited for the intercultural classroom?

-Form teams and choose one of the following questions:

- 1) How can a GI project actively involve students' diverse backgrounds and learning styles?
- 2) How does an investigation create conditions that help students of different backgrounds and abilities gain status and acceptance among their peers?
- 3) Is GI or its components a good vehicle for helping students and teachers realize value the different interests, backgrounds, values, and abilities?

-Discuss what you would like to know in order to answer your chosen question.

-List all group members' questions, organize them into subtopics, and divide the subtopics among group members.

-Seek answers to your questions (resources: examples of GI; your experience with GI; facilitators' experience)

-As a team, prepare a short summary statement about your findings (i.e. your combined answers to your chosen question)

III. Present the summary of your answers to your chosen question.

IV. "Classwide" discussion: What adjustments and modifications can be made in the GI process in light of different cultural contexts?

V. Wrap up:

- What kind of learning took place in this workshop?
- What have we learned about ourselves as investigators?
- What else would you like to learn about GI?



**Convegno Internazionale – International Conference  
Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World  
Educazione e Counselling interculturale nel mondo globale**

**Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013**

**VERSO UNA POSSIBILE FIORITURA UMANA:  
“AGENTIVITÀ” E SVILUPPO SECONDO MARTHA NUSSBAUM**

Di Giuditta Alessandrini

**Abstract**

*Nell'ambito delle scienze economico-sociali è emerso negli ultimi anni un significativo spostamento di asse da un approccio allo sviluppo meramente orientato alla crescita quantitativa come imperativo verso un approccio centrato sulla dimensione qualitativa della vita umana e sui beni immateriali come la qualità della relazione interpersonale, il benessere, la felicità.*

*Lo sviluppo umano, dunque, può essere interpretato in diversi modi e secondo diverse prospettive che non si esauriscono nella dimensione quantitativa (e, quindi, secondo un approccio meramente funzionale alla crescita economica) ma implicano ambiti connessi alla vita sociale nella sua complessità<sup>1</sup>.*

*Il concetto di sviluppo umano può indubbiamente offrire un nuovo criterio di interpretazione e di valutazione della vita concreta delle persone, che riguarda le varie dimensioni della vita umana di uomini e donne.*

*L'approccio alle capacità di Martha Nussbaum – ambito su cui si focalizza il contributo – offre un dispositivo teorico rigoroso non solo per una lettura del tema delle capabilities ma anche per comprendere il tema dell'ineguaglianza di opportunità per le donne a livello mondiale, e per individuare le condizioni che le politiche pubbliche devono adottare per rendere possibile la “fioritura” delle donne, in quanto sviluppo del potenziale in esse presente e garanzia di salvaguardia di una vita dignitosa.*

**1. Una premessa: la definizione del concetto di “sviluppo umano”**

Lo *sviluppo umano* può essere interpretato in diversi modi e secondo diverse prospettive che non si esauriscono nella dimensione *quantitativa* ma implicano ambiti complessi, correlati alla vita sociale nella sua complessità. Per Martha Nussbaum (2010) il profitto è il mezzo funzionale all'esistenza umana ma “il fine dello sviluppo globale, come quello di una buona politica nazionale, è di mettere in grado le persone di vivere un'esistenza piena e creativa, sviluppando il loro potenziale e organizzandosi una vita significativa e all'altezza della loro uguale dignità umana”.

Grazie al pensiero di A. Sen, della stessa Nussbaum, e di altri, è emersa negli ultimi anni la consapevolezza che occorra una rappresentazione delle *strade per la crescita* più ricca e complessa di quella rappresentata dal calcolo del PIL (Prodotto interno lordo).

Vorrei ricordare il valore significativo dell'*indice dello sviluppo umano* (ISU), secondo cui lo sviluppo di una nazione dovrebbe essere misurato non solo in base al reddito nazionale, com'era consuetudine fare nel passato, ma anche tenendo conto dell'aspettativa di vita e del tasso di alfabetizzazione, della disuguaglianza multidimensionale, delle disparità di genere e la povertà estrema.

Nel 1990, il Programma per lo sviluppo delle Nazioni Unite (UNDP) ha pubblicato il suo primo *Rapporto sullo Sviluppo Umano* (2010), che introduceva l'ISU (Indice dello sviluppo umano).

La premessa su cui si fondava l'ISU, al tempo considerata “radicale”, si concentrava sul fatto che lo sviluppo di una nazione dovrebbe essere misurato non solo in base al reddito nazionale, ma anche tenendo conto dell'aspettativa di vita e del tasso di alfabetizzazione, fattori per cui già esistevano dati comparabili per la maggior parte dei paesi. Altri fattori possono essere: a) la disuguaglianza multidimensionale; b) le disparità di genere; c) la povertà estrema.

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<sup>1</sup> Per un maggiore approfondimento degli argomenti, vedasi la bibliografia di riferimento a chiusura del contributo. Vedasi anche i miei volumi del 2004, 2005 ed il recente (2013) *La formazione al centro dello sviluppo umano. Crescita, lavoro, innovazione*, pubblicato nella collana Adapt-Centro Studi Marco Biagi ed edito dalla Giuffrè.

L'approccio dello sviluppo umano (Chiappero Martinetti, Pareglio, 2009) ha profondamente influenzato un'intera generazione di politici ed esperti di sviluppo anche nell'ambito del sistema delle organizzazioni delle Nazioni Unite in generale (Walker, 2012).

La tesi che motiva l'approccio allo sviluppo umano è che la crescita economica non agisce di per sé migliorando automaticamente la qualità della vita in particolare rispetto a settori cruciali come la sanità e l'istruzione.

Martha Nussbaum, nel recente volume *“Non per profitto”* (2010), dimostra che l'incremento del Pil non agisce direttamente sulla libertà politica: si vedano ad esempio i casi di Cina ed India. O ancora si veda come gli Stati Uniti siano al primo posto come Pil ed al dodicesimo posto rispetto all'ISU.

L'ISU medio mondiale è cresciuto oggi del 18% dal 1990 (e del 41% dal 1970)<sup>2</sup>. La Dichiarazione finale relativa all'ultimo convegno dell'UNDP tenutosi ad Istanbul nel 2012, ha sottolineato in particolar modo il bisogno di strategie per lo sviluppo – sia a livello locale che globale – che siano in grado di porre una forte enfasi sul tema dell'inclusione sociale e dell'uguaglianza in riferimento al fatto che lo sviluppo economico molto spesso cammina di pari passo con il degrado economico ed accresce le disuguaglianze. Per raggiungere questi obiettivi occorre una mobilitazione dei capitali e delle risorse, una buona *governance* ed una piena valorizzazione delle donne attraverso l'accesso all'educazione alla salute, ai servizi di base e ad una migliore partecipazione alla forza lavoro. Il Rapporto 2010 ha dimostrato che, riducendo le ineguaglianze sociali ed economiche si possono ridurre i rischi ambientali, mentre non riuscire a rallentare il deterioramento delle situazioni ambientali si accompagna al crescere delle ineguaglianze economico-sociali.

Le capacità, secondo la visione di A. Sen e Nussbaum –, sono il potenziale effettivo su cui si basa la “fioritura umana” (Nussbaum, 2010).

Il benessere delle persone è *molto più che una questione di denaro*, poiché consiste nella possibilità di realizzare i progetti di vita che gli individui hanno ragione di scegliere e perseguire attraverso la coltivazione delle *capabilities* di cui sono portatori. Da qui il richiamo ad una nuova economia, un'*economia dello sviluppo umano*, che abbia come obiettivo la promozione del benessere umano e della crescita, e che si impegni a valutare e perseguire attivamente politiche alternative, nella misura in cui permettono di migliorare lo sviluppo.

## 2.L'approccio alle capacità: elementi distintivi

L'approccio alle capacità (*capability approach*), secondo la Nussbaum, è un approccio alla valutazione comparata della qualità della vita da cui scaturisce la teorizzazione di una “nuova” giustizia sociale. Questo schema teorico era stato formulato già a partire dalla prima metà degli anni ottanta da A. Sen, economista e premio Nobel nel 1998, ma è stato arricchito e coniugato nei termini di politica pubblica e correlato a problematiche più ampie di tipo etico e giuridico negli ultimi anni da diversi autori (tra cui Robeyns, 2005) e da differenti prospettive.

Le motivazioni che consentono che questo schema teorico possa rappresentare la sostenibilità e la qualità di processi di sviluppo deriva almeno da tre ordini di motivazioni: il benessere individuale non è considerato né una competenza né una condizione statica definita dal possesso di determinati standard, bensì come “un processo” nell'ambito del quale è fondamentale la disponibilità di risorse alle quali è consentito l'accesso; il secondo ordine di considerazioni richiama l'aver allargato la considerazione di povertà ed eguaglianza come opportunità che risiedono nello spazio di vita degli individui e delle società. Il terzo è correlato al rapporto con una visione complessa dello sviluppo che supera la

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<sup>2</sup> Il *Rapporto sullo sviluppo umano* è una pubblicazione indipendente commissionata dalle Nazioni Unite per lo sviluppo (UNDP). La sua autonomia editoriale è garantita da una risoluzione speciale dell'Assemblea generale (A/RES/57/264), che riconosce il *Rapporto sullo sviluppo umano* come “un esercizio intellettuale indipendente” e “un importante strumento di sensibilizzazione sullo sviluppo umano in tutto il mondo”. Sono stati pubblicati autonomi *Rapporti Nazionali sullo Sviluppo Umano* da più di 140 paesi nel corso degli ultimi due decenni. Il *Rapporto sullo sviluppo umano* è tradotto in più di una dozzina di lingue e lanciato in più di 100 paesi ogni anno.

dimensione economicistica per incentrarsi su dimensioni legate a valori antropologici (lo star bene, lo sviluppo delle potenzialità, la giustizia, l'uguaglianza)<sup>3</sup>.

Le domande di base da cui nasce l'approccio, nella versione Nussbaum, dunque, sono le seguenti: quali sono le opportunità per ciascun essere umano nella società in cui vive? Qual è il potere di definizione di sé delle persone?

Lo scopo sostanziale di tale approccio è migliorare la qualità della vita di ciascuno definita in base alle sue *capacità* (*capabilities*).

La valorizzazione delle persone, grazie allo sviluppo del *capitale formativo* può essere il primo passo di un processo che conduca a guadagnare "libertà sostanziali", ovvero – come ripete Sen (2000) – "una libertà che implica la capacità (*capability*) di trasformare i beni, le risorse a disposizione in libertà di perseguire i propri obiettivi, di promuovere i propri scopi, di mettere in atto stili di vita alternativi, di progettare la propria vita secondo quanto ha valore per sé".

Le capacità sono – in altri termini – diritti essenziali di tutti i cittadini: sono distinte e devono tutte essere garantite e tutelate.

Il rispetto della dignità umana – in questa prospettiva – richiede che i cittadini raggiungano un alto livello di capacità.

Le capacità possono articolarsi, quindi, in due categorie: *capacità interne* (i tratti personali, le capacità intellettuali ed emotive, le capacità di percezione e di movimento) e le *capacità combinate* (acquisite grazie all'interazione con l'ambiente).

Le capacità sono, dunque, la somma delle capacità interne e delle condizioni socio-politiche ed economiche in cui possono determinarsi i "funzionamenti".

La rivendicazione della dignità umana può essere, dunque, ostacolata dall'impedimento al raggiungimento di capacità sia *interne* che *combinatae*. Questa è strettamente legata al concetto di "attività". Dobbiamo proteggere – secondo la Nussbaum – sfere di libertà fondamentali, sfere la cui rimozione renderebbe una vita non all'altezza della dignità umana.

L'approccio alle capacità o capacitazioni (*capabilities*) non si può definire come una teoria sulla natura umana bensì come un approccio di tipo "valutativo ed etico".

Le *capabilities* sono, dunque, poteri innati che possono essere *alimentati* o no e diventano capacità di base.

Cosa significa, quindi, capacitazione? Il senso più autentico del concetto è quello di "opportunità di scelta": da qui consegue che l'idea che promuovere capacità indichi promuovere "sfere di libertà" o "libertà sostanziali" (Sen, 2000).

"La capacitazione – sono sempre parole di Sen – non è che l'insieme delle combinazioni alternative di funzionamenti che il soggetto è in grado di realizzare".

Il concetto di "*funzionamento*" richiede, dunque, di essere compreso per cogliere l'intero schema teorico: costituisce, infatti, come abbiamo visto, il punto finale del concetto di capacità. I funzionamenti sono le capacità che si possono o si devono prendere in considerazione. Per Sen, le capacità infatti vanno intese come uno schema aperto a differenza di Nussbaum per la quale – come vedremo più avanti – è possibile elaborare una vera e propria tassonomia di capacità. Il concetto di funzionamento – di matrice aristotelica – afferma Sen (2000, p. 79) "riguarda ciò che una persona può desiderare – in quanto gli dà valore – di fare, di essere" ed ancora "Questi funzionamenti cui viene riconosciuto un "valore vanno", dai più elementari come l'essere nutrito a sufficienza e il non soffrire di malattie evitabili ad attività e condizioni molto complesse come l'essere in grado di partecipare alla vita della comunità ed avere rispetto di sé".

Un ulteriore concetto, quello di "*agency*" (o agentività), è fondamentale nello schema dell'*approccio delle capacità* in quanto evidenzia un processo finalizzato a produrre mutamento in base a *valori ed obiettivi*<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Dal 2004 è stata costituita un'Associazione internazionale che riunisce studiosi interessati ai temi dello sviluppo umano e dell'approccio alle capacità. L'associazione "HDCA – *Human Development Capability Association*" promuove attività di ricerca di alta qualità relativa allo sviluppo umano e all'approccio della capacità. Tale ricerca scientifica comprende più discipline per le quali lo sviluppo umano e l'approccio delle capacità hanno dato un significativo contributo, come la ricerca inerente alla qualità della vita, alla povertà, alla giustizia, agli studi di genere, all'ambiente. L'associazione si propone di produrre ulteriori contributi in tutte le discipline inerenti, tra cui l'economia, la filosofia, la teoria politica, la sociologia e gli studi sullo sviluppo.

Per fare un esempio, possiamo immaginare un insegnante di scuola secondaria che condivide l'esigenza di formare i giovani alla sostenibilità in via teorica considerando la letteratura e la reportistica in merito. In questo caso possiamo sostenere che ci troviamo di fronte ad un set di valori. Ma se lo stesso insegnante si impegna personalmente nel vero e proprio dare sostanza ed attuazione a tali valori, sviluppando elementi innovativi nel curriculum in questa direzione e si mobilita ancor più ispirando e sostenendo un gruppo di giovani che elaborano nuove responsabilità in ambito extrascolastico (ad esempio organizzandosi come gruppo di lavoro, community sul web), ebbene, in questo caso l'insegnante sviluppa "agentività" perché elabora (o stimola ad elaborare) obiettivi che danno sostanza ad un set di valori di cui si fa sostenitore.

Per Nussbaum, in definitiva, le *capacità* possono essere indicate in un *quadro concreto* che può essere garantito da leggi e principi costituzionali.

Secondo questa prospettiva, è possibile disporre di una tassonomia di *dieci* capacità come condizione necessaria affinché vi sia giustizia sociale, nella misura in cui la persona viene vista come un *fine*.

Concepire il *benessere* e la *qualità* sociale della vita degli esseri umani in termini di libertà sostanziali degli individui, secondo il paradigma delle capacità, ha conseguenze di vasta portata per il modo di intendere lo stesso processo di sviluppo. Secondo questa angolazione, infatti, il fine dello sviluppo (e della crescita economica-sociale) è "creare una situazione, un ambiente, in cui le persone, individualmente e collettivamente, siano in grado di sviluppare pienamente le proprie potenzialità e abbiano ragionevoli probabilità di condurre una vita produttiva e creativa a misura delle proprie necessità e dei propri interessi".

L'obiettivo di una società *giusta* dovrebbe essere la realizzazione dell'eguaglianza delle capacità dei suoi membri. Ne consegue che l'obiettivo da massimizzare non è l'utilità: non si tratta solo di redistribuire beni (seppure primari), ma di attivare le *capacità di utilizzare quei beni*, per trasformarli in "tenore" di vita.

La lista delle capacità comprende le seguenti dieci dimensioni (Nussbaum, 2010):

1. *Vita*: ogni individuo deve avere la possibilità di vivere fino alla fine una condizione umana di vita di normale durata, non morire prematuramente e non trovarsi nelle condizioni di minaccia esterna alla propria incolumità.
2. *Salute fisica*: godere di buona salute, fruire del nutrimento adeguato, potersi riprodurre ed avere condizioni abitative adeguate.
3. *Integrità fisica*: essere nelle condizioni di muoversi liberamente da un luogo all'altro, essere protetti di fronte aggressioni anche sessuali, abusi (in particolare quando si è nell'età infantile) e violenza domestica; godere del piacere sessuale e capacità di scelta nelle funzioni riproduttive.
4. *Sensi, immaginazione e pensiero*: poter usare i propri sensi per immaginare, ragionare e soprattutto pensare in modo umano ovvero in contesti dove è possibile accedere all'istruzione ed alla conoscenza. Utilizzare immaginazione e pensiero ai fini dell'auto-espressione. Essere in grado di sviluppare scelte autonome, di natura religiosa, letteraria, artistica. Poter andare in cerca del significato ultimo dell'esistenza in modo autonomo. Fare esperienze piacevoli ed evitare forme di dolore inutile.
5. *Sentimenti*: poter elaborare sentimenti di affetto per cose e persone. Essere in grado di sviluppare forme di sostegno a tali capacità attraverso le forme associative.
6. *Ragion Pratica*: essere in grado di formarsi una concezione di ciò che è bene e male, impegnando se stessi in una riflessione critica su come pianificare la propria esistenza, ancorando tale capacità al bisogno di protezione della propria libertà di coscienza.
7. *Appartenenza*: poter vivere con gli altri esseri umani, ed impegnarsi in forme di interazione sociale, esercitando empatia e compassione; essere capaci di giustizia e di amicizia. Proteggere istituzioni che sono alla base della tutela di tali forme di appartenenza. Proteggere la libertà di parola e di associazione politica. Poter essere trattati come persona dignitosa, senza incorrere in forme di umiliazione del sé. Essere protetti dalle discriminazioni in base all'etnia, sesso, tendenza sessuale, e religione, casta, origine

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<sup>4</sup> Alla base dell'idea di capacità è possibile rintracciare il concetto *aristotelico* di *dunamis* (potenza) correlato ad *energeia* (atto). "Dunamis" è anche capacità di produrre un mutamento, capacità attiva (non dimentichiamoci che anche l'anima può essere colta un "insieme di capacità"). Su Aristotele cfr in particolare, Berti, 2004; Howie & Innocenti, 1975.

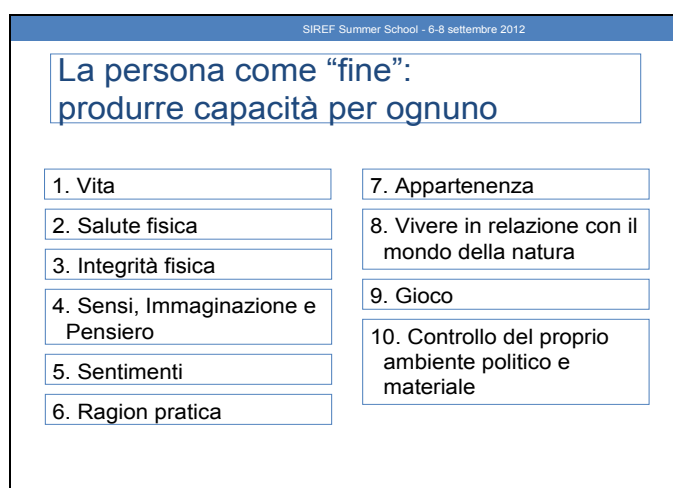
nazionale. Sul lavoro, essere in grado di lavorare in modo degno di un essere umano, stabilendo un rapporto di mutuo riconoscimento con gli altri lavoratori.

8. *Altre specie*: vivere in relazione con gli animali e le piante e con il mondo della natura, potendo averne cura.

9. *Gioco*: poter ridere, giocare e godere di attività ricreative.

10. *Controllo del proprio ambiente*: partecipare alle scelte politiche che governano la propria vita e godere delle garanzie di libertà di parola e di associazione. Aver diritto al possesso di terra e beni mobili in termini di concrete opportunità, cercare lavoro essere garantiti da arresti e perquisizioni. Godere dei diritti di proprietà.

La tavola seguente (1) sintetizza in un quadro unico la tassonomia delle dieci capacità.



Tav. 1 – La tassonomia delle dieci capacità

### 3. La svolta dell’approccio delle capacità: inferenze in ambito educativo

Il problema che abbiamo di fronte nell’ambito delle scienze sociali e pedagogiche è quello di chiedersi in che misura tali trasformazioni di fatto incidano su una visione antropologica del lavoro come fonte di dignità e identità.

Il dibattito in materia appare in bilico tra *una visione della formazione economicista-funzionalista*, e *una visione inclusiva* di investimento sociale sul potenziale e sui talenti delle persone, al di là della loro condizione occupazionale (Arendt, 1994; Baumann 2002, 2012; Beck, 2000; Dell’Aringa, 2011; Reviglio, 2011; Savona, 2009; Tronti & Centra, 2011). Quale delle due visioni prevalga nei diversi contesti, dipende dai presupposti normativi del welfare che si assume per “buono”, dal concetto di cittadino e di cittadinanza (Todorov, 1997) che in esso si iscrive.

In sintesi l’approccio alle capacità sottolinea i seguenti aspetti:

- Le capacità sono “diritti essenziali” di tutti i cittadini: sono distinte e devono tutte essere garantite e tutelate.
- Il rispetto della dignità umana richiede che i cittadini raggiungano un alto livello di capacità, in tutte e dieci le sfere indicate nell’approccio della Nussbaum.
- Garantire le *dieci* capacità è condizione necessaria affinché vi sia giustizia sociale (Nussbaum, 2010).

La tavola seguente (2) propone una *lettura parallela* di alcune dimensioni dell’approccio teorico della Nussbaum con alcuni principi universalmente accettati in ambito pedagogico considerati quindi “parte sostantiva” di un modo di pensare pedagogico.

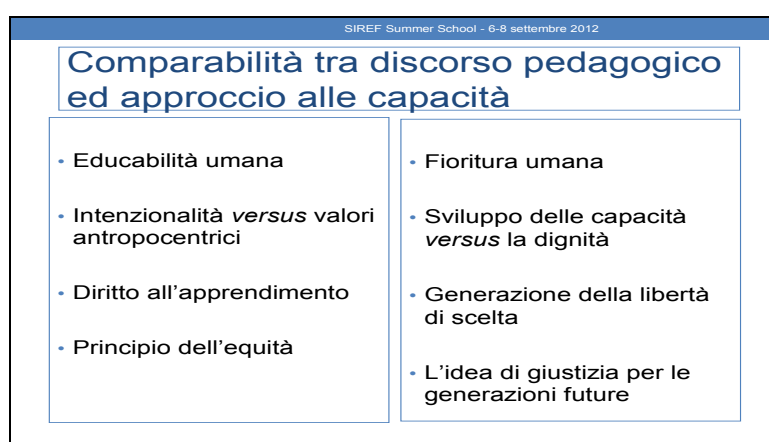
L'idea di *educabilità* umana come elemento-cardine del congegno pedagogico – correlato anche all'idea di intenzionalità – può essere assimilato al concetto di “fioritura umana” come passaggio dalla potenzialità all'atto.

La dignità può essere considerata come la direzione di fondo di un'idea di sviluppo intesa in senso antropologico, ovvero centrata sull'*humanum* della persona.

La coniugazione pedagogica del diritto all'apprendimento è un'istanza correlata a ciò che c'è di più irriducibile all'istanza della libertà umana, il libero arbitrio della persona come *persona capace di agire* e di esprimere opzioni dotate di senso.

Questo “punto d'arrivo” altro non è se non l'ideale dell'*areté* espresso da sempre nella *paideia* classica.

L'idea di giustizia per le generazioni future, infine, è correlato al tema dell'educazione come fonte di equità. Questo “postulato” di matrice illuministica ha riferimenti molto chiari all'universo di discorso dei padri dell'economia come Adam Smith (1776), ma è anche uno dei motivi che sostengono alla base il valore “politico” di un sapere pedagogico orientato alla prassi ed al cambiamento (basti pensare per tutti, tra gli autori del novecento, all'opera di J. Dewey del 1916).



Tav. 2 – Discorso pedagogico ed approccio alle capacità

Possiamo comunque rilevare nelle opere della Nussbaum (2001, 2012) un quadro sistematico di riflessioni pedagogiche correlate alla responsabilità politica che la pedagogia ha nel suo seno nel merito dello studio delle condizioni che generano processi educativi centrati sulle capacità critiche e di pensiero.

“Produrre crescita economica non significa produrre democrazia” è detto con molta chiarezza dalla studiosa di Chicago.

È possibile rilevare una sorta di dicotomia tra modelli educativi centrati sulla cultura umanistica, orientati alla costruzione di “menti” critiche ed aperte alla bellezza, all'immaginazione ed all'empatia e modelli orientati prevalentemente ad una cultura tecnico-scientifica focalizzata sull'esigenza di forgiare mentalità orientate alla produttività. Educare ad una vita dignitosa significa porre le premesse per un'educazione alla democrazia all'interno di un paradigma alternativo a quello della crescita economica. Il paradigma dello sviluppo umano.

L'ideale socratico – visto come pratica sociale – viene configurato dalla studiosa come un ideale di grande potenza innovatrice in grado di contrastare modelli centrati sul primato del profitto inteso come unica via per la crescita. La dimensione dialogica e cooperativa può diventare l'asse su cui costruire una pedagogia per lo sviluppo umano (Nussbaum, 2012).

L'obiettivo di una società *giusta* dovrebbe essere la realizzazione dell'eguaglianza delle capacità dei suoi membri. Ne consegue che l'obiettivo da massimizzare non è l'utilità: non si tratta solo di redistribuire beni (seppure primari), ma di attivare le *capacità di utilizzare quei beni*, per trasformarli in “tenere” di vita. L'effettiva realizzazione delle capacità è però correlata alla responsabilità del soggetto. “Si può ipotizzare – secondo l'approccio di U. Margiotta ampiamente condiviso da chi scrive – un “welfare di quarta generazione” (Donati, 2001), di un “welfare attivo e plurale” ovvero delle capacitazioni, basato sul principio della cittadinanza societaria, in cui il soggetto pubblico non si sostituisce agli attori, ma

garantisce loro la possibilità di agire in base a regole eque e solidali, fondate sul riconoscimento della libertà di partecipazione ed espressione del talento” (Margiotta, 2013).

Le distanze tra “forti” e “deboli”, in questa prospettiva, dovrebbero essere “limate” e, in modo particolare, va ridotta la percentuale di persone situate *sotto la soglia minima* di competenze, ai fini della tutela dei loro diritti e della partecipazione democratica.

Ciò significa che, in una società giusta, occorre riconoscere *lo specifico potenziale* di apprendimento del soggetto, e la capacità di coniugarlo *con* il merito, il talento, il potenziale (Margiotta, 2009).

Il merito dovrebbe poter diversificare i risultati, facendo emergere l'eccellenza e riconsegnando al contesto lavorativo un compito alto, quello di una “*cura dei talenti*”, liberando il più possibile il merito e il potenziale dei lavoratori dai condizionamenti sociali e culturali d'origine.

In questo tipo di welfare si auspica un passaggio dall'*employability* alla *capability*.

È una prospettiva di grande rilievo dal punto di vista dell'innovazione all'interno dei processi di formazione/lavoro che si sostanzia sul tema dell'istruzione-educazione.

#### **4. Per una prospettiva di giustizia sociale di fronte alle istanze di *gender equality***

È questo *nodo* che acquista il valore centrale di generazione dell'istanza di giustizia sociale e contrasto alle disuguaglianze.

L'approccio appena descritto restituisce al tema della formazione quel valore che fa parte della tradizione di economisti come Adam Smith<sup>5</sup>.

Quali sono, allora, i fattori *strutturali* in grado di favorire l'inclusione e la libertà di realizzazione delle *potenzialità* delle persone (ed in primis delle donne)?

Per capire il ruolo delle capacitazioni bisogna tener conto, secondo Sen, di tre elementi. Il rapporto diretto con il benessere e la libertà degli esseri umani; il ruolo indiretto che le capacitazioni hanno in quanto agiscono sul cambiamento sociale, ed, infine, il ruolo indiretto che hanno in quanto influiscono sulla produzione economica (Sen, 2000, p. 296).

Per dirla con Sen, il “welfare delle capacitazioni” consente al soggetto di esigere l'agibilità dei propri diritti sociali: in primis il *diritto di apprendimento*.

Questo diritto è correlato significativamente al diritto di cittadinanza e si “espande” in un arco temporale che si sovrappone all'intero arco di vita della persona. La visione della legittimità e della lungimiranza dell'idea di *long life learning* già elaborato a partire dai documenti europei dell'inizio del decennio appena trascorso (AlmaLaurea, 2012; European Commission, 2011; ILO, 2012; Isfol, 2012a/b; OECD, 2011) deve oggi acquisire concretezza e valore fondativo di un nuovo welfare.

Il problema che si pone, oggi, è quello di sviluppare un passaggio “politico”: dalla generica riconoscibilità del diritto di un apprendimento che si configuri *durante* tutta la vita, ad un sistema di riconoscimento e certificazione di competenze che assicuri l'accesso della persona ad istanze di partecipazione ad una cittadinanza attiva. Il soggetto va accompagnato in questo percorso evolutivo centrato sulla *capability* anche in un'ottica di *life long guidance*.

Alcuni documenti europei sottolineano che il permanere della crisi economica in Europa determina un maggior peso dei rischi di disuguaglianza sulle donne in particolare, sulla persone mature rendendo più difficile una ricollocazione professionale e quindi maggiore una vulnerabilità sociale correlata con il ciclo di vita<sup>6</sup>.

Un altro tema di rilevanza crescente per il futuro è la considerazione della *gender equality* in correlazione con il fenomeno delle migrazioni con le caratteristiche che questo sta assumendo. Le popolazioni femminili provenienti da paesi in via di sviluppo per la gran parte sono state interessate nell'ambito di tali spinte migratorie dal bisogno che i paesi occidentali esprimono sempre più – anche in correlazione

<sup>5</sup> Uno dei fattori della ricchezza delle nazioni è identificato da Adam Smith, nel 1776 con la quota di lavoratori produttivi sul totale della popolazione: basandosi su quest'elemento, l'economista, con molta chiarezza e per la prima volta, sottolinea la *centralità del lavoro nella società* in contrapposizione ai retaggi della società feudale, all'epoca ancora persistenti anche nella società inglese a lui contemporanea.

<sup>6</sup> Cfr in particolare (a cura della fondazione Brodolini) *Gender equality in caring responsabilità over the lifecycle*, da Conference equality between women and men, Brussels 19-20 settembre 2011.

con i trend demografici – di figure destinate alla cura (colf e badanti). Alcuni studi valutano le specificità di situazioni a rischio di disuguaglianza per la donna in tali ambiti: le vite divise tra paesi d'origine e paesi dove si trova il lavoro, la valenza economica di persone che è destinata ai paesi di origine e non ritorna a generare benessere direttamente sulle donne che lavorano. Tali situazioni denotano caratteristiche da cui emergono nuove problematiche anche dal punto di vista delle condizioni di giustizia sociale.

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## **Find the Other through books: Children's literature and intercultural education**

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### **Abstract**

The societal transformations occurred in the last decades, particularly the contemporary migrations movements, rise questions related to the concepts of nation, identity and citizenship. Portugal, particularly since the end of the 20th century, becomes the destination of several immigration fluxes, turning the Portuguese society into a plural one. Portugal is also known by their relevant inclusive policies, comparing with other countries, but in the daily life things are different and we find xenophobe attitudes in Portuguese society.

The aim of this paper is to examine the role of children's literature in the context of intercultural education and the promotion of a cosmopolitan citizenship. In fact, children's literature is, on one side, a privileged setting for the encounter of the youngest (children and adolescents) with cultural diversity, supporting, for instance, the development of intercultural competences. On the other side, children's literature may constitute a kind of "shelter" for young immigrants when they find in those literary works positive representations of their culture and ways of life, by also giving them an opportunity to affirm their identities. Children's perceptions of other cultures are formed, at least in part, by the books they read. Through the contact with the social and cultural portraits of the Other in children's literature, young readers internalise important values, by creating personal predisposition for an effective intercultural dialogue.

We analyse three children's books written by Portuguese authors, examining the images of the immigrant and of otherness presented in these narratives. We take particularly in consideration language and its relation with power relations and social positions constructed in texts, and question at which point these tales, published in this new millennium can contribute to intercultural dialogue and to intercultural education.

Keywords – Portuguese children's literature; Intercultural education; immigrants

## 1. Introduction

According to the *Human Development Report - Overcoming Barriers: Humana Mobility and Development* (UNDP, 2009), Portugal is at the forefront of Europe and the world in what concerns public measures with regard to access to health care, education and the integration of immigrant people. In fact, since the end of the 20th century, Portugal becomes the destination of several immigration fluxes, turning the Portuguese society into a plural one. Responses to this new scenario were urgent, at different levels, and some political measures have been implemented, particularly in the last two decades. However, in daily life sometimes things are different and we can find xenophobe attitudes in Portuguese society, becoming more evident in times of economic and social crisis. Simultaneously, because of that same crisis, we observe that a new vague of Portuguese people is leaving the country to look for a job in others latitudes.

So, it's a fact that these contemporary migratory movements provide, more and more, the interaction between people of different races, nationalities and ethnicities. It should be noted, however, that Western societies have been facing serious problems of integration of ethnic, cultural and religious minorities, revealing somehow everywhere, conflict and xenophobic and racist manifestations. According to Neuliep (2006, p. 2-4), only through the promotion of intercultural communication one can manage and reduce these conflicts and ensure the survival of the planet we all share. The development of intercultural dialogue entails, in effect, numerous social and economic benefits for societies, highlighting, among them, the personal growth of citizens. Mutual understanding based on enlightening dialogue but not necessarily tending to homogenization (cf. Bennett, 1998), is an important issue in relations between individuals. And communication with people from different cultures enables individuals to learn about their ways of life, their values, customs and history.

The formation of competent citizens, concerning intercultural communication, occurs naturally through the investment that democratic societies should do on intercultural education. The post-September 11/2001 society is a society that needs urgently to promote intercultural education, as this allows, according to Moral and Martin-Albo (2003, p. 128), the formation of citizens capable of understanding the Other and the problems that originated the departure from her/his country; accepting the Other without question the place where he/she comes from, their language and their customs; to remove the prejudices resulting from lack of

communication between cultures; to recognize the positive aspects of other cultures and universal values, to defend his own ideas both verbally and through action, through active participation in social and cultural life, to understand that we are all people with the same rights and that we all have the right to achieve the same goals. Significantly, from the last decade of the twentieth century, Portugal, a country of emigrants, has also become the target of different immigration flows (especially from Brazil, Eastern Europa and Asia, joining the more ‘traditional’ flows from late Portuguese’s African colonies).

Looking to the educational context, we find today in our schools students from various parts of the world. As in other European countries, the Portuguese society is increasingly a multicultural society, and it is up to education – positioned at the front line of action –, to find adequate responses to this situation, by developing actions to promote and consolidate the intercultural dialogue and “cosmopolitan citizenship” (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Cosmopolitan citizenship “recognizes universal values as its standard for all contexts, including national contexts. It stresses those things that unite human beings rather than what divides them” (p. 21). Considering that “cosmopolitan citizens are not born, they become cosmopolitan citizens through formal and informal education” (p. 25) it becomes of almost importance the initiatives teachers take at school. So, the commitment of schools to promote equality and diversity is fundamental for the development in young people of an active citizenship and an inclusive democracy. As Osler & Starkey (2005) express, citizenship can be defined as a status and a feeling, but mainly as a practice, i.e., “an awareness of oneself as an individual living in relationship with other, participating freely in society and combining with other for several purposes” (p. 12).

Therefore, the educational system must develop intercultural competences among young people in order to develop harmonious societal relations. And we expect from schools relevant practices that engage the young learners into critical and reflexive thinking about these issues. The achievement of the four pillars for education, presented in the UNESCO report on education for the twenty-first century (Delors et al, 1996), particularly “learning to live with other”, remain a central objective, and we remember that the report states clearly that “the task of education is to teach, at one and the same time, the diversity of the human race and an awareness of the similarities between, and the interdependence of, all humans” (p. 92). These directions are developed in several international documents, and we only mention the Unesco *Guidelines on Intercultural Education* (2006), which principles underline the importance of incorporating in teaching and learning materials that contribute to the discovery

of cultural diversity and awareness of the positive value of cultural diversity and also that presents the experiences of the learners.

## **2. Children's literature and intercultural education**

Among the wide range of resources and activities that teachers can use and implement in classrooms, in the context of intercultural education, children's literature seems to hold an important place. Considering the encounter with the newcomer/the Other and the knowledge of other cultures, various authors have already demonstrated the importance of children's literature to develop attitudes of respect, understanding and acceptance of cultural and ethnic differences. Working with children literature that fulfil the characteristics of good multicultural children's literature (cf. Bigger, 1996; Higgins, 2002; Morgado & Pires, 2010) teachers can cultivate positive attitudes and respect toward all individuals, no matter their country of origin, their ethnicity, culture or language.

We know that children's perceptions of the world are formed, at least in part, by the books they read. Books are a mirror of children' own world but can also be a window for encounter other people, their culture and lives. Through the contact with the social and cultural portraits of the Other in children's literature, young readers internalize important values, by creating personal predisposition for an effective intercultural dialogue.

As we have already explained, the 21st century brings a new and diverse group of learners into Portuguese public schools. So, because schools have become much more culturally and linguistically diverse, educators need to be aware of that situation, and promote a social environment where cultural differences present in society and among the learners are seen as an enriching value. Remembering the lesson of Paulo Freire, to learn implies, first of all "to learn to read the world", so educating for interculturality makes students sensible to the existence of different ways of life, traditions, customs and worldviews and prepares children to manage the relationships with others.

One strategy is to provide books that show the problems and experiences of the newcomers and how we can facilitate their integration in Portuguese society. These books replicate actual life experiences of others, right in the classroom. For example, problems with solitude and with language are represented in those books and readers are invited to reflect on those troubles, sharing emotions and identifying with characters, and through this process

books can inspire children to have positive attitudes towards their colleagues and to help them. This approach also helps students to understand different perspectives of diverse cultural groups. We believe, with Perotti (1994), that intercultural education enables children to manage the relationships with others and broadens their range of experience within the multicultural society of our days.

These aspects also lead educators to pay attention to the ways migrant people are conveyed in a story (how and why ethnicity, language and culture are suggested), because implicit messages matter. Several studies have been conducted examining how texts of children's literature portray multicultural characters because we make sense of reality through language and it is through language that books construct representations of the world. The use of language is never neutral. Language is constantly conveying sociocultural messages that carry a certain meaning and value, and in the context we are discussing, this question has a particular importance, considering we are talking about books for children. As Applebee (1978) has shown, stories are an important agent of socialization and the implicit models presented by texts contribute to the construction of expectations about the world they live in.

### **3. Intercultural approaches in Portuguese children's literature**

In the context of Portuguese children's literature we must say that the presence of migrant characters is a new issue. In fact, although the constant presence in Portuguese schools of children from African countries (mainly from Cape Vert, Angola and Guiné-Bissau) due to the relations with former colonies, in books for children and young adults, written in Portuguese language, we could not find African children as protagonist. We can affirm that only with the new century, and with the major changes in Portuguese society, concerning new migrants flows, as we have described earlier in this article, we found the "presence" of migrant children in children's books and with central roles, not only as secondary characters (Bastos & Tomé, 2011).

We will focus on three examples: two books with immigrant children as main characters and one book narrating two parallel stories, one located in Africa and the other in Portugal. The first two books we analyse present fictional children from two different countries, living in Portugal and integrated in the Portuguese school. The characters are presented as realistic people living in a familiar context for young readers – school is the main

set we find in these books. Their experiences as newcomers in Portugal, their emotions and thoughts are portrayed in a realistic manner. And through reading, children can share in the lives and feelings of the characters: the power of stories/narratives is an important issue to take into consideration because stories lead the reader closer to the dilemmas and vicissitudes of character's "life". In this way, stories can be more effective concerning readers response, than dealing only with informational and documentary books. Educators should take these aspects into consideration, when educating for interculturality and citizenship.

Margarida Botelho has, in recent years, published several titles for children with multiculturalism as central theme. In the book *A coleção* (*The collection*), published in 2007, we found a Chinese girl, a newcomer in a primary school. Lia is unable to communicate with other colleagues, because she does not understand or speak Portuguese, and the silence and solitude stain her daily life. The expressions that characterize the attitude of the character are representative of progressive isolation: her eyes are "lost and distressed", in the playground she stays "curled up against the wall" and the narrator comments that she "never felt so lonely".

However, the novelty of this narrative is that the feeling of loneliness and strangeness happens not only with this little Chinese girl. In fact, the feeling of loneliness and separation in relation to other classmates started out being felt by António, a Portuguese boy with the spirit of collector and that, therefore, "is alone in his world". That's when Lia arrives at school, coming from another country and another culture, that António finds finally someone who shares his enthusiasm for collections. Being from different backgrounds and different continents, the affinities between them are stronger than with colleagues who knew already António. And this "lesson" contains a particularly significant dimension in the context of a real dialogue and intercultural education: what seemed to be distant became closer and the contact between individuals is always a gain for the group. The language exchanges, encouraged by the teacher, are also a moment for the development of new discoveries and new relations among the group. The words of the narrator explain the experiences, showing that different languages (in the case Portuguese and Chinese) can be like different musical instruments: "several sounds mixed at the same time in the classroom. It seemed like a music played for the very first time!".

This book is a good example that literature can develop and expand multicultural understandings by depicting experiences that are common to all. The story reminds us the

propositions of Perotti (1994): “l’enfant doit en effet découvrir chez l’autre, à la fois, l’alterité et la ressemblance” (p. 89).

At the beginning of *A coleção / The collection* and “O primeiro Natal em Portugal” (“The first Christmas in Portugal”; Soares, 2006), immigrant children express discomfort by being in a new country, for reasons mainly related to loneliness and to difficulties of integration into a new society with a different language, customs and traditions. The story “The first Christmas in Portugal” (Soares, 2006) introduces us the protagonist, Irina, a girl coming from Ukraine: and she feels homesick from her friends and brothers who remain living with her grandmother in Priluki.

The changed circumstances arising in their lives lead children to feel in the new country as a kind of an “alien” (“extraterrestre”). These are words of Irina, and Lia also realizes that it is “too weird” for others. Language appears in these two narratives as a major obstacle to the establishment of relations with other children and for integration, a similar situation to what happens in real life with immigrants. We know how power is achieved through speech and language skills, and not having these tools is to be placed from the very beginning in a position of increased difficulty. Irina goes to school, but she has problems on interacting with others, especially because she cannot speak Portuguese well, being, however, the best student in his class in the maths subject. His colleagues call him “language rags” (“língua de trapos”) and Irina is all alone in the playground, while observing colleagues and trying to understand what they say.

In the case of this narrative, it is also explicit the difficulties experienced by the family of the protagonist. Irina’s parents work extra hours in their jobs: the father paints a coffee shop on Christmas Eve, the mother works in a pastry until very late. When Irina’s father rescues a young mother helping her give birth, we learn that in Ukraine he was a doctor, although he works in the construction field in Portugal. The living conditions of immigrants are subtly presented in this story (logistics, professional and personal conditions), always stressing the dignity of immigrants leaving their country in search for a better life. At the end, Irina finally understands what her friend Afonso always calls her – “fairy” (“fada”) – when she sees the word on a Christmas card that he offers her and she begins to believe that the future will be better.



*Eva* (2011), a book also written by Margarida Botelho, offers two stories, each one beginning in a different side of the book (which has two front covers instead of front and back cover). The two stories end in the middle of the book, thus representing, symbolically, the encounter of the two main characters, two girls with the same name living in two different countries/continents – Africa and Europe. The main plot of each narrative is almost the same and the differences occur because of the specificities of the social and cultural contexts in which the characters live. In Africa children have to get water from the well and to collect firewood to make lunch and Portuguese children have water at home and a microwave to cook lunch. Other aspects of the story contrast the more natural and traditional way of life of the African children with the constraints of a urban life and the “invasion” of technological devices. In Portugal, the children saw a big tree in the park, and they can only express a desire (“I wish I could go outside and climb the tree...”) but African children can give free expression to their wishes climbing the biggest tree in the small village. The urban space inhibits the fulfilment of desires, imposing barriers that do not exist in the African village. At the end of each story – situated at the central pages of the book – the two girls meet each other find through the “magic glass”, a television set.

The books mentioned provide an opportunity to stimulate reflective thinking and to promote cross-cultural understandings. With Lia and Irina, fictional characters, children can recognize what kind of challenges, in real life, colleagues coming from other countries have to face and what we can do to help them. Children can also learn that there are also similarities between their experiences in starting school with those of Lia and Irina. *The collection* also illustrates the teacher’s role in promoting intercultural dialogue and solidarity.

#### **4. Final remarks**

Globalization and migration have increased the racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity in the education systems around the world. In this context intercultural education gained in the last decades a special importance with new insights from different fields. As Banks says, we must develop a permanent effort in this domain, because “educational equality, like liberty and justice, is an ideal toward which human beings work but never fully attain. (...) When prejudice and discrimination are reduced towards one group, they are usually directed toward another group or take new forms” (Banks, 2009, p. 4). Leclercq (2003) also remembers us that “there is an unshakeable link between the intercultural

perspective and human rights because interculturality is founded on the principle that difference must never be a euphemism for inferiority” (p. 18).

Children's literature reflecting cultural diversity can help young readers recognize the diversity of their communities and of society. Books that allow migrant children to see themselves in a positive role give them also an opportunity to affirm their identities. Children and youth also need books that show the interaction of people of diverse cultures, their ways of encountering and solving conflicts, their ways of developing respect for each other, and their ways of creating solidarity. The books we have analysed offer to young (and adult) readers examples of life experiences, namely by showing the difficulties that immigrant children have to face in the new country they live. The positive endings have also a significant meaning, representing hope and confidence in the future.

We believe that by reading these books, children and young people become more aware of intercultural issues and develop cosmopolitan citizenship: crossing glances with characters and discussing the ideas conveyed by these books, you can see the world from different angles, and having a better understanding of others, seeing he/she as an equal. Books that give a positive representations of the Other and its culture or reporting the experiences of migration, with the adversities migrants have to support, develop the social consciousness of the Other and improve cultural dialogue (Bastos & Tomé, 2011).

We cannot forget the value of reciprocity and that, first of all, we are talking about the encounter between people (and not just between cultures): in this sense, a hug can make people closer than the mere encounter between cultures. This feeling is underlined in the books we have examined and is exposed in the final image and words of *The collection*: "Together they discovered the largest collection of all: a collection of four hands".

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## **Ecconi Pronto: a preventative-developmental curriculum to promote self-directed learning in Italian primary schools**

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Counseling in the United States is a mature profession with established professional norms and models for practice in a wide range of settings. School counseling is an important counseling specialization that has developed very clear descriptions of professional practice that are reflected in role and function statements (ASCA, 1990), explications of comprehensive developmental guidance (Gysbers and Henderson, 2000) and, most recently, in the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs (ASCA 2003). According to modern models for practice, school counselors have an obligation to provide professional services to meet the developmental needs of all students. These services include a broad range of types of interventions including classroom-based developmental guidance lessons for students, group counseling for students, individual counseling for students and consultation with teachers and parents.

In Italy, counseling is a developing profession and its model of operation in schools is still evolving. While there is increasing recognition that the counseling can make potentially important contributions to the improvement of schooling (Carey & Bertolani, 2009), there is currently a wide range of actual ways that counseling is being implemented within schools. (Bertolani, 2010). Currently, very few schools employ full-time counselors. Most often, schools contract with private practice counselors to provide counseling services to students and/or consultation services to parents and teachers, both typically provided in one-on-one formats. At present, school counseling practice in Italy is oriented much more towards the remediation of problems than towards the prevention of problems through development-facilitating interventions.

In Italy, in order for school counseling to grow and achieve its full potential to positively impact students lives, it will be necessary to expand the range of activities and services offered by counselors in schools. It seems particularly important to find ways to introduce counselor-led prevention-oriented programs to the Italian educational system. A partnership between the University of Verona and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has been established to support the collaboration to develop, evaluate and disseminate effective school counseling practices. Ecconi Pronto is the first product of this partnership. It is a preventative-developmental curriculum based on the principles of self-direction theory, structural cognitive development theory, positive psychology, and narrative therapy, and it is inspired by the intercultural principle according to which the promotion of cooperative learning methods and inclusive attitudes is intended not only towards foreigners but also toward special needs or different learning styles (Portera, 2011).

Ecconi Pronto is based on the fundamental assumption that students' academic development and personal development are inextricably bound together and it is intended to start students down the path towards self-directed learning. It is a story-based curriculum designed to be delivered by primary school teachers supported by school counselors. It is appropriate for general population of primary schools and also who are having difficulty becoming readers and/or making the transition to being independent learners. The curriculum helps students develop preliteracy skills and begin to construct their own stories about themselves. Each story is grounded in an area of positive psychology and teaches students positive ways to understand themselves and useful ways to direct and motivate their own behavior. The narrative itself is an intercultural action, because every story that we build or invent is a mix of other stories (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992).

Ecconi Pronto is also designed to help teachers understand the inner lives of their students, develop strong nurturing relationships with them, and develop skills in using group process to promote personal-social and academic development simultaneously in their classrooms. Ecconi Pronto is intended to compliment (not supplant) skills-based literacy instruction. It is intended to teach the structure of good stories, how to remember and relate the sequence of events in a story, how to make good inferences about the characters' inner lives of thought and emotions, and how to make good inferences about how characters inner lives influence their behavior. Each story in the Curriculum is based on the key concepts from a research tradition in modern educational or developmental psychology related to the capacity to be an effective self-directed learner. The characters and events in the stories help students see how these concepts can be used by to improve their lives.

Theoretical Foundations

Ecconi Pronto is based on three important foundations, Self-Directed Learning Theory, Social-Cognitive Development Theory, and Narrative Theory.

### Self-Directed Learning Theory

Self-Directed Learning is learning that is directed by the individual himself or herself. It is a desired endpoint of the educational process. In order to be self-directed learners, students need be able to make good decisions about what to learn and how to learn it. But the most important decisions are based on an individual's values and life goals. So, learning how to understand one's life goals and values is a critical foundation for self-directed learning.

Similarly, in order to be effective self-directed learners, students need to be able to manage their own learning. This too requires an understanding of one's own learning processes (how you learn best) and one's own motivational processes (how you can develop and maintain the motivation that maintains learning-directed behavior). The abilities are generally referred to as "meta-cognitive" skills because they require that we think about our internal processes in order to manage them more effectively.

In spite of the fact that learning how to understand one's life goals and values and learning how to use meta-cognitive processes to manage learning and motivation are critically important to help students learn how to be self-directed learners, these skills are not typically explicitly taught in schools. Ecconi Pronto is designed to introduce these skills to students and to launch them on their voyage towards self-directed learning.

### Social Cognitive Development Theory

Social-Cognitive Development theories have their origins in the work of Piaget and Vygotsky. In particular, Vygotsky emphasized the importance of language and social interaction in the supporting children's cognitive development. For Vygotsky, development is the internalization of culture that provides them with both the content of thought and the tools of thought. Culture initially resided outside the child but it is gradually internalized through dialogic processes with adults and peers. Effective teaching creates interactions and dialog that exist on the leading edge of children's cognitive development. These interactions include content and use cognitive processes that children are just ready to internalize. In this zone of proximal development children are able to do things with help that they are not yet ready to do by themselves. Effective teaching in this zone of proximal development involves a process of scaffolding where teachers initially supply a good deal structure, support, dialog, and direction. The externally supplied scaffolding is gradually "faded" as children develop the ability to do the work by themselves.

Weinstein and Altschuler (1985) applied social cognitive developmental principles to the understanding of self-knowledge development. Self-knowledge development refers to the processes through which people come to know themselves and to use this knowledge to intentionally direct their own behavior.

They identified four stages of self knowledge development which they named the Elemental, Situational, Pattern and Transformational levels. In the Elemental Level, children learn to attend to, remember and recount personal experiences but the recounting of these experiences had poor sequence and lacks connection between external events and internal states (thoughts and feelings) or between internal states and actions. In the Situational Level, children develop many of the capacities that enable later self-direction. They are able to see how a collection of related events comprise a whole "story", to recount events in good sequence, and make causal connections between external events and inner states (feelings and thoughts) and between inner states and subsequent behavior. In the Pattern Level, adolescents develop the ability to operate abstractly on their "stories". They develop the ability to recognize and identify their own habitual patterns of behavior. Finally, in the Transformational level, adolescents develop the ability to alter their own patterns of behavior through the intentional application of self-administered meta-cognitive interventions. They can encourage the activation of desirable patterns and forestall (or interrupt) undesirable patterns.

Ecconi Pronto is designed (according to the principles of Vygotsky) to provide a highly interactive educational experience that will help students internalize Situational Level self-knowledge skills.

### Narrative Counseling Theory

Narrative Counseling (White, 2007) is a relatively new approach to counseling that emphasize the importance of stories as the fundamental way that people make sense of their lives and their place in the world. Stories are self-generated and based on self-observation and experience. Stories are also influenced

by the things people are told by significant others and by the truths transmitted to individuals by the culture in which they reside.

To understand a person, one needs to understand their stories. To understand a person's difficulties in changing their behavior one needs to understand how their stories prevent change. To help a person change, one needs to help them create better stories about themselves. Most of the existing theory and research in narrative counseling has focused on its use in helping troubled individuals "externalize problems" and "re-story" their lives. Recent work has focused on the use of narrative approaches in understanding proves of career development and the use of narrative counseling techniques in career counseling (ee Savickas, 2000). Only a few authors have focused on the use of narrative approaches in as more preventative ways. Eppler, Olsen and Hidano, (2009), for example have recently discussed the potential of using story-telling as a technique to help elementary school students identify positive outcomes for problematic situations.

Given the powerful role that stories have in the organization and direction of people's lives, it is surprising that so little attention is paid to helping children acquire the concepts and tools they need to create good personal stories. *Eccomi Pronto* is intended to help fill this void by helping children acquire useful concepts that they can use to: construct an image of themselves as active self-directed individuals; learn useful self-management skills, and; learn the elements of good "story telling". In short, *Eccomi Pronto* will help students learn how to create good stories about themselves that will serve as the foundation for their positive psychological development.

### The Units

The *Eccomi Pronto* Curriculum contains 12 units. Each of the 12 units contains a story that is based on the psychological principles that have been shown to be important in the development of self-directed learning. These principles come directly from research on: Goal Setting, Causal Attribution, Help-Seeking, Possible Selves, Self-Efficacy, Use of Self-talk to Self-Regulate Behavior, Comfort with Social Difference, Self-Regulation of Motivation, Social Skills for Collaborative Learning, Cognitive Engagement, Learned Optimism, and Intrinsic Motivation.

Each of the twelve lesson cycles has four parts: A brief Introduction to the Lesson, A Story, Group Processing of the Story, Follow-Up Activities and Evaluation Suggestions. The Introduction orients students to the work and helps them focus on key concepts and skills related to the lesson. The Story consists of a description of the antecedent state (the problem) of the story, a series of events, descriptions of characters who interact with each other in story and who experience the events of the story, and a resolution of the story (with an explicitly stated or implied lesson or moral). The Group Processing component is a detailed protocol to help teachers lead group inquiry focused on the story. The Follow-up Activities are concrete suggestions for projects that can be used to reinforcing learning. And the Evaluation component included instruction for how to determine whether students are mastering the material.

### Data Collection

Teachers (N = 16) and Students (N = 300) from 7 elementary schools in the Italian speaking area of the Trentino-Alto Adige region of northern Italy participated in this study. Students were enrolled in either the first, second or third grade. The sample was comprised of equal numbers of girls and boys. All teachers volunteered to have their classrooms participate in this implementation and evaluation of *Eccomi Pronto*. Participation was approved by school principals. The schools were different in location, size and number of students. Two survey instruments were used to collect evaluation data on classroom climate and student engagement. A semi-structured interview and two open-ended surveys were used to collect qualitative data on final evaluation of the project. These data were collected after the *Eccomi Pronto* intervention. Teachers were interviewed, students and parents completed the open-ended surveys. Observations of teachers were also used to collect qualitative data. Observations were made during the interventions and the days after. Observation cards were developed to facilitate teachers recording and transmitting their observations.

### Results

Teacher ratings of student classroom behavior before and after *Eccomi Pronto* were compared to determine which changes in students' behavior were noted by teachers. The changes reflected improvements in student behavior, showing that after *Eccomi Pronto* more students received higher scores for appropriate behavior. Teachers indicated that fewer students showed inattention and disruptive restlessness and more students went beyond what is expected of them on assignments and asked questions in order to acquire new

information. These changes suggest that Eccomi Pronto resulted in noticeable changes in positive classroom behavior associated with increased student motivation and engagement in the learning process. Teachers' ratings of the quality of the learning environment in their classrooms were significantly higher after the Eccomi Pronto intervention in comparison to before the intervention. Student ratings of their own achievement-related behavior before and after Eccomi Pronto were compared to determine which changes students noted in themselves. Students reported positive improvements in their own achievement-oriented behavior after Eccomi Pronto including increased engagement in learning, increased attention, and increased academic self-efficacy and confidence.

From the qualitative analysis of the teachers final interviews and the surveys completed by parents, some important qualitative changes in students were noted. According to the teachers, the children often referred to the stories during the daily classroom activities. Moreover, teachers noted that the students engaged in the following new behaviors: they encouraged some of their classmates to be more engaged and more committed in the classroom, they used the Eccomi Pronto modality processes to enable taking turns in other activities and paid more attention to respect this rule, they tried to put in practice what they learned from the stories, citing the characters as examples to follow, (such as trying without giving up, being and thinking positive, and accepting each other). In addition, some children spontaneously used elements of the stories to comment on things that were going on in the classroom. Another improvement noted by teachers was an increase in positive classroom participation of students who seemed to speak without fear of the negative judgments of peers. Children who were more shy and less involved improved were reported by teachers to show improvement in engagement and willingness to participate actively in classroom discussions. Teacher remarked that special needs students were more able to find their space for participation. Other changes highlighted by the teachers were the increase of concentration, especially for students who had difficulty paying attention. Teachers also noted that students were better able to work together.

Parents noted an increase of concentration and attention. They described their children as more being more attentive and reflective, more curious and interested in asking new things, happier to listen and more confident in comparing their own behavior with the behavior of the characters in the stories. An important change indicated that children spoke more about school, about themselves and what they liked (i.e. interests, goals, dreams..) following the example of the characters of the stories. In addition, parents noted that after Eccomi Pronto children wanted to read more at home because they better understood what they read.

Four elements emerged from the teachers observations and final interviews. First, they reported to have many inputs and very good effect on the teaching plan and activities. Through the stories they were able to practice reading comprehension, active listening and verbalizing, and working on text manipulation. The teachers stressed that the Eccomi Pronto activities were accessible to all children, despite the different groups level that usually are present in all classes, and they always participated with great enthusiasm. The second element was that the project allowed to address important aspects of learning that tended to be overlooked including student's motivation, self-perception and self-esteem. Furthermore, they indicated that the experience was useful because it gave children an enjoyable opportunity to reflect on their life experiences and goals. The third element was that Eccomi Pronto stimulated a high level of involvement in children. They noted that some features of the group processing of the stories were associated with this involvement. For instance, they noted that it was particularly impactful that everybody had the chance to give their opinion, that all the responses were appreciated and each child was thanked for answering, that for some activities (i.e. the question on the what I have learned from the story) there were no right or wrong answers, and that the reformulation given to the children's response provided an important extra feedback. Finally, as observers during the Eccomi Pronto interventions, the teachers stressed that they came to understand some class dynamics that they were not fully aware. They were able to identifying students who found it more difficult to interact with others and those who better captured the details of the stories. Teachers indicated that, thanks to that role of observer, they had the opportunity on one hand to learn more about the children, and on the other hand to start extra activities not designed at the beginning of the academic year.

These results show that Eccomi Pronto Curriculum can be a resource not only for Italian schools, but for all the schools interesting in providing an approach that allows students to learn the necessary skills, both in terms of academic and personal development, to self-direct their lives.



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## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

*Given some of the challenges that Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Two Spirited Intersex Queer (LGBTTIQ) students, teacher and administrators encounter, to what extent, if any, does Multicultural and Intercultural Education provide opportunity for their inclusion in Ontario, Canada?*

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March, 2013

This research paper has been revised from a submission for a course on Interculturalism and Critical Democracy in Education: Issues of Globalization and Neoliberalism offered by the University of Toronto and the University of Verona for Dr. Agostino Portera and Dr. John Portelli in July 2012.

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

### **Introduction**

Our current neoliberal model of schooling brings with it a primary focus of preparing our students with the skills and knowledge to be workers for the labour market. However, the globalization and increasing diversity of the labour market due to both migration and social media necessitates the ability to interact with diverse groups of people with minimal conflicts or rather with the skills and knowledge to resolve the conflicts that arise in a peaceful manner. There is a barrier to the successful interactive integration of a diverse society if students are not recognized as democratic citizens that can contribute to different social possibilities (Hyslop-Margisson, Sears, 2006). Within education in Ontario, in the last five years, the government has introduced an Equity and Safe Schools Policy, echoing the United Nations Educational, Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in support of a more inclusive society that welcomes the diversity of learners and also in support of the human rights of diverse groups. This policy, however, is left to the interpretations of individual boards, schools and school leaders to implement. Globally, many countries are now turning to Intercultural Education as a tool to resolve conflicts, support integration and interdependence of growing diverse populations and to meet the economic challenges of the market

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

(Deardorff, 2006; Grant, Portera, 2010; Organization for Economic Co-operation Development, 2010). Intercultural Education has appeal as a way of being, not limited to education, which can also be applied to the political and social sphere of life. The challenges of LGBTTIQ, such as higher risk of suicide ideation, depression, lack of attendance at school and others are well documented and demonstrate a need to examine alternative educational strategies (D'Augelli et al., 2002; Greytak et al., 2009; Kosciw et al., 2010; Taylor & Peter, 2009; Taylor et al., 2011; Van Heeringen et al., 2000; Wolfe and Chiodo, 2008). **Given some of the challenges that Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Two Spirited, Intersex, Queer and Questioning (LGBTTIQ) students, teacher and administrators encounter, to what extent, if any, does Multicultural and Intercultural Education provide opportunity for their inclusion in Ontario, Canada?**

There is a lot of literature on the philosophy of inclusion but for the purposes of this paper, it will mean the philosophy of maximising the participation of LGBTTIQ people by minimising exclusionary and discriminatory practices (Booth, 2005). The ability to maximise the participation of LGBTTIQ is fundamental to their democratic rights as citizens of our society and is a marker of a true democratic society wherein the critical voices of all members must be heard (Freire, 1998). This paper will explore the concept of Intercultural Education in relation to the existing concept of multiculturalism and in doing so; shed some

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

light on the issues of LGBTTIQ in our current educational system in Ontario.

Some possibilities and challenges of Interculturalism and the resulting implications for the inclusion of LGBTTIQ will be presented based on my analysis, understanding and experiences as an educator, currently an administrator, of over twenty years.

### **Historical Context and Multicultural Education**

Globally, after the Second World War, a Universal Declaration of Human Rights was established in 1948 which was comprised of both civil and political rights; and economic, social and cultural rights. The latter includes such rights as the right to education, right to housing, right to adequate standard of living and the right to health. Similarly, the first Human Rights Code in the province of Ontario took effect on June 15, 1962. It is a law that gives all people of specific groups equal rights and opportunities without discrimination in specific areas such as jobs, housing and services. Despite the existence and acceptance of LGBTTIQ people in ancient civilization and other cultures only recently have they been guaranteed human rights in Ontario. Sexual orientation was added to the list of prohibited grounds for discrimination in the Ontario Human Rights Code in December of 1986 and more recently, on June 19, 2012, the list was amended to also include Gender Identity and Gender Expression. Multicultural Education, a set of strategies and materials to assist teachers to promote a liberal democracy while

Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

responding to the many issues created by rapidly changing demographics of their students, was introduced in both the United States and Canada shortly after the original Declaration of Human Rights. So first, to what extent does existing Multicultural Education reform support the more recent inclusion of LGBTTIQ rights? Multicultural Education helps students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions and existence of diverse groups. However, Multicultural Education provides a dialectical issue: on the one hand it promotes and values the individual identity of the learner but on the other side it does not promote integration or interaction of diverse groups of people. The static and rigid idea of culture, social stratification and hierarchical groups is a limitation of multiculturalism (Portera, 2010). This is a significant drawback for people who identify as LGBTTIQ. Tolerance of diverse groups or respectfully living side by side, a concept promoted by multiculturalism, when examined more deeply demonstrates the social exclusion, rather than the inclusion of LGBTTIQ. There cannot be an equal reciprocity of tolerance between divergent groups when the heteronormative view is a dominant view. Those who find themselves in a minority, such as LGBTTIQ people, must not only “tolerate” the heteronormative structures and practices that are in place, they have no choice but to disengage or thrive in that environment whereas those who are part of the status quo can maintain their views without ‘interfering’ or ‘interacting’

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

with those who are different from them, either consciously or unconsciously. **So, do the role models we currently have in our education system then really reflect the diversity of our population or are they a reflection of the adaptation of that identity into the dominant culture?** We can look to a study of perceptions of other marginalized groups such as women, immigrants and African-Canadians for insights into the subtle cultural barriers to both formal and informal democratic participation. One African-Canadian interviewed would not consider running for political office because he would have to “become a White Black man” (Chareka, 2005). The interviewee further elaborated on reference to the dominant culture in civic life stating he felt he could only be successful in politics if he started thinking like, having an outlook and speech of the White man. This further emphasizes the lack of power and privilege that exists for those who do not identify with the heteronormative structures and practices that currently exist that are neither common nor universal and underscores the need to divest power from a preferred status. The disengagement, and perhaps disillusionment, demonstrates how easily LGBTTIQ, as well as other marginalized groups, can be excluded from the discourses that govern them. In order to buttress their democratic participation in our educational system, there must be the opportunity to explore and deconstruct the existing hegemonic structures and practices and to nurture rather than “tolerate” their existence.

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

Developing collaborative community participation can deepen our democracy to fully include our societal diversity. Only by doing so, can there truly be the equality espoused by the Declaration of Human Rights. In my experience, there is often an unconsciousness of this position of bias, privilege or power that can only be explored when it is done without being judgemental and in an environment of established trust. For example, I once had a staff member, in front of all other staff, openly ask me the question “is it really so bad to say ‘that’s so gay’ to a student?” Without judgement, together we deconstructed the meaning of the language structure, adopted by many within and outside the school as a norm, and how it perpetuates a negative association of being gay that is both hurtful to those who are and to those who respect or care for them. For a prominent member of staff to then emphatically state they would never say that phrase again and will make sure they address any student who does has a positive rippling effect on the climate of the school and the inclusion of LGBTTIQ in the following three ways: first, those who are gay will feel supported; secondly, there will be intervention of those who use language as a negative reference, with or without thought, and thirdly, it gives staff permission to openly dialogue about issues to probe their understanding and seek improvement without being judged.

**With the intersectionality of identities, how many other hegemonic structures and practices are in place, that any one of us does not comprehend nor realize**



## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

**its negative impact on a particular marginalized group?** Harnessing this ontological and epistemological curiosity is the core of being “unfinished” in our development as human beings. This curiosity and search for knowledge is fundamental to the development of ‘conscientization’ or a critical consciousness (Freire, 1970, 1974, 1998) that serves to provide hope for the inclusion of LGBTTIQ. Being curious and critical of our educational system; the language, structure and practices, is not meant as a criticism of current efforts, it is simply acknowledging that what we have is not sufficient and we can seek to improve upon it. In fact from the OECD online consultation (2010), the majority of teacher respondents reported that they did not feel well prepared for diversity in their changing classrooms, neither by their initial teacher education nor by their professional development. Creating opportunities to support their learning and development as human beings is a crucial role of a school leader.

Thus, the current indifference towards diverse groups as they “tolerate” one another illuminates a power or privilege that exists for the heteronormative view and a significant deficit of multicultural strategies or education for LGBTTIQ. This particular limitation of multiculturalism demands a need to look for alternative tools or modes of education to bridge the gap of respecting differences while also finding ways to respectfully engage in interactions and exchange ideas.

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

### **How then does Intercultural Education respond to the inclusion of LGBTTIQ people?**

#### **Intercultural Education**

Interculturalism, not limited to the educational sphere or any one particular group, promotes collaboration to developing a dynamic culture. This collaboration can thereby open discussions about the belongingness of diverse groups in a society and its institutions (Gundara, 2010) and thereby promote the principles of a critical democracy. A critical democracy goes beyond celebrating our differences to create a different way of being (Quin, 2009) by becoming conscious of dominant assumptions and welcoming social change (Freire, 1978). It is important to delineate Interculturalism from Multiculturalism by providing a robust definition of the concept as the current lack of understanding of Interculturalism or ambiguity of meaning (Deardorff, 2006, Portera, 2010) and the variability of its application can be a criticism of it and also a possible limitation of introducing it in Ontario schools. A common understanding of terminology will avoid any misconceptions or misuse which can do more harm than good to supporting interdependence and growth of diverse populations (Perotti, 1996, Portera, 2000). Intercultural Education has been in existence for many years and was first defined by scholars William Heard Kilpatrick and William Van Til in 1947 as:

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

Intercultural Education aims at the best possible achievement of the values of participation with, acceptance of, and respect for others. It is an effort to bring education to bear as constructively as possible on actual and possible intercultural tensions and on the evils of any and all bias, prejudice, and discrimination against minority groups. In short, the effort of Intercultural Education is to ensure to all the adequate realization of these social values and to remove and cure the bias and prejudice leading to such discriminations. (p 4)

Although social discourse has inherent in it power relationships,

Interculturalism is meant to encourage a dialogue and an exchange of ideas where relationships between people are founded on equal terms and to what Paulo Freire refers to as universal human ethic (Portera, 2010; Portelli, Portera, 2012). The intercultural approach is placed between universalism (the education of the human being) and relativism (with the right of equality in their own identity) and takes into account limitations and opportunities from both (Portera, 2010).

Interculturalism does not preclude, and in fact overlaps with, elements of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has several approaches and modalities around the globe but overall multicultural education tends towards assimilation rather than toward cultural pluralism (Eldering, 1996). The key differentiation between both concepts is diverse people have “inter” or relations, or interactions in an intercultural context rather than live statically side by side as they would in a multicultural context (Portera, 2010). In fact a lack of understanding of this distinction and the semantics of Interculturalism has confused projects which have

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

attempted to use it and failed. Rather than struggling to understand the other's view, there is the reversion to a more multicultural paradigm where societies seek to live adjacently to one another by "tolerating" each other rather than interacting in meaningful ways. In Interculturalism, identity and culture are no longer approached rigidly, but rather dynamically and thus are in constant evolution (Portera, 2010). The shaping of an evolving culture and hence our way of being will always be "unfinished" (Freire, 1998) as we seek to continually seek to understand one another's viewpoints by an openness to listening to each other. This promotes growth, inclusion and a critical democracy that benefits each group in society, including LGBTTIQ.

How can this concept of Interculturalism be practically applied in our Ontario schools? Key to the practical application of Intercultural Education is the acquisition of the related complex construct of Intercultural Competence or the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations. The degree of Intercultural Competence depends on the acquired degree of its underlying elements. Recently, in response to seeking clarity of terms, international scholars have come up with the consensus on the specific attitudes and affective features, (inter)cultural knowledge, skills and reflection that constitutes Intercultural Competence and also ways of measuring it (Deardorff, 2006; Deardorff, 2011). This model of Intercultural Competence could be used as

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

a basis for the development or acquisition of Intercultural Competence and its assessment in Ontario schooling. However, despite a consensus on a definition of its components, the role and importance of language in Intercultural Competence has remained a controversial issue that has not yet been resolved (Deardorff, 2006). Resolving this controversial issue is crucial as language and social discourse contribute toward reinforcing as well as assembling systems of reasoning, which in turn affect dimensions of belongingness (Portera, 2010). A resolution would necessitate an exploration of the implications of using different terminology to refer to cultural competence and how the terms are interpreted. If this exploration included the participation of previously excluded groups and cultures such as LGBTTIQ, it would be an opportunity for growth that would critically and, therefore, democratically engage LGBTTIQ while also responding to a key criticism of Intercultural Education; that of the formation of its language.

### **Equality or Inequality of Language Structure?**

Currently as it exists, the terms of equality in the framework for intercultural dialogue and its meaning based on the formation of its language are challenged by such critics as Hodgson and Igbino (2011) who both criticize the Council of Europe's *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* by claiming that Interculturalism actually promotes a certain type of undemocratic governance or

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

perpetuates a colonial notion of Europe in its dealings with minority populations.

The politics that underlie the language are that of the European notions of democracy and therefore, this sets the limits of the rules and climates that constitute the definition and meanings of words and terms. Other cultures must then either displace some of their own viewpoints as a precondition to participate in an intercultural dialogue with the dominant culture or not participate at all due to feeling insecure or inferior. (Hodgson, 2011, Igbino, 2011)

This view challenges the tenet of equality of terms needed for an intercultural dialogue to take place between an intergroup of complex identities. This is paralleled in symbols or language structure found on washrooms in Ontario schools and the underlying politics of heterosexism. Let us consider what happens when in a particular school, a student or staff member may not feel comfortable going to the washroom because their gender does not match their physiological body. This transgender person when faced with the option of using a washroom designated as only male or only female rather than gender neutral does not truly have equal access of opportunity to participate in afterschool activities if they have to rush home to use a washroom, as has been reported to me. This precludes an equal opportunity for that person's participation at school. Without equal opportunity of access, there cannot be equity of outcomes for that individual. This once again reiterates the aforementioned bias and influence of a dominant culture.

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

If there is not the ability to deconstruct meanings and functions with an understanding of the biases that contribute to them, and with an openness to revisit and alter them, then how can there be a critical democracy based on equality of terms? Since inherently the more robust definition of an intercultural dialogue encourages an understanding of one another's viewpoints, and there has already been an evolution of the construct of its components, this challenge can perhaps be best addressed by nurturing the voices previously silenced to now have a platform to join the international community and the continued collaboration to carefully re-examine the rules and limits of the terms of dialogue. This creative moment can be a "win-win" (Portera, 2012) because Intercultural Education can be utilized to develop integrative mentalities based on notions of differences and multiple identities (Gundara, 2010).

### **Limitation of Interculturalism and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ**

Overall, to this point, Interculturalism can be a positive tool to engage others in a dialogue to carefully examine the hegemonic structures and practices currently in place to build a more democratic educational system and, in fact, a more inclusive society. More specifically at the school level, however, a reasonable accommodation that cannot be achieved provides insights into the limitations of Interculturalism. Reasonable accommodation involves a process of negotiations that recognizes and legitimates similarities as well as differences and has the

Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

potential to transform conflicts rooted in cultural differences into opportunities for growth and enrichment (Portera, 2012). Reasonable accommodation fits with Interculturalism as Intercultural Education is based on the notions of dialogue and interactive integration, respect, exchanges, negotiation, and reciprocity (Portera, 2012). A resolution that satisfies all parties concerned, however, is not always possible. In a recently reported incident, a real estate agent, on behalf of its 7<sup>th</sup> day Advent client and on the basis of their religious beliefs, refused to offer accommodation for housing to same sex partners in an urban city in Ontario. Provincially the laws will dictate housing cannot be denied but it cannot dictate an understanding of viewpoints between the landlord and tenant. In school, when one person says they wish to be excused from exercises that promote the respect of LGBTTIQ students on the basis of their cultural beliefs, a crucial dilemma is faced by administrators and teachers. What happens when individuals do not possess the intercultural skills required to negotiate and find a resolution? Who makes the final decision in the matter when there is not the time to develop Intercultural Competence in student, staff and/or parents? At first glance, "reasonable accommodation" seems very reasonable as does a dialogue and discussion; however these examples show us that neither reasonable accommodation nor Intercultural Education is sufficient. To be fair, it is readily acknowledged that Intercultural Education is not a panacea nor is it perhaps the most appropriate tool



Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools in every situation (Portelli, Portera, 2012). At this point, much like the law, it calls upon teachers and administrators to intervene. We cannot be neutral or unbiased in such situations because to divorce ourselves from the matter is tantamount to validating the status quo which only serves to promote the exclusion of LGBTTIQ and perpetuate the challenges faced by them. In order to accord equity and equalize life chances, we must be ‘fair’ but not ‘impartial’ (Gundara, 2010). In Ontario, the government has recently interceded to ensure that the name Gay Straight Alliance can be used by student groups in any school, public or Catholic. This “fair” yet not “impartial” intervention has met with a lot of conflict from those who do not understand the need to allow someone to have recognition of their identity or perhaps to know how it feels to be oppressed. Unfortunately, for some, they feel their personal efforts are being dismissed because they have used alternative, more generic names for groups proposed by their boards for these groups of student gatherings without consideration to the bigger picture of all schools or an understanding of how language can engage or exclude the existence of others.

### **Implications for Pedagogy**

For the purpose of this essay, implications for pedagogy in Ontario schools will be directly connected to the concepts of Multicultural, Intercultural Education,

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

Intercultural Competence and critical democracy already discussed in this essay and linked to existing pedagogy norms in Ontario. In Ontario, differentiation of instruction is the key pedagogical tool used to focus on the learner and offers a framework to address the diversity in a population and variance in student learning (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006). In, and of itself, it does not take into account realities of social difference, grounded in the immediate daily worlds of students as well as in the larger social and political contexts of their lives which contributes to a curriculum of life (Portelli, Vilbert, 2006; Freire, 1998). Nor, coupled with multiculturalism does it allow for the harmonious interaction or integration of intergroup dialogue. Therefore, the introduction of Interculturalism and its construct of Intercultural Competence which respects and values others' ideas, can help students to engage in a social discourse that will allow them to exchange ideas and in doing so, help them with their personal growth and shape a culture based on the past and present, and hope for their future.

Programs and learning that are for “all students”; however, perpetuate a heteronormative view and negate the complexity and unique identity of the LGBTTIQ community. Interculturalism alone is thus not sufficient to support the inclusion of LGBTTIQ as it assumes dialogue will take place between those who are already on equal terms. Thus, a critical examination of the heteronormative structure and assumptions of curriculum is also required. There has been a lot of

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

literature written on critical pedagogy and student engagement from the theoretical perspective to the practical (Balcaen, 201; Freire, 1998; Kalogirou & Malafantis, 2012; McInerney, 2009; Mosley, 2010; Portelli, 2002). A critical pedagogy perspective informs the teacher who is required to both deconstruct assumptions, heteronormative language and views of existing curriculum to then construct learning that includes students and their identity as part of the process. Specific teaching of LGBTTIQ language and its meaning in our curriculum, both within the class and within the school, will show respect and regard for the dignity and inclusion of that community and help to set up dialogues on “equal terms”. Overall, the attention paid to the construction of knowledge, skills and attitude that allows the equal contribution of LGBTTIQ, promote their inclusion and support a critical democracy.

It has already been mentioned that teachers do not feel prepared to fully meet the diversity of students in their classroom. Therefore, time, space, support and training or professional development are required for teachers who are at the front lines of responding to the increased diversity in the classroom to develop the skills and knowledge they need to engage students through both critical pedagogy and an intercultural approach.

### **Conclusion**

## Intercultural Education and the Inclusion of LGBTTIQ People in Ontario Schools

This paper has examined promoting the inclusion of LGBTTIQ in our current neoliberal system of education through analyzing both the benefits and challenges of introducing Intercultural Education to the existing form of Multicultural Education in Ontario. A closer look at the theory and practice of both multicultural and Intercultural Education and practice brings an awareness of the significant influence and exclusion of a dominant ideology and the subsequent need for devolution of power. Though Intercultural Education has its limits in supporting LGBTTIQ in schools, as shown by the inability to reach reasonable accommodations between groups, the principles it champions are a good foundation for examining and deconstructing the hegemonic structures and practices to bring about a democracy which is more critical and focussed on full participation of all people. Supporting teachers to develop the skills, attitudes and knowledge they require to assist students to make sense of their being in relation to the social context of others and prepare them for their future is fundamental to the promotion and inclusion of LGBTTIQ community and a more democratic society.

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# NUTRITION, BETWEEN PHYSIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

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2013

## ONE MUST EAT TO LIVE .....

Nourishment is one of most fundamental human's activity because of its vital characteristic and its daily nature. One eats to live, this seems obvious to everyone, especially as three quarter of the world die of hunger. This is a biological truth. Relationship between nourishment and health is another obviousness with their quantity and qualitative factors. Currently in the western world, people are really preoccupied by ideal quantities of calories, vitamins, mineral salts, proteins, lipids and other carbohydrate that they ought to be taking to be at the same time thin and healthy. One is also preoccupied by food's quality. Coffee is not recommended for nervous people. Vegetable fat is better than animal fat, etc. The development of biological agriculture emphasizes on the danger regarding chemical fertilizers and pesticides. A discipline was created around this preoccupation : dietetics. If truth be told, the worry of the ones (mostly women) who are interested in their nutrition is more aesthetics than for health reasons. But this does not change anything in the way we perceive nutrition. It is always about quantities, substances to be ingested and what effect these substances will have on the body. A mechanized body, like a car. Mechanics without emotion. A mechanic – dietician "checking the levels."

## ..... AND LIVE TO EAT !

But this biological truth hides another one which is as important, it is the psychological issue regarding nourishment. Of course, psychoanalysis looked into that issue bringing eating behavior back to unconscious emotions, which are repressed and therefore past. As far as I am concerned these theories do not really enable to see what really represent nourishment to human beings. And here I would like to make an hypothesis regarding the double function of nourishment.

## THE TWO FUNCTIONS OF NOURISHMENT

In fact nourishment would have two functions. The first function would be the one I have talked about at the beginning, which is the biological one. It consists in a practical function, I would nearly say instrumental. We will call it **heterotelic function** (from the Greek 'telos' : aim, goal) to use a differentiation made by Michel Lobrot in "*La liberation sexuelle*" regarding sexuality. This means that the considered activity finds its purpose outside itself. It is in this sense that it is instrumental. We eat that or the other to put on weight, to lose weight, to be in a better health. In the field of sexuality the heterotelic function corresponds to the genesic function, the reproduction function. Sex act can also have that function.

Alongside this heterotelic function regarding nourishment, without an apparent relation into it, there would be another function totally independent, the **autotelic function**. It seems rather obvious that most of our eating behavior do not have much to do with our physiological needs. Désiré Mérien, the great French specialist in fast, speaks of the experience of true hunger that only the ones who have carried out and brought to completion a fast know. Indeed we often think of hunger when we would like to eat something for pleasure. One frequently experiences that we eat more for pleasure than because we are hungry. Recently I did a drastic diet related to a fast, and after a few days I felt a terrible frustration. I wanted to eat certain things. I could have eaten boiled vegetables but I did not eat them. This shows that what I felt was not hunger but a real frustration concerning the pleasure of eating.

Moreover, our eating choices have got little to do with our biological needs. From time to time, it even upsets them when, for instance, we eat too much, or not enough or inappropriately. What is remarkable here is precisely the independence of that function. Everything is going on as if it had its own life, its own functioning. Not only it is not at the heterotelic function's service, useful as would like it to be a kind of biological finalism, but it is at the service of nothing at all but of itself. This is why I talk about autotelic function. In the sexual field, this autotelic function refers to eroticism. Eroticism has not got a biological or useful purpose, unless we want to see in it such a purpose, in morals or a moralizing viewpoint. For example masturbation is not more useful for human beings reproduction, than taking a delicious Italian coffee at a whatever "Piazza Duomo", for the species' preservation. In one case or the other, one can simply have some kind of pleasure. As one talks about independent erotic's drive, one could also talk about "gastrophilic"'s drive as well. This autotelic function is psychological and cultural.

For that matter, these two functions refer, in the reference frame of *Self Determination Research*, to two great categories of motivation. The autotelic function would refer to intrinsic motivations aiming for a pleasure contained in the action itself, whereas the heterotelic function would refer to extrinsic motivations for which the aim is external to the action. As it happens, it is about motivations which are purely utilitarian and instrumental like procreation in the case of sexuality or survival or health in the case of nourishment.

## WHAT MAKES US EAT ?

During a conference I did a few years ago in Italy, I asked the participants to write down on a piece of paper three foods, drinks or prepared dishes which they like eating the most. I then asked them to try to explain why they enjoyed these particular food. The result was interesting and confirmed that eating behavior has got, most of the time, nothing to do with biological function. I tried to do a phenomenological analysis of these eating behaviors and I ended up in finding the first steps towards a categorization of these motivations but it is non exhaustive and can certainly be adjusted. I would like to present it here very briefly as it could eventually be the base for reflection, but also to show how much our preoccupations in the eating field are strong and faraway from a biological truth on which dieticians are centered.

- N°1 - Aesthetics motivations. For example we like a dish for its color.
- N°2 - Motivations linked with discoveries, genuine epistemic drives pushing towards discoveries of exotic, new, unknown flavors
- N°3 - Motivations linked with memories. It is Proust's madeleine. It is, on a more pragmatic level, anchored in N.L.P.. "I like eating this raspberry cake because it reminds me of my grandmother and my childhood." says a participant.
- N°4 - Motivations regarding identification. It could be the teenager who is going to drink alcohol, which will give him the impression to belong to the adult attractive world.
- N°5 - Interpersonal motivations. It is the meal taken with friends or it could also be the Last Supper in which the idea of sharing is prevailing.
- N°6 - Motivations linked with food purity. They arise with the idea that certain food is good in itself. It does not have any effect on the organism. It is good simply because it is pure.
- N°7 - Motivations linked with the person who cooks. Prepared dishes made by a person whom I love would benefit from a favorable prejudice.
- N°8 - Motivations linked with beliefs regarding specific virtue from such or such a food. It is the placebo effect. It is alcohol which warms you up, meat which gives you energy or fish which increases intellectual faculties.
- N°9 - Motivations linked with pure gustative pleasure. These motivations are linked with the gustative feeling itself, with sensuality.
- N°10 - Motivations linked to the feeling of fullness experienced by satiety. Physical feeling when you are full, appeased.

These motivations, like all motivations, are the result of experiences made by people. Enjoyable experiences creating these drives, which I called "gastrophilic" or with a non less barbaric term, autotelic. Let's note that pleasure does not necessary arise from a gustative feeling. It is also linked, in some cases, with the representation one person has from a particular food or dish. In all cases, what strikes us is the deep psychological nature of these motivations and their detachment from instinctive and physiological motivations. Their ultimate aim is satisfaction and psychological well-being.

These experiences are obviously connoted from a cultural point of view. If biology is one, culture is plural and eating variations, according to the culture, are enormous. One cannot ignore this fact and not integrate it in eating disorders. A Lebanese friend told me one day that in her country people eat raw liver. Most Italians are horrified by the quality of French coffee whereas the French finds Italian coffee too strong. And what can we say about religious intervention regarding nourishment, pork rejection in some religion and meat rejection on Fridays in the Catholic religion ? What can we do about the fact that a lot of children do not like vegetables, which are yet good for their health, but love industrial sweets ? One can see how much cultural nourishment's determinants have an important psychological impact on eating behavior, and intercultural variations are such that we can see in it a lack of interest regarding physiological and dietetics plan The English *bacon and eggs*, for example, does not go well with the cholesterol's recommendation.

### WHEN NOURISHMENT BECOMES A DRUG

To say that these drives are independent does not mean that they do not have a sense in life. On the contrary as it is about positive drives bringing out some amount of pleasure, they are essential to life. Their role in someone's psychic health is truly fundamental. It establishes an antidote to mental distress and anxiety. And it is precisely that which makes them dangerous when other means of pleasure are beginning to be missing. In that case there is an overinvestment concerning these drives which play a compensatory role. The role which we make them play as the only means of pleasure leads to bulimic behavior. It is a drug phenomenon, which, before being a specific addiction to a given product, is above all else a psychological compensatory mechanism.

But relationship to nourishment can be the object of unhappy experiences, like in most case of obese persons studied by Hilde Bruche and from whom she is speaking about in her book "Les yeux et le ventre" named by Michel Lobrot in "Apprendre à vivre". With these persons what predominates is hunger's anxiety which can only be calmed by an over-nourishment. Generally obese persons have not lacked of food more than any others, on the contrary. Regarding their nourishment they were often urged on excessively by their mothers. At the same time, these overprotecting mothers did not enabled their children to have positive experiences in the physical field, like the fact of running or playing. These physical experiences would have avoided him to be haunted by hunger's feeling, which in this lack of pleasure's context, would transform itself into a genuine anxiety.

In one case or the other, whereas nourishment's relationship has been the object of positive experiences or whereas it has been the object of negative experiences, the lack of positive elements at the time when eating drives have been created or at the time when they are carried out, make them play an excessive role which translates itself into pathological behaviors. Nourishment becomes then a real problem.

### THREE WAYS FOR A THERAPY WITH BULIMIC PERSONS

Therapeutically speaking, what can we do ? I see three possible ways of work.

Firstly, someone in the grip of these compulsive behaviors from which he feels the irrational nature, must be stopped from feeling guilty. This guilt often leads to self-frustration as well as moment in which the person is “going wild”, which means, in fact, that he is having a bulimic behavior. To forbid a drive to express itself, makes it simply stronger. This is why I find all these recommended diets from the outside which are not taking into account eating pleasure, not safe and even dangerous. I will come back to that later.

Secondly, help the person to have some nice and new physical experiences outside the nourishment's field. These experiences will have to be strong enough to give birth to solid drives able to counterbalance hunger's anxiety. Therapy can be a privileged place where these experiences will be lived, when a body psychotherapy occurs, but it can also be suggested in the person's everyday life.

Thirdly, develop, enrich, diversify eating drives. Overeating aims to calm hunger's anxiety or anxiety itself and takes extremely rough shapes, in which pleasure, even though present, is little developed. We can make this eating drive become something else than a compensatory device. It can become a real source of wanted pleasure in itself, without compensatory worry. In my nourishment's workshops, I make the participant straight away work on food with the aim to develop a sharp awareness of what they do when they eat as well as the pleasure they gain from it.

#### SEARCHING FOR A BALANCE BETWEEN PHYSIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Diets help. They helped me. They are like a reference. For example Désiré Mérien's combined diet helped me. A diet is valid in itself from a strictly physiological point of view. But physiology is only one point of view in itself but it does not consider the complexity of relationship to nourishment, its over-determination, its psychological components. The pleasure of eating plays an important role in the psychic economy, in particular because eating is a daily action imposed by physiological needs, and also because it is about a quite primary drive, from which frustration convey to aggressiveness. I think about one point of view, the one I actually had in 1998 and on which I changed my mind, which consisted in opposing the pleasure of eating with diets forced upon oneself for health's requirement and presenting it as an alternative to these diets is as absurd as those which consists in only seeing physiological aspects without taking into account the nourishment's psychological and emotional worth. From now on I wish to defend the thesis concerning a complementarity with these two approaches. The extrinsic motivations also have their importance. The desire to be in good health or thin has got as much worth as the desire to take pleasure in eating. Leaving all powers to the pleasure of eating can be disastrous. I have known some bulimic persons who cultivated the pleasure of eating and who had no problem about that. One needs to mention it, even though the majority of bulimic persons have got a relationship with nourishment rather compulsive and rough.

But diets' problem is that they nearly always lead to frustration. Today a lot of dieticians have understood that one could not simply and purely forbid such or such a food. They are then searching to prepare appropriate meals in which the pleasure of eating is taken into account. But however attractive is the recommended food, the problem of frustration is not resolved for all that. A dividing

line stays between what can be eaten and what cannot be eaten. After a while this frustration ends up provoking a “catching up phase” preceded by anxiety and followed by guilt. Désiré Mérien says himself in *Jeûne et santé* that “Some neophytes, after having carried out a too long fast or tried too abruptly ideal hygienic diets (sometime being even the only combined diet) do not suitably bear these diet's changes. They become bulimic persons and go back to the worst heterogeneous meals”. I think that the more someone is rich regarding their “gastrophilic”'s drives, which means that the more he is able to enjoy what he is eating and the more he is creative with his food, the more chance he has to find for himself a nourishment which will provide him with both pleasure and health. But isn't pleasure already health ?

Being frustrated from eating creates tensions, stress and anxiety which are as important as nourishment regarding the psychic's economy of the person. The question is to find out if the disadvantages created by frustration are not superior to the advantages coming from a given diet. The challenge regarding nourishment consists therefore in finding the best possible compromise between the organism's physiological demands dictated by the state of health of the person and the psychological impact of his nourishment which may be negative in case of frustration or positive in case of pleasure. I make the hypothesis that a certain level of frustration has consequences not only psychologically but also physically.

Changing one's own diet or our patient's diet means that it is nearly never without psychological repercussions. Every doctors should be aware of that and remember it. It reminds me of a client I have in therapy, who recently sank into a deep depression after two weeks of a diet without gluten, whom her doctor prescribed to her for a supposed allergy. This purely materialist outlook, regarding nourishment in which the doctor is only counting on his patient's will power, goes well with the representation of our actual robotized world, described by Michel Lobrot in his latest book, *Ma vie, un kaléidoscope*. We are capable to built navigators which show us the way to go when driving a car and at what time we should have been there but yet we are still in the Neolithic Age in the area of social sciences. One cannot change one's own diet or our patient's diet without taking into account the psychological dimension of that activity. It is here that everything becomes complicated. Even though it exists several dietetics schools and even fashions in this field, it is easier to define an ideal diet, by definition good for most people or even everyone, than helping a given person to manage his diet depending on his tastes, his distastes and of the importance nourishment has for him, in a general way and in the particular phase he is going through at the time. Factors are numerous and room to manoeuvre is sometimes narrow.

## BEYOND NOURISHMENT

The thoughts I had at the beginning regarding heterotelic and autotelic nourishment's functions and sexuality have unexpectedly changed in my mind. I became aware that we could apply this double function to the whole of human activities. Let's take for example physical activities. I can, because it is recognized that doing a bit of exercise is good for me, do maintenance gym. But if my motivation is only extrinsic, if my aim is only to be fit, there are a lot of opportunities for me to abandon. For that matter gymnastics clubs speculate on these utilitarian motivations. They know that everyone wish to



have an attractive and thin body. But these motivations, no matter how strong they are, weight nothing next to the lack of pleasure coming, most of the time, from these activities. The remaining ones are the ones who take real pleasure, the ones who find there a satisfaction which has got nothing to do with the will to have a thin body and a brilliant health. This satisfaction can be linked with the pleasure of making an effort, the socialization with other club's members, etc. Heterotelic and autotelic functions are present in every human activities because in all human activities there are a useful aspect and a gratuitous aspect. Usefulness, the heterotelic function, brings us back to the will. Gratuitousness, the autotelic function, brings us back to desire and even to pleasure. This is why when activities are done for themselves, only to have pleasure, without looking for profits, they are the real driving force for human's progress.

Translation : Ann Simon-Debonne

## ***Educazione e persona nella complessità. Itinerari di pedagogia interculturale tra identità, alterità e riconoscimento.***

Francesco Bossio – Università della Calabria

*“Rientra in te stesso, è dentro l’uomo che abita la verità.*

*[...] e se scopri la tua mutevole natura trascendi te stesso”*,

Sant’Agostino, *La vera religione*

Il monito di Sant’Agostino all’introspezione per scoprire la verità interna a ciascuna persona è un invito a non distrarsi nelle cose futili ed esteriori, in quanto solo partendo da uno sguardo interiore autentico e disincantato possiamo ascendere alla conoscenza di noi stessi, fase propedeutica per conoscere l’altro, gli altri, il mondo esterno. Solo dopo essere riuscito a fare queste trasformazioni, secondo Sant’Agostino, l’uomo può scoprire una verità ulteriore che lo abita, ovvero la trascendenza di Dio.

L’identità, a cui ci richiama il Padre della Chiesa, connota in maniera particolare tutti quegli elementi che individuano una persona in quanto tale. Un elemento caratterizzante della persona, come vedremo più avanti, è la costante ricerca conoscitiva di questi nuclei profondi, identitari, che la segnano, anzitutto, nella direzione di *zoon logon echon* attraverso il *logos* raccogliendo il molteplice nell’unità del discorso. Questa apertura dialogica costitutiva della persona viene agita attraverso il *logos* in una apertura dialettica positiva di ricerca di senso, interiore anzitutto, e con gli altri in una feconda e inderogabile dimensione relazionale che, pedagogicamente definiamo cura.

Oggi molto più di ieri la società consumistica e globalizzata propone stili di comportamento ed orientamenti esistenziali che attraverso paradigmi onnicomprensivi cercano di obliare lo sforzo personale che la ricerca di se stessi, necessariamente, comporta proponendo come alternativa modelli fortemente performativi e competitivi. La cura di sé, è necessario precisare, può sussistere solo in presenza di una relazione. La cura di sé e la cura dell’altro, degli altri, possono essere esperite solo attraverso una relazione, una connessione profonda, un *motus* dialettico, una apertura costitutiva. Non possiamo pensare alla cura in situazioni di completa chiusura rispetto a se stessi, in condizioni di alienazione personale o di estraniamento, così, specularmente, rispetto agli altri la cura può essere offerta solo quando sussistano condizioni di relazione o di collegamento, di qualche tipo, tra sé e l’altro. E’ fondamentale il rapporto con la realtà, quella interiore, e quella esterna a sé, del mondo, degli altri e l’elemento che *in primis* caratterizza questa processualità è il legame profondo che la persona ha stabilito con se stessa e con gli altri. Pedagogicamente, infatti, non possiamo pensare al soggetto come capace di dare o restituire qualcosa che non ha, che non gli appartiene. Pensiamo, ad

esempio, al rapporto docente/discente, il docente può, concretamente insegnare ai suoi allievi solo ciò che conosce. Sarebbe paradossale chiedere ad un docente di insegnare argomenti che non possiede o che ignora. Allo stesso modo, la cura o la conoscenza dell'altro sarà direttamente proporzionale alla conoscenza che il soggetto avrà di se medesimo. Sarebbe irrealistico pensare ad un soggetto alieno a se stesso, alla sua dimensione interiore, alla sua identità, che riesca a conoscere l'altro nella sua autenticità. L'atto educativo esperito dal docente nei riguardi dei suoi allievi è un radicale processo educativo di cura che si connota, anzitutto, nella capacità del maestro di farsi carico, comprendere *cūm prehendere*, prendere con sé, assumersi la responsabilità della cura dei suoi allievi, così da condurli *in primis* verso la conoscenza di se stessi e verso l'inculturazione.

Purtroppo, come abbiamo visto, il sociale oggi restituisce in maniera sempre più totalizzante e pervasiva l'*imago* atomistica del soggetto e della stessa realtà, come se solo la dimensione solipsistica e narcisistica della soggettività fosse il paradigma da adottare per vivere in sintonia con se stessi e con la società, negando, in maniera implicita la dimensione relazionale, fondamento cardine della cura. L'altro è visto sempre di più come problema da evitare, non come persona da incontrare, conoscere con cui stabilire feconde corrispondenze. Questa chiusura solipsistica porta *in primis* il soggetto a vivere una situazione di disagio, di estraniamento anzitutto rispetto a se stesso e poi nei confronti degli altri, della realtà circostante, del mondo intero. Negare l'altro in quanto tale e eludere le relazioni che l'esistenza continuamente restituisce è fonte di alienazione per il soggetto, di sofferenza interiore. Se questa chiusura egoica e questa dimensione di non accettazione dell'altro e della dialettica relazionale dovesse protrarsi nel tempo, ovvero essere vissuta molto a lungo, può diventare patologica e implicare anche disturbi della personalità e della mente. Copiosi gli studi e ricerche scientifiche<sup>1</sup> indicano quale eziologia delle malattie mentali, anzitutto, disturbi di tipo relazionale<sup>2</sup>. La relazione rappresenta un elemento costitutivo della persona, non possiamo pensare l'umano privato della galassia relazionale naturalmente collegata all'esistenza. Elemento cardine della relazione, come abbiamo visto, è la cura. Possiamo indicare due modalità principali dell'esplicitarsi della cura. La prima modalità è il prendersi cura di sé, *cura sui*, è il passaggio, propedeutico e fondamentale, di svelamento del *proprium* personale, l'identità che caratterizza la persona umana come essere unico ed irripetibile. Il passaggio successivo riguarda la cura dell'altro, elemento fondamentale, come vedremo più avanti, della civile convivenza.

Pensando alla formazione umana - come processualità di crescita interiore e di acquisizione di consapevolezza di sé e degli altri, della realtà - che continuamente si

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<sup>1</sup> Vedi, D. Goldberg, I. Goodyer, *Origine e sviluppo dei disturbi mentali*, Centro Scientifico Editore, Milano, 2009; D. Hales, R. Hales, *La salute della mente. Riconoscere, prevenire e curare i disturbi mentali*, Longanesi, Milano, 1998; F. Pellegrino, *L'approccio integrato ai disturbi mentali. Linee guida e pratiche cliniche*, Springer Verlag, Milano, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Cfr., G. Caprara, D. Cervone, *Personalità. Determinanti, dinamiche, potenzialità*, Cortina, Milano, 2003; V. Lingiardi, *La personalità e i suoi disturbi. Un'introduzione*, Il Saggiatore, Milano, 2001.

dispiega nel tempo delle stagioni della vita e nello spazio esistenziale segnato, *in primis*, dalle relazioni interpersonali, risulta evidente che l'educazione è anzitutto cura che consente di orientare la persona a realizzare se stessa in una direzione etica per quanto umanamente possibile.

L'incidenza dell'Altro, nel costituirsi dell'io, è quasi uno statuto dell'esistere umano, una norma dettata dalla sua stessa indole, per la quale, sottrarsi alla dimensione della relazionalità non solo significa andare incontro ad una aridità ontologica ed esistenziale ma, ancor più, morire all'ideale stesso di uomo, sottrarsi ad una di quelle componenti che rende tale l'essere umano, elevando la persona a quel mistero affascinante che egli stesso, dagli albori della sua esistenza, anela a conoscere e a rivelare più di qualsiasi altra cosa.

Emmanuel Lèvinas è il filosofo che, nella contemporaneità, ha, forse, più di tutti gli altri pensatori centrato il *focus* della sua speculazione su l'alterità, come elemento cardine di ogni autentica relazione umana. La reale manifestazione dell'assoluta alterità viene chiamata da Lèvinas "*volto*". Noi chiamiamo "*volto*" il modo in cui si presenta l'Altro, che supera l'idea dell'Altro in me<sup>3</sup>. Attraverso il volto, seguendo Lévinas, l'Altro più radicale si presenta a me, entra con me in relazione ed intenziona la mia esistenza, la corrobora di senso e la investe di responsabilità. L'Altro annulla il dualismo, la dicotomia apparenza (forma)-contenuto (essenza), ma rimanda continuamente alla dimensione più autentica della persona, rivelando al tempo stesso la dimensione originaria del "medesimo", ovvero il mio sé e quello dell'Altro, del mio interlocutore<sup>4</sup>. In altre parole, grazie all'incontro, al riconoscimento ed al confronto con l'Altro, *io* posso autenticamente ascendere alla *mia* verità, l'essenza che mi caratterizza come persona unica ed irripetibile. Dobbiamo inoltre considerare che il contesto comunicativo in cui ci troviamo immersi ci propone incontri e relazioni sempre più fugaci ed inautentiche, problema già analizzato in precedenza, (si pensi alla rapidità delle nuove forme di telecomunicazione o al complesso mondo dei *Social Network*). Non è facile cercare di dipanare il bandolo della matassa, perché nel tempo della pluralità, della complessità, della globalizzazione il termine alterità spesso ci fa paura, ci spiazza, ci disorienta. E non è facile perché, quando si parla di rapporti umani, di relazioni, di incontri il rischio di rifugiarsi all'interno di luoghi comuni, di stereotipi e moralismi è sempre molto alto.

Tuttavia, c'è bisogno di parlare di relazioni, è assolutamente necessario fermarsi a riflettere sul significato che hanno i rapporti all'interno della nostra vita ed è opportuno farlo nella consapevolezza che, per quanto la modernità tenda ad esaltare il mito dell'indipendenza e dell'autosufficienza, nessuno di noi può fare a meno dell'altro da sé. Non è possibile pensare al singolo uomo senza situarlo nel contesto storico, culturale, interpersonale nel quale vive e fa esperienza del mondo; ogni forma di

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<sup>3</sup> Cfr. E. Lévinas, *Totalità e infinito* (1961), Jaca Book, Milano, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

chiusura agli altri non può che portare verso l'alienazione e l'impoverimento personale e sociale. "L'uomo – sostiene Martin Buber – diventa io a contatto con il tu"<sup>5</sup>. Il riconoscimento e l'accettazione dell'altro rappresentano la prima tappa della socializzazione, dunque della formazione umana. L'incontro dell'uomo moderno con l'altro può essere storicamente ricondotto ai grandi viaggi intrapresi nel Cinquecento finalizzati a esplorare i confini del mondo, spesso però queste avventure verso l'ignoto hanno avuto come epilogo cruenti conquiste. Basti il richiamare alla memoria una data memorabile, il 1492, anno della scoperta e conquista dell'America, evento che nel volgere di pochi lustri si è trasformato in un atroce genocidio<sup>6</sup>. Partendo da questa drammatica esperienza, l'incontro con l'altro uomo, frequentemente, è stato tragicamente segnato dalle sopraffazioni e dalle barbarie. Per la prima volta nella storia dell'umanità l'uomo si è trovato dinanzi l'altro uomo, il suo *alter ego*, ma purtroppo non lo ha riconosciuto nella sua alterità e lo ha combattuto ed annientato<sup>7</sup>. Il problema che emerge, da questi eventi, ma si potrebbe ampliare il *focus* di osservazione a moltissimi esempi rispetto all'incontro, al dialogo, alle modalità di percepire, vedere e di interagire con l'altro, riguarda una dinamica educativa e pedagogica radicale, quella del riconoscimento. Possiamo indicare il bisogno del riconoscimento come esigenza fondamentale dell'esistenza, secondaria forse, solo all'istinto di autoconservazione. Da queste premesse possiamo affermare che pedagogicamente la scoperta dell'io, lo svelamento e l'ascesa verso la consapevolezza di sé e l'acquisizione del *proprium*, dell'identità unica e irripetibile della persona, così come le complesse ed articolate dinamiche del riconoscimento sono mediate dal tu, dalla relazione. Il "con" è l'elemento radicale e fondativo della relazione costitutiva dell'uomo continuamente in relazione "con" gli altri, il continuamente rimanda all'intera esistenza umana, a tutte le stagioni della vita dalla nascita fino alla vecchiaia avanzata, l'essere con gli altri, il *Mitdasein* heideggeriano<sup>8</sup>, struttura ontologica costitutiva, declina significativamente l'intero processo educativo e formativo. In quanto struttura ontologica costitutiva l'essere-in-relazione appartiene, costitutivamente, all'intera esistenza con tutte le complesse dinamiche legate al riconoscimento. Attraverso questo originario e continuo essere in relazione con gli altri e attraverso il riconoscimento, fondamentale per la costituzione di me in quanto persona, che l'altro mi restituisce, possiamo facilmente dedurre che pedagogicamente è come se la relazionalità dell'altro, degli altri, autenticamente mi restituissero a me stesso, mi aiutassero a determinarmi come sé personale, nella mia identità e caratteristiche. E' solo attraverso il tu, gli altri che ricevo i riconoscimenti che mi fanno essere, e riconoscere a me stesso, ciò che sono. Il riconoscimento o all'opposto il misconoscimento sono elementi fortemente interrelati a caratteristiche distintive della

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<sup>5</sup> M. Buber, *Io e tu*, in Id., *Il principio dialogico e altri saggi*, a cura di A. Poma, San Paolo, Milano, 1993, p. 67.

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. T. Todorov, *La conquista dell'America*, Einaudi, Torino, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. M. Heidegger, *Essere e tempo* (1927), a cura di P. Chiodi, Utet, Torino, 1986<sup>2</sup> (1969), § 26, pp. 203-214.

persona che, in misura più o meno rilevante, connotano il *proprium* identitario, o comunque qualità a questo interrelate. Identità e riconoscimento sono due elementi differenti che tuttavia divengono complementari, nel senso che il riconoscimento diviene una funzione simmetrica della stessa identità personale, nei termini che la stessa identità diviene concreta e reale solo attraverso il riconoscimento. Il monito socratico a conoscere se stessi non è da intendersi solo come una operazione di scavo archeologico nella propria interiorità per conoscere e quindi potersi appropriare dei nuclei più segreti e profondi di se stessi, ma è da intendere anche come la capacità di dialettizzare questo *proprium* identitario con gli altri al fine di mostrarlo nella sua interezza e renderlo così oggettivo, ovvero poterlo palesare agli altri e vederlo da questi riconosciuto. Il riconoscimento ha come prioritaria implicazione quella che l'identità della persona diventi, attraverso l'oggettivazione che gli altri mi conferiscono attraverso il riconoscimento, consapevolezza profonda, reale ed autentica di se stessi. Questa oggettivazione di sé (autocoscienza<sup>9</sup>), della propria identità, è resa possibile dal riconoscimento che l'altro mi restituisce riconoscendomi nelle mie peculiarità e caratteristiche. La persona non riuscirebbe ad ascendere alla piena consapevolezza di sé, oggettivata, senza l'opera di riconoscimento dell'altro, degli altri che continuamente riconoscendomi conferiscono realtà e autenticità al mio essere e alle mie azioni. Io riesco a riconoscermi nel mio *proprium*, nella mia identità, in quanto l'altro mi ha riconosciuto come tale. L'altro diventa così consustanziale a me stesso, elemento fondante e costitutivo della mia identità. Così l'identità personale si ibrida con quella dell'altro, diventa intersoggettiva, così come è intersoggettiva la costituzione dell'autocoscienza. Il riconoscimento apre la soggettività all'alterità fino alla condivisione profonda dell'autocoscienza, riconoscere l'altro implica anche l'accoglierlo e rispettarlo nelle sue peculiarità e caratteristiche, conferendogli la dignità di soggetto e lo stesso statuto morale che grazie a lui riesco ad attribuire a me stesso. Il riconoscimento è quindi un processo che nasce nell'etica del rispetto dell'altro, degli altri, come di me stesso, fondamento stesso della civile convivenza.

Il problema fondamentale oggi è che pensando all'incontro, all'ibridazione tra due culture completamente diverse “il contatto non si traduce in uno scambio equilibrato – come afferma Serge Latouche – ma in un flusso continuo a senso unico, la cultura ricettiva è invasa, minacciata nella sua propria essenza e può essere considerata vittima di una vera e propria aggressione.”<sup>10</sup> La globalizzazione dell'economia ha innescato profondi processi di deculturazione, che come effetto principale hanno determinato una omogeneizzazione di ampie regioni del mondo rispetto alla logica dell'economia capitalista e al suo sistema di valori socialmente condivisi. La logica di mercato e quella del profitto hanno completamente curvato la società sugli interessi economici, gli effetti dirimpenti della crisi economica occidentale hanno stravolto completamente le

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<sup>9</sup> Cfr. *L'autocoscienza*, in G. W. F. Hegel, *Fenomenologia dello spirito*, Bompiani, Milano, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> S. Latouche, *L'occidentalizzazione del mondo. Saggio sul significato, la portata e i limiti dell'uniformazione planetaria*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 1992, p. 68.

economie dei singoli paesi che sono stati risucchiati nel vortice della crisi globale.<sup>11</sup> L'aspetto più paradossale è che l'economia di mercato si fonda esclusivamente sulla produttività, restando sostanzialmente indifferente rispetto a istanze tipicamente umane come la comunicazione e la relazionalità intersoggettiva, i legami profondi, l'affettività, lo spirito di servizio, la vita stessa dell'uomo. Le esigenze reali sono quelle delle persone che continuamente si incontrano, parlano, entrano in relazione anche se sono state educate e formate in culture diverse e per questo hanno modalità differenti di vedere il mondo e di interagire con esso. "Come potrebbe prendere forma il progetto di una educazione alla cittadinanza del mondo nel programma di un'università odierna? – si chiede Martha Nussbaum – [...] Questa educazione deve essere multiculturale, deve cioè far conoscere agli studenti le caratteristiche principali della cultura tipica di altri gruppi [...] La consapevolezza della differenza culturale è essenziale per favorire il rispetto reciproco, che è a sua volta il necessario presupposto per l'instaurarsi di un dialogo produttivo. Le cause principali del rifiuto di chi è diverso sono infatti l'ignoranza e il ritenere le proprie abitudini valide per natura."<sup>12</sup> Se il presente ci restituisce un modello di economia globale, planetaria, perché non possiamo pensare una educazione multiculturale che ci faccia interagire, relazionare in maniera feconda e positiva, riconoscendo tutte le soggettività come persone indipendentemente dalla loro cultura di origine, ceto sociale o convincimento politico e religioso? Dalla chiusura solipsistica del soggetto, dalle sue insicurezze interiori legate ad atteggiamenti di assolutizzazione della propria *imago*, di matrice tipicamente infantile e adolescenziale, nasce la mancanza di conoscenza di sé, della personale identità con le peculiarità proprie, le potenzialità ma anche i limiti, e discende da questi atteggiamenti la mancanza di riconoscimento che solo la relazionalità autentica riesce a dare. Se il soggetto non riesce a conoscere se stesso, a scoprire la sua identità, non riuscirà mai a riconoscere l'identità altrui, così vedrà l'altro sempre come una potenziale minaccia alla sua integrità. Questo discorso generale trova maggiori conferme se l'altro appartiene a una cultura diversa dalla propria, proviene da paesi lontani e vive seguendo modalità esistenziali differenti da quelle soggettive, in questo caso la chiusura sarà ancora più forte, così come la barriera edificata per escludere l'altro sarà ulteriormente rafforzata. Potrebbe sembrare un discorso semplicistico oppure superficiale ma si impone per il suo realismo, il soggetto nega, disconosce l'altro, rifiuta qualsiasi contatto o dialogo, perché anzitutto non conosce se stesso, la sua identità di persona unica ed irripetibile che ignora, rifiuta e disconosce. "Nel rifiuto affascinato che suscita in noi lo straniero – scrive Julia Kristeva – c'è una parte di inquietante estraneità nel senso della depersonalizzazione che Freud ha scoperto e che si ricollega ai nostri desideri e alle

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<sup>11</sup> Cfr. A. M. Baggio, P. Coda, L. Bruni, *La crisi economica. Appello a una nuova responsabilità*, Città Nuova, Roma, 2009; L. Napoleoni, *Il contagio. Perché la crisi economica rivoluzionerà le nostre democrazie*, Rizzoli, Milano, 2012; G. Sapelli, *La crisi economica mondiale. Dieci considerazioni*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> M. C. Nussbaum, *Coltivare l'umanità. I classici, il multiculturalismo, l'educazione contemporanea* (1997), Carocci, Roma, 2010, pp. 85-86.

nostre paure infantili dell'altro [...] Lo straniero è dentro di noi. E quando fuggiamo o combattiamo lo straniero, lottiamo contro il nostro inconscio – questo «improprio» del nostro impossibile «proprio». Delicatamente, analiticamente, Freud non parla degli stranieri: egli ci insegna a scoprire l'estraneità dentro di noi. E questo è forse il solo modo per non perseguirla fuori."<sup>13</sup> Pedagogicamente la relazionalità interno esterno è ineludibile in quanto è originaria e costitutiva dell'essere umano; non possiamo pensare, ad esempio, di dialogare con l'altro se non riusciamo a farlo con noi stessi, parimenti non possiamo conoscere l'altro se non conosciamo, realmente, noi stessi. Il disconoscimento, la chiusura, il rifiuto dell'altro sono l'effetto speculare della chiusura, della mancanza di conoscenza verso noi stessi. Il monito socratico, mediato dal motto delfico, “conosci te stesso”, riproposto con spiegazioni e in contesti diversi da Sigmund Freud agli inizi del Novecento, arriva fino a noi, figli della postmodernità e della globalizzazione, come un grande bisogno per sconfiggere i mali più profondi del nostro presente come la mancanza di senso, il vuoto e il nichilismo esistenziale, la reificazione e la dilagante indifferenza verso gli altri e verso i mali del mondo. Il conoscere se stessi non è un processo deterministico preconstituito ma è una ricerca che dura per tutta la vita, anche se è opportuno precisare che nessuna persona riuscirà completamente a conoscere se stessa, ad ascendere pienamente alla consapevolezza della personale identità. La persona è anzitutto in contatto con se stessa, con la sua verità, ovvero con l'identità, che abbiamo indicato come verità personale, proprio partendo da se stessa intenziona la sua esistenza in una dimensione etica e valoriale che la pone in una condizione di apertura costitutiva verso l'altro, gli altri, ha una progettualità esistenziale che continuamente declina le sue azioni, operando continuamente nel totale rispetto degli altri e delle regole della civile convivenza. Da questi presupposti, l'autonomia del soggetto si esprime, anzitutto, nell'affermazione delle proprie peculiari caratteristiche che lo rendono persona tra persone. La conquista, l'ascesa, lo svelamento dell'identità portano il soggetto a interagire in maniera differente, anzitutto, con se stesso e poi con gli altri da cui viene riconosciuto nelle sue peculiarità e caratteristiche e che a sua volta riconosce. In altre parole, nel momento in cui la persona scopre la sua identità e inizia a riconoscersi ed essere riconosciuta come essere unico ed irripetibile depositaria di qualità e peculiarità proprie, agisce coerentemente a quello che è, al suo statuto morale interno, non si lascia influenzare o traviare in direzioni esistenziali diverse, agisce coerentemente a se stessa e a ciò che ha progettato di fare nella sua vita. La vitalità discende alla persona dall'autenticità del suo essere e delle scelte intraprese, ma anche da un interesse vivo per l'esistenza orientata nel bene e nella gioia dell'incontro e della relazionalità feconda con gli altri. La profondità della persona si radica nella sua verità identitaria che la spinge continuamente a superare le apparenze delle cose o delle situazioni per ascendere alla loro costitutiva profondità e completezza. La persona è continuamente protesa a migliorare se stessa e a cercare di aiutare gli altri nella loro personale evoluzione, così da ampliare la sfera della propria coscienza e maturare

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<sup>13</sup> J. Kristeva, *Stranieri a se stessi* (1988), Feltrinelli, Milano, 1990, p. 174.



interiormente. Questa maturazione si compie continuamente attraverso dinamiche di riconoscimento, come abbiamo visto, e di relazione con gli altri, la persona è costitutivamente con, insieme agli altri. “*Essere singolare plurale* – scrive Jean-Luc Nancy – vuol dire: l’essenza dell’essere è ed è soltanto una *co-essenza*. [...] Non si tratta dell’essere in prima battuta, cui si aggiunge il «con», ma del «con» al cuore dell’essere.”<sup>14</sup> La persona è originariamente “singolare e plurale” in quanto costitutivamente in relazione con gli altri, in una dimensione di autenticità esistenziale e di reciproco riconoscimento delle proprie peculiarità e caratteristiche identitarie che ascendono così verso l’autocoscienza, una dimensione oggettivata di se stessi. Pedagogicamente, ciascuna persona continuamente si educa e si forma nella relazione con gli altri, e questa relazione educativa è feconda in quanto anche l’altra persona o le altre persone della relazione a loro volta traggono benefici educativi e istanze formative da questo incontro di mutui riconoscimenti e di ibridazioni feconde. L’altra persona diventa così consustanziale al mio personale percorso di maturazione e di formazione, complementare e costitutiva alla mia maturazione e al mio miglioramento. Essendo il rapporto con l’altro costitutivo dell’essenza stessa della persona che lo sperimenta, ne discende che l’apertura, la disponibilità, l’ascolto, gli atteggiamenti che noi abbiamo verso gli altri saranno gli stessi che riusciremo, concretamente, a vivere con noi stessi e viceversa, in una continua ed inarrestabile dinamica di riconoscimenti reciproci. L’altro per eccellenza, lo straniero è sempre portatore di istanze e stimoli nuovi, di cambiamento per la comunità che lo accoglie, al di là di sterili contrapposizioni e preconcetti, mi restituisce testimonianza della sua cultura e modalità esistenziali che, concretamente, aprono, nella reciprocità della relazione, gli orizzonti e i paradigmi di conoscenza e di senso, rendendo fecondo e vitale l’incontro, il confronto e i, reciproci, riconoscimenti. Il rischio reale, riferendoci all’incontro con lo straniero, nella nostra società governata dalle oscure logiche economiche mondiali e dalla economia di mercato è quello di confondere, e sclerotizzare, i conflitti di interessi con quelli di identità. Solo riportando alla luce le dimensioni più autentiche dell’umana natura, che risiedono anzitutto nell’identità, nella relazione e nel riconoscimento, è oggi possibile affrontare le sfide della modernità, una modernità insidiosa e complessa che, tuttavia, se colta nella sua dimensione più positiva di opportunità e di incontro può portare l’essere umano a sbocciare come persona aperta a se stessa, all’altro, al mondo.

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## **Memory culture and learning amongst students at Danish colleges of education**

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### **Contents**

Introduction .....	1
Short project description.....	2
Two narratives: similarities and differences .....	3
Narrative construction of meaning and self-identity .....	3
Connecting the personal with the bigger story .....	5
Recognition and inclusion .....	7
Dealing with difference in education.....	8
References .....	9

### **Introduction**

In this paper I outline the framework and some initial questions in my newly initiated PhD project on biographical learning and differing memory cultures amongst teacher students at Danish colleges of education. The paper will be opened with a short project description which will be followed by a presentation and preliminary analysis of the narratives of two teacher students. I will use these narratives in a pilot analysis of central aspects of the project, namely how the informants through their memories narratively express self-identity and relations to others as well as perceptions of their education. The paper will be concluded with a few questions for further discussion.

### Short project description

In my project I address communities of memory<sup>1</sup> at Danish colleges and ask how alternative individual and collective memories overlap or dissonance with the dominating cultures present at the institutions.

My approach is narrative life story interviews (Horsdal 2012) through which I will address how the students bring in or reflect upon their own biographical narratives and memories when they learn about history, religion and culture. This raises questions on how cultural memory is evoked in learning processes. The project will have a special focus on alternative memory cultures amongst ethnic or otherwise constructed minorities. With this focus I wish to address the role memory and cultural background play in the changing intercultural structures of minority and majority relations at the colleges. Due to my special interest in minority positions I will in the following mainly focus on the narrative of T, as she has an ethnic and religious background and in several ways represents herself in opposition of the Danish majority.

In my future work I will use narrative interviews, observation and other forms of fieldwork to look both backwards and forwards in time. People use their current understanding and reflection about their past in their meaning-making of their present and navigation for their future. Through the life story interviews I aim to use the student's reflections on their personal trajectories leading up to now. Through these narratives I hope to gain insight into the reflections on and configurations of the narrator's identity work (Gee 2000) and to get a situated perspective of how and from what sources the informants create meaning and cohesion in their lives. Apart from life story interviews, I will conduct and use semi-structured interviews, logbooks and classroom observations in order to qualify a more forward looking analysis of how the students understand and use history.

The aim of the project is to address how we in teacher's education can include memories and personal narratives of students in order to make learning relevant and available? Furthermore I aim to explore how we in education can improve dialogic, intercultural and multiple perspective understanding across divergent cultural narratives and memory cultures.

In this paper I will present the first two narrative interviews of my project. I will use them in a pilot analysis of my initial research questions as well as they have helped me in my ongoing rethinking and detailing of the project. Hence, this paper will address the following questions:

- *What traces and communities of memory can be found in the narratives of the teacher students?*
- *How do the students narratively express self-identity and collective identities?*
- *When and how are such traces of memory<sup>2</sup> activated at learning processes at the colleges?*
- *And when are they in conflict with the overall collective memories at the colleges?*

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of communities of memory draws on the work of Robert Bellah et al: Habits of the Heart. Individualism and Commitment in American Life (University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1985).

<sup>2</sup> My use of the notion of traces of memory is inspired by the work of May-Brith Ohman Nielsen, 2004.

### **Two narratives: similarities and differences**

In the following I will present the narratives of my two first informants, T and L. T and L are both female students at their first year of their education, studying at the same teachers training college in central Copenhagen. They are in the beginning of their 20'ies and share a feeling of dedication towards the project of becoming teachers. Both narratives are structured along their personal routes, experiences and choices that have motivated their educational choice. In these, meetings with encouraging teachers, social empowerment and the feeling of being able to influence others, guided them both in their educational choice. Differences in the narrative forms and in the ways the women tell about experiences, sentiments and changes in their lives can however in some regards be seen as almost opposite self-representations.

The teacher student L creates in her narrative a picture of a rather confident young woman who tells vividly about childhood memories and youth. And despite difficult periods both in school and family life her story is characterized by almost idyllic memories of tight family ties, growing up in a big house in the countryside and with close relations to family and friends. L is ethnic Danish and can be seen as representing a majority position at the teachers college. Although L explicitly says that she in her current situation doesn't live the way she prefers, as she hasn't got her family and friends close around her it is clear, that strong communities and nearness to others are central values.

In the narrative of T there are no such concrete memories of strong communities or of being close to others. On the contrary, the theme for T's narrative seems to be isolated and alone. T's childhood memories are – to the limited extent we get access to them in her narrative – characterized by growing up in what she calls a ghetto in a socially deprived area of central Copenhagen. Furthermore her narrative is colored by isolation, fights with the other kids and no lasting friendships in her Arab primary school. T's family are Muslim immigrants from Tunisia, and despite the fact that T is born and raised in Denmark and speaks perfect Danish, she has never had any 'Danish friends' and she doesn't refer to herself as Danish. Instead she reflects on her Muslim identity and her continued struggle for coming to terms with being a Muslim in 'an anti-Muslim society'. This seems to reflect an understanding that Danish and Muslim identity cannot be combined.

### **Narrative construction of meaning and self-identity**

Several stories and recalled memories in the interviews give us an impression on how T and L understand and create self-identity. In the narrative of L we continuously get an impression of the person L through her stories and memories and through her view on the world around her. She tells stories and draw pictures that invites the listener to imagine the different situations through her life, and that helps us understand her current position as well as future ambitions. In this way we obtain the possibility to vicariously experience her life and background and to see the world with her eyes.

*This thing about living with so many people, that suited me really well, I really just like being with other people. My mother used to say that I never played only by myself. I never did anything on my own. It only makes sense to me if there is somebody else*

*there. [...and at boarding school] there were just people around all the time. So that was something I realized at that time – that I felt really good when I can be a part of a greater community and when there are people around all the time (L).*

Similar vicarious experiences are not easily formed from the narrative of T. Her story is characterized by a more superficial recollection and external description of important persons in her life that have influenced her. She doesn't tell much about concrete experiences or memories. Rather she summarizes her own analysis of where and why she is where she is today. Central characters in her story are two teachers, her father and grandfather. But none of them are introduced by a close or personal description but rather as persons who – in her view – have played a role in forming her personality:

*[I had] a teacher in Danish who helped me to develop my personality regarding independence and who I am today, in general and socially. Because after I graduated from the private school, I was a very anti-social, introvert person and I had prejudices against everything and everybody. But that teacher who understood me and helped me to move on meant that I started to open up and form my own personality. That turned out to strengthen me, because I went through a very hard period of time in high school [...] but it didn't affect me because I had built this strong personality the year before (T).*

I find that both L and T in their narratives express rather essentialist perceptions of self-identity. They both try to explain how they *really are*. This is most evident in the story of T who stresses what her personality is like and who has helped her to get to know herself. She is aware of personal development through external and social influences, but at the same time her telling seems to draw a picture of an inner core identity, that *is there* and can be discovered and revealed: “Maybe I'm just born with this personality that I don't care. If someone doesn't want to be with me, then I don't care about you either! [...] So maybe that's something I am born with, my character” (T).

This understanding deviates from current hegemonic theories of identity as narratively constituted as defined by researchers as Jerome Bruner and Marianne Horsdal. Although you cannot tell or be whatever you like, there is according to them not one truth or ‘real meaning’ to be revealed beneath the narratives. Rather there is heterogeneity of different possible stories, narrative performances and counter-narratives. In other words, even though we in theory may reject the notion of essentialist identities, this understanding is not reflected by my informants. This calls for an examination of how an essentialist self-perception influences personal narratives.

I find it worth examining in what ways my informants presentations of themselves influence or reflects their concrete navigating in the world. I read the narrative of T as rather external and static without stories or pictures that invites the listener inside in her story. Despite her willingness to share private thoughts and reflections about adapting and trying to understand the social rules of the game, her hardships and difficulties of interacting and being understood by others seem to be the master narrative of her story. She has more experience in distanced relationships, in drawing boundaries and barriers than in inviting people in. She had friends at her previous schools, but she has also experienced that the friendships didn't lasted:

*Childhood experiences...? Well, I did have some friends at the private school, but they didn't last after all. There were good times, but they didn't last. Then there were lots of fights in the yard and between the people who lived here, and I think this is because*

*this is a ghetto area. And that have marked me a lot in my childhood. I am certain that that has played a role in making me who I am today. Because I don't put up with everything, and I have to have it my way, and I am like really a fighter. I can discuss for hours – really, I won't give in, no matter what. [...] I'm not saying that we are from a socially deprived family, we are not at all, but I grew up with people from deprived families, that I have had many fights with. We also played, but we also fought. That's just how it was like, that was life. You would never find that in a posh neighborhood in Denmark, but that was how it was like here (T).*

This reflection is far from the childhood memories of L. On the contrary, these are marked by a nostalgic and idyllic tone:

*The place I was born and lived till I was 15 years old was a big old house. And I have loved that place. Still today, if I think about where I live, then it's that house I picture. My dad built a lot there and it was really nice. There was a big garden with a lot of trees and lots of room to play [...]. Upstairs there was a room that wasn't in use, so my dad suggested that we should build a bar. So we did, and I stayed home from school for three days – maybe I shouldn't say that! – But it was really exciting for me, because I was a part of it all. In planning where it should be, in the designing and building of the bar. It was a real project I joined and it was really exciting. Things like that have meant a lot to me, and that's why I have been really close to my dad (L).*

*We have lots of memories together with my parents and lots of things that we could talk about. And therefore I remember the first years of my life as really secure and cosy. It might sound like some real countryside idyll, and actually it was. I was allowed to do all the things that I liked and we got all the experiences that we wished for (L).*

However there is also counter narratives in L's story. The most dominating of these are when she as a teenager realizes that her parents are getting divorced:

*"It actually changed my life radically, you can say. Because everything was all of the sudden... well all this family-thing that it all had built upon, all of the sudden it just wasn't there anymore" (L).* In L's narrative this becomes a turning point towards more independence. She leaves home early to live with her boyfriend. But at the same time as she look for other close relations than her family, she still highly values the strong ties between herself and her boyfriend, family and her friends.

### **Connecting the personal with the bigger story**

The Danish researcher Andreas Rasch-Christensen has done research in how teacher students to a very high degree draw on their own personal resources and narratives when they learn and teach history. He has shown how students link the past with the present and link personal relations and narratives to the bigger history. Being able to draw upon your personal small stories when learning about the bigger history is essential for gaining understanding and meaning. This is supported by historian May-Brith Ohman Nielsen who has illustrated how historical consciousness is activated when people relate historical episodes or themes to their own lives. Doing this, people create 'traces of memories' in cognitive connections between past and present through which the individual finds the bigger history meaningful (Ohman Nielsen, 2004; Rasch-Christensen, 2010).



In order to be able to bridge the bigger history with smaller personal stories, Marianne Horsdal stresses the importance of narrative competences and self-reflection: Being able to understand and narratively reflect upon one's life strengthen people's ability to understand and navigate in the bigger history, in society and in an otherwise often confusing world. And if your own history is not appreciated as meaningful, you are according to Horsdal and others less likely to find society around you meaningful (Horsdal, 2012).

These findings raise the question on what consequences it might have for minority students' learning if they don't find personal identification in the school curricula or in the educational approach. And this is again related to issues of recognition, power and mastering of hegemonic cultural codes. In this context Horsdal introduces the term 'cultural re-embedding' to describe the preconditions for recognition of what is being told. She finds cultural competences to be crucial in order to know what can be said in which contexts and what will be heard and re-embedded. If people don't experience recognition of their stories, it is most likely that they will abstain from telling them.

I am interested in the left out memories that don't seem to suit the institutional collective discourses and memories. At this early stage of my project I have found indications of narrative differences between my two pilot-informants that calls for a closer examination. I find several examples in the narrative of T that suggests difficulties for her to find her own voice and connect to others. Instead she experiences frustration and lack of understanding and she repeatedly refers to feelings such as 'frustration', 'irritation', 'insult', 'anger', or of 'being just about to explode' when interaction with others gets difficult.

In this context I find it interesting that these feelings most often are connected to situations in class when certain topics provoke her or simply get too personal. This is for instance the case when her teacher in the topic KLM ('Christianity, Life view and Citizenship') addresses certain problematized issues related to Islam. As a consequence, she doesn't know how to engage in these lessons even though she has a strong urge to take part, and she often ends up frustrated and not participating. In the following T reflects on such situations:

*I get really frustrated and personally I don't think that I would react like that if I were a converted Muslim, because it really has something to do with my background, she [the teacher] pokes at my feelings, and she irritates me in an emotional way when she mentions these issues that hurts. It's related to my background in that way that my parents are Muslims, and we are all Muslims, and I get frustrated, like insulted. Because there is war in the Middle East and people are dying there every day, and Islam and Muslims in the Arab countries are like development countries, you know. And these problems are real, but still I get insulted. I feel, that it is me, that she points at, like it is me that she is trying to frustrate... and then there are some attitudes, that emerge in our discussions in class and I get an urge to take part in the discussions, for an example in this about war, but then I think, No, I don't really want to, even though I also think, "Oh, I want to take part! I want to defend! [...] But its best I keep quiet, right – because it's very subjective, it's very much about my feelings, and that's not how it's supposed to be (T).*

By concluding that "that's not how it's supposed to be" T seems to refer to what I have labeled the institutional discourse and the values of the colleges. I will give this discourse more attention in my work to come. It's evident that T in situations as the above feels personally confronted. She wants to take part in the discussion, but she can't seem to find the way to make her own position

understandable and can't navigate between personal feelings and a more distanced academic approach. This situation is connected to the need to relate personal smaller stories with the bigger story. At the same time, I find that the difficulties of T suggest some important challenges in doing this, maybe especially if the personal stories are a part of a bigger contested or problematized community of memory.

### **Recognition and inclusion**

T's narrative is characterized by experiences of being different and standing outside the common understanding: in social rules of the game, classroom working methods and in perception of certain topical questions as above. Also prior experience tells her, that friendships seldom lasts and that meaning and understanding across social and cultural lines are difficult to reach.

Several times T explains her feeling of being different from others due to her Tunisian and Muslim background. However, she also stresses her early experiences of standing out in the private Arab school. This suggests a more rooted isolating feeling of being different in both contexts, as the ethnic 'other' and 'non-Dane'. In both cases however, she uses the notion of cultural difference as an explanation of her in some ways marginal position. But at the same time, she stresses that her different perspective can be a resource for her – for instance when teaching pupils who are lonely or who have minority backgrounds. Most of all however, she worries that her being different will prevent her from understanding Danish children when becoming a teacher:

*But if I were to teach... a class with only Danish pupils, then I don't really know whether I would be able to understand them. That's my problem [...], because I grew up in an Islamic-Arab school. I don't know how people today think, because I didn't grow up amongst the Danes. I only remember things from the private school on Nørrebro<sup>3</sup>. I can't put myself in their place, because I don't remember anything from kindergarten, and I never had any Danish friends during my childhood, so I can't really read their thoughts [...]. Immigrant kids, I can put myself in their situation. I can understand them, and if they say something really weird, then I know what they mean. When Danish kids talk, on the contrary, then I think, 'what is it this person, this kid means?' (T)*

T's reflection in the above phrase addresses a perception that Danish kids (here meaning non-Arab kids) are different from her in ways that prevents her from understanding them. Thus her narratively ethnic framed self-identity seems to stand in her way of simply viewing the pupils as children without considering the ethnic category. In another context Horsdal has worked with the inclusion of minority groups in different communities. She stresses that taking part and being included in a given community most often are preconditions to feeling the motivation to take part. If people don't feel recognized and included, they will often look for other avenues and communities to join (Horsdal, 2001: 278).

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<sup>3</sup> Nørrebro is a central part of Copenhagen where many immigrants live.

### **Dealing with difference in education**

The Danish researcher Laura Gilliam addresses how both teachers and students categorize students along ethnic or social lines. She describes that many Danish teachers in order to be inclusive appear to ignore ethnic differences amongst their pupils. However this policy often changes once the teacher are in the teachers' staff room. Here the children are often referred to as the 'Danish and the bilingual in ways where the latter are often problematized (Gilliam, 2008: 26). This shows that language is never neutral and according to Gilliam this often results in a continuation of social and cultural inequalities where students with minority background are not helped to address cultural difficulties properly. Gilliam's research shows that there is a need for attention on what kind of language, knowledge and praxis that are recognized as valuable or as problematic in schools and to better help vulnerable pupils to meet these desired forms (Gilliam, 2008).

A deeper analysis of aspects mentioned in this paper requires further interviews and research. In the future I will address the question of whether a 'minority-framed' master narrative creates difficulties in learning processes and exam conflicts on how to relate personally to specific subjects. Within this I am especially interested in whether the very narrative of 'being different' from a supposed majority gets to serve as an explanatory model for students with minority background in ways, that prevents them from challenging the concrete social interactions behind the categories.

In conclusion I will raise the question whether these described characteristics of self-identity, ways of telling and cultural marks can be seen as interrelated with preconditions for learning. Can the negative experiences that dominate the narrative of T be related to limited or differently formed narrative competences? – And what does that mean for her positioning when learning? Furthermore, several methodological and ethical considerations are relevant. This relates to questions of the dialogical space in the interview situation and the agenda of both informant and researcher. Here as in the wider context it is impossible to discard issues of power and representation.

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## *Costruzione di relazioni e educazione interculturale*

E' aprile dello scorso anno e inizio un laboratorio di educazione interculturale in una quinta elementare di un Comune in provincia di Ferrara

In sinergia col Corso di formazione che stiamo facendo il laboratorio punta a stimolare la classe sul tema della differenza supportando i percorsi di didattica interculturale e il processo di integrazione dei bambini stranieri

Come sempre mi chiedo chi ci sarà oltre quella porta e come sempre loro staranno chiedendosi chi entrerà dalla porta

La maestra mi accoglie e come d'accordo lascia sia io a impostare il rapporto con la classe

Non dico nulla e li guardo mentre loro mi guardano

E' un inizio tranquillo, oggi raro nelle classi spesso segnate da ben altre dinamiche.

Lascio che il tempo della pausa permetta di scrutarci, di far emergere qualche emozione

Vedo visi curiosi, sento qualche risata, noto qualche sguardo spero

Impossibile non soffermarsi sulle due bambine con la pelle un po' scura vestite in modo molto colorato, immobili che mi scrutano attente e sul bambino di pelle nera che tiene il mento appoggiato alle braccia sul banco

Due occhi che mi fissano, immobili

Lascio che il suo sguardo mi entri dentro e con esso le domande che sottende, domande che gli occhi esprimono come se fossero trasparenti

Cerco la modalità opportuna per centrarmi su quel gruppo, narro la storia del mio avere casa in un villaggio Africano, spostato verso il "normale" ciò che appare di solito "strano", mi connoto come "figura ponte", io Italiano bianco narro di amicizia con Africani neri e mostro immagini che rappresentano quei mondi lontani che i bambini di altri paesi sovente ben conoscono, provenendo da là.

Ne parlo con rispetto, curiosità, affetto e racconto che la mia casa al villaggio fu costruita per invitarmi a tornare, segno e simbolo del legame che ci univa

La mia casa, là, è una capanna che abito sentendomi onorato del gesto che mi è stato fatto a testimoniarmi amicizia

Gli occhi del bambino nero chiedono meno e si collocano di più

Quando giro tra i banchi per dare a tutti la mano mi tende subito la sua e ci sorridiamo

Termino le prime due ore e la maestra mi offre un caffè nell'intervallo

E' contenta e stupita al contempo: "Mi spiega cosa è successo? John – il bambino nero – è arrivato due mesi fa e non ha mai aperto bocca rifiutandosi perfino di dire il suo nome. Oggi si è presentato, ha commentato le diapositive poi ho visto che prima è venuto da lei a offrirle un po' della sua merenda con un sorriso grande così"

"Bè per avviare un processo di educazione interculturale occorre costruire clima, creare le condizioni affettive perchè il bambino come l'adulto si senta accettato e quindi riconosciuto nella sua specificità.

Per aprirsi all'altro occorre sentirsi sicuri, non temere di essere presi in giro, derisi, giudicati, svalutati, collocati in categorie precostituite"

"Ma cosa le ha detto, ho visto che vi siete parlati un po'"

*Laboratorio Teranga  
Ricerca e scambio tra persone e culture*

“Gli ho chiesto della sua famiglia, se ha visto cose che gli ricordano il suo paese e lui mi ha chiesto come mi sono trovato, cosa amo mangiare in Senegal, cosa mi piace fare.

Poi gli ho chiesto di dirmi quale è la lingua di sua madre, la lingua materna e di dirmi alcune parole in quella lingua, ho provato a ripeterle e gli ho detto di salutarmi la sua famiglia.”

“Per lei che ha la sua esperienza in Africa è facile ma come posso fare io?”

“L’Africa non servirebbe a nulla se non sapessi conmetterla ai ragazzi. Credo anche lei abbia vissuto qualche esperienza di accoglienza. Come si è sentita? Cosa la ha aiutata? Quali gesti? Riviva quello, lo accolga in lei e riuscirà a restituirlo. Molti adulti lo allontanano, lo dimenticano. I bambini hanno bisogno di sentirsi accolti sia che siano di Ferrara o provengano dal Ghana.

Se mettiamo la nostra persona nei protocolli di accoglienza li facciamo vivere se no restano percorsi burocratici, freddi che non creano calore, clima umano”

“Tutti i bambini sanno riconoscere il valore di un sorriso, di uno sguardo attento e non indagatore. Se è disorientata e non sa cosa fare glielo dica, si metta al loro livello ... diventeranno i suoi migliori collaboratori. Noi abbiamo bisogno di loro come loro di noi e ogni bambino desidera aiutarci se ci sente vicini. Risolvere il problema dei bambini stranieri a scuola è risolvere il problema della relazione in classe tra adulti e bambini ed è soprattutto un problema di consensualità. Se partiamo dal problema risolviamo poco è meglio partire dalla persona. L’intercultura è costruzione di relazioni tra persone”

### **Intercultura**

Mi occupo da molti anni della tematica interculturale e nella mia esperienza tanto sul territorio quanto nella scuola è consueto verificare come si ritenga che “fare intercultura” sia:

- Insegnare italiano come L2
- Attuare un protocollo di accoglienza
- Allestire uno scaffale multietnico
- Impiegare i mediatori
- Organizzare un serata di cucina multietnica
- Organizzare una festa multiculturale

....

Secondo i paradigmi della pedagogia interculturale queste sono un insieme di importanti attività propedeutiche o di corredo ma non sono il cuore centrale dell’approccio interculturale

Se così fosse ci troveremmo davanti ad un interculturalismo senza culture cioè ad una interazione senza gli attori dell’ interagire

La pedagogia interculturale si propone come percorso, progettazione, tesa al facilitare la costruzione di relazioni tra persone per loro natura portatrici di differenze

Ma gli incontri accadono in un preciso momento e in un preciso luogo e I pregiudizi sono sempre in agguato

La storia segna gli incontri

Che storia ha quel luogo? E che storia ha con i luoghi di provenienza dell’altro?

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Ricerca e scambio tra persone e culture*

Nel 1986 mi trovavo nella Casamance Senegalese, sui confini con la Guinea Bissau Allora era buona norma avvisare quando si arrivava in un villaggio Guineiano. Il recente ricordo del colonialismo Portoghese faceva sì che i ragazzini vedendo un bianco dessero dimostrazione della loro abilità nel centrare un bersaglio con le fionde. Ricordo ancora quando girai la moto velocemente e mi detti ad una fuga precipitosa un pomeriggio in cui dimenticai di avvisare

Nei primi anni "90 arrivavano i primi "bambini di altri colori" nella scuola Fui chiamato con urgenza da una scuola per un problema di grande urgenza In sala insegnanti arrivò una Prof.ssa tutta ansimante: "E' arrivato un bambino Nigeriano nella mia classe. Non parla Italiano. Che devo fare?"

Tre anni fa fummo incaricati di avviare una ricerca sulla percezione dell'immigrato in un Comune del Modenese L'allarmismo era così elevato da spingere le famiglie a recarsi dal Sindaco per dire che "Una famiglia Marocchina ha affittato un appartamento nel nostro quartiere. Come facciamo?"

Come io non ebbi il tempo di dire a quei ragazzini che non ero Portoghese perché il colore della mia pelle era sufficiente a collocarmi in una categoria precostituita e molto sgradita così molti incontri tra autoctoni e migranti sono segnati dalla reciproca immagine precostituita e dagli stereotipi che la accompagnano. Lo stigma della differenza può annullare la possibile costruzione di relazione con la persona

Una attività che sovente facevamo nelle scuole elementari di Modena era quella del nuovo compagno di banco:

- ✓ Domani arriva un nuovo alunno. Chi lo vuole di fianco nel banco?
  - ✓ Da dove arriva?
  - ✓ Dal Marocco
  - ✓ Qualcuno dice sì
  - ✓ Dall'Albania
  - ✓ Quasi tutti dicono no
  - ✓ Dagli Stati Uniti
  - ✓ Tutti dicono di sì
  - ✓ Perché dite tutti di sì allo Statunitense?
  - ✓ Perché è come noi. Perché non è extracomunitario. Non ne abbiamo paura
  - ✓ Capisco, intanto un chiarimento: extracomunitario vuol dire che non è della Comunità economica Europea. Quindi anche uno Statunitense è extracomunitario
- Ma parliamo della vostra paura  
E da lì si iniziava a lavorare sui pregiudizi, riconoscendo la legittimità della paura  
Perché un'emozione non è né buona né cattiva  
Semplicemente è e si è formata in una sua storia che la fa emergere dentro di noi

"Perché usate i confetti quando vi sposate?" mi chiedeva una mediatrice Africana a Cesena, o "Perché avete fatto così tante città e tutte sulla stessa strada qui in Emilia?" chiedevano mediatrici Marocchine a Reggio Emilia o ancora "Perché mettete i vostri padri anziani negli ospizi?" mi dicevano un gruppo di amici Senegalesi durante un incontro nel loro paese

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Ognuno è esotico agli occhi dell'altro

Queste domande sono occasioni di maggior riflessione e conoscenza della propria cultura, abitata da gesti, segni, abitudini, di cui sovente si è persa la radice, la ragione della sua presenza.

Si abita una modalità che si ritiene assoluta quando invece è relativa, storica. Una cultura è una storia, sono scelte fatte nel corso del tempo che hanno portato a connotare la nostra quotidianità così come oggi essa è

L'approccio interculturale si pone l'obiettivo di aumentare la consapevolezza verso la propria storia aumentando di conseguenza la flessibilità

Tante soluzioni avrebbero potuto portare a quel che ognuno di noi chiama "la propria identità" e tanti nuovi collegamenti possono rimodellarla come fossero fili che tessono nuove trame impreviste e contribuiscono a rompere il mutismo delle ovvietà.

Intercultura è quindi negoziare significati tenendo a riferimento il valore della condivisione  
(1)

*Seyla Benhabib* contesta l'uso che si è fatto del concetto di cultura come un insieme chiuso e immutabile. (2)

Al contrario, propone di concepire le identità culturali come negoziazione dinamica non solo nella sfera pubblica ma anche in quella privata. Per disinnescare lo scontro di civiltà, senza cadere nelle retoriche del multiculturalismo.

Il nostro sistema di vita è insidiato dal cosiddetto "paradosso della legittimità democratica": la democrazia si basa su norme universalistiche, che però valgono soltanto all'interno di una determinata comunità politica e di un territorio accuratamente circoscritto.

Che cosa sono, allora, e quale autorità possono avere quelle "norme cosmopolitiche di giustizia" che caratterizzano l'orizzonte della società civile globale?

Un tema di crescente rilievo, via via che le appartenenze tradizionali si fanno più labili e transitorie.

Benhabib chiama in causa il carattere "iterativo" della democrazia, che non è, come non è mai stata, un sistema rigido e definito una volta per tutte, ma il frutto continuamente rinnovato di negoziazioni e riformulazioni.

L'identità è sempre "l'identità dell'identità e della differenza", in altre parole, l'identità è sempre una categoria dinamica che include la differenza, che include l'altro/a e l'alterità in sé. Questo principio è fondamentale anche per il modo in cui noi comprendiamo la cultura.

La cultura giunge ad identificarsi solo passando attraverso narrative conflittuali e contraddittorie, che contengono sempre un riferimento agli "altri".

Il "Noi" presuppone sempre un "Loro": c'è sempre un modo in cui "Noi" facciamo le cose che è opposto al modo in cui "Loro" fanno le cose.

Molti altri autori hanno messo in luce i rischi di un eccesso di culture o di una ossessione identitaria. (3)

Anche Z. Bauman nel suo "Le vespe di Panama" ci parla di questo (4)



Ci incamminiamo quindi verso una "pedagogia dell'interazione" più che dell'integrazione. (5)  
Il cuore dell'approccio non riguarda lo studio della cultura ma il risultato dell'incontro e la relazione è l'oggetto autentico dell'interculturale. (6)

Le differenze tra persone risiedono nelle nicchie di apprendimento: i valori, le categorie, i codici comunicativi.

Le culture sono muri, le persone possono saltare i muri delle culture perché la persona non è la cultura

Elemento determinante risulta allora essere il "clima umano" entro cui si colloca lo scambio

### **Educazione interculturale**

Costruire relazioni, curare il clima, è ancor più necessario oggi poiché, al contrario della classe citata all'inizio, è consueto incontrare classi provocatorie, annoiate, intervenienti sulla parola dell'altro, irritanti, con tempi di attenzione minimi etc

Così come è consueto incontrare dirigenti scolastici e docenti che chiedono "Ma cosa sono diventati?" e segnalano la impossibilità di lavorare nella scuola con questi ragazzi:

Di norma mi confronto con loro sostenendo il contrario

I ragazzi sono il risultato del disorientamento del mondo adulto, restituiscono ciò che hanno ricevuto: fatica a gestire le emozioni, disagio nello stare nel tempo della pausa, diffidenza verso l'altro, disagio nel raccontare la propria storia, ....

Ma il bisogno dell'altro è intatto e occorre partire da qui

Saper stare nel tempo di passaggio dalla diffidenza alla fiducia

Richiede risposta a tre domande:

- Come mi sento?
- Come si sentono ?
- Ho voglia di essere qui?

Richiede quindi intenzionalità, metodo e una consapevolezza che ricorda il passaggio de "Le città invisibili" :

*"Tutto è inutile, se l'ultimo approdo non può essere che la città infernale, ed è là in fondo che, in una spirale sempre più stretta, ci risucchia la corrente.*

*E Polo:*

*"L'inferno dei viventi non è qualcosa che sarà; se c'è n'è uno, è quello che è già qui, l'inferno che abitiamo tutti i giorni, che formiamo stando insieme.*

*Due modi ci sono per non soffrirne.*

*Il primo riesce facile a molti: accettare l'inferno e diventarne parte fino al punto di non vederlo più.*

*Il secondo è rischioso ed esige attenzione e apprendimento continui: cercare e saper riconoscere chi e cosa, in mezzo all'inferno, non è l'inferno, e farlo durare, e dargli spazio."*

(7)

Poi occorre riflettere sul fatto che ci sono classi molto difficili ma altre sono accoglienti, presenti, vivaci, curiose e la provenienza sociale è la stessa, la percentuale di "differenze" presenti è analoga ...

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Sovente si tratta di classi nello stesso plesso, magari nello stesso corridoio ... dove sta allora la differenza ? Da cosa è generata?

L'esperienza personale in centinaia di scuole e le ricerche sul tema portano a dire che la differenza è generata dal modo in cui l'adulto costruisce la relazione convergendo verso un aspetto preciso: una relazione di fiducia e stima e la condivisione di un piano morale.

Ogni insegnante è persona differente e le relazioni che si incontrano hanno propria originalità:

- c'è la maestra attenta, premurosa e assertiva che segue il singolo nel seguire il gruppo,
- la professoressa prossima alla pensione innamorata del suo lavoro e dei ragazzi, talmente innamorata che viene d'obbligo restituirle tanto affetto,
- la maestra severa, giusta, attenta e presente verso cui dimostrare coerenza ,
- la maestra giovane che parla a bassa voce e rallenta il tempo con la calma e col racconto

.....

Ognuna differente dall'altra ma in ognuna di queste classi c'è il momento in cui l'insegnante dice "Ehi ragazzi cosa succede? Come siamo d'accordo?" e tutto si riequilibra all'interno di una relazione in cui ci si sente riconosciuti e in cui la norma è condivisa.

In queste classi si concretizza la risposta ad un bisogno fondamentale dell'essere umano e cioè il bisogno di rispetto.

"Il rispetto è un profumo o lo senti o non c'è" dice il proverbio dei Pulaar, nomadi del Sahel

Il rispetto è un dato relazionale da costruire in funzione degli attori del rapporto

C'è il rispetto formale dovuto al ruolo e c'è il rispetto alla persona che è in quel ruolo

Occorre conoscere la persona per sapere cosa caratterizza il suo senso del rispetto

"Non sei più mio figlio, non mi rispetti più" diceva durante la cena la mamma dell'amico Saidou Moussa Ba il giorno del rientro a Dakar dopo tre anni di migrazione a Milano

"Perché mamma cosa ho fatto?"

"Mi stai guardando negli occhi. Non mi stai rispettando. Non si guarda negli occhi un genitore. Non ti abbiamo forse insegnato questo io e tuo padre?"

"Scusa è che in questi anni in Italia ho dimenticato questa modalità"

Il rispetto ha quindi il suo correlativo nell'ascolto

In quelle classi si respira la presenza di una parola adulta che viene ascoltata dai ragazzi perché anche la loro parola viene ascoltata

Il rispetto e l'ascolto si apprendono nel rispetto e nell'ascolto

Attraverso questo è possibile condividere un quadro delle regole che genera orientamento nel gruppo

Una regola presidia un valore e l'interiorizzazione della regola porta a far proprio il valore che la sottende, a costruire una morale di gruppo (8)

Così come non derido Tommaso perché ha le orecchie a sventola così non derido Amhed perché ha la pelle di un altro colore o perché parla una lingua "strana"

Dietro ognuno di noi c'è una madre e un padre con cui condivido quei suoni e deridere una lingua è deridere un mondo affettivo, riconoscere la lingua di un bambino è riconoscere i suoi genitori, la sua provenienza, la sua storia

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Il mio accento suona strano a te così come il tuo suona strano a me e possiamo comporre un mosaico dei suoni che caratterizzano ogni parola  
Ridere della stranezza è ridere di sé.

Fare educazione interculturale è quindi lavorare sui pregiudizi per ridurre lo stigma della differenza per poi aprire i soggetti alla possibilità di rivedere le proprie categorie culturali attraverso la didattica interculturale

In tal modo vado a sedimentare in ambito cognitivo ciò che ho sperimentato sul piano socio – affettivo

Le porte dell'apprendimento si aprono dall'interno e se mi sento accettato come persona posso aprirmi al dubbio verso mie convinzioni, miei comportamenti

Come ci dicono gli studi sul pregiudizio occorre non venga percepita l'attesa di un cambiamento pena il dar vita alla resistenza ad esso. (9)

Significa saper stare, accogliere, le persone con cui si opera e avvicinarsi alle loro emozioni e pensieri con forme di dialogo del tipo "non giudicante".

Questa modalità di dialogo è utile al creare quel clima facilitante che veniva indicato sopra come premessa fondamentale all'aprirsi allo scambio delle reciproche differenze

Componenti di tale modalità sembra siano:

- . l'essere persona tra persone
- . esprimere autorevolezza: capacità di ascolto e legittimazione di sé e dell'altro
- . curiosità e interesse al mondo dell'altro
- . orientamento solidi e flessibili al contempo
- . coerenza ed esempio
- . cura dei limiti e delle regole
- . cura del codice materno e di quello paterno

Educazione interculturale, pedagogia partecipativa, approccio alla persona sono sinergici.

***Scuola, differenze, educazione interculturale,***

Oggi un tempo nuovo è tra noi e l'Italia delle Italie è abitata da cittadini di altri colori  
Ancora più urgente sarebbe il rivedere gli schemi e le categorie con cui sinora abbiamo pensato ed agito e che hanno guidato il nostro stare insieme nella scuola e nella società.

Nel documento "La via italiana per la scuola interculturale e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri" (Miur, 2007) è contenuta un'importante considerazione: la presenza di alunni stranieri non è il "problema", ma soltanto la spia di quanto stia cambiando il mondo e di quanto sia importante ed urgente aggiornare la nostra scuola.

Ma sempre lo stesso documento cita che nella variegata problematica dell'integrazione e della riuscita scolastica degli alunni con cittadinanza non italiana, tra i punti di criticità che permangono – nonostante il cammino percorso e i molti passi in avanti compiuti – assume particolare rilievo quello che il "Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2010" di Caritas/Migrantes ha chiamato "integrazione subalterna", intendendo con questa espressione l'insieme dei fattori che connotano come particolarmente svantaggiata la frequenza della scuola degli alunni stranieri e in particolare di quelli neo-arrivati.

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Varie ricerche tra cui quella recente condotta a Bologna sui figli dell'immigrazione confermano che "... la scuola risulta un'esperienza sempre estremamente frustrante, che genera rabbia, un luogo di umiliazione che stimola ad una ribellione più generale" "Galera è la definizione più frequente che i ragazzi danno del proprio istituto" (10)

Negli ultimi 40 anni la scuola è stata attraversata da proposte di approcci, metodologie, tecniche tese a rinnovarla, darle un ruolo diverso, dare dignità alle differenze che la abitano, a partire dalla famosa frase di Don Lorenzo Milani "Non c'è nulla che sia ingiusto quanto far le parti uguali fra diseguali" e dalla sua famosa Lettera a una professoressa.(11)

Mario Lodi è stato un protagonista di questi anni

In una intervista del 2012 dice: . «L'Italia è un disegno incompiuto. Non è nato il popolo che volevamo rieducare, così come non è nata la nuova scuola che avevamo in mente. Se mi volto indietro, se penso al nostro lavoro di quei decenni, mi sembra tutto vanificato. Oggi è prevalsa la scuola tradizionale, un modello competitivo che somministra nozioni e dà la linea». Non vogliamo teste piene, le vogliamo ben fatte: era lo slogan degli insegnanti democratici. Un'altra favola bella che se n'è andata." (12)

Ma dice anche: «Possedere un cuore, che è un motore potente. E poi attaccarsi al bambino, seguirlo con dedizione, riuscire a scrutarne i talenti nascosti. Senza mai dimenticare che il compito della scuola è trasformare un gregge passivo in un popolo di cittadini pensanti». Nel deserto attuale ognuno di noi può ripartire da qui poiché ognuno può prendersi il suo "potere personale" e generare consensualità:

"Supponiamo che camminando per strada un certo giorno voi incontriate un cane o un gatto randagio che vi è simpatico e allora decidiate di adottarlo, di portarvelo a casa. Ben presto si stabilirà fra voi due un coordinamento di comportamenti e poche ore dopo vi troverete ad esclamare: "Ma guarda questo animale come è intelligente!"

Questo animale dunque è intelligente perché ha coordinato il suo comportamento con il vostro con facilità.

Ma anche voi avete coordinato il vostro comportamento con il suo.

Entrambi vi state adattando a una situazione nuova: voi , che non avete mai avuto un animale in casa prima, avete dovuto decidere dove collocare la ciotola per il cibo, rassicurarlo, trovargli un posto dove può fare i suoi bisogni, ecc. e il gatto ha dovuto esplorare la casa e scegliere i suoi posti preferiti.

Nel fare questo vi guardavate l'un l'altro per controllare il reciproco consenso: "Va bene così? Un po' più in là?"

E' questa consensualità che crescendo e trovando conferma vi ha portato a esclamare: "Ma guarda come è intelligente questo animale!"

(Da parte sua è probabile che il gatto, a modo suo, pensi di voi esattamente la stessa cosa ...)

Il punto a cui voglio arrivare è che l'intelligenza non ha niente a che fare con la soluzione dei problemi; l'intelligenza è prima di tutto una questione di consensualità.

La soluzione dei problemi è del tutto secondaria rispetto alla dimensione centrale dell'intelligenza, che è la consensualità. (13) (14)

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È nel “fare insieme” che le persone si avvicinano e si “scoprono” facendo cadere steccati e barriere e costituendo gli spazi comuni della nuova cittadinanza.

Nel tempo della modernità liquida il singolo individuo si trova di fronte ad un compito irrisolvibile: trovare soluzioni individuali a problemi di origine sistemica (15)

Questa crisi può essere feconda, obbligandoci a ritessere trame relazionali, a riscoprire il valore della persona ridando quel “buon senso” evolutivo alla nostra specie che Eibl Eibensfeldt ci dice essere a rischio

“L'uomo della società di massa, civilissima sul piano tecnologico, si trova a dover superare, per adattarsi, difficoltà non lievi, derivanti dal fatto che la sua eredità biologica conserva tratti arcaici, frutto di adattamenti prodottisi nella lunghissima fase in cui visse, in gruppi poco numerosi, come cacciatore-raccoglitore. Tutti i nostri moduli comportamentali innati si sono sviluppati in tale fase, che rappresenta, in termini temporali, il 98 % della nostra storia. Nella restante parte di essa, in proporzione assai più breve, costituita dagli ultimi diecimila anni, *non siamo più* mutati sul piano biologico.

In realtà abbiamo conosciuto un'enorme evoluzione culturale, ma quanto alle emozioni, alle pulsioni, ai meccanismi del pensiero, siamo rimasti vecchi e non siamo sensibilmente diversi dai nostri avi paleolitici che vissero cacciando renne durante le glaciazioni.

In poche parole, ciò significa che uomini con il bagaglio emozionale del Paleolitico guidano oggi, come presidenti, le superpotenze, corrono come in gara sulle autostrade, o pilotano cacciabombardieri supersonici, ciò che non è poi, a ben vedere, molto divertente. Ci troviamo trapiantati con la nostra mentalità da paleolitici nel groviglio della società moderna. Abbiamo creato per noi stessi questo nuovo ambiente, ma ci siamo adattati a esso portandoci dietro certe tendenze innate, per via delle quali, in particolari situazioni, ci troviamo disadattati, comportandoci perciò in modo poco ragionevole, con violenza e spesso contro ogni buon senso.” (16)

“Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu”: “Una persona è persona tramite e attraverso le altre persone. Io sono perché noi siamo” (Proverbio Zulu)

Claudio Cernesi

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## Competenze di mediazione interculturale per educare alla cittadinanza in contesti plurali

### 1. “Luci” e “ombre” della mediazione culturale/linguistico-culturale.

La recente letteratura nazionale e internazionale di settore riconosce nella mediazione (alternativamente definita linguistico-culturale, culturale, interculturale) uno strumento utile a gestire e facilitare l'accesso e le relazioni tra autoctoni e stranieri all'interno dei diversi servizi del territorio.

Gli studi condotti sulle esperienze di mediazione in contesti multiculturali, oltre a descrivere il profilo professionale del mediatore e il suo ruolo di facilitazione dei processi di integrazione, evidenziano tuttavia alcune criticità particolarmente rilevanti per una concreta convivenza in prospettiva interculturale. Nello specifico, tali studi:

- rilevano come la domanda di mediatori culturali scaturisca da una mancanza di formazione all'approccio interculturale negli operatori dei diversi servizi (Cohen-Emerique, 2008);
- rimarcano la necessità di promuovere in ciascun operatore, ai diversi ambiti professionali, competenze nella relazione con l'alterità culturale (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2003), sottolineando come la mediazione interculturale dovrebbe essere uno stile caratterizzante i diversi operatori socio-educativi (Gimenez, 2008);
- precisano come il ricorso sistematico al mediatore culturale possa contribuire a rafforzare una *visione culturalista* della alterità, finendo con il cristallizzare le differenze culturali così come la possibilità stessa di comunicare e di imparare a comunicare tra differenti (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2003).

Rispetto alle prime ricerche condotte in Italia, a partire dalla seconda metà degli anni Novanta, sulle prime esperienze di “mediazione spontanea” (Johnson, 1996), gli attuali studi sulla mediazione riconoscono come essa sia ormai giunta “ad un bivio” e sottolineano la necessità di intraprendere una *fase di riflessione critico-costruttiva* (Favaro, 2006) su tale dispositivo. Emerge cioè la necessità di *so-stare sulla mediazione* per esaminare non solo le reali ricadute che, nei diversi servizi, le pratiche di mediazione hanno sui reali processi di interazione e di partecipazione democratica tra “differenti”, ma anche quanto tali servizi siano capaci di trasformarsi in reali luoghi interculturali per quanto concerne sia la loro struttura sia la loro logica d'azione.

A tale riguardo, tra le principali “ombre” connesse alla figura del mediatore culturale, si riconosce come tale figura, oggi, incorra spesso nei pericoli di:

- cadere in una sorta di *paradosso* che finisce con il trasformare il mediatore da facilitatore di processi di integrazione in un “*pompieri sociale*” (Balsamo, 2006; Favaro, 2006) che, suo malgrado, contribuisce a rafforzare una “*etnicizzazione dei conflitti*” (Belpiede, 2006) spesso legata ad una “*visione culturalista*” delle differenze (Ceccatelli Gurrieri, 2006);
- “sconfinare” nelle professioni educative (Favaro, 2004), contribuendo a rafforzare, soprattutto in ambito scolastico, degli “*usi impropri del mediatore*” (Favaro, 2001, 2004; Tarozzi, 1998, 2006; Fiorucci, 2002, 2006).

Per tali ragioni, si evidenzia:

- l'opportunità e l'esigenza di distinguere il concetto (e le relative pratiche) di mediazione tra “*professione specifica*” (quella appunto del mediatore linguistico-culturale) e “*competenza professionale*” come stile relazionale proprio di ciascun operatore (Favaro, 2004);

- il configurarsi della mediazione come una strategia e un “dispositivo complesso”, situato e distribuito, che richiede il protagonismo di tutti gli attori dei servizi in un *quadro progettuale di rete con e per il territorio* (Tarozzi, 1998, 2006; Ceccatelli Gurrieri, 2003; Favaro, 2004; Belpiede, 2006; Fiorucci, 2009).

Quest’ultime considerazioni si collocano, peraltro, in sintonia con i recenti documenti emanati dall’Unione Europea in materia di formazione e di intercultura, i quali, oltre a includere le *competenze interculturali* nel pacchetto delle “8 competenze chiave” necessarie alla formazione del cittadino europeo (Raccomandazione del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, 2006), ribadiscono il ruolo che, in una prospettiva di educazione permanente, le diverse agenzie formativo-educative hanno nel favorire lo sviluppo di competenze utili al dialogo interculturale, inteso quest’ultimo come “potente strumento di mediazione” atto a facilitare processi di inclusione e di coesione sociale (Libro Bianco sul Dialogo interculturale, 2008).

## 2. Mediazione interculturale: “dimensione strutturale dell’educazione”

Nell’attingere al suo significato etimologico dello “stare” o del “porre nel mezzo”, “mediazione” è un concetto che si declina su piani diversi, quali:

- il *filosofico* (pensiamo: al “termine medio” del sillogismo; alla “riflessione”, intesa in senso hegeliano come “mediazione razionale dell’esperienza”, Garulli 1990);
- l’*etico* (il concetto aristotelico di “medietà”);
- gli *studi sulla gestione del conflitto*.

Con specifico riferimento alla proposta pedagogia italiana, tale concetto si presenta in modo poliedrico, trovando specifiche connotazioni all’interno della scienza pedagogica, dell’educazione e della prospettiva interculturale.

Se guardiamo al dibattito epistemologico che, specie tra gli anni Settanta e Ottanta, impegna i pedagogisti italiani, ritroviamo come alcuni di essi, seppur da prospettive epistemologiche diverse, facciano un esplicito riferimento al concetto di *mediazione* per indicare la peculiarità *dell’identità pedagogica* tanto nel suo rapporto con le altre scienze quanto con il mondo dell’esperienza educativa.

La pedagogia viene definita, infatti, come “*mediazione per eccellenza*” (Cives, 1973, p. XII) e “*scienza mediante*” (Bertolini, 1983), capace di operare, in vista di una “*antropologia pedagogica di frontiera*”, una “*mediazione critica*” tra i diversi piani nei quali si realizza l’educabilità umana (Mencarelli, 1977). Essa è inoltre “*scienza (anche se pratica) delle mediazioni*” (Cambi, 1991) che ritrova, proprio nelle “*antinomie*” pedagogiche ed educative – gli “*elementi strutturali del ‘fare pedagogia’*” (Cambi, 1991, p. 66) – i “*luoghi*” in cui il “*fare pedagogia*” (a livello sia di riflessione che di pratica educativa) può esercitare la propria mediazione. Quest’ultima dunque sembra configurarsi come *costante tensione pedagogica a ricomporre in unità*, secondo la “*logica dell’et-et*” (Orlando, 1997, 1999), ciò che appare contrapposto, riconoscendo “*il valore positivo delle opposizioni*” (Orlando, 1997), da intendersi come delle “*polarità compresenti*” (Orlando, 1999) che, senza escludersi mai a vicenda, caratterizzano la realtà umana e, in particolare, l’esperienza educativa.

“*Mediazione*” rappresenta pertanto un concetto che segna la peculiarità sia dell’esperienza educativa in quanto tale sia della persona e del ruolo educatore.

Più precisamente, nel definire l’educazione come un “*aiutare gli uomini a ‘unificarsi’ [...] cioè a maturare e a farsi uomini*”, Cives ritrova lo specifico della mediazione educativa nell’operazione tesa a equilibrare dinamicamente, ad armonizzare e coordinare i vari livelli nei quali si esprime “*la varietà*



irriducibile” delle caratteristiche personali di ciascuno all’interno dei diversi contesti sociali (Cives, 1973, p. XII).

Guardando invece all’esperienza educativa da una prospettiva fenomenologica, che riconosce la relazionalità e l’intenzionalità come le dimensioni ontologiche originarie dell’esperienza educativa, Bertolini definisce la mediazione come “una delle principali funzioni dell’educatore” (Bertolini, 1996). Essa costituisce propriamente la funzione nella quale si esprime *l’agire intenzionale e responsabile* dell’educatore, tanto da poter considerare la mediazione stessa come “una delle direzioni intenzionali dell’esperienza educativa” (Tarozzi, 1998). Per tali ragioni, essa caratterizza non solo “la peculiarità di tutte le professioni pedagogiche” (Demetrio, 1997a) e il compito-dovere di ogni educatore ma esprime anche un processo che riguarda direttamente la *competenza riflessiva* dell’educatore stesso (Demetrio, 1997a).

Con particolare riferimento al contesto scolastico, Elisabetta Nigris definisce la mediazione come “una realtà polisemica” (Nigris, 2002), indicando nella “mediazione pedagogica” e nella “mediazione didattica” la gestione dei processi che caratterizzano i conflitti che attraversano le relazioni tra docenti e alunni. Esplicitare le “effettive cause dei conflitti” rappresenta, quindi, data la natura asimmetrica propria della relazione educativa, una capacità che rinvia alla responsabilità e al compito dell’educatore di saper ricercare e agire costantemente “una mediazione possibile” (Nigris, 2002, p. 187) tra istruzione ed educazione, tra piano cognitivo, piano affettivo-relazionale e piano socio-relazionale, così come tra contenuti e metodi, tra stili di insegnamento e processi, contesti, strumenti di apprendimento (a tale riguardo si veda anche Canevaro, 2008).

Data l’uguaglianza epistemologica che intercorre tra pedagogia generale e pedagogia interculturale (Secco, 1992; 1999), si riconosce inoltre come non soltanto proprio l’orientamento interculturale della pedagogia evidenzia il ruolo di questa come scienza “della mediazione rispettosa della diversità” (Sirna, 1997) e “delle mediazioni” (Tarozzi, 1998), ma anche che la stessa “mediazione interculturale”, all’interno degli attuali contesti educativi di fatto multiculturali, rappresenta:

- il compito specifico dell’insegnante “che, con consapevolezza, si interroga e attrezza per favorire non tanto la transazione da una cultura all’altra quanto la sintesi – dove possibile – tra culture, allo scopo di creare momenti pedagogici capaci di andare oltre le reciproche differenze” (Demetrio, 1997b, p. 5);
- la “soluzione” che permette di mantenere un costante equilibrio tra “diritto all’uguaglianza” e “diritto alla differenza”, preservando dai rischi derivanti dallo sbilanciamento verso pratiche educativo-didattiche orientate verso approcci di tipo compensativi o di relativismo culturale (Tarozzi, 1998, 2004);
- una “competenza professionale” (Favaro, 2004) diffusa e distribuita tra ogni operatore all’interno di un progetto educativo co-costruito tra scuola e territorio il cui fine ultimo è quello di creare una “cultura dell’intercultura” (Tarozzi, 2004).

### **3. Il “triangolo della mediazione interculturale”**

Se, dunque, la mediazione, oltre a delineare un profilo professionale specifico, è un concetto che riguarda direttamente *l’educabilità in senso interculturale della persona umana*, c’è da chiedersi come essa si definisca e dove si collochi all’interno dell’agire educativo in contesti plurali.

Il significato etimologico del termine “mediazione”, come abbiamo accennato sopra, rinvia a qualcosa e/o a qualcuno che “stando nel mezzo” favorisce, per il fatto stesso di trovarsi nel “punto centrale”, la relazione tra persone e/o cose che si collocano in una posizione opposta. Trasferire,

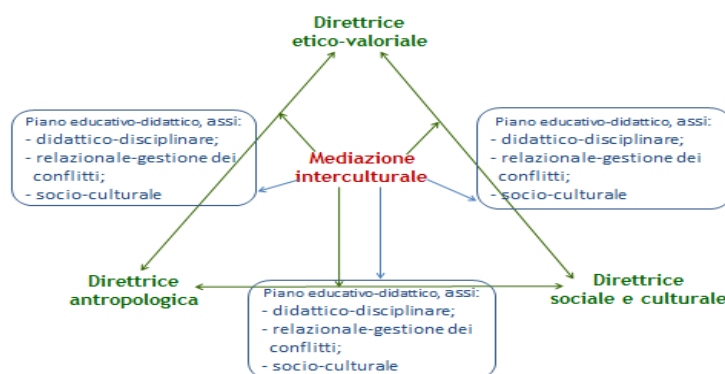
oggi, tale significato all'interno delle realtà multiculturali, dove la diversità si presenta spesso come una contrapposizione che si frappone tra l'io e il Tu, il Noi ed il Loro, induce a riconoscere come sia proprio la *relazione* o – piuttosto – il riuscire a “porre in relazione” il fine stesso dello “stare in mezzo” – del mediare appunto – in prospettiva interculturale.

Dal punto di vista pedagogico, i “luoghi” nei quali l'agire educativo è chiamato ad operare delle mediazioni, “ponendosi tra”, risultano essere allora proprio quelle “aree esistenziali” lungo le quali si dispiega la *relazionalità* dell'essere umano e alle quali la pedagogia è impegnata a offrire delle “traiettorie di senso” in una direzione umanante.

A tale riguardo, se prendiamo in considerazione la proposta pedagogico-interculturale elaborata negli ultimi venti anni e se, in particolare, ci richiamiamo ad una prospettiva dialogica e fenomenologico-ermeneutica, che considera l'esistenza umana come una costante relazione del soggetto verso se stesso, gli altri, la realtà (naturale, sociale, culturale, “trascendente”), possiamo riconoscere come le principali “traiettorie di senso” lungo le quali si articola la mediazione educativa in prospettiva interculturale risultano essere le direttrici: *antropologica, sociale-culturale ed etico-valoriale* (Figura 1).

Per ognuna di tali direttrici ci limitiamo a richiamare qui alcuni concetti-chiave che, nell'orientare l'azione educativa, permettono di evidenziare anche le principali competenze che l'educatore è chiamato ad acquisire per farsi un reale “agente di mediazione interculturale”<sup>1</sup>.

Figura 1. Il triangolo della mediazione interculturale



La *direttrice antropologica* nel rispondere alla domanda fondante l'agire educativo – “quale idea di uomo?” – evidenzia come tratti costitutivi dell'essere umano:

- la *dialogicità*: struttura ontologica della persona quale “essere-in-relazione-con”;
- la *spiritualità*: quale tensione alla relazione con ciò che “trascende” la realtà empirica (Ebner, 1998; Panikkar, 2002);
- l'*alterità*: quale realtà esistenziale-ontologica che, essendo sempre ad un tempo *intrinseca* ed *estrinseca* ad ogni soggetto-persona, contribuisce a delinearne *l'identità in senso narrativo* (Ricoeur, 1993);
- la *differenza*: quale atteggiamento esistenziale che, nel sospingere il soggetto ad impegnarsi in un compito di *progettazione esistenziale*, gli consente di definirsi come “personalità” originale e distinta dagli altri (Bertin, Contini, 2004). Di conseguenza, considerare il problema della

<sup>1</sup> Per un approfondimento delle direttrici di senso qualificanti il “triangolo della mediazione interculturale” si veda, Cestaro, 2013, 2012.

formazione dell'identità quale profilo di una personalità all'insegna della differenza, invita a riconoscere proprio nella "differenza" la *cifra esistenziale dell'identità* stessa.

Inoltre, se la *relazionalità* costituisce la realtà esistenziale-ontologica all'interno della quale si formano l'io e il Tu, dal punto di vista educativo le *principali competenze* che consentono di agire una *mediazione interculturale* afferiscono alle capacità di:

- pronunciare la "parola giusta" (Ebner, 1998), quella cioè che dispone costantemente all'incontro, all'apertura all'altro da sé, sollecitando e facendo costantemente appello alla natura relazionale che abita ogni essere umano;
- creare e/o facilitare il "con-tatto" tra l'io ed il Tu, inteso come "momento aurorale" della relazione tra, come "situazione di confine" e "soglia" che può permettere o ostacolare l'incontro (Milan, 2007);
- costruire relazioni con e tra, mediante un comportamento comunicativo coerente e in grado di agire ascolto attivo, empatia, assertività (Watzlawick *et alii*, 1971; Rogers, 1997);
- "lottare con", "per" e "contro" l'altro (Milan, 2007), al fine di sostenerlo nel compito di *costruzione narrativa e creativa* della propria *identità-differenza*.

Nel risponde alla domanda "quale etica, oggi?", la *direttrice etico-valoriale* ancora le proprie risposte alle questioni antropologiche implicate nella dialogicità ontologica della persona umana e sollecita a riconoscere come "bussole etiche" dell'agire intersoggettivo i principi di: *reciprocità*, *responsabilità*, di *giustizia umana*, di *rispetto*, di *uguaglianza* (Buber, 1993; Lévinas, 1990; Jonas, 1990; Ricoeur, 1993) e di *solidarietà* (Bertolini, 1991).

Offrendosi come *orizzonte di costante mediazione tra l'io e il tu* anche – e soprattutto – quando questi afferiscono a mondi culturali tra loro diversi, la dimensione etica sollecita pertanto a riconoscere come:

- al centro dei rapporti tra le culture vi sia *in primis* la *persona umana* incarnata nella pluralità dei "volti" che abitano il "villaggio globale";
- i *diritti umani* costituiscano quei tratti universali – connaturati ad ogni soggetto-persona – che, nel definire l'appartenenza di ciascuno alla medesima famiglia umana, consentono di orientare in senso umano e umanante la formazione di un "Noi" nel quale ad ognuno sia data occasione di riconoscersi nonostante le proprie reciproche differenze.

Si tratta di considerazioni etiche queste che, nel tempo attuale liquido e plurale, sollecitano inoltre a:

- promuovere sul piano giuridico-politico (nazionale e internazionale) il *principio di inclusione* di sé e dell'altro/gli altri all'interno della medesima comunità umana (Habermas, 1998), presso la quale ognuno ha, per diritto naturale, uguale cittadinanza;
- tutelare, a livello globale e locale, il primato del principio di *cittadinanza umana* (Bauman, 2010; Morin, 2001; Nussbaum, 1999) sul principio di cittadinanza anagrafica.

Dal punto di vista educativo, farsi "agenti di mediazione interculturale" per una "cultura della cittadinanza umana" richiede allora la competenza di trasformare i contesti multiculturali in "luoghi etici" in cui a ciascuno sia data la possibilità di fare esperienza: di sé e degli altri come soggetti di diritti umani universali; di giustizia umana, di equità, di condivisione democratica di scelte e di obiettivi comuni.

La *direttrice sociale e culturale* risponde alla domanda “quale ‘idea’ di società e di cultura” e, nel ribadire come la cultura sia un prodotto sociale, evidenzia il ruolo attivo che, proprio attraverso il loro interagire, le persone hanno in qualità di artefici e co-costruttori culturali (Berger, Luckmann, 1969; Geertz, 1987; Mantovani, 2004).

Essa ribadisce pertanto l’importanza di riportare al centro della quesitone culturale le persone, optando per un “approccio personalista” alla cultura piuttosto che per un “approccio culturalista”. Quest’ultimo infatti, nell’enfatizzare il potere delle culture di modellare e di veicolare il pensare e l’agire individuale e sociale, finisce con il cristallizzare il singolo e le comunità all’interno delle rispettive culture annullando ogni possibilità di dialogo tra orizzonti culturali diversi.

Riconoscere e valorizzare invece il potere creativo di intenzionare e di co-intenzionare, attraverso l’interazione con gli altri, la realtà trasformandola in un contesto culturale soggettivamente e intersoggettivamente significativo richiede all’educatore l’*intenzionalità* e la *responsabilità* di “imparare il mestiere dell’antropologo” (Caronia, 1996) allenandosi ad “apprendere” non tanto la cultura dell’altro quanto piuttosto “l’incontro con l’altro” (Abdallah-Prechteille, 2005).

Agire come mediatore interculturale, accettando la sfida di *educare all’incontro con e tra differenti*, chiede pertanto di saper trasformare i contesti educativi multiculturali in reali *palestre di socializzazione al plurale* dove a ciascuno sia consentito di imparare ad allargare i rispettivi punti di vista (su di sé, sugli altri, sulla realtà) e di co-costruire “contesti di senso” condivisi, mediante i quali poter scoprire oltre alle reciproche diversità anche – e soprattutto – le *somiglianze* che uniscono, in un vincolo di reciprocità-responsabilità-solidarietà, sé agli altri. Si tratta di un compito educativo questo che sollecita ogni operatore a saper testimoniare e promuovere in particolare competenze di:

- *decentramento*, allenandosi e allenando, non solo a “giudicare strano ciò che è familiare e familiare ciò che appare come strano”, ma anche a saper gestire costruttivamente quello “spiazzamento cognitivo ed emotivo” (Scalvi, 2000), che l’incontro con la diversità inevitabilmente determina;
- *decostruzione*, quale *habitus mentale* critico-costruttivo che, proprio attraverso il confronto con la “differenza”, consente di riconoscere i presupposti dei rispettivi “punti di vista” (credenze, cognizioni... ), di smascherare eventuali distorsioni percettive (stereotipi e pregiudizi) e di pervenire così ad elaborare una “nuova” conoscenza (di sé, degli altri, della realtà) arricchita dal confronto fecondo con l’alterità.

All’interno dei singoli contesti educativi e, in particolare, di quello scolastico, tali *tre direttrici della mediazione interculturale* si declinano, a loro volta, lungo *tre assi principali*:

- il *cognitivo* (o didattico-disciplinare), dove la mediazione si fa azione che stimola non solo a conoscere “saperi” e codici culturali propri e altrui ma anche – e soprattutto – a comprendere quelle interconnessioni che proprio la formazione di un *pensare bi-locato* rende possibile. Inteso, quest’ultimo, come quell’attività cognitiva flessibile che, nel decentrare i propri “ancoraggi” e nel riconoscere oltre alle diversità anche le somiglianze e le influenze reciproche, permette di “ragionare” non solo “transculturalmente” ma anche “interculturalmente” (Demetrio, 2002);
- il *relazionale-comunicativo*, dove la mediazione interculturale non si esaurisce unicamente nella gestione dei conflitti determinati dall’ambiguità e/o dalla non conoscenza delle rispettive cornici culturali, ma richiede piuttosto lo sviluppo di competenze utili a gestire i processi che, a livello cognitivo e socio-affettivo, caratterizzano le relazioni che ciascuna delle persone coinvolte nell’interazione vive con le differenze che avverte “fuori” e “dentro” di sé;

- il *socio-culturale*, dove la mediazione interculturale si fa azione volta a promuovere atteggiamenti e comportamenti di reale *coesione sociale*. Intesa, quest'ultima, come quel clima intersoggettivo attraverso il quale poter educare all'esperienza del "Noi", favorendo nel contempo lo sviluppo di una *cultura della convivialità* e della *partecipazione democratica* tra soggetti umani "differenti" e pur sempre "uguali".

*"Poiché è il nostro sguardo che rinchiude spesso [gli] altri nelle loro più strette appartenenze, è anche il nostro sguardo che può liberarli"* (Maalouf, 1999, p. 29).

Riteniamo che la *"responsabilità di educare* i reciproci 'sguardi' a riconoscere, ad ammirare e a tutelare l'universalità di un 'Noi' che – pur tuttavia – non può rivelarsi se non nel segno della pluralità e della differenza, rappresenti un *compito imprescindibile di mediazione interculturale*. Da intendersi, quest'ultima, come *"dimensione strutturale"* di un agire educativo in contesti multiculturali" (Cestaro, 2013, p. 213-214).

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**Quale intercultura?**  
**Sguardi e contributi dall'America Latina e dall'Africa Sub-Sahariana**  
 (Rosanna Cima, Reinaldo Fleury, Mariteresa Muraca<sup>1</sup>)

Intercultura: critiche e proposte delle prospettive post-coloniali e post-occidentali

*Nell'autunno del 2006 mi trovavo a Città del Guatemala per la mia prima esperienza di tirocinio e di ricerca di campo in un paese straniero. Avrei trascorso quattro mesi nella “Casa 8 de marzo”, una casa di accoglienza autogestita per ragazze impegnate in un processo di uscita dalla strada e i loro figli. Il nostro arrivo nella “Casa 8 de marzo” era stato a lungo preparato ed era stato frutto di molte negoziazioni con la coordinazione del movimento. Il desiderio di studiare la prospettiva pedagogica della “Casa 8 de marzo”, ispirata alla pedagogia freiriana e ai principi dell'amicizia liberatrice, andava oltre un interesse scientifico: essa rispondeva ad un'opzione politica ed esistenziale. Eppure, contrariamente alle mie aspettative, questa opzione e la comunanza di genere tra noi e le ospiti della casa non sembravano garantire in sé le condizioni di una relazione significativa. Avevo lasciato l'Italia decisa a costruire con le ragazze di strada una relazione connotata da reciprocità, prossimità, amicizia ma la rappresentazione di me che le ragazze mi rimandavano era quella di una giovane studentessa bianca, europea e ricca. Ricordo un episodio che mi è capitato al mercato: ero al banco della frutta di una signora anziana, un'indigena. Io le chiedevo il prezzo dei prodotti e lei rispondeva, prendendomi in giro con le sue compagne e aumentando evidentemente il prezzo della merce. Tornando a casa pensavo che non volevo essere trattata come una gringa, io ero diversa, ero lì per ragioni diverse. Ma mentre mi lamentavo tra me e me per questo trattamento incapace di cogliere le specificità del mio caso, riconoscevo in quel gesto di scherno un profondo segno di resistenza: il popolo che io avevo di fronte nella persona della venditrice indigena era riuscito a sopravvivere a 500 anni di persecuzione grazie al silenzio e all'ironia. Ed io, per quanto lo desiderassi, non potevo ignorare la frontiera che ci separava e che secoli di storia avevano costruito. In quel momento, di fronte a lei, ero responsabile anche per quelli che mi avevano preceduto, per quanto mi dichiarassi dissidente.*

Abbiamo scelto di partire dal racconto di una giovane studentessa alla sua prima esperienza di ricerca in un terreno straniero come esempio di incontro tra lingue e culture differenti in un contesto educativo e di ricerca. Esso ci permette di entrare nel cuore della riflessione sulle pratiche interculturali in America Latina e in Africa Sub-Sahariana attraversando le principali critiche che, a partire da questi luoghi, vengono mosse al concetto di intercultura, così come elaborato in Europa.

Se, infatti, le prime riflessioni teoriche e i primi interventi di carattere interculturale si sono affermati in Europa, a partire dagli anni '80, come risposta alle sfide della società multiculturale e multietnica, e hanno assunto il carattere di una rivoluzione pedagogica, permettendo di superare strategie educative di carattere compensatorio a favore di una visione positiva della convivenza di soggetti culturalmente ed etnicamente differenti (Portera, in Portera, Böhm e Secco, 2007); nella realtà Latinoamericana e dell'Africa Sub-Sahariana la dimensione interculturale si arricchisce di significati specifici. In questi contesti colonialismo e migrazioni, dominazioni e convivenza, contatti spontanei e forzati hanno indotto profondi processi di acculturazione, fusioni sincretiche violente e abbandono forzato delle proprie identità culturali originarie. Di fronte a queste realtà già in buona misura interculturali o almeno meticce, la sfida è comprendere i complessi itinerari di formazione e produzione culturale, per favorire il superamento della soggezione e dello sfruttamento e la costruzione di relazioni sociali più libere (Fleuri, 1998).

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A questo proposito Carlos Giménez Romero (in Mantovani, 2008) fa riferimento alle critiche ricevute alla sua impostazione interculturale in Guatemala, dove ha lavorato dal 1996 al 2000 come consulente internazionale al progetto Q'anil del PNUD (United Nations Development Programme) su *Intercultura, politiche pubbliche e sviluppo umano sostenibile*. Il contesto del lavoro di Giménez era quello della fine della guerra civile e della firma dell'Accordo dell'Identità e dei Diritti dei Popoli Indigeni. In particolare, alcuni intellettuali guatemaltechi fecero notare a Giménez che l'intercultura, nata in Europa per le politiche di integrazione degli immigrati, pretendeva applicarsi in Guatemala alla relazione tra le popolazioni indigene originarie e la società che li rifiuta, li marginalizza e li sfrutta. In questo contesto l'approccio interculturale sembrava non cogliere adeguatamente la relazione profondamente diseguale tra chi detiene il potere e la maggioranza discriminata, al contrario si presentava come un tentativo di rendere più docile la richiesta di riconoscimento e di diritti da parte del movimento indigeno.

In questo senso si comprende l'insistenza di alcune prospettive post-coloniali o post-occidentali, elaborate in America Latina, Africa ma anche India, di pensare l'intercultura a partire dalla decostruzione dell'autoritarismo delle relazioni sociali e della storia raccontata a partire dalla prospettiva del colonizzatore.

Secondo Catherine Walsh (2009), a differenza del colonialismo inteso come relazione politica ed economica, che implica la dominazione di un popolo o di una nazione su un altro, la colonialità è la categoria capace di rendere conto del modello di potere che si è affermato, a partire dalla colonizzazione europea nelle Americhe, come volto occulto della modernità. Essa è strutturalmente legata alla naturalizzazione dell'idea di razza, una supposta distinta struttura biologica che situava alcuni in situazione di naturale inferiorità rispetto agli altri, e all'articolazione delle forme storiche di controllo del lavoro intorno al capitale e al mercato mondiale, attraverso la diffusione del capitalismo.

Anibal Quijano (in Lander, 2005) mostra come l'idea di razza, nel suo senso moderno, non esistesse prima della conquista dell'America, essendo sorta probabilmente in relazione alle differenze fenotipiche tra conquistatori e conquistati. Essa è stata responsabile della produzione di identità sociali nuove: *indios*, neri, meticci, così come spagnoli e portoghesi, etichette queste ultime che, originariamente, si riferivano solo alla provenienza geografica. Queste identità sono state associate a gerarchie, luoghi e ruoli sociali e hanno legittimato le relazioni di dominazioni imposte con la conquista.

Per quanto la colonialità attraversi tutti gli aspetti della vita, la sua azione può essere compresa a partire da quattro aree: la colonialità del potere si riferisce alla costruzione di un sistema sociale, a partire dalla categoria di razza; la colonialità del sapere assume l'eurocentrismo come ordine esclusivo di ragione, conoscenza, pensiero e dequalifica e scarta altre razionalità epistemiche; la colonialità dell'essere si esercita attraverso l'inferiorizzazione, la subalternizzazione e la disumanizzazione; un ultimo tipo di colonialità si riferisce alla negazione delle cosmovisioni dei popoli originari.

La repressione delle forme di produzione della conoscenza dei colonizzati, dei loro sistemi di senso, del loro universo simbolico, delle loro forme di espressione è stata, secondo Anibal Quijano (in Lander, op.cit.) la più violenta, profonda e duratura nei confronti dei popoli indigeni, soprattutto d'America e d'Africa. I colonizzati sono stati costretti ad apprendere parzialmente la cultura dei dominatori in tutto ciò che fosse utile alla riproduzione della dominazione. A lungo termine, ciò ha implicato la colonizzazione delle prospettive cognitive, dell'immaginario, dell'universo delle relazioni intersoggettive del mondo. Attraverso il mito della civilizzazione come una traiettoria umana, che parte dallo stato di natura e culmina con l'Europa, la modernità e la razionalità sono state immaginate come esperienze e prodotti esclusivamente europei. Inoltre le relazioni intersoggettive e culturali tra l'Europa, soprattutto l'Europa Occidentale, e il resto del mondo sono state codificate non come differenze storiche ma attraverso la naturalizzazione di categorie quali Oriente-Occidente, primitivo-civilizzato, magico/mitico-scientifico, irrazionale-razionale, tradizionale-moderno.

A questo proposito si pensi, ad esempio, a cosa ha significato e cosa continui a significare

l'imposizione della scuola dei colonizzatori in Africa Sub-Sahariana. Quale portata emotiva può esserci nell'apprendere a scuola la lingua di chi ha tentato di distruggere le cosmovisioni del proprio mondo? Misconosciuto i rapporti con i sessi? Con gli antenati? Scardinato le relazioni con la terra in cui si è nati? Cosa può significare acculturarsi attraverso quei saperi che hanno costruito le logiche della conquista, della deportazione degli schiavi, del colonialismo, dell'arricchimento di pochi a scapito della miseria di molti? Rispondono a queste domande le narrazioni di coloro che hanno saputo prendere voce, certamente grazie anche alla lingua straniera, come, ad esempio, Cheikh Hamidou Kane (1961):

La nuova scuola aveva a un tempo le caratteristiche del cannone e della calamita. Del cannone ha l'efficacia di uno strumento di guerra. Meglio del cannone rende la conquista perenne. Il cannone domina i corpi, la scuola domina le anime. [...] Della calamita, la scuola ha l'irradiante splendore. È solidale d'un ordine nuovo, come un nucleo è solidale d'un campo magnetico. Lo sconvolgimento della vita degli uomini all'interno di quell'ordine nuovo è simile allo sconvolgimento di certe leggi fisiche all'interno di un campo magnetico. Si vedono gli uomini conquistati disporsi lungo invisibili e imperiose linee di forza. Il disordine s'organizza, la rivolta si acquieta, le albe di rancore risuonano dei canti d'un universale atto di ringraziamento.

Nominati come unici e universali troppo spesso i saperi deportano ed esiliano gli individui, piccoli e grandi, innescano sottomissioni, oggi come allora, dalle scuole primarie all'università. Le scuole sorte nei villaggi, ora sulle montagne o nelle metropoli dell'Africa occidentale, allargano lo strappo, continuano la deportazione delle anime, direbbe Kane. I modelli scolastici sono obsoleti, rigidi, indifferenti, non incontrano i residenti poiché essi sono pensati come mancanti. Sono scuole trapiantate senza considerare e dare valore alle lingue e ai saperi dei luoghi. Trapianti che spesso ingenerano rigetti.

L'aggressività di tali modelli ha toccato in particolare le giovani ragazze tuttavia vogliamo sottolineare più in generale la rottura e l'esclusione che la scuola (nei Paesi francofoni dell'Africa Sub-sahariana ma non solo) ha paradossalmente incrementato verso le giovani generazioni. Se è vero che in queste aree geografiche un primo problema è l'accesso alla scuola dei bambini, ancora molto basso, non è da meno la domanda: quale scuola viene proposta? La scuola ha un ruolo fondamentale nell'apertura dei giovani verso le comunità di prossimità, punto di partenza verso l'apertura al mondo. Se in *primis*, possiamo dire che apprendere il francese alla scuola dei francesi a Ouagadougou segna senza dubbio un'apertura di grande portata verso il mondo (Lopes, 2003), bisogna anche domandarsi: qual è il gusto delle parole che si sono apprese? Per codificare quale mondo? Per dare quale tipo di ordine alle cose? Per produrre quali discorsi? Sono domande che ci interpellano anche oggi, nelle scuole occidentali, nelle aule, dalle elementari all'Università, quando si fa o si parla di intercultura. Sono questioni che interrogano radicalmente il pensiero educativo a partire dal come si insegna la lingua, poiché in ogni lingua vi abitano le strutture per vedere il mondo, per escludere o per includere, per controllare, per costruire categorie, cornici di senso, pregiudizi (Foucault, 1971).

Frantz Fanon, in *Pelle nera maschere bianche* (1996), mostra attraverso una toccante analisi il gioco delle costruzioni di stereotipi e di fantasmi, delle paure e delle violenze che le lingue impongono. Scrive: “parlare è essere capace di utilizzare una certa sintassi, possedere la morfologia di questa o quella lingua, ma è soprattutto assumere una cultura, sopportare il peso di una civiltà.” (Ibidem, p.18)

È attraverso la sua esperienza di vita, i luoghi in cui emigra e dai quali provengono i suoi antenati che Fanon coglie con maestria i fantasmi che abitano la relazione tra diversi. Relazione questa, come Fanon scrive, che riduce a categorie e a stereotipi impedendo all'uno di cogliere la realtà dell'altro e, pertanto, di esercitare la conoscenza di sé e del mondo. L'attenzione che lo psichiatra e scrittore martinicano dedica alle cause sociorelazionali delle sofferenze psichiche sono conferma che le discipline (nel suo caso della psiche, ma non solo) sono prodotti culturali e tendono inevitabilmente a diffondere la cultura da cui originano. La presunzione che esse siano *universalmente valide* mostra quanto possono non solo non curare, ma addirittura provocare

malattie quando si trasportano e si impongono ad altre lingue, altre eziologie, altre cosmovisioni.

La proposta di Catherine Walsh (2009), dunque, è quella di articolare decolonizzazione ed intercultura. Se da un lato, infatti, l'intercultura deve smontare la matrice coloniale, creando altre condizioni del potere, del sapere, dell'essere e del vivere, la decolonizzazione non avrà impatto senza lo sforzo di interculturalizzare, articolare saperi, logiche, vite in un progetto multiplo e moltiplicatore, orientato alla convivenza e non solo alla co-esistenza. In questo senso, l'intercultura si situa criticamente, a partire dal punto di vista di chi ha sofferto una storia di sottomissione, subalternizzazione e razzializzazione e si costituisce come un progetto politico, sociale, etico ed epistemico. L'esempio proposto dall'autrice è quello delle nuove costituzioni politiche della Bolivia e dell'Ecuador in quanto tentativi di decolonizzare lo Stato come struttura di esclusione e dominazione, risaltando logiche, razionalità e modi di vivere storicamente negati e subordinati e trasformandoli in contributi sostanziali per una trasformazione di orientamento decoloniale.

Nelle nuove costituzioni boliviana e ecuadoriana l'interculturalizzazione coinvolge tre dimensioni fondamentali: - la pluralizzazione della scienza e della conoscenza, in vista del superamento del monismo della definizione di scienza e del riconoscimento che anche i saperi ancestrali sono tecnici e scientifici; i diritti della natura: considerare la natura come soggetto di diritti, come accade soprattutto nella costituzione ecuadoriana, significa mettere profondamente in discussione la logica moderna, coloniale e occidentale a partire dal punto di vista della filosofia indigena, che risalta l'armonia integrale tra tutti gli elementi della realtà; e il così detto *buen vivir*, che si riferisce ad una visione e pratica sociali che articolano ciò che è tangibile con la dimensione spirituale, gli uomini e le donne, gli esseri umani e la natura, a partire dalla valorizzazione della relazionalità, della corrispondenza, della complementarietà e della reciprocità.

Quali contributi per il contesto italiano? Decolonizzazione dello sguardo ed etnocentrismo eccentrico

In che modo le critiche e i contributi dall'America Latina e dall'Africa Sub-Sahariana possono permettere di riformulare la prospettiva interculturale anche in Italia? Osservando da queste distanze la prospettiva interculturale europea diviene ancora più evidente il rischio di cadere in un pensiero che, di nuovo e proprio in nome di un "tra le culture", costruisce rapporti di potere e di valori tra maggioranze e minoranze, ripete forme stereotipate di pensare gli altri e si abbassa alle comparazioni, appunto, *tra* un noi e gli altri. Se la traduzione di pensieri e proposte politico-educative, coscienti del loro luogo di enunciazione, in altri contesti implica sperimentare lo scarto tra ciò che si desidera dire e ciò che si può dire, l'insufficienza delle parole e il silenzio, allo stesso tempo permette di creare connessioni e tollerare ambiguità, generando reinvenzioni illuminate da altri sguardi e da altre letture, che li restituiscono trasformati e arricchiti nei contesti originari della loro produzione.

Un primo invito che possiamo cogliere da queste riflessioni è di imparare ad osservare, almeno in parte, quali sono le categorie con le quali percepiamo l'altro, *come* si sta in presenza dell'altro, *che cosa* rappresenta l'altro per chi lo osserva e lo ascolta. L'altro, infatti, non esiste mai da solo, sorge all'interno di una interazione e interpretazione avvolta da ciò che nominiamo "cultura". Potremmo dedurre che come "costruiamo" l'altro, così "costruiamo" *chi* siamo e la "cultura" che respiriamo. Spiegare e (di)spiegarci il nostro percepire e nominare l'altro, tenendo conto di un etnocentrismo non è una questione solo personale, come abbiamo visto, siamo frutto di un percorso costruito anche da altri e, per agire uno spostamento, una trasformazione dello sguardo è necessario continuare a porre in gioco la tensione tra il pensiero dell'esperienza del nostro singolo essere donne, uomini nel lavoro con le Storie e le Geografie di Regioni, Stati e Continenti. Considerare le conquiste delle Americhe (Todorov, 2004), i colonialismi, i neocolonialismi e le categorie costruite *sull'altro*, predisposte per giustificare la sua distruzione, ha sapore amaro, ma non per questo possiamo non sentire. Amaro è osservare come si sono strutturati i modelli di incontro con l'altro (Cima, 2008), amaro è constatare l'elevato numero di pubblicazioni innalzate per rendere scientifico un razzismo, scientifica la misurazione del colore della carnagione che

decreta lo stato di lavoratore e, di conseguenza, il suo grado di intelligenza (Ostuni, 2005; Franzina, 1994; Bevilacqua, De Clementi, Franzina, 2002). E, come sotto altre spoglie, meno riconoscibili e a volte subdole o mascherate da un voler fare del bene, siano ancora oggi presenti le categorie che mettono l'altro nello statuto di *mancante*.

Più di dieci anni fa nel territorio di Calcinato (Brescia - Italia) è stata avviata una ricerca orientata a rintracciare le posizioni pratiche e teoriche assunte da assistenti sociali, educatrici, professionisti di istituzioni quali la scuola, i servizi sociali, le aziende sanitarie locali nei confronti dei migranti, che ha permesso di individuare tre posizioni nell'interazione con l'altro. La prima posizione, che può essere definita del "sapere sull'altro", porta a fissare il discorso dell'altro, spesso sollecitato da curiosità e stimolato da pre-informazioni che l'operatore ha acquisito per altre vie, in un sapere fuorviante, astratto, generico, slegato dai luoghi e dai tempi. In questo senso non si incontra l'altro ma quanto di lui si vuole confermare. La seconda posizione fa leva sul principio di uguaglianza come mezzo migliore per arginare la troppa diversità. Essa suscita nella relazione un senso di in-differenza e al contempo, di fronte all'effettiva non uguaglianza dell'altro, insinua il pensiero della *manca*za, che costruisce il di meno dell'altro e il di più di chi guarda. La terza posizione, infine, è centrata sul paradigma della somiglianza. Essa è rassicurante sia perché permette di gestire l'inedito e il nuovo che l'altro rappresenta, sia perché conferma una parte di noi. Al contempo, tuttavia, essa, da un lato, esce dal presente e dalla sincronia della relazione per collocare l'altro in un passato arretrato, nega la possibilità di vedere l'esistenza e di creare un campo teorico e pratico diverso da quello che già si conosce. Tutte e tre queste posizioni perpetuano, in contesti differenti, l'opera colonialista, sia conquistando l'altro attraverso l'erosione delle forme del sacro, del segreto e delle radici vitali; sia tentando di renderlo uguale a noi e di colmare la disuguaglianza; sia, infine, non cogliendo la sua esistenza e viziando i suoi racconti con la fantasia di poterli comprendere a partire da presunte somiglianze, in cui il termine di riferimento siamo noi stesse e noi stessi (Cima, 2008).

Riconoscere queste posizioni nell'interazione con l'altro, per quanto faccia emergere un'immagine poco rassicurante dell'operatore, è un primo passo necessario nella direzione della decolonizzazione dello sguardo, delle categorie e delle parole usate per codificare l'altro. Infatti "il rapporto tra un servizio e i suoi fruitori è *sottomesso* alle parole che si utilizzano. Vi è una reciprocità simbolica tra servizi ed utenti; ancora prima che vi sia l'incontro effettivo con la tal signora, il tal signore, il servizio già li suppone". (Cima, 2012, p.24).

In particolare, per capire, almeno in parte, in quale orizzonte si collocano i nostri comportamenti e atteggiamenti bisogna affrontare l'etnocentrismo, che *naturalmente* si costruisce nelle società e nelle singole vite, farci i conti e acquisire un *etnocentrismo eccentrico*. Quasi uno scioglilingua da ripetere a voce alta, per sciogliersi in capacità di accoglienza dei propri confini e vederne i limiti.

Accettare la presenza etnocentrica di un pensiero è disegnare i seguenti limiti:

- la pretesa fissità della conoscenza è una illusione (Glissant, 2007);
- possiamo conoscere di noi stessi solo ciò che siamo in grado di consentire agli altri di conoscere (Ibidem);
- quando non si accetta la presenza delle differenze si incontra solo una proiezione deformata dei propri pensieri e concetti;
- ciascuno fa riferimento a dei sistemi di significato che provengono dai propri codici linguistici e culturali, ignorarli porta al pericolo di proiettare sull'altro contenuti stereotipati passandoli per verità;
- la fabbricazione degli esseri umani si differenzia in base alle cosmovisioni e agli universi ai quali essi si riferiscono, sono punti di riferimento profondi che costituiscono il centro di

ogni singolo e della comunità alla quale sente di essere inserito e/o averne avuto origine (Nathan, Stengers, 1996).

Assumere il peso del proprio *etnocentrismo* è ammettere il limite del proprio sguardo, costruito e costruttore di categorie e, per questo, capace di spostarsi, di divenire *eccentrico*, scenterato, decentrato. Dal greco *ék*, che significa "fuori da" e *kéntron* "centro", costruiamo l'immagine: colui che è *sposato*. Nella lingua italiana *eccentrico* è sinonimo di bizzarro, fuori dal comune, fuori dal normale. È un'azione oggi necessaria che richiede una certa forza, un certo coraggio e che promette e permette altri movimenti, altre scoperte. Dotarsi di un pensiero di confine, capace di eccentricità è un primo necessario sforzo. Stanare il pensiero convenzionale che si ritira dall'esperienza e si ancora a scontati universalismi di marca individualistica è un atto di libertà, spostarsi "fuori dal centro" e pensare tra i confini è posizione scomoda ma colloca i saperi in "campi di esperienza [...] all'interno dei quali si costruiscono e si riconoscono i significati" (Rezzara, 2012). È una scelta che chiede di *rinunciare al porre le differenze in un tra*. Esse esistono per se stesse: appare sciocco porci la domanda "qual è la differenza tra il maschile e il femminile". Esiste il genere maschile, esiste il genere femminile. Così è per le altre differenze. Viene spontaneo "fare le differenze", si dice nella lingua corrente, tra un bambino e l'altro, tra un fratello e una sorella. Qui si tratta di *ammettere e amare* le differenze e non di una comparazione *tra* di esse, vedere le differenze e accoglierle permettendo ai portatori – se vogliono - di dirsi e dirle.

In educazione reinterrogare queste posizioni e renderle operative nelle pratiche di accompagnamento dei bambini in difficoltà scolastica, delle famiglie venute da lontano e che vivono situazioni conflittuali, significa spostarci dai quadri di riferimento "convenzionali" per agire una cura, una clinica educativa, una etnoclinica, che permetta ai significati "culturali" di (ri)costruire le storie delle difficoltà e di tracciare le vie e gli orizzonti per un possibile miglioramento. Optare per un *etnocentrismo eccentrico*, segna una posizione dei sentimenti, dello sguardo, delle conoscenze che deve essere guadagnata e che richiede un apprendistato continuo, poiché implica una azione sulla nostra complessità di singole e di singoli, ma anche una condivisione con i professionisti della cura di una nuova cultura del lavoro educativo, di una intercultura che in primis interroghi le operatrici e gli operatori. Implica, in sostanza, una politica dell'incontro.

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## **Language Learning and Oral Traditional Stories as tools to promote Intercultural Education**

“J’appartiens simultanément à mon coin et au monde”  
(Abdallah-Preteuille & Porcher) , cited by Oliveira & Sequeira (2012, p.12)

1. In the last decades Portugal has been hosting many citizens from Europe, China, Brazil, and Africa, particularly those coming from the former Portuguese colonies. According to recent Eurydice statistics (2004), there are 120 nationalities in Portuguese public schools. Unlike the rate among Eastern European and Asian immigrants, the school dropout rate among Portuguese and Lusophone Africans is very high due to many causes, such as the low socioeconomic and academic levels of their parents, the different cultural environment and, for some, the different languages spoken at home (e.g., Creole in the Cape Verde Islands). Due to their relative number in elementary and secondary schools, and their absenteeism and school dropout, these groups have drawn the attention of several teachers and scholars who had started to research this population and had decided to apply an intercultural approach to the teaching of the Portuguese language and culture. According to Oliveira & Sequeira (2012), the Portuguese school system was based on a cultural assimilation towards the different origins of their students. Only in the late 80s did the educational authorities create alternative curricula that acknowledged the different cultures and origins of the students; however, due to several reasons, it had not been as successful as expected, and the dropout share remained high. In the meantime, various steps were taken from different perspectives, some of which recognized the need for an education aimed to promote sociability, tolerance, dialogue and solidarity among citizens of different ethnic and

cultural origins. More recently in 2004/5, a “National Plan to Prevent School Dropout” was developed, whereby the subject “Portuguese as non-native language” was implemented. Despite all these efforts the results are still unsatisfactory, and the gap between theory and praxis continues to be wide.

2. Although intercultural understanding can be acquired through a variety of means, the most certain method is associated with foreign language acquisition, which is then enriched with individual experience. Since language skills are mainly acquired and developed at school or college, teachers need to be aware and sufficiently trained to be able to choose suitable materials and to build on the experiences of their students (Afonso, 2011). As language and culture are inseparable, language teachers should be trained to accept linguistic and cultural diversity as a positive feature of any society, and use it in the classroom (Bernaus *et al.*, 2007, p.27), integrating important dimensions such as the socio-affective, the linguistic and communicative registers, learning strategies and interaction management. Nowadays it is indisputable that cultural understanding and languages ought to be taught together, however it is difficult for some teachers not only to select the cultural materials - as it implies comprehensive knowledge of socio-cultural, political, civic, historic and literary fields relating to that culture – but also to know how to handle them, thus involving methodical and didactic competencies. In addition, it must be considered how and to what extent the cultural materials are present in the societies where the language(s) is being taught because it exerts a considerable influence not only on the teacher’s performance and motivation, but also on the motivation of the students themselves to learn such materials (Afonso, 2011). Considering ‘culture’, a keyword for the intercultural education, both can be elaborated by means of literature in a reciprocal way, as literary texts simplify the comprehension of certain cultural facts and the cultural knowledge enables to understand better certain literary contexts. Bredella (2000, pp. 160-164) exemplifies the intercultural understanding



with a novel written by Norman Silver *No Tigers in Africa*<sup>1</sup> and Afonso (2011, pp. 134-139) with the German film *Nowhere in Africa*<sup>2</sup> by Carolina Link – based on the autobiographic novel with the same title, written by Stefanie Zweig. As referred to by Matos (2012, p. 57), “literature may be a potential resource for teaching and learning a foreign language and culture in intercultural perspective. It is through literature that one may be fully conscious of a language and the worlds that the same language configures”.

Therefore, it is the teacher’s responsibility to establish the foundation for intercultural understanding by guiding students towards it, often by suggesting the means by which learners can develop and update their knowledge, using the electronic tools, for instance, or suggesting adequate literature and films followed by class debates. In addition, by taking into account the richness and diversity of cultures, a specific way of dealing with certain topics can have a stimulating effect, which in turn should further motivate learning.

3. The case study we intend to share was developed by Oliveira & Sequeira (2011). It is set in 2008/09 at a secondary school close to Lisbon where Oliveira teaches Portuguese in multicultural classrooms. Her concern was the low students performance, the high rate of absenteeism and school drop out along with socialization issues, thus moving her to develop a project with her students, aiming to achieve better school results together with the improvement of their socialization, by means of intercultural awareness through oral literature. The school where the project took place is located in a neighbourhood primarily inhabited by people of African origins, particularly from the Cape Verde Islands; however, the second and third generation had already been born in Portugal. The original cultural customs are present here. Emotions and

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<sup>1</sup> A South African fifteen years old “arrives in England and has to adjust to the English culture in general and the English school system in particular. The irony is that he belonged to the dominant culture in South Africa and is now an outsider in England”(p. 161).

<sup>2</sup> Members of a prominent Jewish family (a child and its parents) fled to a farm in Kenya, British colony, before WWII bursts, having to adjust to different cultures and languages (English and Swahili) as plain farm workers. While the father accepts his new condition and the child learns interacting with the African neighbours, the mother is very reluctant to understand and fit in this so different world (pp. 134, 135).

values are very institutionalized in the Creole culture, which has not always been recognized by the school and fellows citizens. This intercultural project was based on a literary genre namely the oral conveyed short stories and proverbs from different countries, as this kind of stories are well know and common in the African cultures. In addition, there was also the intention of involving the parents, who, at the beginning, were mistrustful of the project, fearing a kind of acculturation of their children. For the authors of the project, it was important to involve children and the parents, as they otherwise are not always present to accompany their children, being often accused of not helping or valuing their school trajectory or supervising their absenteeism. As mentioned above, the school is not successful with these generations, despite the few actions that have been taken in order to value their culture and self-esteem (e.g., creating classes in grammar schools where the Portuguese youngsters learn Creole and the associated culture together with those who have Creole as their mother tongue.) For the authors, the project targeted the human side first and then the school performance, obtaining at the end very positive results by achieving the referred aims of self-esteem and cultural recognition, socialization, cultural awareness and less absenteeism together with new, higher perspectives towards the future.

4. There were two targeted classes: the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (A) with the alternative curriculum and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (B) with a regular curriculum, both with boys and girls, the first with fast equal number of boys and girls and the second with four times the number of boys. In Group A you find students from Portugal, Cape Verde, San Tome, Guinea Bissau and Angola while the Group B students are primarily Portuguese yet there is one from Guinea and another from Canada and two Brazilians. This second chapter describes these groups: their origins, travelling experiences, education until this point, future aspirations, likes and dislikes, languages level and competencies as well as their interest in knowing other countries, cultures or people from elsewhere. This is all documented graphically supported by a text.

5. The authors describe their approach in class, referring to how difficult it was to get started as the students wanted to keep their usual groups and avoid being mixed up. But these obstacles were overcome, and both classes managed to work together on the same occasions. Most students have distinctive nicknames according to the neighbourhood or his/her country of origin or even according to their learning skill or kind of curriculum they are in.

Questions such as “Is it possible to measure one’s knowledge?” made the students uncomfortable yet made them to speak to one another. The teacher also asked them if they knew any tongue twister in Portuguese or in any other language. Only a very few did so the homework consisted in asking their parents if they knew any that could be presented in class the next day. The tongue twisters are considered part of the popular oral tradition and are quite often present in folklore, riddles, tales and other stories. The contact with the family was later evident in the testimony of some of the pupils. When the teacher in Group A suggested that the students share with students from other classes, their lack of self-esteem became evident as they mentioned that the others would not want to work or interact with them because of their nicknames and the other reasons mentioned above.

So the teacher decided to organize contests – like best readers and best reciters – with the material they were collecting at home and pointing out the characteristics of every country involved, which generated inflamed discussions. Another interesting exercise consisted of allowing three students to speak in Creole and ask the others to pay close attention and then state what they felt during the conversation and what they had understood. The reactions were not all positive but as conclusions were being summarized they have motive to reflect. Conclusions included: “There is no communication when you do not understand the message”; “The speaker will make an effort to be understood and the listener will pay attention in order to understand”; “Mistrust can undermine the communication”; “In a multiethnic school and society, one ought to learn

diverse languages”; “The integration of the students from the former Portuguese colonies (PALOP) and foreigners is not always easy”.

The following step consisted in collecting the proverbs. The students formed groups to discuss them and elaborated a text to be read aloud by the leader of each group and subsequently analyzed. They concluded that the proverbs from the PALOP countries usually refer to animals, plants and water. Although they are similar, some of the elements referred are from different nature. Some examples (pp.109-126): Portugal: *Há mar e mar, há ir e voltar* (There is the sea, there is a back and forth); France: *Chaque tête, chaque pensée* (Every head has a different thought); England: *A man is known by his friends*; Brazil: *Pai fazendeiro, filho doutor, neto pescador* (Farmer father, doctor son, fisherman grandson); Mozambique: *A morte não tem olhos* (Death has no eyes); Cape Verde: *Se chove morremos afogados, se não chove morremos de sede* (If it rains we drown, if it does not rain we die of thirst); San Tome: *Barriga cheia a ninguém aborrece* (Full stomach doesn't bother anyone); Guinea Bissau: *Sapato velho não aperta o dono* (Un old shoe doesn't hurt the owner); Angola: *Feijão-frade que não comeste não te incha a barriga* (Beans that you have not eaten won't swallow your stomach).

These proverbs were subject to several kinds of contests between the two classes. They had to be completed or reorganized.

Another exercise consisted of telling a story one knew or heard as a child and then analyze its structure, meaning, message, origin and other items related to the literature and students' opinions. Stories from each of the countries of origin of the students' families were told and their message analyzed. Some of them were researched and debated according to the thematic and include the role of the woman and the eating of certain animals uncommon nowadays in Europe (e.g. mice in Angola when there was nothing to eat and in France during the Revolution, for the same reasons). After that each story-teller wrote than her/his story and distributed it among the fellow students.

6. The questionnaire filled out at the end of this project, showed encouraging differences from the one filled in at the beginning. The culture awareness increased, the curiosity towards the other was now present as well as the conscience that is important to understand each other and express oneself clearly to improve communication. The Creole speakers improved their self-esteem and the discrimination among the students was softened as all started working together in a way they had refused before. As to the improvement of the Portuguese language, the results were not as good as expected. Nevertheless, the authors are convinced this is the right approach since it is based on the intercultural communication and not on a communication based on two or three language systems as usual. The use of the mother tongue in some cases and the reference to the culture of their origins in other cases, helped pacify some of these students. Still, the results in terms of general absenteeism and dropouts cannot yet be seen, although there is a positive feedback from the classes of this project.

The goal is, or at least it is desirable, that teachers of Portuguese or other languages and teachers of other school subjects become aware of the advantages of an intercultural approach to the education of their students as well as to their education as citizens. The implementation of a school curriculum where intercultural understanding is developed should be considered in Portuguese schools, not only to cultivate citizenship education but also in order to prepare students for a future professional activity with fellow workers of different origins.

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*An intercultural approach to supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer/ Questioning (LGBTQ) students in secondary schools: Lessons from Ontario, Canada.*

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There is a great lack of knowledge and compassion in society about what it means to be a gay person and the every day struggles that LGBTQ people face. The school environment is no different. The Ministry of Education in Ontario, Canada has mandated policies that attempt to promote acceptance and respect for all people:

Equity and inclusive education aims to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that limit students' prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society. Barriers may be related to gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic background, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, or other factors. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a, pp. 5-6)

There is no guarantee, even with this policy, that schools will become places where every student feels included and respected. Interculturalism as a concept, if applied to the implementation strategies of these policies, can help to bridge the gap between policy and practice. *The main goal of this paper is to briefly examine the policies supporting LGBTQ students in Ontario schools and to suggest how interculturalism (and intercultural education) can be applied to these policies to enhance the implementation of inclusive policy regarding LGBTQ students in schools.*

Why the need for specific policies supporting LGBTQ students? LGBTQ students are not treated like other students in schools but rather as outcasts who are taunted, harassed, bullied; often with very serious consequences. Birden (2002) highlights the plethora of negative acts faced by LGBTQ students in schools including “verbal and physical harassment and violence, low self-esteem, high suicide rates, substance abuse, eating disorders, pregnancy etc.” ( p. 53). EGALE Canada (Taylor & Peter, 2011b) published the First National School Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian schools illustrating the negative climate that has been created in Ontario schools for LGBTQ students. They found that there are higher



rates of suicidal ideation, depression, anxiety, drug abuse, truancy and drop-out rates among LGBTQ students than other straight students and that 3/4 of LGBTQ students feel unsafe at school showing that Ontario schools are not a place where all students are made to feel that they belong and are important to the school community. (Taylor & Peter, 2011b).

The goal of this paper then is to examine current policies supporting LGBTQ students in Ontario and to suggest how the concepts central to intercultural education can assist in the implementation of equity and inclusive education policies for LGBTQ students. The policies examined are: Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation document, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (PPM 119), Policy/Program Memorandum 145 (PPM 145), The Accepting Schools Act (Bill 13), and the response of Ontario's publicly funded Catholic schools through the "Respecting difference" document from the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association. (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2012; Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association, 2012; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009b; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009c)

The goal of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy in Ontario is "to support a publicly funded education system that gives all students the opportunity to reach their highest potential" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a, p.5). This specific policy document acts as a framework for districts to develop inclusive education strategies and safe schools. The goal is one of inclusion for all students regardless of the colour of their skin, their sexual orientation etc. PPM 119, part of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, recognizes the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code that schools in Ontario must abide by. PPM 119 recognizes that Ontario's publicly funded schools must increase their efforts to develop an approach that will respond to the range of needs within school communities (Ontario Ministry

of Education, 2009b). These policies urge school boards to have constant open dialogue with all stakeholders in education, to provide stable learning environments that accept and integrate all students regardless of their differences and urges schools to create an environment that is free of harassment, bullying and prejudice, where each student is able to reach their full potential and appreciated through understanding that there is richness in diversity (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a). The inclusive language of these policy documents certainly bears great resemblance to some of the central concepts of intercultural education, promoting respect, understanding that there is richness in diversity etc. (Portera, 2012). Another key element present in both of these documents is that there must be action from discussion. Here, the Ministry of Education has placed deadlines on school boards to have had an inclusion policy in place by 2010-2011 with a regular review period (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a). This indicates that action has taken place from the dialogue but the extent to which these policies have been implemented is unknown at this time and is an area of concern and much needed, immediate, investigation.

Unlike the previous two policies examined, Policy/Program Memorandum 145 (PPM 145) does specifically address aspects of school culture relating to LGBTQ students. PPM 145 provides clear guidelines for the development of progressive discipline policies whereby “homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour must be addressed” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009c). PPM 145 also mandates that if schools have students who express an interest in starting a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or other clubs that promote healthy relationships, that the opportunity is given. PPM 145 promotes that “when personal relationships in schools are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modelled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009c).

The most controversial of the policies is Bill 13, an amendment to the Education Act. Bill 13 is designed to allow students to create organizations within the school allowing them to help foster a healthy school environment. The new changes to the bill allow for students to decide on the name of the group, whether it be gay-straight alliance or any other name they choose. It is the belief of the Ontario Government that:

students need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to engage the world and others critically, which means developing a critical consciousness that allows them to take action on making their schools and communities more equitable and inclusive for all people, including LGBTQ people. (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2012)

The first step to understanding how GSAs can be implemented in Catholic schools is to understand actual church doctrine referring to LGBTQ people. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1995) states that “the number of men and women who have deep seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible... they must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided” (p. 625). In response to Bill 13, the Catholic Trustees Association published a document, “Respecting difference: A resource for Catholic Schools in the Province of Ontario” (Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association, 2012). The concept presented in the Respecting Difference document presents a wider context and tackles the challenge of bullying for ALL students not only for only one sub-sector of students who are bullied. Here, in one regard, the respecting differences document is moving away from the multicultural view of creating separate groups for different sub-sets of students in schools and does promote the concepts of interculturalism. The other side of the coin is that creating a “respecting difference” group instead of a GSA in Catholic schools can also promote transculturalism whereby the common values of human rights (to not be bullied in this case) are

used to form a group within a school who share common values but whose differences are not being celebrated. Certainly the Respecting differences document shares common language with some critical concepts of interculturalism such as open dialogue, reciprocal relationships between teachers and students and active listening within a group. (Portera, 2012) The resource:

Is based upon the need to recognize that it is possible to respect, affirm and support the dignity of another person while at the same time disagreeing with their viewpoint on sexual morality. This understanding is important in society generally but with respect to differences based upon conscience and religious beliefs, it is essential to restate the importance of respect for differences at this time” (Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association, 2012, p.5).

It is a step in the right direction that the discussions around how LGBTQ students in all schools (not only Catholic schools) are being supported, but it is difficult at this point to understand what types of discussions are occurring and whether or not these discussions are leading to real change for LGBTQ students in schools.

Intercultural education as a concept has historically been used to focus on cross-national comparisons to examine the education of immigrants in various countries and the inequalities that exist within an educational setting toward students who are perceived to be “different”. (Bleszynska, 2008; Portera, 2008) In the context of LGBTQ students, an argument can be made that the concepts of interculturalism can be applied to LGBTQ as a culture because LGBTQ students are treated as foreigners in their own schools and represent a culture that is considered to be different from the mainstream. Interculturalism begins with the application that there are

basic human rights that should be afforded to all people which are outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948). A main and critical concept in intercultural education theory is that interculturalism is grounded in dialogue between cultures where active listening and open-mindedness must be present for true dialogue to occur (Portera, 2008).

Another key concept is that there must be action from the dialogue that occurs. When this idea is applied to policy, it means that it is not enough just to create policy but then have no action or meaningful implementation of the policy (Portera, 2009). Education of all stakeholders is also a central concept in interculturalism, crucial to LGBTQ policy. Portera (2009) states, “education is the tool both for maintaining ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity and achieving social inclusion, equity and intercultural understanding” (p.28). Interculturalism also pushes people in society, and thus in schools, to move past multiculturalism, to avoid assimilation and the creation of a “melting pot” where the richness of certain cultures gets lost (Portera, 2008).

Interculturalism challenges people to not simply tolerate, to not alienate and to not simply cohabitate, but rather challenges all people to live together, to discuss differences and come to a place where every person is able to live in an inclusive environment.

Catholic schools, being publically funded in Ontario, must implement the same policies as all other publicly funded schools. There is great misconception in society and thus, in the media, regarding Catholic Church doctrine and homosexuality. This is an example of how interculturalism can be utilized to help all people understand and respect Catholic Church doctrine. People must enter conversations with Catholics and Catholic schools regarding Bill 13 with an open mind and try to understand what the actual Church doctrine states so that Catholic schools can implement Bill 13 while staying true to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Essentially, the name of a group in a school that works to try to curb bullying for LGBTQ students (and all students for that matter) should reflect the students in the group, but the specific actions and the way that that particular anti-bullying group is conducted is what will make the difference. The Catholic Trustees set guidelines for teachers who will oversee the group in the Respecting Differences document that “all mentors appointed to work with groups of students must know and be committed to Catholic teachings” (Ontario Catholic Trustees Association, 2012, p. 11). So, regardless of what the club is named, the key factor here will be to have a faculty advisor who is well versed in Catholic Church doctrine, who has skill in counselling students, and can work with students to create a positive space where students can work toward resolving some of the issues of bullying within their schools. This will require an educator who thinks in an intercultural way, who allows students to dialogue openly, without a power differential within the group, so that everyone feels as if they are important and can contribute to the group and its activities. The educator who leads the GSA in Catholic schools has to be able to teach interculturally. This means that the educator must respecting the differences of all students in the group which means allowing for open discussion, all the while, making sure that Catholic doctrine is being taught. This does not mean that students are not allowed to question and bring up controversial subject matter. In fact, questioning can lead to a deeper understanding of the differences that people bring to the table as well as a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. If students feel that they can open up to the educator and other students in the group, then the open dialogue and respect that is so heavily promoted by intercultural education (Portera, 2012) will be allowed to flourish. Only through this openness can GSAs or “respecting differences” groups tackle create an environment where LGBTQ students feel safe and welcome in their own schools.

Even though the language of the equity and inclusion policy documents for education in Ontario seem to have common elements with intercultural education, the more important piece of the puzzle is indeed to examine whether or not the policy is being implemented in the way intended by the Ministry of Education and whether or not it is making a difference in Ontario schools for LGBTQ youth? This question cannot actually be answered because there is little to no evidence that these policies are being implemented as they were intended. These are new policies and thus, research on their implementation is still to come but this is an important next step if in Ontario. Taylor and Peter (2012) conducted research Canada-wide to investigate whether or not similar policy was efficiently being implemented supporting LGBTQ students. They note that:

System-level opposition to LGBTQ rights can be found in school divisions... teachers are instructed not to raise the topic of sexual orientation except where strictly necessary... In most Canadian schools, inclusive district policies notwithstanding, there is little or no mention of sexual orientation issues in curriculum or programs (Taylor & Peter, 2012, pp-276-277).

Since thirty percent of the respondents from this study were Ontario students, one can glean that even though Ontario has created policy to support LGBTQ students, gay rights remains the elephant in the room that is avoided unless absolutely necessary. How then can we assume that open, honest and robust dialogue is actually occurring in schools? The Ministry of Education in Ontario does not give specific implementation tools to school boards and with the issue of gay rights in schools being such a politically charged issue, many school boards will air on the side of caution and do only what is minimally necessary instead of pushing the envelope as needed when trying to implement these specific policies in an intercultural way. It is not enough to simply





not report incidents of violence because they perceive that the staff of the school will not help. This is a serious problem in Ontario schools. Educators need to be better educated on current policies supporting LGBTQ students and the role of staff in implementing these policies. This is where the concept of interculturalism can also be introduced to staff because it really does represent a shift in the way of thinking that is needed if schools are going to tackle the problem of LBGTQ violence in schools. Professional Development days can be used as the avenue to deliver this education and training. But, the education of teachers has to start sooner than the beginning of a teacher's career. Gundara (2009) points out, "teachers do not have the background context to effectively teach in unequal societies" (p.294). Teachers colleges in Ontario are currently morphing so this is the perfect time to look at embedding a social justice in education course into every teachers college program where the concept of interculturalism can be introduced to pre-service teachers. Interculturalism can be used to combat many socially unjust problems, not just the rights of LGBTQ students. This concept has already begun in Europe where a recommendation was passed that "teacher training should be based on intercultural understanding" (Portera, 2009) and the global education community should take note and follow this lead.

The other educational piece that is of critical importance is that of the students. In Ontario, interculturalism is not a term or concept that is well known to educators, and even less to students. However, the bullying of LGBTQ students that occurs in schools, is occurring at the hands of other students. The challenge with bullying in general is that, many policies can be put in place but unless we get to the grass roots of the problem and change the way that students think about their responsibilities to one another in this global world, moving past multiculturalism to interculturalism will be a constant challenge. Students have to be educated

about interculturalism and the goals of interactive integration where people of different cultures live together, interacting with each other, exchanging ideas, values, meanings etc. The current multicultural nature of schools would not allow for this to happen and the differences of individuals would never be celebrated. Only interculturalism can accomplish this.

Another way that interculturalism can take hold in Ontario to support LGBTQ students is in the use of a more reflective curriculum to represent diverse cultures including LGBTQ people. This concept is reiterated by Taylor and Peter (2011a, p. 300). The reality is that society is made up of many different people including LGBTQ people and we cannot just ignore their presence. Ignoring the presence of LGBTQ people in society is like ignoring any other culture that is perceived to be different. With this mentality, we will never push past multiculturalism to interculturalism. Thus, if we truly want to educate students to become global citizens, this has to include discussions about families outside of what is considered to be the heterosexual normal. Using the concept of intercultural education when presenting this in a classroom could assist students and teachers in treading through these controversial waters. In order for this to work in a classroom setting both the teacher and the students have to be open-minded and put biases aside. If a hierarchy or a power relationship exists even in the minds of the teacher or students, then interculturalism in a classroom setting cannot exist. Bourdieu (1997), in Rey-von Allmen (2009), says it best; “the intercultural approach wanted to be a strategy for transforming and diversifying power relationships, and for making space on equal terms for those who are undervalued and for their competencies” (p. 35). Schools have to give up some of their power and really listen to LGBTQ students to understand the needs at each particular school. Implementation of policies can’t occur just because the Ministry of Education requires it, but has to occur because students, educators, politicians etc. believe that interculturalism can be used as

a basis for respect and dignity of all persons, including LGBTQ students. Portera (2012) states, “it is unjust that we have to have distinct rules/ guidelines. We need general rules that are more or less accepting of all people”. Thus, it has yet to be proven if mandating GSAs in Ontario schools shows positive gains for LGBTQ students. However, if instead, schools were obliged to create an action plan, using the main concepts of interculturalism such as open dialogue, pushing past multiculturalism and education of all stakeholders that was specific to the individual needs of the school, perhaps the implementation of equity and inclusive policies could happen in a more meaningful way.

Is using interculturalism as a platform for the implementation of equity and inclusive education policies a utopian dream? Perhaps it is. It would take a large shift in current thinking of people in society and in schools in order for the current policies supporting LGBTQ students to be implemented truly in an intercultural way. Does that mean that we should continue with the current multicultural treatment of LGBTQ students in Ontario schools? Absolutely not. In order to truly move closer to this utopia, the fear of open dialogue, of disagreement, of being different has to disappear both in society and in schools. Stakeholders cannot be afraid to take on the key, controversial issues, especially when it means creating a more safe and conducive learning environment for students. This also requires openness to understanding sides of society that some people have historically not been willing to see. “Intercultural education demands that we listen to voices that have traditionally been silenced” (Gundara & Portera, 2008). There has to be a large shift in public opinion toward LGBTQ people if the policy now in place by the Ministry of Education for Ontario schools is going to be implemented in an intercultural way. There also has to be a movement toward more research to better understand the spirit in which the current policies are being implemented. This is a crucial step. Currently the situation for LGBTQ

students in schools is dire so there has to be hope that schools can move closer toward this utopian ideal. If the focus in schools is on all children, LGBTQ students need pioneers in their corner to start the movement.

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**Natalia Danilkina, Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University**

**Meeting business inside a university**

Convergence of businesses and universities that can be regarded as a global trend now has become a quite popular matter of research. Transferring the knowledge and skills between universities and business and the wider community is reported to increase the economic and social returns from the investment (Lambert Review 2003, p.31).

The studies carried out in Russia refer to a vast range of emerging problems – from the correlation of values to regulation of financial floods within a business – university partnership. The challenges of the interaction are sometimes investigated and discussed in terms of cultural differences between the business and academic communities (e.g. Shiverskikh 2010), whereas the main issue of concern is the correlation or collision of the “old” classical and the “new” managerial cultures as the local cultures of the same university (Beliaev 2007, Abramov 2010, Prokhorov 2010, etc.). The specificity of communication between the business and academic worlds inside the learning process as such is, however, almost out of sight.

In practice, integration of business into the learning process has been exercised basically (with the exception of business schools and faculties) in the framework of “traditional” forms accepted years before. Most of the forms imply the inter-cultural communication situations within a fixed context: talking to business on the “business area”, dealing with academics in a university classroom. Sporadic joint conferences raising the questions of labor market demand or innovative enterprises and technology transfer do not save the situation. As a result, the mutual perception keeps being highly stereotyped and the barriers hardly possible to overcome.

Such a division appears to be out-of-date and artificially reproduced. The modern university needs to be open to interaction with other entities that means also other occupational identities involved into higher education. It should become an *open-loop professional system*, opening to non-university environments (Radaev 2010, p.8). Participation of business in education cannot be focused on the managerial and financial issues only. As it is concluded in Lambert Review, *the best forms of knowledge transfer involve human interaction. A large number of collaborations between business and universities come about as a result of chance meetings between academics and business people* (Lambert Review 2002, p.31)<sup>1</sup>.

It can be therefore suggested to extend some practices used by business schools and faculties on more variety of study programs (that is particularly crucial for economics-related trans-

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<sup>1</sup> To attract more business people in the UK to take part in university life it is recommended there to exempt business people from the requirement to undertake training to lecture in universities and to develop the alumni networks in order to build closer relationships with the university’s graduates working in the business community. *Ibid.*, p.31-32.

disciplinary programs and courses). Besides out-class activities, such as visiting enterprises, organization of internships according to curriculum, meeting entrepreneurs at conferences and public events, research practice at enterprises, etc. there can be offered, for instance, an in-class workshop (practicum) conducted by business experts or the study-for-work platform available for bachelor and master students of any specialization – for regular seminars/master-classes conducted by business experts.

Students, whose adaptation to business environment is not enough, may be not quite ready to accept an expert in particular business practices in the place of their “university professor”, since his/her psychological characteristics, competences, behaviors, etc. may differ considerably from what they are used to deal with in class. In some cases, when the previous contacts of students with business community are limited, some symptoms related to cultural shock may appear (see: Winkelman 1994), such as stress reactions, cognitive fatigue, role shock or even personal shock, when the students start seeking support of their significant others like their “common” professor or the closest groupmates. In order to prevent the negative effects of cultural shock, the proactive cognitive orientation is required that includes learning about behaviors and social relations appropriate to another sort of occupational culture, as well as its language – the code of communication operating professional terminology. It can be also suggested to:

- use different techniques developing flexibility of social perception in students, e.g. the audience can be prepared through the trainings on performance of a certain professional role (a researcher, a consultant, etc.) while communicating, along with the acquisition of a toolkit for dealing with certain communicational situations;
- stimulate and support the reflection process in participants; organize evaluation and self-assessment activities; provide feedback exchange and analysis from the both sides involved.

The diversification of the forms of in-class cooperation combined with the preliminary and follow-up work as described above is expected to facilitate the professional and social adaptation of students, to increase the chances for business experts and university audience to become real partners, to develop their cultural, social and economic capital.

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## Migrant traces and welcoming places: from educational context to pedagogical reflection

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### Introduction

Migration is a multidimensional reality that characterizes our society. The quantitative aspect of migration flows leads to a focus on the problematic aspects related to the movement, more than the possible resources. For this reason, migrants' life stories, which hold motivations, expectations and desires, are likely to be lost.

We want to stress the multiplicity of migration patterns, in particular of children of foreign origin, including the second generations children who, even if they did not actually physically make the journey, are certainly involved in changing aspects of identity. This approach helps to eliminate generalizations, and to start reflective processes located in the vital contexts of migrant and non-migrant kids and teenagers.

Young migrants usually belong to their family's migration project and they have to deal with the challenges of integration into a new reality that transforms them into strangers. It is important to seek out the many tracks of migration in the social context: currently in Italy we have 932,675 foreign children, and in particular there are 572,720 children and young people of the *second generations*. "This means that about 6 out of 10 'foreigners' minors are not immigrants, but to all intents and purposes – biographically, culturally and linguistically – new Italians" (aa.vv., 2010: 27). We have a lot of hybrid situations in the second generation range (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001), but what we want to highlight is that these subjects develop their life story in the place where they are born and live, building relationships at school and in an informal context. In reality, they became the *bridge generation* between their family and the social system. We have the responsibility for guaranteeing a more inclusive social structure, where flexible identity, a dialogic approach and an open mind are the foundations of a renewed way of life. It is necessary to promote democratic spaces in which a *feeling of belonging* and *sense of responsibility* can develop; in this way, it is important to encourage *active citizenship* through educative relationships, aimed at achieving full autonomy of the subjects.

We can think about the process of *learning by experience* (Reggio, 2011), in which the subject can acquire skills for living actively in the social space and form ties. In particular, young migrants are looking for interactive places within the social framework, formal and informal, both in the local area and at school. With regard to context, young people attend a lot of different structures in which they can experiment with themselves and share common experiences with their peers. In groups, it is possible to find confirmation in an atmosphere of trust, belonging and mutual bonding; thus, the group becomes a place of education, a communication system and a democratic laboratory.

We will analyze the issue of how citizenship develops in different ways, from the perspective of proposing spaces of solidarity and democratic participation. In this vision, promotion and expression of the resources of each person lead to the development of new spaces for encounter, interaction and reciprocity, as well as for escape from subordinating integration (Ambrosini, 2007). This will promote ties of proximity and suggest models of coexistence between different entities.

### 1. The research project "Children of foreign origin between courtyard and territory"

We want to present a study designed to identify places of education which can respond to the needs of children of foreign origin, through intervention strategies in dialogue with local contexts. The project was carried out in Italy, in the Piedmont Region, within the centres of the AGS

membership – the Salesian Youth Association - for the territory. The objectives of the research *Children of foreign origin between courtyard and territory* were:

- to identify the presence of foreign minors in the territory of the Piedmont region in the centres coordinated by the association;
- to observe the educational and training activities put in place to encourage greater interaction with the context and to support growth processes;
- to identify projects implemented since 2000 associated with the presence of children of foreign origin and their evolution over time;
- to highlight the pedagogical reflection of intercultural background to increase dialogue in the context.

The research produced information on many of the educational practices and pedagogical orientations that characterize the complexity of the intercultural approach. We used quantitative tools for data collection and qualitative tools to gather the experiences of the centre coordinators involved. The research was conducted from May to October 2010 and focused on the areas of aggregation, with particular attention to the *courtyard*, which is a characteristic place in the centres surveyed. The courtyard, in fact, is a passage between spontaneity and structured paths; it is an open space and a safe place to experience interactions with peers, educators and volunteers.

The territory, however, is the context in which dialogue takes place for designing how to *participate in projects* and *share resources* in the interests of the children. In this sense, it is necessary to articulate *educational networks* (Folgheraiter, 2006) that strengthen the social fabric of reference, implementing paths of communicability, sustainability and transferability (Deluigi, 2012, p. 125). If the educational agencies can improve their dialogue, it will be easier to stress the dimension of community and civil society.

The research subjects were 27 organizations, comprising 20 oratories, 3 associations, 3 social cooperatives and 1 community for children. All these structures are inspired by the Salesian pedagogy of Don Bosco (Bosco, 2011; Pellery and Grzadziel, 2011), which is still implemented. We indicate below the main findings in relation to the objectives of the survey.

### ***1.1 Objective 1: identify the presence of foreign minors in the territory of the Piedmont region in the centres coordinated by the association***

Twenty-four of the 27 centres responded to the questionnaires. They welcomed a total of 8801 children, 6959 Italians and 1842 of foreign origin, of which 50% belong to the second generations. Children of foreign origin accounted for 21%; this is significant as the percentage of students of foreign nationality in the region of Piedmont is 11.5% (IRES, 2011).

Twenty of the 24 centres indicated the age of the children. The age group most represented is children between 6 and 11 years, 1935 Italian and 512 of foreign origin, with a percentage of foreigners equal to 20.93%, followed by children aged 12-14 with 1529 Italian and 525 of foreign origin accounting for 25.55%; Italian teenagers aged 15-18 total 1315 and those of foreign origin number 337, equating to 20.41%; finally, young people over 18 total 769 Italian and 205 foreign-born, equal to 21.04%.

The different age groups are provided with differentiated educational, aggregative and recreational proposals and, at the same time, they can experience coexistence, especially in the courtyard. The presence of children of foreign origin amplifies the pedagogical reflection in an atmosphere of democracy, in close collaboration with families and the territory.

Additional data was collected on the origin of the foreign children and their numerical presence in relation to the country of origin. Twenty-one of the 24 centres provided data, noting that 479 children are from Morocco, 358 from Romania and 337 from Albania. There are also 108 children from Peru, 49 from Brazil, 39 from Senegal, 34 from Congo, 32 from Tunisia, 28 from China, 26 from Moldova and 166 from other countries (27 different countries). In total, therefore, Salesian centres receive foreign children from 37 different countries of origin, but only people from

Morocco and Romania are present at each one of the centres. The presence of children of foreign origin from most parts of the world stimulates the construction of inclusive groups and personal development, taking into account the multi-belonging and differences related to their places and cultures of origin (Deluigi, 2012, p. 153).

***1.2 Objective 2: observe the educational and training activities put in place to encourage greater interaction with the context and to support growth processes***

The activities developed by the centres aim to meet the social and educational needs identified in the context. Below we report the main areas, highlighting those that are more frequented by children of foreign origin.

- *School support* for primary and secondary schoolchildren takes place every day thanks to the availability of volunteers who support children having difficulty at school.
- *Sporting activities* promote many types of sports at a competitive level and as a key element of education.
- *Expressive activities* are workshop activities for different age groups. There are projects related to manual creativity and design, dance and music, theatre and photography.
- *Personal training courses* for children, teenagers and young people are intended to promote the integral development of each member of the group.
- *Catechism* is promoted by the centre's local parish and offers a religious idea of growth.
- *Day care centre aggregation* is a service provided in collaboration with the territory and welcomes children sent by social services for reasons of school, family or behavioral problems. Management is delegated to the head of the centre and professional educators who take care of children using individual educational plans. The activities are shared with the other children of the oratory with the support of volunteers.
- *Italian for foreigners* is an activity for children or adults, led by volunteers. The course can be structured into different levels for the acquisition of language skills, fostering knowledge of the context and promoting social occasions.
- *Summer activities* are provided for children aged 6 to 14 years during the school holidays, when activities are carried out throughout the day.
- *Common holidays* are times of aggregation and training that take place in both winter and summer outside the centre but with the presence of the leaders, educators and volunteers.

These diversified activities may stimulate the interests, abilities and skills of each subject. The wide range of options allows children to experiment and meet with their peers, supported by volunteers and educators who create a positive atmosphere in the context. Many of the activities are free in order to make services more accessible; this requires continuous reflection on means to *generate proposals of high quality* in the ever-changing society. The free offering depends largely on the presence of volunteers who, under the coordination of professional educators, can ensure the implementation of a wide range of proposals; so *volunteers become an essential resource*, to be valued and trained to support children's growth processes (Arcidiacono, 2004).

In recreational, sports and artistic activities, children can express their creativity, becoming protagonists and an active part of a group. At the same time, school and leisure become a two-sided framework, both coexisting and interacting in the centres. All groups aim to enhance the children and young persons, enabling them to make significant interactions, to manage conflicts through dialogue, to prove themselves in a strongly competitive but correct way, and to share resources with others in a common view. *The group thus becomes a place of community* in which to experience what it means to *become active citizens* and *feel a sense of belonging to a common reality*.

The climate of acceptance and trust feeds the intercultural approach to education, through processes of personal growth, as well as solidarity with others. In this regard, the young people of foreign origin often themselves become *tutors and mentors for the younger ones*, becoming volunteers and creating fresh educational experiences: this is another way to try to be citizens.

The data collected suggest that the activities most frequently undertaken by both foreign-born and Italian children are *sports and school support*. In sport it is possible to experience a team's dynamic and the trade-off between competition and cooperation while working together to achieve a common goal (Zoletto, 2010). With school support within a learning environment, it is possible to improve one's performance in order to achieve greater academic success (Favaro and Papa, 2009) and, in parallel, to share a common path, discovering and practising a wide range of skills.

### ***1.3 Objective 3: identify projects implemented since 2000 associated with the presence of children of foreign origin and their evolution over time***

The increasing presence of foreign minors has generated a greater reflection also in AGS associations which, since 2000, have implemented projects for children, families and adults, whether of foreign origin or not. None of these projects has created any discrimination between foreigners and natives, fostering the sharing of experiences. Details are given below of projects promoted by the headquarters, to which must be added those run by individual centres or small groups of centres, depending on the needs identified at the specific location.

- *Play It Again Sam*: this is an integrated project between schools and centres, aiming to combat early school leaving and truancy. It involves children of primary school age and of the first grade of secondary school who have little motivation to study as well as difficulties integrating into the dynamics of the classroom. The project requires involvement in many classes, throughout the school year.
- *Accompanying solidarity*: minors are joined by volunteer tutors for remedial teaching and inclusion in group activities within Salesian structures of reference. At the same time, there is a strict connection with parents, with activities aimed at supporting the family core. Tutors are drawn from the local context and ensure a continuous presence, motivation and skills of experience.
- *Cosy house*: this is a project for unaccompanied minors and involves children coming mainly from North Africa and Eastern Europe in search of support and satisfaction of their basic needs. Professional educators implement programs related to personal and relational training and work, starting with the offer of room and board, which becomes the basis on which to build places of protected growth.
- *NOMIS. - New Opportunities for Foreign minors*: this project promotes the inclusion of foreign children in the centres. Children and young people are supported by educators and peer educators. The project focuses on three key areas: the street, the host communities, and interventions over 18.
- *Aggregation centres for minors*: this project is for children aged between 6 and 17 years with personal and relational difficulties, who are at risk of marginalization. The centres, through personalized projects, support the development of the child and his family, enabling him to achieve greater autonomy.

### ***1.4 Objective 4: highlight the pedagogical reflection of the intercultural background to increase dialogue in the context***

The pedagogical approach of the realities encountered in research is based on the needs and resources of minors, as identified in educational experience. For the age group for whom school is mandatory there is an emphasis on the importance of *learning Italian language and having a good school placement*, in which the educational alliance between school and family is most important. In the period between school and a job placement, the need emerges *to continue the educational and emotional support*, and to promote continuing training, specialization and qualification. In this sense, very often, the choice of professional school becomes a “springboard” for many young people to achieve autonomy (Santagati, 2011).

Another common need for children and adolescents is the necessity *to gather and gain recognition within the peer group, to build friendships and to share their free time*. They can find significant options for spending their free time in the Salesian centres, such as open and safe places in which to be recognized as people and build relationships. In view of this, it is necessary to go

beyond the “initial welcome” and *become strategists and developers of significant and lasting interaction*. Faced with the challenge of the presence of foreign minors, some difficulties are detected by operators and volunteers, regarding: understanding children’s problems; recognizing the centre’s limits for offering individualized responses and emphasizing the need to connect with local services; difficulty listening to the complexity of situations to understand them in a deep way.

All the projects follow an inclusive logic and promote *the transition from a multicultural to an intercultural view, to the active participation of each subject, minor, citizen* (Santerini, 2001). In this regard, from the analysis of interviews, a number of fronts emerge for open-ended working. For example, it is necessary to progress from a first encounter with minors of foreign origin to a real knowledge among peers; educators can deepen the dialogue, valuing differences and expanding the space of expression. These professionals became facilitators of interaction in everyday life, and in their work the team may conceive interventions that are increasingly able to start from the subjects’ own resources. The educational style of reference is *social educative animation* (Deluigi, 2010), which *returns empowerment to the individual and to the group, encouraging promotion of shared experiences and active participation in community life*. In this way, it is possible to develop intercultural contexts that are able to embrace different identities and enhance them through the management of daily education which is reflected in a pedagogical design firmly rooted in the context, *working with people and for people*, feeding spirals of democratic living.

## 2. Generate intercultural paths: a possible reading of the context

The analysis of the data collected and interviews has allowed us to develop three models of building intercultural contexts. These models, in connection with the centres involved in the research, have extendable characteristics that make the project reproducible (Deluigi, 2012).

*Model 1 - the whole world in the yard*. This process emphasizes the presence of a variety of backgrounds and origins that coexist within the same context. The courtyard, as meeting place, provides a first open welcome to the children, through educators and volunteers. The evident multiculturalism requires knowledge of how to build intercultural dynamics in a space that becomes significant because there are strong and mutual ties between differences, which become actors in the construction of new ways of living together.

The first step consists in accepting the other subject with his life story and his culture, values and experiential “baggage”. The arrival of the children is a starting point for creating opportunities for personal growth and the shared inclusive dynamics of the group. The transition takes place with the crossing of the threshold, the gateway to mutual understanding. On the threshold the first contact and presentations occur, and it is important not to be invasive and to listen to the other. The third step is the entry of the children into the Salesian centres: their entrance may provide informal or more structured proposals, and guarantees meeting and discussion with peers and freedom of choice among the assets available. In this way, the minors can decide and value their resources. In a climate of trust, the courtyard becomes a space of transit and residence, in which you can observe passages, transits and structured bonds, a place where you can take a ticket (general admission) and returns (attendance continues).

The last step of this process defines the courtyard as a significant place *for me* (growing space where there is a choice of which activities to attend), *with others* (building mutual relations), *for others* (the possibility of implementing paths of solidarity).

*Model 2 - from comparison to cooperation*. In this process we highlight the passage from the individual dimension to the opening group. This is a process in which both the personal dimension and the collective are valued and promoted. The challenge consists in making the transition from the *exclusive ego* to *us*, which includes multiple identities. Children are trainees who discover their own identity, thanks to the accompaniment of educators. Secondly, there is the knowledge of others and of plurality; here the first interactions start and may generate conflicts that need to be managed. The discovery of relationships requires people to be able to live within social contexts, engaging in dialogue and learning continuously from experience and encounters with others.

The third step is building relationships between the attributions of meaning that each person brings. We need to build social spaces that are attentive to the *multiplicity of meanings* that inhabit the different cultures of which people become carriers (Santerini, 2007). The fourth step describes the *group as a place of interaction, of belonging, participation and responsibility*. Kids can interact with each other in everyday learning experiences in common: they become members of a little community which recognizes and acknowledges them. They participate by bringing their own original contribution and become responsible for their decisions and actions. The last step requires that peer groups do not remain closed, but know how to open to the outside with a *common and democratic vision*. So, it is necessary that the welcoming process is continuous and that they *learn to cooperate between differences*, achieving common goals.

*Model 3 – from researching the project to planning its renewal*. The last model shows how planning, reflexivity and intentionality guide the work in the educational contexts, returning recurring and generalizable elements of reflection. First, it is necessary to rediscover the *fundamentals of the project* because it is important that they are clear and shared by the whole educational team. Thus it will be possible to implement innovative projects in a continuous dynamic interaction between *social territories and research*. The second step is to be able to *reflect on the experiences implemented* (Schön, 1983) in order to be able to identify the elements of success and failure, and to be able to *promote situated growth experiences* (Lave and Wenger, 1991). This will allow the team to communicate with the participants and to promote the third step of the process, *participatory planning*, which stimulates the sharing of ideas and creation of meaningful experiences.

The participatory planning becomes a powerful moment of community that all the people involved can experience directly. In this way, it will be possible to develop concerted and achievable educational projects, as the resources and needs of the context, *listening to the many voices of the social actors*. The focus of this process is to build deep ties within which anyone can design him or herself with others. With foreign children, we will need to consider an educational design for their identity through the past, present and future in a flexible way, since the references may be variable.

The last step of the process sees educational action as a consistent and reflective dialogue. It can reconstruct the *face-to-face relationship*, which reveals a *passion for education*, which in turn promotes *mutual solidarity* and will follow *shared growth paths in the plurality of everyday life*.

## Conclusion

We believe that there are many educative strategies to promote the interests of foreign minors and their families; from this research, some educational guidelines have emerged, developed in the field that sees *everyday life and social context* as two balanced elements of a framework in which to promote the continued growth of children.

We leave the way open to further study to explore educational spaces as places in which to deepen and renew pedagogic reflection. *It is necessary to increase the dialogue between theory, practice and reflection, in the form of intercultural educational work, supporting creativity and promoting social interactions that will generate innovative models and intercultural society* (Perucca, 1998), *through the educational demands of daily life*.

We should build a *thought migrant* (Pinto, 2002) because intercultural growth needs continuous reflection and implementation, from the common areas of interest (schools, orators, leisure venues...), which can become genuine laboratories of democracy, providing opportunities for personal and social projects for new generations.

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***TITLE OF PRESENTATION:***

***"Second generation of migrant students in Greece and Italy: description and perspectives"***

***Abstract:***

The purpose of this paper is to describe the socio-cultural situation of second generation immigrant students in two neighbour countries, i.e. Greece and Italy, which have faced the migration phenomenon during the last twenty five years, like most south European countries. The presentation attempts: a) to highlight the challenges and needs in order to reinforce second generation immigrant students (i.e. the children born by first generation immigrant families) in their school success, b) to discuss on educational policies that could help second generation immigrant students in the learning domain and in their social mobility.

From a European perspective, the situation of the second generation of immigrant pupils has been examined in a large TIES-project, called "The Integration of the European Second Generation" (2009), with selected data from fifteen European cities in eight countries. However, we must take into consideration that the second generation of immigrant students is not a single homogeneous group of young people. This presentation explores commonalities and differences in two neighbour countries, i.e. Italy and Greece, in their educational policies, which seem to play significant role on the educational difficulties that the second generation of immigrant students might face during their school attendance, in order to prevent school underachievement and social disadvantage. It is also worth mentioning that these two countries were not included in the TIES-project.

***Key words:*** Second generation of immigrant students, school difficulties and underachievement, educational policies, perspectives.

***1. Introduction: Children with a double background***

*"Children's vulnerability to adverse social and economic circumstances is well established. Socio-economic background is one of the main predictors of cognitive development that provide the underpinnings of educational achievement, and on which much success in later life depends. But all children are not vulnerable to background factors in the same way; nor is the response to interventions to reverse the adverse effects uniform. Individual and social factors interact in the dynamics of child development. And the outcomes are never entirely predictable" (Bynner, 1999: 3).*

In fact, while the integration of migrant family into the receiving society is a primary challenge of globalization (Suárez-Orozco, 2004:173), to be a child of a immigrant family represents a challenge in itself. A big challenge which needs ability of resilience to survive in context often hostile, to fight disadvantage (Honnet, 2003), to find the hidden opportunity that migration brings in itself. So every family and every migrant student have to find individualised solutions to their problem. But, nevertheless, the educational policies put on a ground by the government to promote inclusive education, to remove restrictions of opportunities for migrant children plays a central role. If immigration is a phenomenon which interest all the nations of the globo, responses gave to it have occurred within each country. In such a context, “immigrant youth’s life chances and future careers are shaped not only by family and community resources but by the opportunities offered by the educational institutions they attend” (Crul, 2007: 213). Schools are playing:

*“a double role in the integration of newcomers: on one hand, they propagated an explicit curriculum, which consisted of shared values and the minimal knowledge needed to be a productive member of society; on the other, they where vehicles for intergroup contact and friendships among children at an early age when identities and attitudes are developed” (McAndrew, 2007:233-234).*

We focused our attention to children of immigrant families born in the host country. However, we must take into consideration that the second generation of immigrant students is not a single homogeneous group of young people.

This paper describes the socio-cultural situation of second generation immigrant students in two neighbour countries, i.e. Greece and Italy, which have faced the migration phenomenon during the last twenty five years, like most south European countries. The presentation attempts: a) to highlight the challenges and needs in order to reinforce second generation immigrant students (i.e. the children born by first generation immigrant families) in their school success, b) to discuss on educational policies that could help second generation immigrant students in the learning domain and in their social mobility.

This work explores commonalities and differences in two neighbour countries, i.e. Italy and Greece, in their educational policies, which seem to play significant role on the educational difficulties that the second generation of immigrant students might face during their school attendance, in order to prevent school underachievement and social disadvantage.

## **2. Second generation in Italy and in Greece**

From a European perspective, the situation of the second generation of immigrant pupils has already been examined in a large TIES-project, called “The Integration of the European Second Generation” (2009), with selected data from fifteen European cities in eight countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland). They referred to children of immigrants who were born in the immigration country, have pursued their entire education there and were aged between 18 and 35 years old at the time of interviews. It is worth mentioning that Italy and Greece were not included in the TIES-project. The children of second

generation in Southern European countries are much younger, and for them will be difficult to have access to citizenship. So they represent a population very different from the second generation involved in TIES-Project (Imiscoe, 2012).

The Imiscoe research underlined that “education is one of the most crucial indicators for assessing the overall position of the second generation” (Imiscoe, 2012:103). Another crucial factor that must be taken into account is their parents’ educational level. This level could become a serious obstacle for the educational career of a student especially in post-secondary and tertiary education. “The second generation children of more highly educated parents follow a very distinct pattern” (Imiscoe, 2012: 126) their school outcomes in fact being more similar to children from indigenous families. For these reasons, among structural aspect of institutional arrangements, (i.e. how the transition to the labour market manifests; how welfare arrangements around paid work; how care and work are organised; legal frameworks and housing...), we focused our attention on the nature of education systems.

## **2.1. The situation in Italy**

At the first of January 2012, in Italy the number of legal immigrants (non-EU) is 3.673.724 (7% of general population in 2011) (Istat, 2012). 23,9% of them are less than 18 years old. And 60% of the youth with an immigrant background were born in Italy. They come from more than 200 nations. In school, as in our society, Romania, Albania and Morocco are the most represented countries, with respectively 141.050 (18.7%), 103.000 (13.6%) and 96.000 (12.7%) students.

The most of them attend the primary school, where they represent 9.5% of the school population. The number of immigrant students is not the same in all regions: Lombardia, Veneto and Emilia Romagna are the regions with the largest share of these students. In Lombardia they represent 24.4% of the school population (184.592), in Veneto 11.8% (89.367), in Emilia Romagna 11.5% (86.944) (Ismu, 2012). In some schools more than 40% of the students come from immigrant families.

These data show a steady increase in the number of students with an immigrant background in the Italian school system. Since academic year 2003/2004, the number of students with a foreign background has been doubled for primary school and middle school and it has been tripled for other institutional levels.

While some years ago the migrant children increased, today the phenomenon regards the second generation youth. In the academic year 2011/2012, 44.2% of the immigrant students were born in Italy (334.384 people out of a total of 755.939 - Miur, 2012). More than 80% of them attend kindergarten and primary school, although their share is constantly increasing in secondary school (Miur, 2012).

### **2.1.1 Children of immigrant families: what about citizenship?**

After being a country of emigration for more than a century, Italy has recently become a country of immigration. But the strategies adopted to incorporate the newcomers into the national community haven't been effective enough. Reluctance to

liberalize citizenship was intensified as lawmakers were eager to please growing generic anti-immigrant moods. The public opinion seems becoming more reluctant to ease access to nationality, above all after the financial crisis of the last years. Nationality has become a contested issue. “Discrimination and restriction were the only real consequences that immigration was able to produce on Italian nationality law so far: discrimination against non EU immigrants, restriction of *ius soli* and, more recently, restriction of *ius conubii* in order to prevent marriages of convenience. Nowadays the concept of ‘deserved nationality’ prevails” (Zincone, 2010: 26).

In Italy, the legal position of the second generation of children who come from immigrant families is quite precarious. According to the national law, the transmission of Italian citizenship follows the principle of *ius sanguinis* (Portera, 2010). Therefore, citizenship is not a granted right to children of immigrant families. After having lived for all their lives in Italy, being born in Italy, at the age of 18, they must apply the Government (according to article 4, paragraph 2, law 91 of 05.02.92) for citizenship. This law made *ius soli* mode more difficult for children of immigrant family born in Italy, by adding continuity and legality of residence as further requirements.

While, in democratic countries, “a key objective is to produce a political community within which citizens can discuss political issues in an atmosphere of mutual trust, tolerance and sympathy” (Gundara, 2010:39), these children could become the children of nowhere, not only in legal terms.

## 2.2 The situation in Greece

Since 2010, with the establishment of Law 3386/10, important modifications have been made in the direction of the migratory educational policy. Henceforth, with this new Law, the Greek citizenship can be attributed to legal immigrants who meet specific criteria. From about 800.000 migrants (7% of the general population in Greece, in 2006) -according to estimations (Ministry of Interior) for the Integration Domain, today in 2012, the estimation is about 1.000.000 migrants.

More specific, concerning the number of the second generation migrant children living nowadays in modern multicultural Greece is 17%, years from 1 until 18 years old (according to the Ministry Interior, statistical data for 2010). According to the former Migration Policy Institute in Greece, the 59,3% of legal immigrants have accomplished secondary education studies, the 13,4% hold a University degree, the 16,2% have accomplished primary education, while the 9,2% has not completed primary education or are illiterate (for more information and data, see: chapter 1.2. Second Generation Immigrants, in: Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012).

This new societal situation points to the need to redefine the content of terms like ‘belongingness’ and ‘citizenry’, which refer to rights and obligations in a democratic society. In other words, it raises the question: “*Who are the citizens of modern Greece?*”.

Due to the new aforementioned Law, an increasing number of immigrants have obtained Greek citizenship in the past years. More than expected, the new ‘citizenship law’ has sparked reactions from mainstream society and right wing political parties, as well as fears among the general population, often provoked by mass media. In the Greek case, the public opinion has been divided

concerning the attribution of Greek citizenship status because of the fear that Greece is a small country with a population of 11 million Greeks, which means that the ratio between immigrants and the native population must be secured. On the other hand, the uncontrollable entrance of illegal migrants to Greece because of its geographical position has strengthened the existing fears. As a result, there is growing discourse that speaks of Greece remaining Greek and not allowing immigrants to redefine who is Greek.

Section IV of the State Council, recently decided that the new Law is against the Hellenic Constitution<sup>4</sup> (decision no 350/2011), since the right to vote and be elected is attributed only to Greek origin citizens (*jury of blood*), thus legal immigrants who receive Greek citizenship do not have these rights and will not gain these rights unless this specific regulation in the Constitution changes. This issue has been taken up by the Plenary Supreme Court and a decision is expected to be announced in the near future. Difficult times for the spirit of the Democracy.

### **2.2.1 Second generation of migrant students: recent legal decisions**

The latest recent decision of the Plenary Supreme Court/ State Council (Decision no 460/2031) came to abandon any hope for the second generation immigrant children.

According to the majority of the Jury, the attribution of Greek nationality to the immigrant children living in Greece, either because of birth or because of continuous six year studies is considered to be illegal, since it is regarded contrary to the Greek Constitution. Needless to say, that with this Decision immigrant children lose any hopes for acquiring an identity, since they are 'apatris' (which means without 'patris', i.e. homeland).

In November 2012, the new Greek Government proposed that the law granting Greek citizenship to children born in Greece to immigrant parents be amended as a consequence of a ruling handed down a day earlier by the country's supreme administrative court, the Council of State. It applies to children of immigrants, who were born and raised in Greece, have attended school in Greece for at least six years and speak Greek. Moreover, their parents must have been legally residing in the country for at least five years. The judges said of the State Council that there had to be a constitutional review for this legislation to apply. The Ministry of Interior is expected to submit a Bill soon to take into account the view expressed by the State Council.

According to the current new law, the second generation of migrant pupils, need to follow a six years continuous education, as an additional qualification.

## **3. School measures and provisions**

### **3.1 The Italian context**

Italian school has developed an inclusive approach towards students with an immigrant background, as evidenced by the official documents of the Ministry of Education. Since 1994, with the Ministerial Memorandum n. 73 – *Intercultural Dialogue and Democratic coexistence: the planning engagement of the School* -,

intercultural approach has been promoted as the pedagogical answer to the new multicultural society, not as a mere compensatory activity but rather as the “integrating background” for all. In fact, the implementation of intercultural principles in the school curricula has encountered many difficulties: the uneven territorial distribution of migrant communities across Italy, the need for teachers to deal with emergency issues (welcoming the wave of foreign students, meeting Italian language teaching requirement, the lack of training ecc.). So, the pedagogical approach has been brought forward by individual schools through intercultural education programmes, undertaken in partnership with other organisations and local authorities.

The factors which affected the second generation students in Italian school are varied. Among them we can quote school policy approaches, school dynamics between students and teachers as well amongst students (peer-cultures), and socio-economic background. Even if the national law (Minister of Education, 8.1.2010) clearly forbidden concentration of immigrant-origin children in some public schools, *de facto*, this is a phenomenon on the rise. This happens thanks to the combined effects of the socio-economic context (job opportunities for parents, processes of ethnicization of some residential areas) and the decision taken by some Italian parents to leave schools in which there is a high presence of non Italian students. This phenomenon does not occur when immigrant children come from Eastern countries (Romania, Poland, Ukraine, Albania), but the situation is really different when students’ families come from Africa, Middle East or Far East. The acceptance of these children by their peers is not something granted. Often the opposite happens. They were born in Italy, they have never seen their parents’ country, they feel Italian in some peculiar way. But, in many cases, their classmates don't consider them Italians, but Pakistani, Senegalese, or Moroccan. In a word, they are strangers.

The percentage of early school leavers still is very high: 43,8% of immigrant students aged between 18 and 24 dropped out of school compared with 16,4% of Italians. Most of them are girls: 42,1% of immigrant girls while Italian girls are 12.7% (+ 29.4%); among males we have 45.6% of immigrant origin and 19.9% of autochtones (+25.7%). These young people could become Neet (Not in Education, employment or training) and they could become people at risk in a context of economical crisis.

Because of their living on the edge of two worlds, parents and children with an immigrant background (above all, the teens) feel the need to develop stronger ethnic identities and attachments to their homeland (Dusi, 2012; Fass, 2010). In such a way, they are involved in a process of re-ethnicization (Skrobanek, 2009), developing a sense of belonging that gives roots to their identities. “Ties with homeland offer a way for the second generation to cope with the ways in which their groups are viewed and often marginalized” (Louie, 2006: 542). In Italian public school, experiences of successful immigrant integration and good academic achievement exist, but such experiences are not really systematic.

### **3. The Greek context**

During the last three years, there is an intense reflection from the academic and scientific community in Greece regarding the educational policies, which should be designed in such a way that it could strengthen the educational background of migrant students and that it could meet the criteria of equal opportunities for all pupils, independent from their socio-cultural background, their language and religious

differences, the social and economic background of their families and any particularities or divergences these pupils might have from what is named "norma".

If amongst priorities of the educational systems of modern multicultural countries an inclusion school, which will embrace all the students, then the direction of the Greek educational policy should definitely change. On the other hand, we must take into consideration the current economic crisis that Greece faces which calls for cut offs and reductions in the field of Education, and in the case of migrant pupils less educational provisions. The mono-cultural and ethno-cultural school does not have a place in times of intense multiculturalism, it constitutes an obstacle in the progress and school success of migrant students, it enhances the social inequalities and, finally it reflects the pathogenesis of the society, enclaving education in perceptions and stereotypes of the past, which are not keeping in pace with the needs of our times.

#### 4. Discussion

In order to make some critical suggestions, at this point, we consider that it is important to categorize the two prevailing tendencies in our days concerning educational support policies for migrant students.

1. Educational policies that support the *Bilingual Intercultural Education* model through suitable educational programs within the school or in the wider community, addressed to migrant students and their families.
2. Educational policies which support the *Teaching languages of countries of origin of migrant pupils as a second language, particularly for newcomers migrant students*, through suitable school textbooks and educational programs within the school for the migrant students and also in the wider community for their families.

Regarding the first tendency, this has been taken into consideration according to the legislative regulations for the implementation of Intercultural Education in Italy and in Greece, as in most South European countries. On the other hand, in our countries, migrant pupils when face difficulties with lessons at school, they are usually labeled and treated as pupils with special needs.

As far as the second tendency is concerned, modern reception countries could partially support bilingual education measures, with the application of relevant educational provisions according to which migrant pupils could be taught the language of their country of origin at school units, where migrant pupils could attend afternoon supportive bilingual lessons. In fact, the Italian school system does not provide any form of teaching in this sense.

Another important dimension in the education of migrant pupils is associated with the equality of opportunities. Educational reality shows that in Greece migrant children do not have the same educational occasions with their native Greek peers. In Italy children with an immigrant background more often experience school failure than native students, especially from the junior high school. Besides, the Italian context is characterized by the phenomenon of 'ducting training'. Most immigrant students choose vocational training. This choice is influenced by personal, familial and structural constraints that restrict their access to lyceum and college.

The good competence of the official language of the reception country (i.e. Greek and Italy in this case), which is also the official language of teaching, constitutes a very important factor that effects significantly migrant pupils' school success.

## 5. The future is already here.

Even if the migration has been at the heart of human history, in every country the newcomers represent still now the stranger (Park, 1928). So newcomers are receiving with a mix of openness and rejection, curiosity and fear. The ambivalence of the societies of immigration is something not easy to manage for the adult but for the children could become something that put a risk their identity and their inclusion. Educational politics and school institutions play a crucial role in building a future of success and integration of these children in the nation that is not their mother land but mostly a mother-in-law.

Research on the academic success of students with immigrant background, point in the same direction: the most important role played by social class in predicting school performance and social integration of these children (Mahieu, 1999; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Doucet, 2003). Of course, there are hundreds of factors at a play and class does not account for all discrepancies between autochtones and minority students.

What about educational policies? In practice, contrary to the principles of Intercultural Education for equality and respect to all cultures and language, the education of migrant pupils in South European countries through what is called "common public school", it functions on an assimilative perspective rather than on an intercultural direction, since the conditions that prevail in public schools enhance the social exclusion of migrant pupils. Especially, today, the main question that is associated with the implementation of Intercultural Education is: *Can modern multicultural reception countries afford the cost of educational provisions and additional measures that could be addressed to migrant pupils?*

The issue of integration of migrant families and the educational support of their children in the host country constitutes a core issue of more major importance, which in practice really interests the governments of South European countries to a small extent. Summarizing the trends that have been followed the last twenty years, as good practices in the direction of successful migratory educational policies are considered the following four type of measures:

1. The effective integration of migrant children in the educational system of a host country is better achieved in smaller age groups, particularly through the attendance of preschool education structures. This means that the state would support migrant families through suitable measures such as the one-day kindergarten and institutions of Early Childhood Education, which have a compensatory role for children coming from families with low socio-economic background, as well as a very important role for pupils' social integration in the school environment.
2. Improvement of quality of schools and teachers' work, which means that the state should take care to distribute more resources, to engage better educated teachers, or teachers with a migratory background for the teaching of home languages of migrant pupils.
3. In-service training seminars on intercultural education and on teaching a second language, with emphasis on practical and methodological issues, which would empower teachers to improve their knowledge and abilities.



4. School system which adopt policies that fight prejudice, discriminations and combat racism, lead migrant pupils to better school attainments results as well as to an effective school and social integration.

Involuntary segregation which conduct to a social exclusion is mostly a product of socioeconomic factors (Mehan, Hubbard & Villanueva, 2008), residential segregation (Mc Andrew, 2007), and of the lack of educative policies. Because of inadequate educative policies, second generation of immigrant students not only experience a life of socio-economic deprivation but also they receive a second-class education.

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## Children from Elsewhere and their Integration in Italian Primary School

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### 1. Introduction

In Italy, the presence of students who have migrated directly (immigrant children) or indirectly (children with immigrant backgrounds) is constantly increasing. In the 2010-2011 academic year, students with foreign parents were 711,064, equal to 7.9% of the entire school population (in 1997 they only accounted for 0.7%). Their presence is greatest in primary school, where they are 9% of those who attend. Among the many nationalities represented, Romanian, Albanian, and Moroccan are the largest groups (Ismu-Miur, 2011). For immigrant students, institutional education can be a two-edged sword. Special programs (e.g. language instruction and intercultural programs) can facilitate learning and foster the integration process by building bridges between communities and individuals from diverse backgrounds (Han, 2008). On the other hand, education reproduces inequalities if discriminatory practices, such as exclusion and segregation, lead to lower educational attainments of disadvantaged minority groups (EUMC, 2004, p. 3).

Although there are some studies (Canino, 2010; Colombo, 2010; Dusi, 2011; Luciano, Demartini & Ricucci, 2009; Ongini, 2011) examining the relationship between immigrant families, their children and schools, the data regarding the process of integration of immigrant children in Italian schools require further investigation (EUMC, 2004). Since the widespread tendency is to attribute the responsibility of school and socio-educational integration difficulties to the families of immigrant students (Perregaux, Changkakoti, Gremion & Hutter, 2008), and to their different culture, we thought it would be useful to hear the voices of children from elsewhere (MacNaughton, Smith & Davis, 2007). Considering their points of view could be helpful in order to develop some useful reflections (Rorty, 1991) on their experiences and needs, and to design educational interventions to support their integration (Glick & Hohmann-Marriot, 2007), based on their point of view as "sophisticated thinkers and communicators" (Harcourt & Conroy, 2005, p. 567) and fully recognized social actors.

The research arose from a need felt in the greater social context to find strategies that foster a sense of belonging to a common reality (Vincent, 2008). The need to belong in a global context is difficult to satisfy, especially for those who undergo a sense of loss from the very beginning of their lives, such as children who experience migration (Moro, 2010). Integration in class (Steinbach, 2010), recognition between peers (Dunn, 2004), and social belonging are closely linked dimensions. Where this sense of belonging is lacking, it is possible to foster belonging through participation in school life (Dusi, 2010).

The main research questions were: "How was your experience in Italian schools? What difficulties did you encounter? Who helped you? What would you suggest to help the integration of a new immigrant child in class?"

### 2. Theoretical Framework

This qualitative research combines grounded theory with a phenomenological approach. We adopt an ecological research paradigm, proposing a vision of knowledge as rooted in natural life contexts,

thus giving great value to subjectivity and subjects' encounters with learning processes. From this perspective, research takes the complexity of the real world into account and is stimulated to find adequate tools to get closer to subjects' experiences, keeping faithful to all their nuances and contradictions. Phenomenological research is oriented to answer questions of meaning, and can be useful when the research aims at understanding an experience as it is lived and perceived by the participants (Polkinghorne, 1989). Consequently, participants are asked to describe an experience rather than making abstract considerations (Giorgi, 1985). The participants' comprehensive descriptions of the phenomenon are the basis for an analysis that can draw out the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

### 3. Methodology

Data were gathered from 15 research participants aged 10 to 11 (4 from Morocco, 3 from Moldova, 2 from Romania, 2 from Brazil, 2 from Senegal, 1 from Pakistan, and 1 from Argentina), who were attending their last year of primary school. These children were born outside of Italy and primary school was their first encounter with the Italian educational system. Some of them attended primary school from the beginning, some others from the third or fourth years, one of them only for the last (fifth) year. We try to reconstruct their processes of integration through their stories and those of their parents. The investigation aimed to understand what factors support them in their encounter with school and what factors create obstacles.

Individual interviews were preceded by a focus group interview in order to identify the most important areas of investigation concerning these students' encounters with Italian primary schools (Morgan, Gibbs, Maxwell & Britten, 2002). All interviews were recorded and transcribed. During the focus group and interviews, the children's teachers helped to create a calm and reassuring atmosphere for the children (Lahman, 2008).

### 4. Results

Analysis of the data led to identification of core categories concerning the children's points of views about their process of integration in the Italian school. For children of mixed heritages, the links between primary and secondary socialization are not necessarily obvious and natural. Their microsystem (family) is not one of the circles of belonging of their macrosystem (host society) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and they must overcome the divide between their private world (home), and the public world (school), creating links between culturally distant worlds. In adjusting to a new culture and context of life, they have to face culture chock (Bennett, 2002) and acculturative stress (Berry, 1992) on a personal level.

#### 4.1 Children's voices<sup>1</sup>. Primary school: *Entering a new world*

Coming to school means entering a new world, seeing new faces, meeting new challenges: excitement and fear mark these children's entrance to school. Happiness as well as anger and fear are part of this new experience. To belong to this new world, to be relate to their classmate, to feel that others are relating authentically to themselves; to feel a satisfying and coherent involvement with the school world are crucial needs for the newcomers.

##### 4.1.1. *The Language.*

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<sup>1</sup>All quotes have been translated into English by the authors in order to lighten the text. MC means migrant child. The first number indicates the number assigned to the child, and the second one indicates the turn of speech.

For these children, one of the main challenges of entering primary school is mastering the language - a universe of meanings, representations and concepts to name oneself and the new world and to find one's own place in it.

*I was scared...it was the first time I set foot in a school, I didn't know the language, I had a hard time... I felt happy and excited because I didn't know my classmates, I kept repeating their names". (MC13/7)*

The experience of isolation is intensified by not sharing the same language as one's peers. The language spoken in the classroom is a language of others. It manifests itself in all its deafening inarticulateness, a strangeness that makes one anxious and fearful, and one's lack of the codes of conduct of relationships becomes explicit. One's diversity becomes more obvious as one cannot belong to that world.

*I felt...I don't know... afraid, I was ashamed because I didn't understand the language and everyone was looking at me. (MC6/24-26)*

The language of the other, at the beginning, is an uncomfortable place. Linguistic incompetence reveals the fragility of our power in the world of humans, reveals the fragility of a being who needs a more hospitable space to appreciate himself and flourish (Ricoeur, 2004). Learning the language means fitting into a world of social relations, governed by rules, values and codes of communication, in which they desire to belong.

#### 4.1.2 Classmates: between rejection and friendship

Language is reciprocal, comprehension, a symbolic and relational need; it allows access to the human world, whose membership is also about identity (Evans, Bronheim, Bynner, Klasen, Magrab & Ranson, 2000). Learning the language of the other allows you to enter a new world, and feeds the desire to reside there. But learning the language of the other is made possible by the presence of hospitality:

*My friend started to understand me, I don't know why, she didn't even know Portuguese and she always managed to understand me, in moments of sadness, in moments of happiness, when I needed something she could always understand me. (MC1/46)*

With mutual recognition, and acceptance, we acquire the need to speak, the possibility to speak and to hear yourself speak. Language is a gift from people with whom we have entered into a relationship. Friendship means that sentences are no longer mere syntactic patterns, but deep linguistic exchanges in which each being reveals himself to the other, and which open new possible worlds:

*My friend was the most important person.. she did so many things.. she taught me sign language, taught me how to speak Italian, explained to me when I have to use double consonants, explained to me how to spell a word, when I didn't understand she explained, sometimes I went to her house to study, we were very close. (MC3/52)*

Friendship is a special form of recognition, being together emotionally and in solidarity. Communication that takes place in the peer group is also one of the most effective mediators to learn a new language (Sidoli, 2002). How do you learn a new language and become a part of a new world? These children speak of friendships with peers.

Friends play a central role in the growth and formation of a human being; they have a determining influence on the quality of a child's life (Rubin *et al.*, 1998). To find a friend among classmates means to find someone who emotionally supports and sustains the processes of transitions. Entering primary school is a transition that is always a source of stress for children. Anxieties related to school are amplified when this world does not speak your language or share your symbolic and cultural universe. One needs not to feel rejected, alone:

*I sometimes feel pushed aside, all the girls in my class always play together and I'm only with Valeria. There's a guy who always says things..., he makes fun of me in front of the girls, so they all look at me and I feel alone. (MC2/96)*

“Feelings of rejection/alienation are the flip side of the relatedness coin. Findings regarding the effects of rejection are consistent and clear. Rejection or the sense of exclusion or estrangement from the group is consistently associated with behavioral problems in the classroom (either aggression or withdrawal), lower interest in school, lower achievement, and dropout. More important are the findings that link rejection to various forms of emotional distress including loneliness, violence and suicide. These findings lend strength to Bauermeister and Leary’s suggestions that these maladaptive school behaviors should be interpreted as ‘desperate attempts to establish or maintain relationships with other people or sheer frustration and purposelessness when one’s need to belong goes unmet’ (Bauermeister & Leary, 1995, p. 521)” (Osterman, 2010a, p. 343). Even if individuals differ in the strength of their need to belong, as Kelly points out (2001), proper and adequate satisfaction of the needs of relatedness and belongingness leads to physical, emotional, behavioral, and mental well-being (Maslow, 1968). Students’ experience of belonging in school contributes favorably to their emotional wellbeing as well as to a range of attitudinal and behavioral outcomes and enhance learning (Osterman, 2010b). Besides, the sense of belonging to school who reflect “the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment” (Goodenow, 1993, p. 80), can be seen as a precursor to social connectedness, as a student said:

*There is no future without school. You have to learn to understand your classmates, new people, and they teach you a lot at school. (MC2/110)*

The school and classmates are the gateway to a newcomer's affiliation with his new world. For children from here and from elsewhere, to be accepted at school, to feel part of the school world, means to be able to know oneself and to be known as a member of the society in which one is growing up.

#### 4.1.3 Teachers

The presence of an adult who is able to welcome a migrant child is a bulwark against their lack of references, in the impossibility to be supported by their parents in this encounter with the new world. Migrant children, more than others, depend on the teacher "to be able to invest academic knowledge" (Moro, 2010, p. 70): the subject matter is not in itself meaningful enough to be the object of investment (Moro, 2007; Charlot, 2000).

*The teachers have helped me, for example, the Italian teacher did everything possible to make me work, to make me understand Italian. (MC2/54)*

The migrant child is looking for meaningful connections with the new world, which the teacher represents. The words of these children bring to mind those of Martin Buber. The child feeds "the desire that the world will become for us this person, that we are meeting as us and him, that we choose and recognize as we do with him, that he acknowledges us as we acknowledge him. The child..., facing the dark night...who advances past the window and threatens to invade, aspires to experience the sense of mutual bonds" (Buber, 2009, p. 39-40, author's translation). This adult, the teacher who is guardian of the new world, has the role of the ferryman to introduce these children, newly arrived not by birth but by family choice. The children expect the teacher to be able to weave meaningful relationships with them and to support them in the process of language learning. "To be highly motivated in a particular classroom, the students' psychological needs must be addressed in that specific classroom" (Osterman, 2010: 239). And teacher, through interpersonal support, method of instruction that promote positive interaction with peers, and her/his influence on the nature of peer relationships within the classroom, influence students' sense of belonging to the school world.

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

When asked: "Based on your experience, what should be done, according to you, to facilitate a newly arrived child's process of integration into the class?", the students interviewed stressed the importance of relationships and learning the language of the country. They talked about relations of friendships that make them feel part of the class.

*"Students' sense of being accepted, valued, included, and encouraged by others (teachers and peers) in the academic classroom setting and of feeling oneself to be an important part of the life and activity of the class. More than simple perceived liking or warmth, it also involves support and respect for personal autonomy and for the student as an individual" (Goodenow, 1993, p. 25).*

Because of the limited size of our sample (fifteen children), these findings shouldn't be viewed as representative, yet they seem to confirm the results of previous research (Moro, 2010; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). There are still unanswered questions and a need for further research in the study of the successful long-term integration process of migrant children. Which actors and situations have most influence on this process? What is the role of classmates? Of the child's personality? Of their socio-economical conditions? Could fostering a sense of belonging at school be enough? What do teachers and institutions have to do?

These children had the experience of living at the juncture of two worlds and two cultures, and they told us the great importance of feeling recognized by their peers and feeling supported by their teachers to be able to integrate into their new reality. Growing up at the border between two different symbolic horizons is a difficult undertaking but these children show us their great ability to manage with the new world and its language. But it has a cost: fight, fear and loneliness that can compromise their learning process. Besides, their parents cannot help them because of their low levels of education (especially mothers from North Africa and the Middle East), in an encounter with an educational system which they don't understand and which does not welcome them (Dusi, 2011; Crosnoe, 2011), while they are living one of the most stressful events that a family can undergo (Heckmann, 2008).

The focus group and children's interview data clearly indicate the important role of friendships with schoolmates and relationships with teachers. This fosters a sense of belonging to school and to the new society. The obstacles of feeling lost, nostalgia, fear, non-belonging and the lack of knowledge of the Italian language, which is an obstacle encapsulating the former obstacles because "man is man and he has a language" (Heidegger, 1973, p. 27, author's translation) are often overcome through the encounter with a schoolmate who acts as a mediator-tutor in the new context, and by being supported by a teacher who welcomes, provides trust, and fosters the student's learning within

the necessary educational timeframes (Eurydice, 2009). Peer's and teachers' support have the most direct impact on students' feeling about school and their coursework. Peer acceptance affects, in a particular way, students' self perceptions that, in turn, affect their behavior and engagement (Osterman, 2010).

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**Language as the Core of Intercultural Learning:  
An Integrated Approach to Language, Culture and Communication in the FL-Classroom**

**By Michael Ennis**

**Abstract**

In response to an inadequate treatment of culture in the foreign language classroom and the widely accepted need to instruct cultural awareness and intercultural competence, recent trends in education policy and pedagogy in the US and the EU have sought to establish culture as the “core” of foreign language curricula. While the theoretical foundations of this movement are accepted as indisputable, the paper takes issue with the continued separate treatment of language and culture in the classroom and, especially, any preferential treatment of culture over language. Rather than culture being at the core of foreign language education, the paper argues that language should be at the core of intercultural education. After outlining the basic tenets and insights of the culture movement in Foreign Language Pedagogy and Second Language Acquisition, the paper builds upon watershed scholarship (e.g. Claire Kramsch, Michael Byram and Milton and Janet Bennett) to introduce an over-arching framework for developing cultural awareness and intercultural competence, while maintaining the centrality of language and therefore the need to develop both linguistic and communicative competence in L2. The model is intended solely as an example for what might be developed from the bottom-up in various educational contexts, and not as a universal prescription for teaching language and culture concurrently.

*Keywords:* Communicative Competence, Cultural Awareness, Intercultural (Communication) Competence, Interactive-Communicative Approach, Foreign Language Pedagogy

**Introduction: From “Big C” to “Little C” to *many Cs***

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

With the rise of cultural studies and the social and cultural turns in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), language instructors and program directors at all levels have gradually opened their minds to a notion of culture beyond the canonical works of literature, masterpieces of art, intellectual achievements, master narratives, and public rituals, myths and heroes of a nation. “High culture” has had to make room for everything from various genres and media of popular culture, to an ever-expanding myriad of sub-cultures, to, in the information age, the walls, feeds, blogs, wikis and podcasts of everyday people. Such “texts” have been deemed appropriate in the foreign language classroom, because influences from cultural anthropology and the social sciences have made it clear that there is something behind “material culture” that needs to be dealt with, namely a “subjective culture,” or an intangible world of social conventions, values, expectations, worldviews and identities that at least in part governs human behavior. Simultaneously, scholars and educators have come to embrace the natural interdependence of language and culture in the real world.

Especially since the advent of the 5 C’s in the US (ACTFL 1996) and the Common European Framework of Reference in the EU (Council of Europe, 2001), there has been a comprehensive effort to incorporate this broader conception of culture into foreign language instruction. Although there have been countless suggested remedies to the inadequate treatment of culture, the most influential innovations borrow theories and methods from the fields of Sociolinguistics, Cultural Anthropology and Intercultural Communication. Some go as far as to place culture at the “core” of language instruction, whereby the ultimate goal becomes to develop both “cultural awareness” and “intercultural communication competence” (e.g. Bennett et. al., 2003; Brody, 2003; Chick, 1996; Crawford & McLaren, 2003; Damen, 2003; Dunnett, Dubin & Lezberg, 1986; Hu & Byram, 2009; Kramsch, 2004; LaFayette, 2003; Lange, 2003; Paige et. al., 2003; and Saville-Troike, 2003, Levine & Phillips, 2010). Such terms have become catch phrases in regional, national and international scholarship, in cutting edge textbooks and in classrooms around the globe, and a clear switch to cultural content and cultural tasks abound. While the need to develop both cultural awareness and intercultural competence is duly noted, the culture movement challenges the status quo and aims to permanently transform the essence of foreign language education, and should therefore be subject to careful analysis.

The central criticism of this paper is that the culture movement has overcome the separate treatment of language and culture only in theory. What seems to have remained from the “culture-corner” era in course book and syllabus design is a separation of language tasks and culture tasks due to a dependence on the learners’ native language for cultural and intercultural instruction. There seems to be a popular misconception that due to the psychological and cognitive demands of confronting and discussing cultural differences and cultural processes, most beginning and intermediate students lack the linguistic competence to be enlightened on such matters in the target language. This paper challenges this trend on two grounds. First, the tendency toward culture learning as the core focus of the foreign language classroom reverses the natural relationship between language and culture, as the languages one acquires are in the first place the medium of acculturation, in the second the foundation of one’s culture, and in the third the medium of expressing culture. Second, focusing solely or even primarily on culture in language classrooms runs the risk of undermining the last 40 years of SLA research which have culminated in interactive-communicative approaches to language teaching, unless culture tasks are carefully integrated into language instruction. Given the already limited funding and emphasis on languages and cultures in many Western education systems, the culture movement, or at least its common implementation in praxis, runs the risk of merely replacing much of language instruction with cultural instruction. This is all the more disconcerting when one

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

considers that the vast majority of learners do not continue formal study of foreign languages and cultures beyond what is required in the education system.

### I. A Case for the Interdependence of Language, Culture and Communication

According to a constructivist view of cognitive and affective development, for instance that of Piaget (see Wadsworth, 1996), human beings learn by interacting with their environment. As we assert ourselves in the world, we gradually assign meaning and purpose to various objects and actions, form ever more complex categories for those objects and actions and develop skills in using those objects and performing those actions to satisfy our wants and needs. A *social* constructivist perspective, for instance that of Vygotsky (see Wertsch, 1985), basically qualifies the constructivist view by noting that the vast majority of interaction is social in nature and the acquisition of semiotic systems, themselves progressively learned via social interaction, is what permits higher mental functions and advanced cognitive development: Vygotsky believed that language facilitated both social interaction and thought, and was therefore central to all human activity. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (see Carroll, J., 1991) goes one step further, claiming that the semiotic systems one acquires in fact shape cognition, because the relation amongst signs in the languages we acquire in turn supersedes the relation amongst objects in the real world, in other words, because – even in the weakest version of the hypothesis – a semiotic network underlies all mental categories.

The theory of communication proposed by Gudykunst and Kim (see Gudykunst, 1995) goes as far as to claim that the primary goal of communication is “Uncertainty Reduction” or the formation of ever more complex mental categories for dealing with the world, especially the new and unexpected in our social lives. Linked to Uncertainty Reduction are current theories that define stereotypes as the naturally occurring mental categories for dealing with other people (see Øyvind, 1999). Just as we classify inanimate objects and animals based on their overt characteristics and attributes, so do we categorize human beings, at the very least in terms of two very general categories, “us” and “them”, if not in multiple categories based on any number of social constructs such as beauty, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, socio-economic background, nationality, etc. In this respect, stereotypes are “necessary evils.”

Cultural Anthropologists, such as Edward T. Hall (1989, 1990) or Clifford Geertz (1973), define “culture” as a mesh of semiotic systems developed for interacting with others, whereby every utterance and act takes on meaning. Culture is defined as “subjective reality,” or a person’s acquired understanding of how the world was, is and should be. Culture could be summarized as the entirety of mental categories one has formed through experience – i.e. primarily through socialization. Culture encompasses all things one has come to know and expect since birth and it guides our perception of, interpretation of and emotional reaction to everything we encounter. Research on values, most notably that of Kluckhohn (1954) and Hofstede (2004), supports “Ethnorelativism” (not to be confused with “moral relativism”), or the notion that even our deep-rooted values were formed via social interaction with members of social institutions (e.g. family, peers, education, mass media, etc.). These “core” values are understood as the fundamental building blocks of culture.

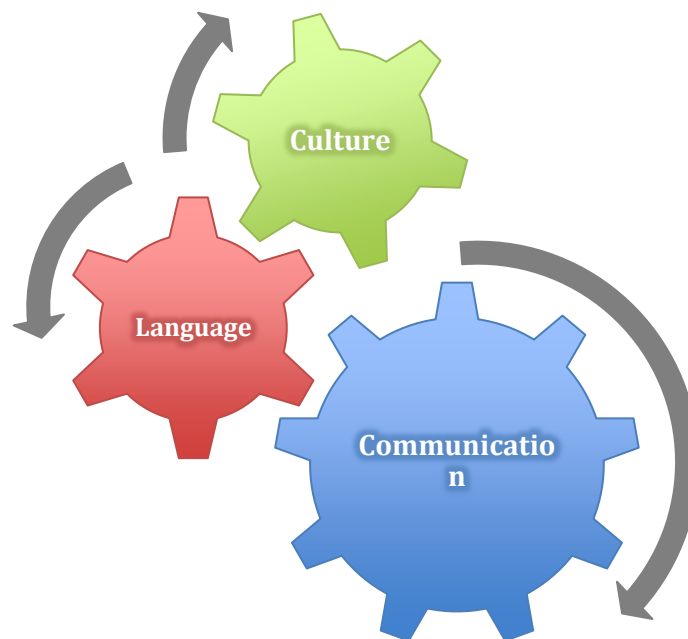
Finally, Sociolinguistics (see Hymes, 1967; Kramsch, 1993, 1998) and Sociocultural Theory (see Lantolf, 2000; Block, 2003) combine to reveal (a) that the meaning of all verbal and nonverbal behavior emerges only during social interaction, (b) that the successful negotiation of meaning is not possible with linguistic knowledge alone, but also requires social skills and cultural knowledge, (c) that communication is not just about the negotiation of meaning, but simultaneously involves the constant (re)negotiation of social reality, which includes all social constructs such as power relations, identity, group membership, and even the context and rules of

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

language and social interaction, (d) that language and culture form a dynamic whole which is only observable during social interaction situated in a given context and which is constantly in flux as a result of social interaction across contexts.

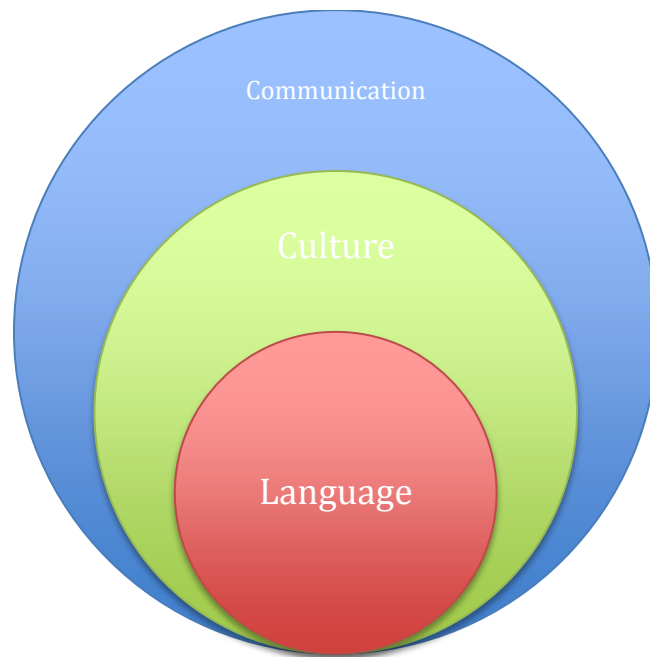
The upshot of this over-simplification of several complex theories for language instructors is the inherent interconnectedness of language, culture and communication: communication is the primary activity of all human beings, and it is how language and culture are *perpetually acquired* (Fig. 1); in turn, language and culture allow us to engage in ever more complex forms of communication, while the languages one *perpetually acquires* for communication is at the core of this ongoing process (Fig. 2). Although this model refers to a learner's native language (L1) and culture (C1), it has clear implications for L2/C2 pedagogy. First, it becomes crucial to prepare students for dealing with this dynamic interconnectedness in their real life encounters with L2/C2 communities. Second, it reveals that teaching a foreign language and culture means to expose students to a foreign social reality, which will result in affective and cognitive responses. Third, and most important for the arguments herein, it means that it is inadvisable to treat a foreign culture as something unrelated to acts of communication in that culture's language. Especially in a cultural or intercultural curriculum, language should remain the core focus and traditional communicative tasks in L2 the foundation of classroom activity.

**Figure 1: Communication is both the means and purpose of acquiring language and culture**



## Language as the core of intercultural learning

**Figure 2: Language is at the core of human existence**

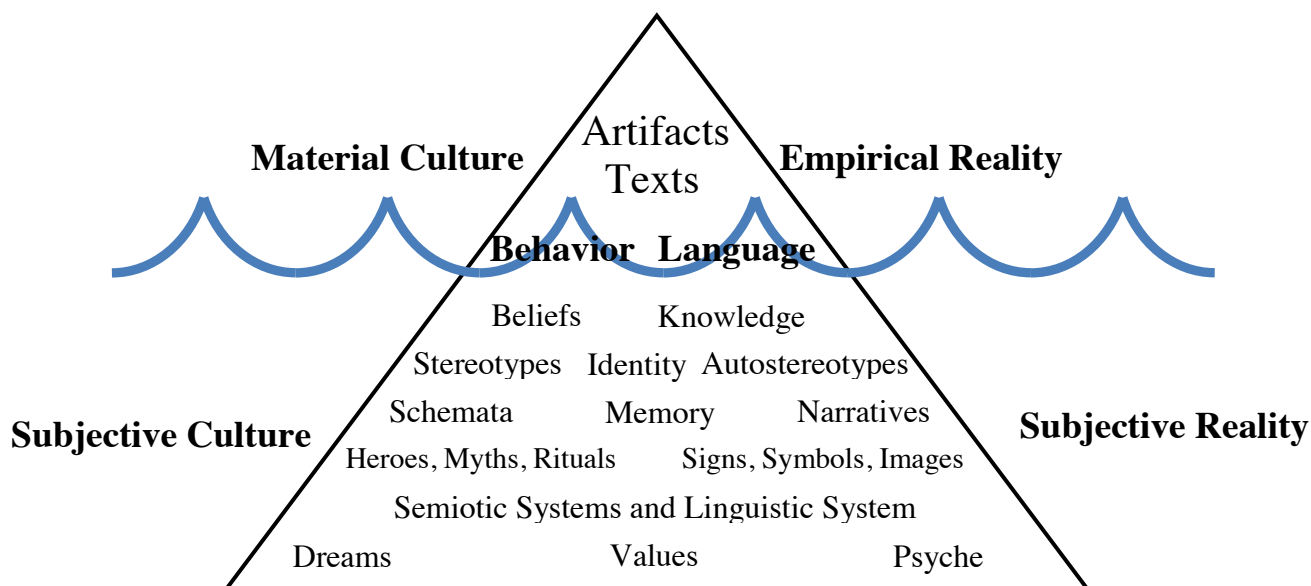




## II. A Case for Intercultural Education

There are at least three overlapping schools of thought that seek to establish the centrality of culture in foreign language education: Critical Pedagogy (e.g. Crawford & McLaren, 2003), Ethnography (e.g. Erickson, 1996; Hall, J. K., 1999; Riggenbach, 1999; Saville-Troike, 1996; Schiffrin, 1996), and Intercultural Education (e.g. Bennett et. al., 2003; Borrelli, 1991; Buttjes, 1991; Byram, 1991, 1997; Chick, 1996; Damen, 2003; Dunnett, Dubin & Lezberg, 1986; Kordes, 1991; Paige, 1993; and Smith, 2003). Each of these broad approaches derives its definition of culture from Cultural Anthropology in that they each focus on a “subjective culture” present in “subjective reality” as manifested in the “material culture” observable in “empirical reality” (Fig. 3). They each also seek to adopt both a “cultural specific” (to develop “cultural awareness” of a specific target culture) and a “cultural general” (to develop “intercultural communication competence”) approach, in which there is a dual focus on the cultural knowledge necessary to better understand foreign language communities and on the skills necessary for interacting with the members of those communities. Though individually they set disparate and often abstract goals, taken collectively they begin to offer practical solutions to the issues faced by instructors.

Figure 3: The Iceberg Model of culture (adapted from Rogers and Steinfatt, 1998)



Critical Pedagogy is very broad in scope in that it aims to enlighten students on the nature of cultural processes and instill in them the ability to critically analyze all phenomena in terms of their contexts and from multiple frames of reference via hermeneutics and phenomenology. The ultimate goal is the subversion of hegemonic practices, the emancipation and empowerment of subcultures and the elimination of prejudice, discrimination and hegemonic practices. Feminist scholars extend the movement to what might be called “Critical Feminism” in language instruction (e.g. Freeman & McElhinny, 1996). But most arguments in favor of Critical Pedagogy offer few to no recommendations for teachers. Critical Pedagogy might best be described as a statement of purpose for the culture movement.

The implementation of social scientific methods such as Discourse Analysis and Microethnography in the language classroom constitutes a pragmatic attempt to enlighten students on the sociolinguistic, sociocultural and sociopolitical implications of communication in L2 by turning them into “ethnographers” and “language researchers.” Students are to be trained

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

in basic research methods and are expected to conduct “mini research projects” during their encounters with L2/C2. Thus, proponents of Discourse and Ethnographic Analysis provide numerous concrete methods and tasks. Yet these methods tend to have many limitations in an FL-context in which students do not yet have the linguistic and communicative skills to conduct such inquiries in the target language or are not immersed in the target language and culture so as to make such observations with regularity. The use of recorded authentic interactions between members of the L2 community or having students conduct research in their own communities (e.g. Erickson, 1996; Schiffrin, 1996), the analysis of film and television (e.g. Hall, J. K., 1999; Judd, 1999; Scollon, R., 1999) and the use of tandem learning and internet communication technologies to facilitate autonomous learning via interaction with native speakers (e.g. Little and Brammerts, 1996),<sup>1</sup> can all clearly be used to expose the interface of language, culture and communication across contexts, but are difficult to incorporate into the full range of tasks necessary in contemporary language learning.

The field of Intercultural Communication (see Paige, 1993; Smith et. al., 2003; Bennett, 2005), or the study of all cross-cultural interactions, is founded upon empirically tested Intercultural Training programs. These training programs offer individual activities, a focused methodology and detailed guidelines for the instruction of intercultural competence. The theoretical foundation of most programs is Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (**Fig. 4**), which can be used to inform foreign language teachers as to the appropriateness and relevance of materials and tasks. Furthermore, the central goal of ICC, and by extension Intercultural Education, is to understand and minimize miscommunication across cultures on all micro and macro levels, and this aim encompasses the intentions and methodologies of both Critical Pedagogy and Ethnography. In terms of placement and assessment, Bennett has developed an Intercultural Development Inventory, which is a statistically validated psychometric instrument for measuring Intercultural Sensitivity/Competence (See, for instance, the extensive reference and use of Bennett’s model in Hu and Byram, 2009). Therefore, the only challenge to integrating IE into FL-instruction is adapting the methods of such training programs, without undermining the existing goals of foreign language curricula, i.e. the attainment of fluency and accuracy in L2 and the development of communicative competence on all levels—linguistic, socio-cultural, discourse and strategic—and across the four skills—reading, writing, speaking and listening. Yet in many cases, intercultural activities would merely need to be translated into the target language.

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<sup>1</sup> See also the work at the International Tandem Network: <http://www.cisi.unito.it/tandem/email/idxeng00.html>

**Figure 4: Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett 1993 and 2004)**

**Ethnocentric Stages**

**Denial:** a result of little to no contact with other cultures, either by coincidence or choice

**Defense:** difference has been acknowledged, but one seeks to maintain one’s worldview

**Minimization:** while cultural diversity is accepted and not negatively evaluated, it is dangerously trivialized as being less important than universals

**A. Isolation:** has "benign stereotypes" and needs exposure to cultural difference

**B. Separation:** has erected physical or social barriers and needs exposure to "Big-C" to facilitate differentiation (1993: 32-34)

**A. Denigration:** forms negative stereotypes and a "a derogatory attitude toward difference"

**B. Superiority:** emphasizes the positives of one's own culture and needs to focus on the positives of C1, followed by the equally positive aspects of C2

**C. Reversal:** Denigration of C1 and Superiority of C2 is a possible outcome; needs to see the “commonality of cultures”, the “generally good in all cultures” and “the value and vulnerability that all human beings share” (1993: 40-41)

**A. Physical Universalism:** assumes that physical and biological similarities results in mutually understandable verbal, nonverbal and mental behavior, but ignores “the culturally unique social context that enmeshes such behavior in a particular worldview” (1993: 43) and needs to be made explicitly aware of the necessity of social context

**B. Transcendent Universalism:** assumes that “all human beings, whether they know it or not, are products of some single transcendent principle, law or imperative” (1993: 43) and needs to develop cultural self-awareness, followed by an illustration of substantial cultural differences, preferably with the help of members of other cultures

**Ethnorelative Stages**

**Acceptance:** “cultural difference is both acknowledged and respected” (1993: 47)

**Adaptation:** one accepts that “one does not have culture, one engages in it” (1993: 52); accumulates a “repertoire of cultural alternatives” (1993: 52) and develops the ability to shift frames of reference

**Integration:** implies coming to grips with a multiplicity of realities, with internal culture shock and cultural marginality; realizes that “identity emerges from the act of defining identity itself” (1993: 60); ≈ “Third Culture” “Marginal Man”, etc.

**A. Respect for behavioral difference:** takes note of the cultural context of foreign behavior and an attempt is made to evaluate behavior within its cultural context

**B. Respect for value difference:** values of other cultures are realized and accepted as equally valid, at least in their own cultural context; values are not viewed as universals or something that is possessed, but as the process of “assigning worth”; needs practical application of ethnorelativism in simulations

**A. Empathy:** possesses the ability to shift frames of reference from context to context and adopt other’s perspectives; development proceeds from constant gathering of knowledge about another culture and practice of IC

**B. Pluralism:** becomes bi- or multicultural and demonstrates “Natural Empathy”; (Accidental pluralism does not result in intercultural sensitivity/competence, as it does not guarantee a positive attitude toward difference nor conscious ethnorelativism.); Actual face-to-face interaction will result in continued development

**A. Contextual Evaluation:** can pick and choose from “many cultural options” in order to adapt to a given situation

**B. Constructive Marginality:** can step outside of all cultural frames of reference due to a complete acceptance of cultural relativism and the notion of subjective reality, and can therefore assume the role of mediator between cultures. NOT “Encapsulated Marginality”: the “state of being stuck on the margins of two or more cultures without a conscious choice” (1993: 64)

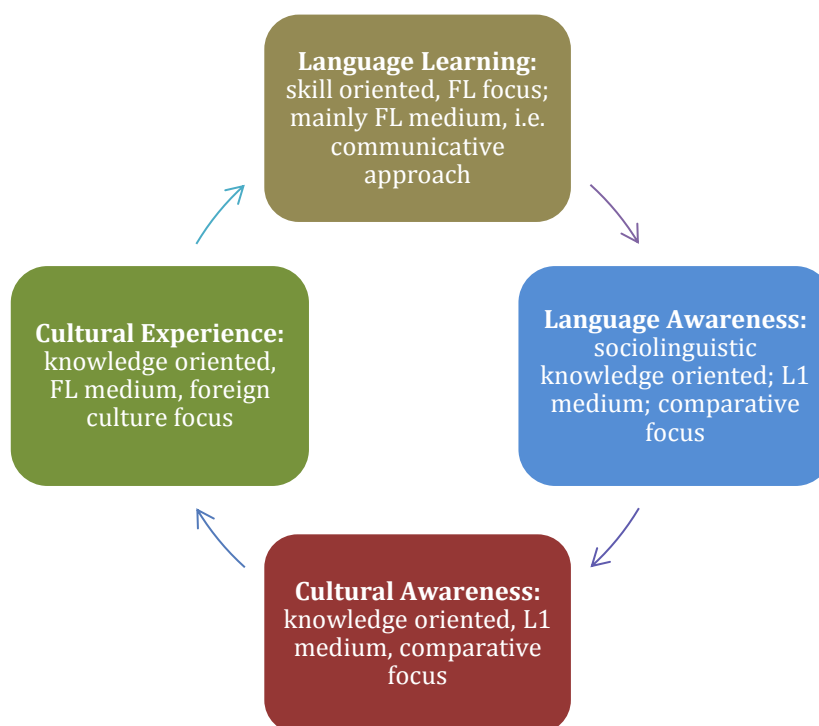
### III. A Case for an Integrated Model

Embracing the inseparability of language and culture necessitates a broad and adaptable model that fully integrates language and culture pedagogy, accounts for all levels of foreign language instruction and serves to guide textbook/lesson, syllabus, and curriculum design. There are several models in the literature which outline the inherent link between acculturation and language acquisition (e.g. Action and de Felix, 1986; Gonzalez, 2004) and the development of intercultural competence and language acquisition (e.g. Witte, 2009); there are numerous policy statements of intercultural education and calls to action which outline the challenges and goals of intercultural education and its assessment, especially in the EU (e.g. Byram & Zarate, 1995; Byram, et al, 2002; MLA, 2007; Council of Europe, 2008; Byram, 2009; Beacco, et al., 2010; Lenz & Berthele, 2010, and Levine & Phillips, 2010); and there are countless suggestions for individual activities to develop cultural awareness and/or intercultural competence, most recently of the ethnographic and intercultural sort referenced above. Yet, there are few accepted models that piece it all together to demonstrate how linguistic competence, communicative competence and intercultural competence might be taught simultaneously from the most basic to the most advanced levels of language instruction. The most widely circulated publications call for more culture and discuss the challenges and goals, sometimes offering broad guidelines for curricula or task design and assessment, without outlining how intercultural language teaching might occur in the target language at various levels of proficiency. In the absence of such guidance, language instructors, especially at the beginner and early intermediate levels, continue to fend for themselves when it comes to teaching culture and intercultural competence in L2. That said, the groundwork for an integrated model has existed for some time.

The most directly and indirectly influential model of teaching language and culture is Michael Byram's (Byram, 1991, 1997) model of teaching skills and knowledge, represented by four interrelated content areas (**Fig. 5**). The model is paradigmatic of most suggestions for the teaching of language and culture. The basic premise of the model can be summarized as follows: "to teach culture without language is fundamentally flawed and to separate language and culture teaching is to imply that a foreign language can be treated in the early learning stages as if it were self-contained and independent of other socio-cultural phenomena" (Byram, 1991: 18). Yet although Byram claims that "[l]earning must be a clear approximation to first language and culture acquisition," implying "direct experience" (Ibid, 18-19), he maintains that the students' L1 can be used for comparative analysis. Byram calls for the use of L2 to teach the language and experience the culture, whereas L1 can be used to reflect on experiences with L2 and C2. Furthermore, most of the language learning and cultural experience is to take place outside of the classroom, within the context of homework assignments, study abroad, travel and a life-long dedication to language and culture learning.

Language as the core of intercultural learning

Figure 5: Byram’s integrated model of teaching language and culture (Byram, 1991)



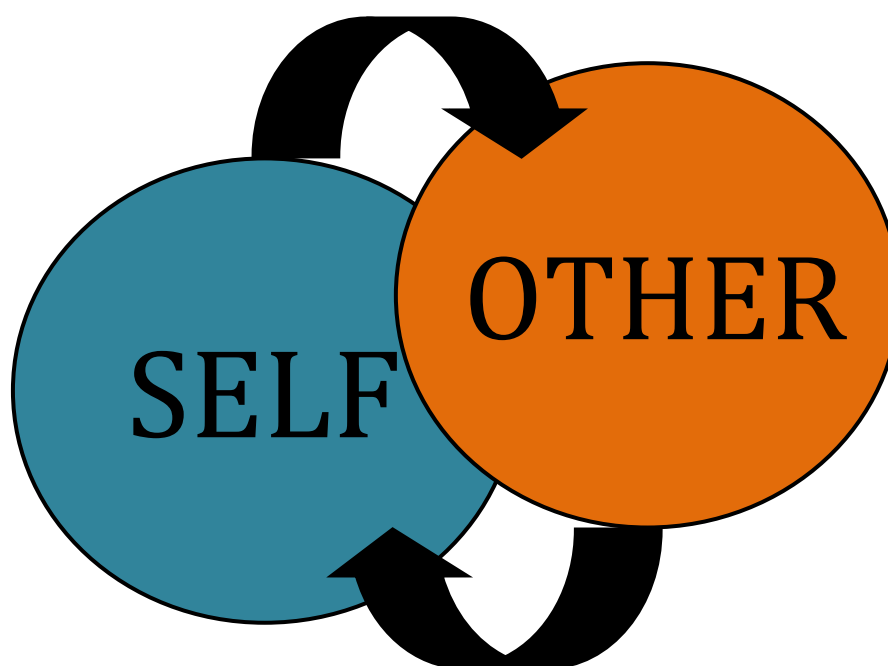
Byram’s work has been profoundly influential in curriculum policy in the EU – it is the inspiration of the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* (Council of Europe, 2009) and central to the EU’s official policy on Intercultural Education – but actual implementation has been somewhat limited in Europe and applying his model to FL instruction in the US is near impossible. With the exception of Spanish, it is difficult for American students to come into direct contact with members of the target linguistic community, as it is cost and time prohibitive to plan a field trip or weekend excursion to a community where the language is spoken. Though Europeans tend to be more internationally-minded than Americans, most experiences abroad are short stays for field trips, tourism or business, where only a minority of the best students have the opportunity to take longer sojourns via EU exchange programs.<sup>2</sup> It would seem if western high school and college students do not “experience” the target language and culture in the language classroom, it is likely they will not experience much at all. Considering the fact that there has also been a recent reemergence of Functional Grammar and Grammar Translation approaches to deal with the issue of fossilization talking about L2 and C2 in the students’ native language quickly diminishes the amount of class time actually spent using the language to develop accuracy and fluency in the four skills. Byram’s model essentially requires instructors to prepare students so that they might learn from real encounters. This should be the ultimate goal of instruction, but we must accept the fact that those real encounters will occur neither immediately nor regularly for most students. We must accept that very few of Byram’s concerns can be addressed, unless we either exponentially increase the amount of money and time spent on foreign languages and cultures – which is unlikely in the foreseeable future – or carefully integrate all facets of his model into traditional interactive-communicative tasks.

<sup>2</sup> An estimated 4% of all European university students now participate in Erasmus (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/1011/report.pdf>).

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

The second most influential model of language and culture instruction is Claire Kramersch’s model of “Teaching at the Cultural Faultline” (Kramersch, 1993, 2003). Kramersch is a pillar in both cultural studies and the sociolinguistic/sociocultural realm of SLA, and her insights are an inspiration of Critical Pedagogy in American foreign and second language instruction. Kramersch’s body of work calls for classroom tasks designed to enlighten students on cultural processes, especially the role of context and the divergent perspectives that others bring to all acts of communication. This is accomplished by requiring the students to adopt the perspective of *Other* (Fig. 6) in the tradition of Phenomenology, Critical Sociology and Ethnography. Most importantly, Kramersch gives concrete demonstrations of how language and culture might come together in traditional communicative tasks. The most basic example she offers is to have students analyze and perform a simple poem or narrative from the perspective of its multiple voices, so as to gain a deeper understanding and more precise interpretation of what the text is supposed to mean. A slightly more complex example would have students interpret a narrative individually before having all students present their interpretations to the class. The subtle differences in interpretations across classroom participants would serve as a catalyst in a discussion of cultural perspectives, which would conclude with an anticipation and/or demonstration of how members of the L2/C2 community would tend to interpret the narrative on their own terms.

Figure 6: Kramersch’s model requires the shifting of perspectives (Kramersch, 1993 and 2003)



The greatest strength of Kramersch’s approach is that it successfully unites language and culture in communicative tasks conducted entirely in L2. The weakness is that it is most relevant for literary studies. Although Kramersch is one of the driving forces behind the social and cultural turn in SLA and FL-pedagogy, and although she has recently expanded her model to include linguistic autobiographies (2009), her critical pedagogy requires extensive adaptation for most of the world’s language programs – not to say that the model could not or should not be expanded to other genres. Her approach seems to be most concerned with teaching literary studies to

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

American university students and for this reason it has had limited impact on intermediate and basic language instruction and programs in which literature is rarely emphasized.

The least influential, yet most complete model of an integrative approach to language and culture is that proposed by Janet and Milton Bennett (Bennett et. al., 2003). The Bennetts suggest adopting and adapting established techniques used in intercultural training programs and integrating them into traditional language instruction. They suggest that Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) should be referenced in the design of classroom tasks, to ensure that students engage in activities that are appropriate in terms of their ability to process and cope with cultural difference. Additionally, they suggest aligning their model to established language proficiency guidelines in an attempt to simultaneously inform curriculum design on both the students' ability to perceive, understand and cope with cultural difference and their ability to do so in L2. Although their proposed model would allow for a truly integrated approach to language and culture from the most basic to the most advanced levels of instruction, and although all trends and models discussed thus far could be included in such a model, there have been no prominent attempts to follow their advice to-date. The paper will therefore conclude by aligning the DMIS with the two most widely accepted proficiency guidelines – the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2012) and the Common European Framework (Council of Europe, 2001) – while taking all insights discussed in this paper into consideration, as an initial attempt at an overarching set of guidelines that fully unites language, culture and communication in the classroom.

**IV. Toward an Integrated Approach to Language, Culture and Communication**

	<b>INTERCULTURAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY</b>	<b>LANGUAGE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF LINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE</b>	<b>GOALS AND LIMITATIONS OF AN INTERCULTURAL CURRICULUM</b>
<b>1</b>	Starts at <b>DENIAL</b> , or is unaware of the fundamental differences between C1 and C2  <i>Quickly</i> moves to <b>DEFENSE</b> as encounters superficial differences between C1 and C2, solidifies stereotypes of the people of C2 and becomes aware of the stereotypes people of C2 have of the people of C1	Starts with <b>NO COMPETENCE (A0)</b> in L2  <i>Quickly</i> moves to <b>NOVICE (A1)</b> as is exposed to and pushed to produce words and chunks in very simplistic, but meaningful tasks, engages in rote memorization and learns strategies for negotiating meaning in L2	<i>Only possible</i> if student has lived in an isolated community without any knowledge of L2/C2, but is an assumed starting point for all beginning instruction
<b>2</b>	Starts at <b>DEFENSE</b> , or believes that both C1 and C2 are homogenous and static, and that C1 is fundamentally superior to C2  <i>Systematically</i> moves to <b>MINIMIZATION</b> as encounters the many positives of both C1 and C2, and begins to rationalize cultural differences and critically analyze the validity of stereotypes from both sides	Starts at <b>NOVICE (A1)</b> , or can produce memorized chunks in highly structured communicative tasks, and can begin to negotiate for meaning in L2  <i>Systematically</i> moves to <b>INTERMEDIATE LOW-MID (A2+/B1)</b> as is exposed to and pushed to produce simplified examples of L2 in highly structured communicative tasks intended to emphasize both the meanings of words and the significance of forms	<i>Ideally</i> reached by the end of the first course in a basic language program, at the latest
<b>3</b>	Starts at <b>MINIMIZATION</b> , or believes people of C1 and C2 are inherently similar, in spite of the differences experienced and comes to view stereotypes as being erroneous beliefs about others  ----- <i>Struggles</i> to move to <b>ACCEPTANCE</b> as encounters the most profound differences between C1 and C2 (especially underlying value systems) and the plurality of C2s (subcultures) within all language communities, comes to understand the experiential causes for those differences and the role of context, develops a broader conception of self and other and begins to form more complex stereotypes to compensate	Starts at <b>INTERMEDIATE LOW-MID (A2+/B1)</b> , or can start to creatively produce complete sentences with varied grammatical accuracy, demonstrating at the very least an awareness of grammar and the presence of a developing linguistic system, and can negotiate meaning and begin to notice meaning and form in context  ----- <i>Systematically</i> moves to <b>INTERMEDIATE HIGH (B1+/B2)</b> as is exposed to and pushed to produce grammatical sentences in gradually more authentic, complex and open-ended tasks—still with an explicit focus on form—, learns to pay attention to both the linguistic features and the role of context, and starts to learn how to self-correct mistakes and errors via communicative interaction with more advanced and native speakers	<i>Ideally</i> reached by the end of a basic language program (or university/high school minimum foreign language requirement), at the latest  -----
<b>4</b>	Starts at <b>ACCEPTANCE</b> , or views C1 and <i>all</i> C2s as equally valid ways of perceiving and reacting to the world, at least in their own contexts, and accepts stereotypes as “necessary evils” that need to be kept flexible in dealing with others  <i>Systematically</i> moves to <b>ADAPTATION</b> as encounters C2s on their own terms and begins to consciously and unconsciously appropriate various features thereof in order to better understand, communicate and/or integrate	Starts at <b>INTERMEDIATE HIGH (B1+/B2)</b> or has at least begun to “learn how to learn” via interaction in order to better communicate and begins to produce strings of sentences in coherent, connected discourse during interaction  <i>Systematically</i> moves to <b>ADVANCED (B2+/C1)</b> as exposes self to and pushes self to produce strings of grammatical sentences in a range of authentic contexts, actively attempts to self-correct and acquire L2 via interaction with more advanced and native speakers, and, begins to intensely study the formal rules of L2	<i>Likely</i> reached with the successful completion of a language degree program (Major/Minor) that offers some content-based immersion courses, opportunities for extracurricular interaction in the target language, and, most importantly, some sort of study trip abroad.
<b>5</b>	Starts at <b>ADAPTATION</b> , or comes to realize the emergent and transitional nature of culture; can empathize with the perspectives of C2s, and can begin to apply explicit and implicit knowledge of appropriate C2s to interactions with native speakers of L2  <i>Might</i> move to <b>INTEGRATION</b> as a result of a dedication to life-long intercultural and language learning in virtually every interaction with others	Starts at <b>ADVANCED (B2+/C1)</b> or is capable of sustaining discourse and making up for limited mistakes and errors by self-correcting and actively recycling new features of L2 during interaction with advanced and native speakers  <i>Systematically</i> moves to <b>SUPERIOR (C1+)</b> by continuing to interact with other advanced and native speakers and making a conscious effort to improve all linguistic aspects	<i>Possibly</i> reached after several years of formal and autonomous study including content-based immersion courses and at least one long-term study abroad experience (exceptional undergraduate study), <i>more likely</i> a result of advanced study (M.A. /PhD.) and/or multiple or extended stays abroad
<b>6</b>	Has reached <b>INTEGRATION</b> if can bring multiple valid cultural frames to every situation, maintains a critical distance to all forms of behavior and utterances, while still capable of successfully interacting with others, i.e. embraces the true nature of identity and culture	Starts at <b>SUPERIOR (C1+)</b> , or the ability to comfortably interact with and learn from natives  <i>Might</i> move to <b>DISTINGUISHED (C2)</b> , or native-like competence, as a result of a dedication to life-long intercultural and language learning in every interaction with others	<i>Possibly</i> reached only after several years of advanced study including content-based immersion courses and/or extended stays abroad
<b>7</b>			<i>Results unlikely</i> even after many years of exposure



## Language as the core of intercultural learning

The first column above is primarily based upon Milton J. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1993 and 2004) and the recommendation of Janet Bennett and M. J. Bennett (Bennett et. al., 2003) to apply it to foreign language education by superimposing the model onto an established set of language proficiency guidelines. The model is a statistically established measure of the psychology of Intercultural Sensitivity and is accepted in the field of Intercultural Communication as an indicator of Intercultural Communication Competence. Further insights come from research on stereotypes (Allport, 2000; Øyvind, 1999) and value systems (Kluckhohn, 1954; Hofstede, 2004; Hills, 2006), two of the most common fields of inquiry in Intercultural Communication. The aggregate work of Kramsch (1993, 2003 and 2009) and Byram (1991, 1997 and 2009) was also crucial throughout. Also informative were the concepts of the Five C's (see ACTFL, 1996 and Phillips, 2003), Critical Pedagogy (see Crawford and McLaren, 2003), and Ethnographic Analysis as a learning tool (see. Erickson, 1996; Riggenbach, 1999; Saville-Troike, 1996; Schiffrin, 1996).

The terminology and much of the description used in the second column is based upon the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2012) and the Common European Framework (Council of Europe, 2001), where the alignment of the two guidelines is based upon personal experience teaching in the US and the EU. Hymes's (1967) levels of communicative competence – linguistic, sociocultural, discourse and strategic – were consulted, whereas linguistic competence is viewed here as lexical and syntactic accuracy while communicative competence encompasses the other three competences. The model is also based upon SLA currents (see Ellis, 1997; Lee and VanPatten, 2003 and Lightbown and Spada, 2006): The Input-Interaction-Output Model of second language acquisition, in which the Input, Output, Noticing, and Interaction Hypotheses all play a significant role, is accepted as the culminating achievement of the last 45 years of research and theorization (cf. Block, 2003). The need for explicit grammar instruction is accepted as a given, whereas a combination of Grammar in Context, Input Flooding, Input Enhancement and, most importantly, Input Processing are given preference over deductive instruction in the student's L1, while deductive instruction is advisable once students are capable of such linguistic analysis in L2. The underlying idea stems from the notion of Learners as Researchers and Strategy Training (cf. O'Malley and Chamot, 1990), most notably in Discourse/Ethnographic Analysis and learning via interaction. It is assumed that lower levels of proficiency are achievable with little cultural awareness, sociocultural competence and intercultural competence/ intercultural sensitivity, while advanced proficiency is not achievable without such knowledge and skills.

The aim of this model, as outlined in the third column, is a set of guidelines for the development of tasks, lesson plans, syllabi, textbooks and entire curricula that take into account students' ability to cope with and learn from (a) perceived differences between C1 and C2, and (b) new examples of L2 during real life interactions with L2-C2. Most importantly, care was taken to align the development of intercultural sensitivity with the development of language proficiency. Each number represents one of seven levels of intercultural sensitivity and a corresponding level of linguistic and communicative competence. Each row describes, in the first column, the cognitive/affective and, in the second column, the social/linguistic skills at that level and the types of activities required to develop to the next level. The timeline for each level is based upon personal experience as both student and instructor: although students enter language programs at different levels, although some proceed more rapidly, and although some finish a program developed beyond expectations, students completing the foreign language requirement at a university rarely exceed the Intermediate Low to Mid range on the ACTFL scale and B1 on the CEFR scale. Students possessing a BA in a foreign language rarely exceed the Intermediate High-Advanced Low (B2) range. Only students who spend significant time abroad, take care to interact with natives, and develop effective learning strategies reach the levels of Intermediate

## Language as the core of intercultural learning

High/B2+, Advanced/C1 and Superior/C2. The same could be said for the ethnorelative stages of Intercultural Sensitivity. The sociocultural and psychological issues of living abroad and dealing with others have to be adequately dealt with for higher levels of proficiency to even be conceivable. For this reason, the two developmental columns are adjustable, but inseparable.

The goal of levels 1-3, or of a basic language program through the university, is to prepare the students to gain from interactions with native speakers, implying that students must be urged to complete a study abroad program thereafter. The primary goal of levels 3-4, or of the major/minor, is to develop students who are successful in and dedicated to learning from real life encounters. Levels beyond this point are, in most cases, attainable only as a result of a life-long dedication to language and culture learning and many years of autonomous study. In other words, as foreign language teachers, our goal should be to help students become intermediate learners that have come to accept foreign cultures as equally valid alternatives to their own, so that they are prepared for life-long autonomous study. We can offer courses at more advanced stages only if we accept that students actually become advanced speakers of the language and learn to apply elements of the foreign culture if they are engaged outside the classroom.

***It should, however, be stressed that both the organization into “levels” and the “alignment” of the two strands of development is specific to the author’s personal experience as learner and educator.*** Some language programs have a population of beginner language learners who are much further developed in terms of intercultural sensitivity by virtue of living in a multilingual and/or multicultural community, while there are a number of high school and underclass college students who are quite proficient in their specific foreign languages, but due to normal affective and cognitive development and limited intercultural experiences are not interculturally sensitive/competent. ***Therefore, the alignment of the two strands of development and the organization of the model into defined levels should be considered flexible to the context of instruction; in other words, it is conceived as a model of desired targets and not a model of natural cognitive development.*** But regardless of how the model is restructured, the ultimate goal remains to systematically prepare students for life-long intercultural and language learning in their private lives.

## Conclusion

The “Report from the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages” (MLA, 2007) and the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (Council of Europe, 2008) have challenged institutions of education to move toward intercultural curricula. In a world struggling to cope with mass migration, the depletion of natural resources, ethnic cleansing and international terrorism, the old instrumental motivations for teaching and learning foreign languages and cultures no longer suffice. Global challenges necessitate global thinking and international cooperation, and foreign language education is in the best position to develop and implement pragmatic tasks, courses and curricula that attain the goals of translingualism and transculturalism/ multilingualism and multiculturalism. Most importantly, the burden should not fall solely upon the educators of the so-called “critical languages” that are to serve strategic national interests abroad, but the more “traditional” languages, with their higher enrollments, though decreasing funding, should lead the way. It is idealistic to assume that all of our current students will become near-native speakers of the languages they study. But it is necessary that we enlighten them on the relationship between language, culture and communication and foster communicative and intercultural competence. The incomplete model presented in this paper is not intended as the definitive solution to the separate treatment of language and culture, but it is hoped that it at the very least provokes further reflection, discussion and action.

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## Competenze interculturali nelle professioni socio-educative in Spagna: il caso di Murcia

Andres Escarbajal Frutos e Barbara Guidetti

### *Abstract*

La Spagna è passata da circa 165.000 stranieri residenti all'interno dei suoi confini nel 1975, a oltre 1.200.000 nel marzo del 2002, per raggiungere la cifra di 5.700.000 nell'aprile del 2012 (Istituto National de Estadística 2012). Ciò ha dato avvio, nonostante il carattere multiculturale che da sempre la contraddistingue, a problemi legati all'inserimento degli immigrati nella società, alle sfide per il riconoscimento della loro cittadinanza, così come alla convivenza delle differenti culture. Difficoltà che hanno posto molti professionisti del settore socio-educativo di fronte alla condizione non solo di affrontare situazioni inedite, ma anche di dover trovare nuove strategie di intervento nel proprio lavoro. Il presente contributo scaturisce dal confronto e dall'analisi dei dati emersi dalla ricerca effettuata nella Regione di Murcia (Spagna) dal prof. Escarbajal Frutos e da quanto affiorato dal gruppo di ricerca dell'Ateneo Scaligero nel Progetto di Ricerca di Interesse Nazionale (PRIN) diretto dal prof. A. Portera (Competenze interculturali: modelli teorici e metodologie di formazione). Tale confronto si è posto l'obiettivo di evidenziare quali siano le competenze interculturali che i professionisti del settore educativo-extrascolastico e sociale necessitano oggi per svolgere al meglio la propria professione.

### 1.1. Approccio interculturale in Spagna

Come è noto, a partire dagli anni Ottanta la Spagna (così come l'Italia) si è trasformata da Paese di migranti a meta di persone in cerca di un lavoro, di un nuovo inizio, di una speranza. Nonostante il carattere multiculturale della Spagna, essa si compone di differenti e significative comunità linguistico-culturali (Catalogna, Galizia e Paesi Baschi) dotate di una forte autonomia sia amministrativa che politica (Fiorucci M., Catarci M. 2011), il fenomeno della migrazione che ha caratterizzato il Paese dato vita ad una profonda variazione sociale, culturale, politica oltre che economica (Baldwin-Edwards M. 2007; 2009).



Analizzando la storia della migrazione in Spagna è possibile riconoscere tre grandi fasi. La prima ha inizio nel 1975 e termina nel 1985. In questi dieci anni l'immigrazione è soprattutto europea e latino-americana, infatti solo il 10% proviene dall'Africa e dall'Asia. La seconda fase va dal 1986 al 1999; i migranti provengono principalmente dall'Africa (in particolare dal Marocco) e pongono la Spagna di fronte a fattori inediti come, ad esempio, la religione (molte persone aderiscono all'Islam), diversi caratteri fenotipici (che li rendono facilmente identificabili) e nuove motivazioni (gli immigrati sono attratti dalla penisola iberica, oltre che per il persistere della crisi economica dei Paesi di provenienza, anche per la presenza di un "effetto chiamata" del mercato del lavoro, in particolare nel settore dell'edilizia, che l'entrata nella zona-euro da parte della Spagna ha prodotto). La terza fase si avvia nel 2000 quando la Spagna vede raggiungere la quota di 1.000.000 di stranieri presenti all'interno dei confini. È in questo periodo che hanno inizio i problemi dell'inserimento degli immigrati nella società, delle sfide della loro cittadinanza e delle loro molte culture (Cachón L. 2011).

La Spagna, dunque, è passata da circa 165.000 stranieri residenti all'interno dei suoi confini nel 1975 a poco più di 250.000 soggetti in possesso del permesso di soggiorno all'inizio degli anni '90 (circa la metà cittadini comunitari), a oltre 1.200.000 nel marzo del 2002 (dei quali solo un terzo sono comunitari), per arrivare a 5.700.000 nell'aprile del 2012 (di cui 2.400.000 cittadini dell'UE) (Istituto Nacional de Estadística 2012).

Nonostante il carattere intimamente multiculturale della nazione, anche in Spagna si comincia a parlare di educazione interculturale solo in riferimento alla questione dell'immigrazione extra-comunitaria, anche se con un interesse maggiore rispetto a nazioni quali la Grecia, l'Italia e il Portogallo (Susi F. 1999, p.56). Un'attenzione che si è esplicitata sia in abito legislativo (per il quale si rimanda a Caruso I., Venditto B. 2009) e socio educativo (Susi F. 1999; Fiorucci M., Catarci M. 2011). Partendo da tali presupposti, con il presente contributo ci si pone l'obiettivo di riflettere su quali siano da considerarsi le competenze ineludibili nelle professioni socio educative in una società multietnica e multiculturale.

## 1.2. La ricerca

Il lavoro di ricerca condotto dal prof. Escarbajal Frutos (per il quale si è avvalso sia della metodologia qualitativa sia di quella quantitativa, ha carattere esplicitamente esplorativo ed è stato condotto su un campione non rappresentativo) ha visto il coinvolgimento di 150 persone impegnate in professioni educative e sociali nella Regione di Murcia. La ricerca si è posta i

seguenti obiettivi: identificare le diverse risorse e servizi che la Pubblica Amministrazione mette al servizio delle persone immigrate; valutare le caratteristiche, i tipi, i differenti livelli e la metodologia dei distinti comportamenti messi in atto da assistenti ed operatori sociali ed educatori professionisti che operano a stretto contatto con i migrati; conoscere, descrivere e comprendere le funzioni svolte dagli assistenti sociali e degli educatori; formulare una proposta formativa che favorisca un miglioramento delle competenze professionali.

In altri termini, attraverso la ricerca si è voluto comprendere come la Regione di Murcia stia rispondendo alle esigenze di una società sempre più pluri-etnica e, per farlo, si è deciso di ascoltare direttamente le voci delle persone coinvolte: assistenti ed operatori sociali, educatori professionisti e gli stessi immigrati<sup>1</sup>.

Il campione comprende persone che presentano caratteristiche diverse in rapporto all'età, alla residenza, alla formazione accademica così come al settore d'impiego professionale<sup>2</sup>. Ciò che accomuna tutti i partecipanti è che lavorano a stretto contatto con persone con *background* etnico, culturale, assiologico e religioso differente.

I professionisti coinvolti nel progetto di ricerca hanno risposto<sup>3</sup> ad un questionario elaborato per raccogliere informazioni a carattere personale (età, genere, formazione, condizione lavorativa ecc.) sia relative alla loro professione (obiettivi, mezzi, strumenti, conoscenze, strategie ecc.) ed è stato costruito dallo stesso prof. Escarbajal Frutos.

Le 75 persone che hanno compilato i questionari sono state invitate a sottoporsi ad un'intervista semistrutturata al fine di approfondire la comprensione del loro lavoro e dei loro bisogni professionali. Allo scopo di circoscrivere i temi da esplorare, oltre che per garantire la comparabilità dei dati raccolti, si è stabilito di realizzare le interviste attraverso l'ausilio di una griglia di lettura, di audio-registrarle (per poi trascriverle) e redigere un protocollo al termine di ognuna di esse. Si tiene a precisare che durante gli incontri si è offerta ad ogni persona l'occasione di partecipare alla costruzione dei risultati della ricerca (Kahn R. L., Cannel C. F. 1968); così facendo, a nostro avviso, l'incontro non è stato solo un momento utile al

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<sup>1</sup> Dati gli obiettivi del presente lavoro non è possibile presentare la ricerca in modo approfondito ed integrale, per tale ragione si rimanda al seguente sito: <http://www.tdx.cat/bitstream/handle/10803/11078/EscarbajalFrutos.pdf;jsessionid=27A69C11D558A1616648F94915B12E1C.tdx2?sequence=1>

<sup>2</sup> Si ritiene interessante evidenziare che il campione è rappresentato per il 56% da donne.

<sup>3</sup> Si precisa che dei 150 questionari consegnati ne sono stati restituiti 75.

ricercatore per raccogliere dati, ma si è rivelata un' importante *occasione per riflettere* anche per l'intervistato.

### 1.2.1. Risultati della ricerca

Come si è già avuto modo di affermare, nel presente articolo anche per ragioni di spazio, ci si limiterà esclusivamente a prendere in considerazione i risultati utili ai nostri fini, per tale ragione si focalizzerà l'attenzione sui dati emersi (dal questionario così come dalle interviste) rilevanti a comprendere quali siano da considerarsi le competenze interculturali necessarie a tali professionisti, ovvero si riporteranno i risultati relativi alle categorie “competenze professionali generali” e “competenze professionali specifiche”.

Per quanto attiene al primo gruppo, dall'analisi dei dati emersi dai questionari, l'*impegno etico* e le *abilità nelle relazioni interpersonali* risultavano essere le competenze generali più importanti sia per assistenti ed operatori sociali, sia per gli educatori professionisti. Accanto ad esse si trovano la *capacità di lavorare con la diversità* e la *multiculturalità*, l'*adattamento* a situazioni nuove e le *capacità comunicative* che comprendono la conoscenza scritta e orale di una seconda lingua. Durante le interviste assistenti ed operatori sociali, così come gli educatori professionisti, hanno avuto modo di soffermarsi maggiormente sul concetto di competenza e di comprendere meglio quali fossero quelli più rilevanti. Da tali considerazioni si può affermare che tra le competenze generali indispensabili per svolgere al meglio il proprio lavoro i professionisti interpellati annoverano anche: la *curiosità* nei confronti dell'altro che conduce alla *conoscenza di altre culture*; l'*attitudine a lavorare in equipe*; la *capacità di affrontare il nuovo e risolvere problemi*; la *capacità di prendere decisioni*; la *capacità di adattarsi* a contesti multiculturali; buone *capacità di leadership*; *conoscenze tecniche informatiche*, la *conoscenza di almeno una lingua straniera* e soprattutto l'*impegno etico*.

Analizzando i dati dei questionari relativi alle “competenze professionali specifiche”, i professionisti interpellati si sono trovati d'accordo nell'affermare che le competenze più importanti nel loro lavoro sono: *conoscere il contesto* dell'intervento (compresi i Servizi Sociali); *conoscere la legislazione* in materia di immigrazione; *conoscere strategie e metodi d'intervento*. Accanto a ciò vengono anche citate le *abilità di comunicazione interpersonale* e la *conoscenza delle tecniche di mediazione* per la risoluzione dei conflitti. Dai questionari si evince che i professionisti non accordano particolare rilevanza alle capacità per svolgere lavori in *equipe*; abilità di *leadership*; insegnare lo spagnolo agli stranieri; né capacità di gestione del

gruppo. I dati relativi alle “competenze professionali specifiche” emersi dalle interviste confermano quanto affiorato dai questionari.

Per concludere, entrambe le categorie hanno evidenziato la carenza della loro formazione accademica rispetto alla realtà professionale in cui si sono trovati impegnati e sulla necessità di tenersi continuamente aggiornati.

### 1.3. Modello di competenze interculturali

«Chi dice interculturale dice necessariamente, se egli dà tutto il suo senso al prefisso “inter”: interazione, scambio, apertura, reciprocità, solidarietà obiettiva. Dice, anche, dando il suo pieno senso al termine “cultura”: riconoscimento dei valori, dei modi di vita, delle rappresentazioni simboliche alle quali si riferiscono gli esseri umani, individui o società, nelle loro relazioni con l’altro e nella loro comprensione del mondo, riconoscimento delle loro diversità, riconoscimento delle interazioni che intervengono di volta in volta tra i molteplici registri di una stessa cultura e tra le differenti culture, nello spazio e nel tempo. [...] l’opzione interculturale è nell’ordine del processo e dell’azione. Essa afferma la realtà di una interazione positiva tra le differenti componenti di queste società e costituisce, nello stesso tempo anche un riferimento, un metodo e una prospettiva d’azione» (Rey M. 1980, p.140). In altre parole, come afferma G. Wallnöfer (2000), con intercultura si intende un progetto di *inter-azione* fra le parti che si propone di sviluppare una generale capacità di “muoversi” in modo attivo e pacifico *con* e *in* diversi contesti, estendendo e ridefinendo i propri confini personali.

Partendo da simili premesse, si è proceduto all’analisi critica del prezioso contributo fornito dai professionisti che hanno aderito alla ricerca spagnola e, facendo riferimento alle valutazioni effettuate all’interno del gruppo di ricerca di Verona durante il Prin 2010 (Portera A. 2013), si è ritenuto opportuno, oltre che necessario, elaborare un modello di competenze interculturali specifico per il settore educativo/sociale. Un modello<sup>4</sup> che, pur facendo riferimento a D.K. Deardoff (2006), suddivide le competenze in sapere/*Knowledge*, saper fare/*Skills* e saper essere/*Attitudes* (J. Delors 2005). Prima di presentarlo si tiene a precisare che: 1. le tre macroaree sono da considerarsi interconnesse<sup>5</sup>, così come lo sono le abilità, le competenze e le

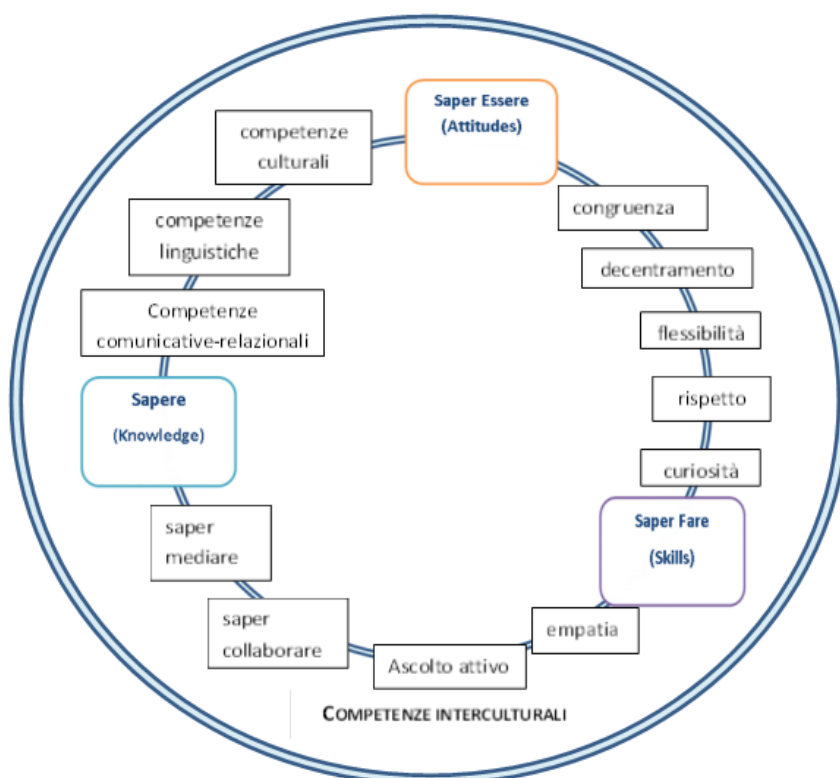
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<sup>4</sup> Per la sua realizzazione si è preso in considerazione anche il lavoro di Graf A. 2004; Abbe A., Gulick, L.M.V., Herman J.L. 2007; Devinney T., Pedersen T., Tihanyi L. 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Per tale ragione si è deciso di utilizzare due cerchi per la loro rappresentazione: il primo indica che le competenze sono collegate le une alle altre, mentre il secondo evidenzia come tutte debbano essere considerate interculturali.

conoscenze inserite al loro interno. Per tale motivo la suddivisione non deve essere considerata in modo statico e rigido; 2. Le tre aree includono quelle competenze che, a nostro avviso, possono e devono essere considerate effettivamente “interculturali” (Perotti A. 1994; Portera A. 2000).

Fig. 1. Modello delle competenze interculturali nel settore socio-educativo



Come si comprende dal termine “attitudes”, nel gruppo delle competenze del “saper essere” sono state inserite le disposizioni naturali utili ad affrontare, in modo efficace, la relazione a carattere multiculturale.

Per accogliere «con favore le diversità che esistono tra i singoli individui e tra le comunità umane, [...] di capire i “diversi” e di operare effettivamente con loro. In un mondo in cui tutti sono interconnessi, l’intolleranza e l’assenza di rispetto sono opzioni non più concepibili» (Gardner H. 2005, p. 13) è di primaria importanza la conoscenza di sé stessi, riconoscere i propri stereotipi e pregiudizi, senza per questo rinunciare alle proprie convinzioni e valori, o giustificare tutto ciò che viene proposto dall’Altro. Per tali ragioni, si è

ritenuto essenziale inserire nell'area del "saper essere" la *congruenza* e la capacità di *decentramento*. Così come sono di fondamentale importanza, per la realizzazione di rapporti (lavorativi e privati) positivi, il *rispetto*, l'apertura, il gusto della scoperta del "nuovo" e del "diverso" (*curiosità*), ma soprattutto la disponibilità a sospendere il giudizio, a mettere in discussione la cultura di provenienza e scardinare i modi di pensare erronei, con l'obiettivo di sviluppare una forma mentis *flessibile*.

«Il dialogo è interculturale o non lo è. Affinché esso sia fecondo e autentico occorrono tuttavia alcune condizioni preliminari: la centralità dell'alterità e della relazione, che comportano come portati ineliminabili la disposizione interiore all'accoglienza della differenza, la reciprocità, l'interiorizzazione della propria non-assolutezza e della non indiscutibilità delle proprie istanze, dando luogo a atteggiamenti di accoglienza, empatia, apertura, tolleranza, rispetto. Il dialogo quindi prevede una sana posizione di relativismo e laicità, che passa attraverso il riconoscimento di valori fondamentali, quali il pluralismo, la libertà e la democrazia, condizione propedeutica per la costruzione di un dialogo interculturale» (Luati 2009, p. 25). Partendo da tale presupposto si è deciso di inserire nell'area del "saper fare" l'*empatia*, l'*ascolto attivo*, la *collaborazione* e la *mediazione*, ovvero competenze a carattere interculturali che non possono essere trascurate nel settore socio-educativo (Bennett M. J. 1993; Gardner H. 2005; Portera A. 2011).

Come ci ricorda Panikkar R. (2002, p. 73) «l'apertura all'interculturalità è veramente sovversiva. Ci destabilizza, contesta convinzioni profondamente radicate che diamo per scontate, perché mai messe in discussione. Ci dice che la nostra visione del mondo, quindi il nostro stesso mondo, non è l'unico». Per tale ragione si ritiene che nell'area del "sapere" devono essere inserite le competenze *comunicative-relazionali*, *linguistiche* e *culturali*. Dove per conoscenze comunicative-relazionali si intendono le competenze che da un lato comprendono le strategie di comunicazione verbale e non verbale e, dall'altro, permettono il riconoscimento dell'esistenza di tante "mappe" (per "leggere" e "spiegare" correttamente ciò che avviene intorno e dentro di noi) quanti sono gli abitanti della Terra (Bandler R., Grinder J. 1981). Competenze comunicative-relazionali che consentano di identificare il conflitto non solo come una "battaglia" da vincere, ma anche come una possibilità di crescita ed arricchimento personale (Stone H., Stone S. 1999; Cheli E. 2003; Portera A., Dusi P. 2005) e che consentano di "familiarizzare" con le emozioni ed il loro linguaggio (Di Pietro M. 1999; Masini V. 2001).

Competenze *linguistiche* (Sclavi M. 2003; Sclavi M., Sussikind L. E. 2011; Trevisani D. 2005; Castiglioni A. 2005, Portera A. 2011) che, da un lato, prevedono la conoscenza almeno di una lingua straniera e, dall'altro,

comprendano la capacità di gestire i turni conversazionali (intraculturali e multiculturali), di auto-osservazione e auto-valutazione (la capacità di riconoscere gli stati emotivi), di analisi e decodifica degli stati emotivi dell'interlocutore (Balboni 2007).

Infine, per conoscenze *culturali*, si intende la capacità di comprendere a fondo la nuova realtà impedendo che le informazioni acquisite diventino dei “recinti inviolabili” (Aime M. 2004) e che invece consentano di riflettere sul nostro modo di vedere, inquadrare ed interagire con le persone con *background* culturale differente.

#### 1.4. Per concludere

Come si è già avuto modo di affermare, «l'obiettivo dell'approccio interculturale è imparare come svolgere l'incontro e non imparare la cultura dell'altro. Imparare a svolgere l'incontro e la relazione con le alterità, nelle loro molteplici forme (culturale, sociale, generazionale, di genere) e nei diversi luoghi e contesti (locali e globali, pubblici e privati, del lavoro e del tempo libero) in cui esse quotidianamente si esprimono e manifestano» (Luatti L. 2011, p. 55).

Muovendo dai risultati emersi dalla ricerca eseguita nella Regione di Murcia, si giunge ad una duplice conclusione: da una lato, appare evidente che sia gli assistenti sociali che gli educatori extrascolastici hanno riscontrato la necessità di individuare (all'interno del loro bagaglio culturale ed esperienziale) e utilizzare delle strategie efficaci al fine di affrontare la loro realtà professionale sempre più multiculturale e multietnica; dall'altro, si sottolinea la necessità di una formazione continua delle persone impegnate nel settore socio-educativo. Una *lifelong education* in cui la pedagogia deve assumere il ruolo che le compete, perché «se l'educazione è una delle autostrade dell'emergenza [...], la pedagogia è la sola vettura di viaggio capace di giungere senza rallentamenti e ritardi al traguardo del *soggetto-persona*. Questo perché è la scienza dell'educazione dotata di uno “sguardo” a trecentosessanta gradi, con la quale è possibile un'interpretazione multidimensionale della vita personale. [...] La pedagogia non si identifica con una o più sfere di maturazione della vita personale, ma come progetto formativo integrale della vita personale, in grado di riannodare in un quadro sistemico e interrelato la molteplicità delle sue dimensioni costitutive» (Frabboni F. 2002, p. 6). Una pedagogia che oggi non può che essere a carattere interculturale.

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**For the International Conference on Intercultural Counselling and Education in the  
 Global World**  
*Educazione e Counselling Interculturale nel mondo globale, Universita degli Studi di Verona*

**Paper Title: Auto-Ethnographic Reflections on the Immigrant and Refugee Experience in  
 an Inner-City High School in Toronto**

*Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy now. Walk  
 humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.*  
 -The Talmud

This paper presentation emerges out of an autoethnographic/interpretive research study I conducted over a period of several years in a Toronto inner-city high school with a diverse student population. The project was entitled “Stories from the Margins: The Immigrant and Refugee Experience in Toronto.” I intended to examine their cultural displacement, in-betweenness, border pedagogy, the differential meaning of literacy development, etc. etc. As I rode on the subway to the school on my first day, I remembered Maxine Greene’s words in her book “Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts and Social Change” (1995):

*This is not romantic or simply a matter of goodwill. We teachers will confront thousands and thousands of newcomers in the years ahead: some from the darkness and dangers of the neglected ghettos, some exhausted from their suffering under dictators, some stunned by lives in refugee camps, some unabashedly in search of economic success. The texts are here, we have to make them accessible, offer the protocols, keep them open. We have to allow opportunities for students to structure their experiences by means of those texts, by means of books men and women have made.*

In the spirit of Greene’s call that “our obligation today is to find ways for the young to find their voices, to open their spaces, to reclaim their histories in all their variety and discontinuity” (p. 120), I was ready to listen to the stories of these immigrant and refugee students --- “those on the margins” --- in the safe haven of a little room off the ESL (English as a Second Language) office on the second floor of Northlands Collegiate School (pseudonym).

I wish to share one particular afternoon at Northlands Collegiate. I had already visited the school several times and had been able to create a positive rapport with the teachers and students of the ESL program. The first snowfall of the season had fallen. I hadn’t been to the high school for a while and it felt good to be back to this neighbourhood brimming with diversity and with people

struggling to survive. These surroundings are so reminiscent of my own childhood with emotionally broken immigrant/refugee parents from World War II: the low-income housing; the little shops with nothing luxurious in them; the desperate longing for a better life, a second chance. Before going into the school, I went into a neighbourhood donut shop for a quick cup of coffee and found out that one of the customers had been robbed just a half hour earlier. He had left his wallet on the counter and had turned his back for only a moment. The police were there writing up a report. The man was very upset and spoke with a thick accent. He could not afford the loss. "It was probably some of the school kids who did it", said the woman behind the counter. I sat with my cup of coffee and felt mournful. I had a premonition that this might be a different kind of afternoon. As I walked over to the school in the cold some kids were hanging around the sidewalk near the rear entrance. They looked tough. You could feel their anger, frustration, and hormones. I wondered if they might have been involved in the theft at the donut shop.

I got to the ESL office on the second floor and was greeted by the ESL coordinator, Ann. I told her what had happened. She said that this was a frequent occurrence in the neighbourhood and seemed suddenly tired. But the librarian was also there and they both wanted to tell me how enthusiastic the ESL students were about the dual track writing project, which I had been implementing in the various ESL classrooms at the school throughout the term. They showed me examples of stories the ESL students had written in their home languages (if they could) and in English (which they were learning).

I had spent my earlier visits to the school introducing this idea to the students in their classrooms. I remember seeing the glow in the eyes of many as they sat at their computers working hard at writing and rewriting their precious stories. They did not complain about how difficult the process was. They asked for help. They seemed happy to be involved in a school project that had meaning for them. It was heart warming to observe these ESL students holding the final products of this writing project: elegantly and professionally bound books, with texts in a rainbow of languages, as well as illustrations. It may not sound like much but they seemed like a handful of jewels to them. I was told that they had been invited to read their "books" to the children of an elementary school nearby. Ann and the librarian were shining with pride.

The stories were filled with the hardscrabble realities of their everyday lives at home and at school --- cultural stories about their families, about the lives they left behind, about the new lives they were trying so hard to create. Most of the students tried hard not to dwell on their sense of loss and sadness or, in some cases, rage. When I read some of the stories I was struck by a kind of defiance in their words. To many of their parents their former life is a painful memory but they, the children, located in the no-man's land of uprooted adolescence, were fighting hard against this resignation. Clearly they need more than just such memories. They are young and filled with nature's gifts of abundant energies and must learn to go forward. But to where, and to what? Amidst their dislocation they must find roads toward viable futures in this new country. Can we

as educators help them? Perhaps our first step is to listen to their stories when they are ready to tell them. Ann made me a cup of strong black tea and I was ready to meet the boy from Afghanistan. She told me that he would be an interesting participant, that he had quite a story to tell.

Mahmoud and I went into the little room adjacent to the ESL office. I adore that particular small space where private thoughts and fears and hopes find voice. I had already interviewed many other students there. It was a glassed-in alcove with a large table, and file cabinets lined up against the one wall that was not made of glass. There was also a window on that wall which looked out onto the side entrance of the school and the parking lot. The wall also had posters on it of places from all over the world. The juxtaposition of these exciting travel posters and the broken lives of these students was incongruous, to say the least. There were also piles of books on the file cabinets as well as lots of student artwork. The room had a protected feel to it. Mahmoud and I sat down at the desk facing each other. He had sharp black eyes set in a smooth face. Ann told me that he had no parents in Toronto; somehow he had just arrived and was living on his own. No one knew much about him. There was an uncle who was his formal guardian.

I took out my tape recorder and asked him if it was OK to use it. He nodded, looking pleased that someone considered him important enough to be interviewed. I immediately liked him. What was it about him? A fragile yet dignified strength? Surviving without any safety net? The sense of being a psychological orphan? The refugee experience is certainly one of trauma to a greater or lesser extent. Yes, I could relate. He had gotten out of Afghanistan six years earlier when he was twelve and made it to Iran with his uncle. He had been taking care of a house in Teheran (whose owners supposedly were in the U.S.). "I didn't go to school in Teheran because I was illegal", he told me. Then he said he got to Azerbaidjan and was lucky that a Russian girl offered him private English lessons for free. His uncle had known her family. His uncle and he then made it to a refugee camp in Pakistan and through some agency there (he said the U.N. but may have meant UNHCRA) he succeeded in getting papers to come to Canada.

He had been in Toronto for only six or seven months. He was eighteen years old and worked in an Afghani restaurant after school and on weekends in order to make enough money to live on. His uncle was in Toronto but the boy didn't want to live with his uncle's family. He wanted to be on his own. But not having money, he shared an apartment with a friend of his uncle. I was impressed by his hopes for freedom. He does have youth on his side and maybe he will make it. But that is not guaranteed -- he has a great deal of catching up to do. He said that had the Taliban not taken over, he would now be getting ready for university and then medical school at the University of Kabul. But he was certainly not seeking pity:

*I feel really lonely most of the time. My uncle is good to me but he has his own family to worry about. I have to make it on my own. I hope I will see my mother again but I don't know how. The teachers here are kind to me but I have so much catching up to do. It's not easy learning how to read and*

*write a new language well enough to be able to go to university. If it hadn't been for the Taliban and all that, I would have been able to become a doctor. That is what my parents wanted for me. Now I am like an orphan.*

I told him about my own parents' situation as Holocaust survivors who were incarcerated in concentration camps, and my own struggles with the war that had devastated them emotionally. About the fact that I don't have many relatives -- that all were killed, except for one who came to Canada before the war. His eyes widened and real dialogue began. About his being Muslim, about my being Jewish. About the fact that his father and brother had been against the Taliban. That he saw his brother's head sheared by a bullet right in front of his house in Kabul. That his father had disappeared, probably also killed. He was surprised when he realized that my life experience had something to do with the film "Schindler's List," and with "The Diary of Anne Frank," which he knew about because his class had been involved in a unit on World War II that term. He was taken aback and told me: "Your family had it much worse than me."

It is interesting how those of us from lands of war often compare our suffering, measuring carefully to ascertain who was worse or better off: the wounded sharing their war stories. And there is at least some comfort in the sharing. "This is the first time anybody Canadian knows what I'm talking about," he admitted to me. "What does it mean to be Canadian?" I asked him. "To look like you belong," he responded and then asked, "Could I write a story for you about when I was a child in Kabul? I still haven't done one but now I want to."

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There are many other stories. There is Lina, a beautiful seventeen-year-old who is from Albania and whose anxiety was tattooed on her clenched jaw when I first met her. She stared at me in a kind of haze during our conversation. Here is an excerpt from the transcript:

*I just don't know if it will ever work out for me. It was bad in Albania but at least I was with my whole family. I miss my mother and my brothers so much. I haven't seen them for over a year and I don't know when we will be together again. It is all legal stuff. In the meantime I am trying to learn English as well as I can because I want to go to university but will I be accepted? I want to be a lawyer but it is only a dream. I want to become Canadian and feel like I belong but that will take a very long time. Most days I wake up in the morning feeling homesick and discouraged. And my father can't help because he is trying to make enough money to be able to get the rest of the family over here.*

At Northlands Collegiate one morning I also spoke with a seventeen-year-old Tamil boy from Sri Lanka who discussed the gaps in his education due to war:

*Here I had to learn what it is to sit at a desk and listen to the teacher. I am beginning to see how much I missed because I didn't go to school for many years because of war and I am only now*

*learning to read and write in English. I can't read or write much in Tamil. It feels good to be here but also I feel very upset because I missed so much and I don't know how I can catch up.*

Then there was Hargan, a boy from Bosnia who told me:

*I realize now that some of my friends here never actually think about the things I'm thinking, that's the difference I realize in myself, it's like, internal. I have seen awful things. I feel old, not like a teenager should feel.*

I didn't really know how to console these students, except to nod in silence. I tell them how school became my way of holding on: to a dream, to an idea, to a possibility, to a vision. Some aren't sure if this will work for them but they seemed to like to hear the story, as though we were orphans gathered around a warm stove with good food nearby. In that little ESL interview room we could feel secure. It is the narrow ridge where, as Martin Buber (1952) put it, the "I and Thou" meet: the territory of the "in-between" where people can come together in community. The beginning of real human communication. For a moment our wounds disappear and we can lay down our burdens. I think about these adolescents often --- about their acute sense of dislocation and rootlessness and the challenges they face: to invent a place and an identity that will become a life-raft through the turbulent waters of their traumatic heritage. There are no magic pills for this, no shortcuts, only blinding loss. But, lest we forget, there is also the quiet benediction of the future --- no matter how uncertain it may feel. They aren't yet sure about what will happen to them, but this much is true, that for many of them, school is the safest place they have ever known.

In field notes that I kept I recorded my feelings after a particularly trying visit to the school on a mid-December afternoon just before the holidays:

*I feel battle weary but have made it to the end of term. It's a dreary rainy December day. The first snow has melted. Just got back from the high school. Police were all around. Many of the kids seemed dazed and confused, afraid after what had happened last Friday: the stabbing death of one of the students. I was there on the afternoon it happened, interviewing Mahmoud. And I was there again today too; this week I interviewed two more students. Their stories are so heavy with the weight of the dilemmas of their lives. They are too heavy for me to carry right now. What to do about a child who had to leave his family at age 12 and roam from Afghanistan to Iran, to Azerbaidjan, to a refugee camp in Pakistan until he got here at age 18?*

*What to do about another boy who was "illegal" as a Kurd in Syria and then got to Pakistan and then to Cuba but never went to school and didn't even know how to hold a pencil when he arrived at this high school in Toronto? He is trying hard to "catch up." He wants to be a computer programmer. The same litany over and over again: "I want to catch up. Will I be able to catch up?"*



*And what to do about a seventeen-year-old girl who is here with her father from Albania and trying to get refugee status? Her mother and siblings are still over there. The girl, who has pale skin with soft blue eyes, is depressed. When she speaks of her ambition to become a lawyer, a light goes on in her eyes but then she returns to reality and they grow dull again. She wants to be able to help people as a lawyer. But who will help her now?*

*What to do about all this misery and injustice, this exile? The stories of these students mingle with the memories of all the broken dreams of my own parents. Their wounds pile onto those of my family and I can hardly breathe. The anger I feel is overwhelming. All that pain, all that deprivation, all that trauma. All my rocking myself back and forth in darkness as a child, hanging on to a thin little thread of hope. Oh God, forgive me for wondering why you let such suffering all just go on. Forgive me for questioning why I and these children, and so many others, have to be robbed of so much. For all that energy wasted just to be able to face the day. For parents who in their brokenness hold their children too tightly or not tightly enough, or simply not at all.*

There is another reality that anyone who lives and works in inner-city neighbourhoods must face: that for many of the newly-arrived who have lived under dictatorships, violence, war and so forth, democracy is not a familiar concept. Some students bring the sectarian violence from their home countries into their classrooms and we as educators need to face this new and complex dynamic. For example, in response to that fatal stabbing that took place near the school grounds one student confided to me:

*There are lots of kids in this school who are really crazy, and want to bring the fights of their countries in here. Some Serbian kids hate the Bosnian kids because of the war and because they are Muslim. And some of the Muslim kids from different places think their way is the best way and don't know much about being Christian or anything. And the Christians don't know anything about Islam. I heard some kids saying very bad things about Jews too. There are lots of fights. It's hard to get along and for everybody to feel OK. How do you make people understand each other? There is no way other than to stare such realities in the eye. Within the context of diversity, issues of cultural difference and conflict resolution no longer can be ignored in schools. Diversity should become a source of genuine learning and we must offer cutting-edge ways to deal with conflict constructively and creatively. As educators we must try to open spaces for dialogue so that such complex issues can be discussed in safe ways and so as to bridge gaps and reconcile difference. This is a daunting task but also a highly necessary one, given the growing frictions in some inner-city high schools both locally and globally.*

## **Concluding Remarks**

I have tried here to offer, through an interpretive/autoethnographic methodological lens (see Coles, 1989,1990; Connelly & Clandinin, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Eisner, 1991; Ellis & Bochner, 2005; Feuerwerker, 2007; Lantieri, 2008; Van Manen, 1990) a glimpse into the lives of

some newly arrived students in a Toronto inner-city high school, as they confront the process of integration as well as personal and social problems in and out of school. For them it is a time of trauma, upheaval and sometimes despair. It is in fact likely that this is the first time any of these students had been invited to reflect on these difficult and painful personal issues within a school context (or within any other for that matter) and I found it challenging to balance voice and silence in the texts of the participants. Such identity processes are fluid and constantly changing and under construction, like life itself. One can only wonder how they would respond a year from now, what they might say then that they did not dare say to me now during my interviews with them.

Perhaps simply opening the space that allowed these students to consider their “outsiderness” and sense of loss as well as their hopes for the future constitutes an important beginning. If we really care about these students we must rethink and reshape our understanding of teaching and learning that is in a way more fundamentally linked to their lived experiences. These issues are also crucial for nation building and citizenship education in pluralistic Western societies such as Canada --- both in and out of school.

On my last visit to the school before the holidays Ann, the ESL coordinator, drove me to the subway after school in the rain and told me how much I mean to these children, how they really look forward to my visits. I told her that I had taken a taxi to the school that day on account of the bad weather, and that when the cab driver realized that he was going into the parking lot of the school (he had heard about the stabbing) he couldn’t believe it. He said goodbye to me as though I was heading off to war and treated me like some sort of hero. Ann and I laughed about this. It felt good to laugh a little. Rheinhold Niebuhr said that laughter is the no-man’s land between hope and despair. Laughter must surely be the first sign of freedom. We hugged each other and wished each other a happy holiday.

I got back to my office on campus after night had fallen. As I looked out of my window at the torrent of rain I felt somehow as old as those children. I had been immersed in wreckage up to my eyeballs. What does one do with so much mindless suffering? When the girl from Albania learned about what had happened to my parents, she had said that that seemed to have been a much worse a situation. Mahmoud had told me the same thing two weeks earlier. I told the Albanian girl that I didn’t really know how to help any of the students. She said: “You do your bit, and let others do their part.” Such a caring and such a wise response.

I remembered also what I had told a teacher at Fielding School in Montreal during one of my research visits there, when she told me that dealing with all these children of oppression was getting to be just too much for her: *Just be there and be a witness to their stories. Maybe we can heal each other.* And now I must heed my own advice. I must have faith that opening a space for telling stories has value. Perhaps just showing that one cares really does matter. *Maybe as we tell*

*and listen to such stories, they are being overheard by hidden angels. I think that one of those angels has been taking care of me forever.*

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## **Shift in motivation in Jigsaw classroom based on theory of self-perception** **Fomicheva Anastasia**

### **Main idea of cooperation**

Cooperative learning is based on the humanistic approach to understanding the individual. It allows us to go from passive acceptance of knowledge to active and largely independent learning, which is implemented in its framework. In the works of Russian psychologists L. Vygotsky, A. Leontiev D. Elkonin, V. Davydov [3, 5, 8, 12] cooperation principle stands out as one of the fundamental principles of education. Cooperative learning is an expression of personality-oriented direction in pedagogy based on student-active approach.

Learning in cooperation established with the aim to help students check and consolidate their knowledge and if it is not enough - to learn. Learning is not only a function of the teacher, but the aim for the purpose of the student. That is, not only the teacher checks and controls how a particular student has required knowledge, but the whole group and every student begins to bear the responsibility.

It is important that this method of training is estimated to be more than the result of activity, and the effort in its execution, that is, and did well, and slow learners can get the same rate if they are equally sought to perform the task. In the traditional (front) method of teaching "strong" students always win - they quickly grasp, more likely to absorb new material, correctly answer the teacher relies more and more on them. A "weak" students can no longer catch up with them, and the time from time become weaker. Their motivation reduces, as they realize that the efforts are not rewarded.

Cooperative learning is changing this situation - it creates a situation where the success of the group depends on the success of each of its members, and students have the opportunity to teach each other useful knowledge and skills.

Effective learning involves not only the teacher's explanations, but the activity of students in discussion and mastering new material. In order to be successful in today's world requires the ability and desire to learn, as information becomes more quickly updated. That lesson in rallying the class to create a positive atmosphere contribute the main goal - the emergence of the desire to learn, a positive attitude toward school and learning, increase learning motivation.

The cooperation involves joint activities of students and teachers and students together. Effective learning requires active learners themselves: the student must be active participants in the process of learning. Teacher, using various types of support directs the activities of the student in a particular direction. The situation of cooperation implies that the teacher provides the student to solve the problem, but offers no ready way of solving it.

Studies show that almost always learning in interaction rises student's motivation . In classes where teaching methods are used in concert, each student learns because of their own capabilities and thus has a chance to be evaluated on an equal basis with others. If a gifted student spends some effort on the achievement his level and a weak student also spends every effort to reach his level, it would be fair if their efforts (in the group) will be evaluated equally, provided that in both cases, each did what he could. Psychologists who study this approach to learning, have found that, if it is valued the effort that students spend in the group to achieve the overall result, the motivation for all students is much higher than in traditional classrooms.

The teacher takes a new, no less important to the learning process role - organizer of independent cognitive, research and creative activities of students. His task is no longer limited to the transfer of the sum of knowledge and experience accumulated by mankind. It should help students independently to extract useful knowledge, to think critically about the information it receives, to be able to tell, they argue, having the necessary facts to solve problems.

### **Theory of self-perception**

When we observe the actions of the person in certain situations, then assign the causes of this behavior or personality traits and attitudes, or external circumstances and situations. Daryl

Bem [2] suggested that the same mechanism can operate and when we observe and analyze our own behavior. Especially in the cases when our own position seems uncertain and if it is difficult to attribute the behavior to any external circumstances. A similar idea has been laid in the works of William James, on the emergence of emotions [9]. From the standpoint of the theory of self-perception people explain their behavior by the conditions under which it is carried out. It also follows from the fact that the reward is not always a positive effect on motivation. Reward for being a joy so may lead to the fact that people will ascribe their positive emotions awards, and not the fact that the activity is pleasing to him. Experiments E. Dice and R. Ryan revealed overjustification effect [4].

When people do what they like with no incentives or coercion, they attribute this to the love of this activity. External promotion reduces intrinsic motivation, forcing people to explain their behavior to these incentives. At this unexpected reward does not reduce domestic interest, because people continue to attribute their actions inner motives. Praise for good work makes you feel more competent and successful, because the increased internal motivation .Award, which aims to control people and make them believe in what they are trying for the prize, reducing internal justification enjoyable. If you offer students sufficient justification for any task and use rewards and incentives, so that they feel competent, they will have fun solving learning problems and will seek to learn something yourself. If the justification is too high, the desire of children to school can be reduced.

### **Motivation**

Cooperative learning is effective not only for the low-achievers but for the high-achievers too. Just like the other, strong students improve their level, have the opportunity to reinforce learning, and most importantly - they are able to teach others while learning themselves. They increase educational motivation as classmates are beginning to turn to them for help, increases their social significance. Studies show that students who play the role of teachers (to help others better learn the material), and at the same time improve their knowledge and get satisfaction from happening. Studying becomes interesting and self-esteem increases [7]. Learning in cooperation improves the internal locus of control, that is, students are more inclined to assess their progress as a result of their own efforts. Cooperative learning gives students the opportunity to express themselves, which in turn has a positive effect on self-esteem. While having the opportunity to help their classmates, children begin to feel self-importance and become more self-confident.

Many educators and psychologists [1, 6] say that when students are not engaged in learning in interaction, their educational motivation is to be better, smarter than others. It is clear when we talk about students with high academic achievement. For those guys who are not the best, it is harder, because for them in a competitive environment there is little incentive. They know in advance that no matter how hard they try they can not be the best. The result is dissatisfaction and enthusiasm for learning is reduced.

Cooperative learning offers an alternative way of motivation, both for "strong" students and for "weak." In Jigsaw classroom the motivation of students is based on the responsibility they feel in the group, the desire to help each other and share ideas. In addition, when students do not compete anxiety reduces and learning begins to bring great pleasure.

Why is this shift in motivation? According to the theory of self-perception, when the information about our feelings and attitudes seem obscure, when we are not sure of them 100 percent, we tend to draw conclusions from the observation of our own behavior and the situation. How that relates the process of learning? When students are in a competitive environment while learning, the high performing students constantly receive confirmation of their abilities and competence. At the time, as slow learners, in comparison with them, constantly receive signals that they are worse in knowledge the subject, and low scores indicate their low competence.

In addition, it is important overjustification effect. According to this effect, the expected, but not a necessary reward for a particular action or behavior reduces intrinsic motivation. That is, if students are always estimates, including the study of those things that they like and

interesting, as a result they develop a sense that they are not working for the interest and for the sake of evaluation. Therefore, a subject that was interesting at first becomes less interesting if the teacher is no longer constantly reward the student. What is the difference in the Jigsaw classroom? During a joint resolution of the general tasks, each student competes only with itself, with its past achievements. In addition, the lack of assessment evokes intrinsic motivation and interest. As a result of such training is rewarding for every student and motivation increases.

G. Tsukerman [11] suggests that it is useful sometimes to give students again the work that they've done before. Usually this does not happen and, as teaching material has become increasingly complex, the child can not see his own development - as he makes mistakes in new material. So it makes sense to offer students perform the task, which they have done before, and compare the results. Most likely, the results will be better and children will understand how much they have already learned.

Support for the student to search for new modes of action is needed to cultivation of people in self-learning initiative. Suggested to be used not unilaterally active interaction and one-to-active cooperation.

What are the results of using Jigsaw in practice? The Jigsaw method was used in learning of foreign language by students of non-language universities especially in the process of learning grammar [10]. Students received tasks together in groups, in which each member had to study the individual parts, and all the students together - a new theme.

This approach to learning material of one textbook and teacher's explanation is absolutely not enough. Of the 154 students surveyed in the economic-mathematical school, where cooperative learning is used, 92% of students said that the textbook material and explanations of the teacher are not enough, they need more material. Already in elementary school students are turning to additional sources of knowledge, to the references. Independent work on the problem becomes completely familiar and priority activity. In this approach, individual self-study is closely related to the work of the team, which gives positive results both in terms of improved performance, as well as in the development of teamwork skills, self-help and empathy.

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## Gestione dei conflitti, educazione alla cittadinanza e promozione socio-culturale: il ruolo del Cooperative Learning

*Dr. Caterina Foppa Pedretti, dr. Marta Milani*

### Verso una nuova idea di cittadinanza

Nel nostro tempo diviene sempre più rilevante il mutamento di significato e di applicazione delle categorie tradizionali legate alla cittadinanza. Ulrich Beck parla di una «società mondiale del rischio», la cui minaccia si estende dal pericolo di una crisi finanziaria mondiale a quello di una catastrofe climatica e ambientale, fino a quello di un allargarsi delle ramificazioni dei centri criminali e terroristici e a cui spetta di consolidare la lotta contro la povertà e di promuovere la diffusione ed il concreto rispetto dei diritti umani<sup>1</sup>. A fronte di ciò, occorre introdurre il senso di una molteplicità di appartenenze ed attivare un'opera condotta simultaneamente a livello locale e a livello globale in vista di un reale mutamento sociale e culturale, che faccia leva anche sulla maturazione, da parte dei singoli, di un'identità dinamica ed inclusiva e di una cittadinanza «competente» e responsabile a molteplici livelli di partecipazione. Inoltre, diventa sempre più necessario attuare l'ideale che mira ad accogliere uomini e popoli sempre più lontani in un comune progetto di convivenza, rendendoli partecipi del dialogo intorno a quei valori, riassunti da Tzvetan Todorov nei sei capisaldi della razionalità, della giustizia, della democrazia, della libertà individuale, del laicismo, della tolleranza<sup>2</sup>, che, pur avendo fonti ed interpretazioni di tipo locale, veicolano un appello universale<sup>3</sup>.

In tal modo la cittadinanza smette di essere un concetto lineare, collocato su uno sfondo di vita tradizionale ed omogenea, e viene a dispiegarsi in modo dinamico tra il riconoscimento dell'esistenza di un'originaria istanza etica prosociale e il traguardo escatologico di un orizzonte valoriale condiviso da tutti. Su questa linea convergono, con contributi originali, autori quali Emmanuel Lévinas, con il suo primato dell'etica sull'ontologia a favore dell'assunzione della responsabilità e della chiamata al servizio del tu; Zygmunt Bauman, per il quale l'istanza etica prosociale diviene il criterio orientativo dell'agire personale in ambito privato e pubblico e nelle relazioni con gli altri; Armido Rizzi, che guarda ad una nuova laicità quale carattere originario del soggetto etico, conoscenza prima che intende immediatamente la coscienza, il bene, il giusto, la colpa, il pentimento, esperienza dell'intera comunità umana strutturalmente anteriore alla distinzione tra coscienza fondata sulla fede e coscienza fondata sulla ragione; Paul Ricoeur, la cui analisi configura l'orizzonte valoriale condiviso come una sintesi attiva e dinamica conquistata attraverso la continua tensione dialogica ed ermeneutica delle diverse vie e interpretazioni che, ispirate dalla comune vocazione all'agire responsabile, vengono elaborate dai singoli e dai gruppi in base all'oggettivazione e alla socializzazione peculiari dell'esperienza etica stessa.

La nuova idea della cittadinanza, dunque, dovrebbe ispirarsi alle esigenze del riconoscimento e dell'accettazione reciproci, della giustizia, della costruzione della pace, del perdono e dello sforzo condiviso per creare un diverso spazio pubblico ed una visione positiva del futuro. In tal senso, le «relazioni aperte ed interdipendenti»<sup>4</sup> riguardano non soltanto gli individui, i valori, i popoli, gli Stati nel contesto della società mondiale del rischio, ma devono permeare anche l'approccio verso i problemi, da intendere come «pro-vocazione» all'esercizio della responsabilità in vista della realizzazione di un alto livello di cittadinanza consapevole e competente, alla luce dell'ideale ultimo del «federalismo nonviolento». La «politica del dialogo credibile»<sup>5</sup> deve aiutare a

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. U. BECK, *Che cos'è la globalizzazione. Rischi e prospettive della società planetaria* (trad. dal tedesco), Carocci, Roma 2003 (IX ed.; I ed. tedesca 1997); ID., *Un mondo a rischio* (trad. dal tedesco), Einaudi, Torino 2003 (I ed. tedesca 2002); ID., *Conditio humana. Il rischio nell'età globale* (trad. dal tedesco), Laterza, Roma 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. T. TODOROV, *Il nuovo disordine mondiale. Le riflessioni di un cittadino europeo* (trad. dal francese), Garzanti, Milano 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Cfr. *ivi*, p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> Cfr. U. BECK, *Un mondo a rischio* (trad. dal tedesco), cit.

<sup>5</sup> *Ivi*, p. 49.

tradurre la finalità della solidarietà umana ed etica in un concreto progetto politico di crescita comune e di cittadinanza responsabile e propositiva, nell'ambito di un tessuto sociale che incoraggi il pluralismo e l'inclusione come componenti essenziali delle sue istituzioni e del suo spirito culturale. Attraverso un confronto aperto sulle possibilità di costruire un programma condiviso e sulle conseguenze di tale programma per persone di diversa etnia, religione, genere ed orientamento etico o culturale, diviene possibile concepire la nazionalità come destino condiviso. Inoltre, il destino condiviso come parte di una «reciprocità oltre i confini»<sup>6</sup> può favorire l'emergere di una cultura di pace e dei diritti grazie all'affermazione degli elementi che legano il destino di una generazione a quello delle successive e il destino di una nazione a quello dei suoi vicini (e a quello del mondo intero).

### **Il rapporto con l'altro tra giustizia e amicizia sociale**

L'uomo non si realizza al di fuori del conflitto, ma al di là del conflitto, al di là dell'*ostilità* per promuovere l'*ospitalità* (*hostis/hospes*: straniero respinto come nemico/straniero accolto come ospite). L'ospitalità esige più che la giustizia e il rispetto, richiama la reciprocità fondata sulla condivisione, sul dono e sulla bontà/benevolenza/carità. L'esperienza giuridica risolve la vita etica nella lotta per il diritto migliore, ma è frutto di un amore che non è amore, di una virtù (la giustizia) che è rimedio alla mancanza di virtù. Bontà/benevolenza/carità si possono considerare in termini di amicizia potenziale, dinamismo unitivo-oblativo, tensione escatologica, e consentono un perfezionamento umano di tipo razionale, affettivo ed etico.

A livello dell'amicizia sociale è indispensabile confrontarsi con il «terzo», che può configurarsi come *prossimo*, come *tu* e al limite come *amico*: tale presenza stimola il confronto tra l'esperienza giuridica e ciò che la trascende, la giustizia e l'amicizia, allo scopo sia di tutelare l'equità, i diritti e la libertà della collettività, sia di promuovere lo sviluppo di un amore più perfetto, della generosità, della creatività, del servizio universale. La giustizia rappresenta il primo gradino dell'organizzazione della vita collettiva e delle responsabilità dell'io e concilia le potenzialità umanizzanti e personalizzanti dell'amore con il rispetto dei diritti, della libertà, della prossimità di ciascuno. L'amicizia, anche quando è sociale, «potenziale», animata da bontà/benevolenza/carità, rappresenta il legame originario che unisce le persone al di là dell'identità e della differenza, donando senso alla ricerca di giustizia.

Per tale motivo si può parlare della ricerca della pace come «amicizia giusta», che salvaguarda l'unicità di ciascuno e i percorsi del giudizio oggettivo nel pensare all'altro. Nell'equilibrio tra responsabilità personale/intimità di amicizia da un lato ed esercizio della giustizia dall'altro nasce la coscienza responsabile dinanzi al terzo. Esiste dunque uno stretto legame tra la libertà soggettiva e il contenuto dell'agire e tale principio rappresenta il cardine di una più ampia concezione della società, della politica e del vivere civile.

### **Conflitti, agire morale ed educazione alla pace**

La pace è un tema complesso, che fa riferimento ad ampi orizzonti ideali e valoriali e che si conquista attraverso una paziente azione educativa della persona. Brevemente, si possono distinguere le due dimensioni della «piccola pace» e della «grande pace»<sup>7</sup>. La «piccola pace» concerne la dimensione del quotidiano, si riferisce ai rapporti che intercorrono tra i singoli individui e che dovrebbero essere improntati all'accoglienza e alla valorizzazione delle peculiarità di ciascuno, necessita per la sua realizzazione del rispetto nei confronti della diversità e dell'unicità dell'altro, anche e soprattutto nel caso in cui i soggetti possiedano tradizioni culturali e religiose differenti. La «grande pace» riguarda invece il dialogo tra i popoli, che spesso richiede la mediazione da parte di persone illuminate e preparate sul piano educativo e culturale, affinché le

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. A. GUTMANN, *Democratic education*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1999 (II ed. ampliata; I ed. 1987).

<sup>7</sup> La distinzione è operata da Milena Santerini in AA. VV., *L'educazione per una cultura della pace*. Atti del Convegno 17 maggio 2000, Università Cattolica di Milano.



parti imparino a «so-stare» nell'eventuale conflitto che le divide, impegnandosi nell'elaborare un'«etica della risoluzione e della riconciliazione» e nel comporre le reciproche divergenze.

L'educazione della persona, e soprattutto dei giovani, deve muoversi sempre lungo la traiettoria che connette queste due dimensioni, aiutando il soggetto a cogliere nell'interesse, nella cura, nell'apertura all'altro la possibilità e la vocazione ad un'intersoggettività più vasta, fino ad abbracciare tutti i viventi, che insieme partecipano dei valori più alti. La persona, dunque, è il primo centro morale in virtù del quale la pace può nascere e può diffondersi e va educata ad essere protagonista di una pace costruttiva, attiva e propositiva, ma anche critica nei riguardi dei limiti, delle insufficienze e delle arrendevolezza del mondo. La persona e la sua educazione si pongono alla base di ogni rinnovamento sociale e storico-politico in grado di promuovere e di accrescere pace e giustizia.

Gli elementi essenziali alla formazione del singolo alla luce di questa prospettiva si possono così riassumere:

1) *la persona come centro morale*: la coscienza umana, come insegna Emmanuel Levinas, è in grado di sentire e comprendere la legge etica più alta e di assumersi la responsabilità dell'agire morale come agire fondante della vita personale, sociale e storica, da cui dipendono il senso della comunione e della solidarietà interpersonali e la condivisione dei destini e dell'agire di tutti;

2) *la persona e i valori*: se la radice della pace riposa nell'interiorità dell'uomo e necessita di venire educata, occorre rammentare che la vera pace testimonia l'impegno nell'attuazione dei valori più alti, assumendo un carattere dinamico ed evolutivo, eticamente e religiosamente ispirato, i cui risultati non possono che provenire da strategie e mezzi nonviolenti, che spezzino i meccanismi di violenza, ingiustizia, sopraffazione e morte, perché non esistono fini buoni e pacifici che si possano conseguire con mezzi violenti, offensivi, disonesti;

3) *la persona e l'agire pratico*: l'aspirazione alla pace, il servizio ai valori più alti, la ricerca di una realtà rinnovata sono i veri motori dell'agire personale e l'azione diviene autentico strumento di unione, di accoglienza, di solidarietà umana nel momento in cui si apre alle presenza del tu, visto come opportunità creativa e collaborante a favore del bene di tutti. Attraverso questo impegno concreto il soggetto trova la via per uscire dalla propria solitudine e dalla propria finitezza, scoprendo l'autentica prossimità, e tale impegno costituisce un vero percorso di formazione e di autoformazione caratterizzato anche da un afflato religioso, da una progettualità profetica, soprattutto nei riguardi dei giovani. L'agire orientato alla pace non può che nascere dalla fiducia nell'uomo, da quella fiducia che scaturisce dall'intimo personale e che si allarga in direzione universale, fino a comprendere nella sua prassi costruttiva e salvifica tutti gli esseri, ma con la consapevolezza di dover incontrare il sacrificio, la sofferenza, la fragilità e la debolezza, che mirano a riscattare le logiche della potenza e della violenza del mondo.

Pur riconoscendo il fondamentale compito delle istituzioni politiche e giuridiche, a cui spetta la responsabilità del bene comune e della determinazione dei presupposti sui quali impostare la convivenza e la crescita sociali, restano essenziali la ricerca e la promozione dell'adesione delle coscienze individuali e dei gruppi sociali ai valori della pace, della partecipazione e della cittadinanza. In questo senso, l'azione educativa può fare molto, recuperando la centralità della dimensione umana integrale, che fa sintesi delle componenti etiche, culturali, spirituali, religiose della persona. In molti casi i problemi politici non trovano un'adeguata soluzione nell'impiego di mezzi meramente politici. Il ruolo fondativo e ispiratore delle dimensioni morali e culturali nei confronti della sfera civile, sociale e politica merita di essere valorizzato, cogliendone la portata immediatamente educativa. La scommessa per una nuova educazione, che si ispiri alla tensione dell'uomo a realizzare pienamente se stesso nella verità e nella giustizia e che valorizzi il potenziale rigenerante contenuto nei valori d'apertura e di creatività intellettuale e morale, è una delle opportunità più promettenti per nutrire una cultura di pace e di riconciliazione di cui i giovani possano davvero essere protagonisti. Lo scopo, dunque, è promuovere sempre più il passaggio da una mentalità e da una cittadinanza che riproducono le condizioni che alimentano il conflitto e la diffidenza reciproca a quelle di una condizione aperta ed inclusiva, che sappia introdurre i fattori di

cambiamento necessari ad una convivenza civile positiva e pacifica tra i gruppi e tra i popoli. Per questo occorre abbandonare ogni forma di indottrinamento alla violenza e di giustificazione della stessa attraverso la costruzione di stereotipi, la mistificazione della verità, la riproduzione di forme di segregazione. Per alimentare la fiducia nell'altro e gli slanci creativi della pace, infatti, bisogna aiutare le nuove generazioni a conoscere e ad interiorizzare i valori democratici e i fondamenti dell'esistenza comune pur nella tutela delle diversità. Questo è il compito dell'educazione alla pace e alla nonviolenza, la quale sempre, di fronte alle scelte e all'agire, si pone la domanda: «Le mie ragioni sono più importanti/hanno più valore della tua vita?», ponendosi come primo obiettivo quello di migliorare se stessi. La consapevolezza che la persona possa essere protagonista di scelte che contrastino il male e la violenza, afferma Aldo Capitini, grande maestro ed educatore in questo campo, parte dal non «considerare l'uomo, e particolarmente il fanciullo, come un essere che non abbia altro che tendenze alla violenza e al combattimento, da incanalare, trasformare, sublimare: per la religione riconosciamo nell'altro una, per lo meno, eguale tendenza all'unità amore verso tutti gli esseri e perciò riferendoci ad essa, puntando su di essa, l'educazione mira a *confermarla*, a svilupparla»<sup>8</sup>. Cogliendo il legame sotteso alla «piccola pace» e alla «grande pace», il concetto di «apertura al tu-tutti» proposto dall'autore invita a cogliere, nell'interesse, nell'affetto, nella cura dedicati al singolo, la possibilità di un'intersoggettività più vasta, di una propensione all'«ulteriore», fino alla «compresenza» di tutti i viventi, collaboranti nella produzione dei valori essenziali<sup>9</sup>.

Spesso, tuttavia, gli uomini sono divisi dai rispettivi interessi. La pace, invece, è un rischio ed ha un prezzo. Tutti vogliono la pace, ma nessuno vuole pagarne il prezzo e costruirla lentamente ogni giorno. Per questo essa è strettamente legata al perdono. La chiave del perdono è in se stessi, poiché il mondo è segnato dal limite e dal peccato. L'Europa ha saputo riunire, dopo conflitti di secoli e dopo le tragedie del Novecento, i popoli che la costituiscono e che sono stati a lungo profondamente divisi proprio alla luce della sua radice culturale cristiana, che apre alla prospettiva e alla speranza del perdono. Senza giustizia non c'è pace e senza perdono non ci sono né pace, né giustizia. Per giustizia non si intende soltanto la giustizia sociale, ma l'essere giusti, fino alla santità. Lungo questa direzione, allora, la pace diventa davvero un dono concesso dall'alto e cui l'uomo collabora, e non la pace illusoria di chi opprime gli altri.

### **Promozione socio-culturale, cittadinanza democratica ed educazione aperta**

L'educazione aperta costituisce una manifestazione educativa della cittadinanza come destino condiviso e una garanzia della conquista dei diritti, ponendo particolare attenzione alle espressioni pedagogiche e curriculari dell'appartenenza sociale e nazionale intesa come partecipazione ad un progetto comune, attraverso la reciproca formazione delle concezioni dei valori della società e del suo futuro, contribuendo così a creare una più ampia unità sociale e supportando nel contempo le attitudini e le competenze democratiche. Educazione aperta significa sostanzialmente apertura mentale, quale misura della capacità di inclusione e pluralismo, conciliazione progressiva della prassi e degli impegni personali e condivisi con i principi democratici. L'obiettivo democratico e volto alla conquista della pace perseguito dall'educazione aperta consiste anche nell'approfondire la comprensione morale della cittadinanza e dei diritti, coltivando molteplici modalità dell'essere buoni cittadini e significati originali nell'elaborazione e nell'interpretazione dei diritti ed incoraggiando l'accettazione di questa molteplicità da parte della nuova generazione di cittadini, chiamati ad assumere questa stessa varietà come caratteristica del proprio modo di pensare.

La partecipazione e l'impegno civici sono elementi imprescindibili per la legittimazione della democrazia, così come la formazione di cittadini che abbiano una mentalità civicamente e socialmente orientata rappresenta un compito vitale del sistema educativo. Un serio investimento

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<sup>8</sup> A. CAPITINI, *Religione aperta*, in ID., *Scritti filosofici e religiosi* (a cura di M. MARTINI), Fondazione Centro Studi Aldo Capitini, Perugia 1998, p. 560.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. A. CAPITINI, *L'atto di educare*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1951; ID., *Educazione aperta*, 2 voll., La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1967-68 (vol. I, 1967; vol. II, 1968).

nell'educazione civica e la realizzazione di un curriculum sociale che sostenga lo sviluppo di una *forma mentis* sensibile alla dimensione pubblica e comunitaria e alla tutela dei diritti di ciascuno rappresentano le premesse per migliorare i risultati inerenti la formazione alla cittadinanza, in termini di conoscenze civiche, competenze e comportamenti sociali adeguati. L'educazione aperta, quale opportunità di incrementare il pensiero aperto, fa affidamento sulla concreta valorizzazione delle diversità presenti nella classe o nel gruppo per mezzo di opportune attività pedagogiche e curriculari (mediazione, negoziazione, *cooperative learning*, metodi per la trasformazione creativa dei conflitti)<sup>10</sup>. L'impiego della diversità attraverso strategie positive può aiutare ad esaltarne i significati etnici e culturali, a supportare la collaborazione, la partecipazione e la democrazia e ad assicurare il pieno rispetto di tutti i diritti fondamentali, riconosciuti nella loro stretta interconnessione.

L'uso della diversità per sviluppare le menti e i cuori dei giovani in senso democratico costituisce perciò una delle pratiche essenziali dell'educazione aperta. Al fine di guadagnare i valori della diversità e dell'apertura, il sistema educativo deve diventare capace di integrare le prospettive, gli orientamenti, i problemi, le persone e i loro diritti. Ciò implica due elementi essenziali, tra loro interrelati: innanzi tutto, l'implementazione dev'essere ottenuta attraverso l'esercizio di molteplici facoltà personali, cioè la pedagogia e il curriculum formativo che intendono avere un impatto sulla percezione e sul comportamento dei soggetti devono combinare la cura dei fattori cognitivi con quella per le dimensioni emozionale e sociale, perché tutte queste componenti – psicologica, cognitiva, emozionale, affettiva, sociale – interagiscono nella formazione delle percezioni e delle attitudini cooperative e democratiche; in secondo luogo, l'interpretazione contestuale dell'educazione aperta dovrebbe costantemente fondarsi sulla comprensione dell'educazione come sforzo ed impegno di tipo anche politico, la cui pratica lega insieme le richieste di diversità, conoscenza, comprensione, riconoscimento, accoglienza dell'altro, ne incoraggia la sussistenza e lo sviluppo e corrobora lo scambio politico tra una molteplicità di *backgrounds*, opinioni, prospettive, aspettative, quale effettivo strumento pedagogico ed educativo e quale opportunità per cogliere, nella contingenza pratica, l'essenza trascendente e universale del diritto. In questo senso, l'educazione civica è chiamata a provvedere, da un lato, un profondo e serio coinvolgimento a favore della democrazia e del diritto, prevenendo l'erosione degli stessi grazie al passaggio da una conoscenza formale dei principi e delle istituzioni che ne regolano il funzionamento e la tutela ad un'effettiva e personale interiorizzazione dei valori che ne sostanziano il significato e, dall'altro lato, ad elaborare un orizzonte comune ai vari gruppi sociali, incentivando la familiarità, gli scambi interpersonali e le relazioni positive tra i membri delle diverse comunità e costruendo, in un assiduo confronto e in un'attiva tensione verso prospettive più alte, una sensibilità condivisa sulla cittadinanza responsabile, i diritti umani, la democrazia, la cultura della pace, la crescita umana e civile della persona, dei gruppi e dei popoli.

### **Cooperative Learning: una strategia per lo sviluppo dell'educazione aperta e la gestione dei conflitti**

I conflitti rappresentano una parte significativa e strutturale della vita. Poiché non è possibile eliminarli (specie nelle società complesse e multiculturali)<sup>11</sup>, è necessario appellarsi a soluzioni che cerchino di far uscire uomini e popoli dal circolo della violenza e dell'odio facendo riferimento al significato della convivenza, della solidarietà, del rispetto reciproco e che, proprio per tale ragione, richiedono un paziente lavoro educativo.

Il *Cooperative Learning* oltre ad essere un metodo di insegnamento-apprendimento dove la variabile principale è la cooperazione, è altresì una metodologia di apprendimento le cui caratteristiche ben si sposano con le finalità di un'educazione aperta. Esso, fondandosi sul lavoro in

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<sup>10</sup> Per una rassegna delle principali strategie educative interculturali e dei metodi di gestione positiva dei conflitti si veda, tra gli altri, A. PORTERA, P. DUSI (a cura di), *Gestione dei conflitti e mediazione interculturale*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2005.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

piccoli gruppi eterogenei<sup>12</sup>, facilita i momenti di confronto, ascolto, dialogo, mediazione e condivisione spianando la strada alla formazione di quell'*habitus* democratico ed irenico che sa coniugare uguaglianze e differenze offrendo ad ognuno pari opportunità<sup>13</sup>. L'obiettivo è la costruzione di quelle che T.J. Sergiovanni definisce «comunità che apprendono, all'interno delle quali l'egocentrismo cede il passo alla capacità di prendersi cura degli altri e le esigenze dell'Io si armonizzano con quelle del Noi»<sup>14</sup>.

Fondandosi poi su modelli di apprendimento induttivo, di stili di pensiero, di intelligenza e attività pratiche e creative, il lavoro di gruppo cooperativo risulta maggiormente ancorato alla realtà del mondo quotidiano (*learning by doing*<sup>15</sup>) rispetto a metodi deduttivi astratti (di matrice tardo gentiliana) che privilegiano lezioni frontali, individuali, lontani dalla vita reale e demotivanti. Cinque gli elementi base che caratterizzano tale approccio<sup>16</sup>: 1) *interdipendenza positiva*, ovvero quella specifica condizione nella quale gli individui sono legati in modo tale che vi è una correlazione positiva tra il conseguimento dell'obiettivo di un individuo e quello degli altri<sup>17</sup>; 2) *interazione promozionale faccia a faccia*: il chiamarsi per nome, il guardarsi negli occhi; ovvero lo spettro di tutti quegli atteggiamenti e comportamenti che contribuiscono a creare un clima sociale costruttivo e democratico; 3) *insegnamento diretto delle abilità sociali*: la consapevolezza che la società in cui viviamo è una realtà complessa fa emergere la necessità di costruire comunità in cui ognuno si metta in gioco nel proprio ruolo e con le peculiari responsabilità<sup>18</sup>. Saper fare lavoro d'*équipe* è fondamentale per lo sviluppo di una comunità che diventi *community of learners*<sup>19</sup>, in cui la conoscenza concettuale dell'abilità si sviluppa e sostanzia con l'applicazione, l'esperienza e la riflessione sulla stessa, e si conclude con una possibile modificazione della teoria dell'azione-esperienza; 4) *formazione di piccoli gruppi eterogenei*, ossia la necessità di contenere l'ampiezza dei gruppi per diversi ordini di ragioni<sup>20</sup>: più aumentano le persone, più si incrementano le possibilità di contributi che però possono non essere funzionali al raggiungimento dell'obiettivo. Non solo: agire in un gruppo numeroso presuppone elevate capacità di relazione e tempi distesi di lavoro e talvolta, data l'inesperienza e la demotivazione di alcuni partecipanti, si assiste – come insegna la psicologia sociale – all'effetto Ringelman, definito anche *social loafing* o disimpegno del gruppo; 5) *verifica e valutazione individuale e di gruppo*: sono due i momenti di revisione individuati dai fratelli Johnson<sup>21</sup>: il *monitoring*, da realizzarsi in itinere, ed il *processing*, che si compie a conclusione dei lavori. Il *monitoring* fa riferimento a tutte le azioni efficaci per la verifica

<sup>12</sup> Scrive a questo proposito S. Kagan: «gruppi eterogenei offrono maggiori opportunità per un mutuo sostegno e insegnamento; migliorano le relazioni e l'integrazione tra i sessi e le razze; rendono più semplice la gestione dell'aula perché avere in ogni gruppo uno studente con alto rendimento è come disporre di un «aiuto insegnante» per ogni tre studenti» (S. KAGAN, *L'apprendimento cooperativo: L'approccio strutturale*, Edizioni Lavoro, Roma 2000, pp. 71-72).

<sup>13</sup> S. LAMBERTI, *Cooperative Learning: una metodologia per la gestione efficace dei conflitti*, Cedam, Padova 2006.

<sup>14</sup> T.J. SERGIOVANNI, *Costruire comunità nelle scuole*, LAS, Roma 2000, p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> L'espressione «*learning by doing*» si associa a John Dewey e agli esponenti della «*progressive education*», le cui tendenze dominarono la scuola americana nei primi anni del '900. Secondo una prospettiva pragmatica e progressista, si tentava di «portare» la scuola nel mondo reale rendendola capace di fornire le informazioni ed i valori necessari per i tempi di cambiamento.

<sup>16</sup> D.B. STROTHER, *Cooperative Learning: Fad or foundation for learning?*, Phi Delta Kappan, Bloomington 1990.

<sup>17</sup> M. DEUTSCH, «Cooperation and trust: Some theoretical notes», in M.R. JONES (ed.), *Nebraska symposium of motivation*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 1962.

<sup>18</sup> In termini tecnici si parla di «*we-ness*» e «*giving*» per indicare l'importanza dell'azione cooperativa ed in particolare del contributo dato agli altri ai fini dell'aumento del senso di autostima e della capacità di pensiero cognitivo di ordine superiore. La costruzione del «senso del noi» (*we-ness*) è un punto alto dell'apprendimento cooperativo, dotato di un potenziale civico e cognitivo straordinario, di cogente importanza per il rafforzamento dell'autostima e dell'eterostima, nonché preconditione della prosocialità e dell'altruismo. Per approfondimenti cfr. G. CHIARI, *Metodi e modelli didattici*, in «Scuola Democratica», 1997, 2-3, pp. 125-154.

<sup>19</sup> A.L. COSTA, B. KALLICK, «Costruire organizzazioni che apprendono», in A.L. COSTA., B. KALLICK, *Le disposizioni della mente. Come educarle insegnando*, Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, Roma 2007, p. 420.

<sup>20</sup> S. LAMBERTI, *Apprendimento cooperativo e educazione interculturale. Percorsi e attività per la scuola primaria*, Erickson, Trento 2010.

<sup>21</sup> D.W. JOHNSON, R.T. JOHNSON, *Joining together and alone*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs 1997.

che si possono mettere in atto durante le fasi di apprendimento. Il suo valore sta nel fatto che consente di rilevare miglioramenti e difficoltà durante lo svolgersi dell'atto apprenditivo sia in relazione alla sfera socio relazionale, che a quella cognitiva<sup>22</sup>. Per quanto concerne il *processing*, invece, esso è il momento dedicato alla revisione che avviene al termine del lavoro di gruppo; per essere pienamente efficace, dovrebbe riferirsi ai comportamenti e alle modalità di lavoro e di apprendimento dei partecipanti senza l'espressione di giudizi di merito o valutazioni sulla persona.

Come mette in luce S. Lamberti<sup>23</sup>, l'uso del *Cooperative Learning*, attraverso i cinque elementi fondamentali e le strutture cooperative specifiche<sup>24</sup>, aiuta il singolo a potenziarsi senza perdersi nel gruppo. L'eterogeneità, cifra distintiva di questa metodologia, consente infatti la valorizzazione di ognuno attraverso il dialogo, lo scambio, l'incontro ma anche lo scontro, per far sì che ogni persona viva esperienze significative, educative e formative e diventi un cittadino/a capace di interagire costruttivamente in società complesse, multietniche e multiculturali come quelle odierne.

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<sup>22</sup> Y. SHARAN, S. SHARAN, *Gli alunni fanno ricerca*, Erickson, Trento 1998.

<sup>23</sup> S. LAMBERTI, *Apprendimento cooperativo e educazione interculturale*, cit.

<sup>24</sup> Per una rassegna delle principali strutture cooperative cfr. S. KAGAN, *L'apprendimento cooperativo*, cit.

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*Dialogo interreligioso ed educazione alla cittadinanza e alla pace a partire da Gerusalemme*

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La componente religiosa rappresenta, soprattutto oggi, un elemento culturale essenziale nel perseguimento di un dialogo e di una convivenza significativi tra soggetti e tra popoli di tradizioni diverse, sebbene essa sia talvolta percepita più come un fattore di tensione e di scontro che di pacificazione e di potenziale integrazione tra i protagonisti. Anche con specifico riferimento alla Terra Santa, le prospettive del dialogo, della pace e dell'educazione alla cittadinanza sembrano essere, da un lato, soltanto un'utopia che sfugge ad ogni possibile reale implementazione e, dall'altro lato, rappresentano un tema "caldo", che attende soluzioni urgenti e sempre più necessarie. Questa situazione paradossale è spesso il risultato della difficoltà di tradurre i valori, le tradizioni e le risorse del dialogo interreligioso e dell'educazione alla cittadinanza e alla pace nell'esperienza pratica di una terra considerata santa da tre religioni, ma profondamente segnata dal lungo e drammatico conflitto tra due popoli. Il conflitto oppone in effetti due popoli e tre religioni che, in passato, hanno spesso coabitato in modo pacifico. Due popoli, tre lingue almeno, tre religioni divise in diverse confessioni. Tre culture d'origine - l'ebraica, la greco-latina, l'araba - immerse nel loro isolamento e spesso nutrite d'ignoranza dell'altro. L'ebreo, il greco-latino, l'arabo sono strumentalizzati, per meglio alimentare la diffidenza o, in tempo di crisi, l'odio reciproco.

Gerusalemme ha nella Bibbia la missione di essere la madre di tutti i popoli. "Pregate per la pace di Gerusalemme" (Ps. 122,6), così diceva il salmista più di tremila anni fa. Soltanto per Gerusalemme, fra tutte le città della terra, è invocato il dono della pace. Perché Gerusalemme si situa in Asia all'incrocio del Mediterraneo, dell'Africa e dell'Occidente. La sua popolazione, venuta da un centinaio di Paesi del mondo, affonda le sue radici nel profondo dell'umanità. Vero microcosmo, Israele è un popolo mediano, la cui mediazione potrebbe annunciare la nascita di un uomo nuovo e di una umanità infine riconciliata con se stessa. È l'ordine che danno Mosè, Gesù e Maometto nelle Scritture, nel Nuovo Testamento e nel Corano. "Pace e giustizia si abbracceranno", canta il salmo 85. La riconciliazione non sarà possibile se ciascuno non si aprirà al perdono e non abbandonerà la pretesa di essere l'unico amante di Gerusalemme. Questo è il prezzo della pace.

*Statuto del dialogo interculturale ed interreligioso*

Come sottolinea padre Frederic Manns, docente di Egesi neotestamentaria presso lo Studium Biblicum Franciscanum di Gerusalemme<sup>1</sup>, il dialogo, e soprattutto il dialogo interreligioso, si può considerare come un pellegrinaggio, un invito ad uscire dal proprio mondo e dalle proprie certezze per incontrare l'altro e la sua esperienza di fede, per scoprire il comune desiderio di raggiungere la Verità, cercando la crescita spirituale di ciascuno e proponendosi non un mero interesse intellettuale, ma soteriologico. Inoltre, l'apertura al dialogo non deve essere presentata soltanto come una conquista del mondo moderno, ma occorre coglierne la radice in alcune delle più genuine esperienze cristiane, soprattutto in Oriente: l'esperienza dei commercianti europei sulla via della seta, i quali hanno portato il Cristianesimo fino in Cina; il tentativo di S. Francesco di avvicinare pacificamente i musulmani durante le crociate; il caso dei giudeo-cristiani di Alessandria che si sono confrontati con successo con la cultura ellenistica.

Il dialogo è una "pro-vocazione" all'esercizio della responsabilità storica e sociale ed è "una competenza ed uno strumento" che devono essere sviluppati e incrementati al fine di favorire la conoscenza e la comprensione reciproche, soprattutto in quei contesti in cui convivono culture e religioni diverse. Perciò, come si è detto, esso ha una funzione soteriologica, ma anche un valore

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. F. MANNS, *Il dialogo ecumenico ed interreligioso in Terra Santa*, lezione tenuta presso l'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, il 16 febbraio 2008, nell'ambito della I ed. del Corso interdisciplinare ed internazionale di Alta Formazione *Per una cultura di pace in Terra Santa*.

strategico e pratico, quale mezzo per costruire un'alleanza di lealtà e fiducia, una "nuova alleanza di speranze", finalizzata a raggiungere insieme tutto ciò che il singolo non può da solo conquistare<sup>2</sup>.

Oggi l'impegno del dialogo si è spinto verso nuove frontiere e vede aprirsi ulteriori positive opportunità, ma deve anche misurarsi con problemi sempre più numerosi e pressanti, come quelli relativi alle conquiste della scienza e della tecnica, alla difesa della sacralità della vita umana e della sua dignità, all'affermazione della giustizia, della pace, della libertà, alla tutela dei diritti umani, alla salvaguardia del creato, questioni che implicano risvolti etici di grande complessità. Il dialogo rappresenta perciò un processo, un cammino reale delle coscienze nella loro diversità verso un punto ideale che è il riconoscimento universale della verità etica, almeno negli ambiti di maggiore rilevanza. Tutti siamo in cammino verso il consenso: né già arrivati né al punto di partenza, ma in una situazione in cui l'incontro, il dialogo delle culture, è insieme necessario e possibile, irrinunciabile e percorribile. Il dialogo richiede la distinzione e l'integrazione di due momenti: da un lato, la determinazione di una base comune, e su questo versante risulta essenziale il lavoro delle istituzioni politiche, giuridiche e religiose; dall'altro lato, la ricerca del consenso delle coscienze, per colmare attraverso l'impegno educativo lo scollamento tra il livello istituzionale (coscienza dei diritti dell'uomo, del rispetto ecc.), che va gradualmente maturando in molteplici contesti, e il livello di coscienza vissuta (non soltanto nel senso della coerenza, ma anche in quello del riconoscimento convinto), che resta in molti casi di grande incertezza. Ciò che tuttavia risulta essenziale, afferma Armido Rizzi nella sua riflessione sul nuovo concetto di laicità, "è la convinzione che non c'è nessuna cultura (religiosa o laica) che non possa dare il suo contributo positivo alla scrittura di questo codice etico ideale, e d'altra parte non c'è nessuna cultura che possa considerarsene il luogo integrale"<sup>3</sup>.

### *Culture, religioni e dialogo in Terra Santa*

La realtà della Terra Santa sintetizza la particolare condizione di una terra, attualmente divisa da un muro, di due popoli, israeliano e palestinese, che da oltre sessant'anni cercano una strada di pacifica convivenza, e di tre religioni, Ebraismo, Cristianesimo e Islam, anch'esse frammentate al loro interno in molteplici correnti spirituali, tradizioni e culti.

In Terra Santa, sia in Israele sia nei Territori dell'Autonomia palestinese, la religione è determinante, sia in senso strutturale, sia in senso storico, culturale e umano. È raro trovarvi traccia di elementi laici, nel senso introdotto in Occidente dalla Modernità, dove Stato e Chiesa sono tenuti distinti e dove la fede è solo un aspetto più o meno rilevante della realtà sociale. In Terra Santa, dove tutte le anime culturali e religiose si trovano rappresentate, la religione entra in tutti gli aspetti della vita quotidiana, pubblica e privata, e la permea in profondità. Così la maggior parte della popolazione continua a regolare e a scandire la propria esistenza sulla base di un *ethos* religioso consolidato, tipico dei vari gruppi d'appartenenza e profondamente interiorizzato dai membri di ciascuna comunità. La componente religiosa costituisce quasi sempre un elemento essenziale nella costruzione dell'identità personale e tende ad esprimersi in alcuni tratti specifici, distintivi e ricorrenti, tra cui per esempio, la partecipazione attiva alla preghiera rituale e alle celebrazioni, il modo di vestire, la scelta di esporre e di indossare oggetti e simboli specifici del proprio credo confessionale, la scelta dei nomi dei figli. Inoltre, ogni individuo riceve alla nascita un numero di identità accanto al quale è posta una sigla che definisce la sua fede di appartenenza. Essa diventa dunque parte integrante della sua identità civile: ciascuno è definito e considerato cristiano, ebreo o musulmano indipendentemente dal fatto che sia praticante o meno. Infine, all'autorità religiosa vengono delegati molti aspetti della vita del Paese. Un esempio significativo è rappresentato dal matrimonio: non esistono né in Palestina né in Israele matrimoni civili, il matrimonio è sempre religioso con notevoli conseguenze a livello sociale. Si pensi alla drammaticità che assumono in un

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. J. SACKS, *The dignity of difference. How to avoid the clash of civilization*, Continuum, London-New York 2003, pp. 216; ID., *To heal a fractured world. The ethics of responsibility*, Continuum, London 2005, pp. 280.

<sup>3</sup> A. RIZZI, *Laicità. Un'idea da ripensare*, Pazzini, Villa Verucchio 2004, p. 59.



contesto simile i matrimoni misti: il fatto di sposare una persona appartenente ad una fede diversa è considerato un abbandono della propria comunità.

In questo contesto, la convergenza, a partire dagli anni Venti-Trenta del secolo scorso, del movimento sionista di tipo laico-nazionale con fermenti religioso-messianici ha contribuito al configurarsi di Israele come Stato ebraico, in cui l'obiettivo democratico ispirato a libertà, giustizia e uguaglianza di diritti convive con una qualificazione ebraica "soddisfatta sia integrando nelle proprie strutture amministrative una componente religiosa, sia escludendo "simbolicamente" altri elementi, a iniziare dalla Costituzione (sostituita dalla presenza di un certo numero di leggi fondamentali), che sarebbero potuti apparire "concorrenziali" alla presenza, per lo meno implicita, della Torà come suprema norma della vita collettiva ebraica<sup>4</sup>. Inoltre, i movimenti radicali di messianismo territoriale, che esaltano il legame popolo-terra (movimenti etnico-messianici) e concepiscono il rapporto con la terra come possesso inalienabile, operano per l'integrale ebraicizzazione dei "luoghi simbolo ebraici". Perciò, il messianismo territoriale costituisce "un fattore che secolarizza obiettivamente la religione trasformandola in un'ideologia politica"<sup>5</sup>.

Purtroppo, in tutte le espressioni religiose si annida il rischio del fondamentalismo, cioè di quell'atteggiamento che tende ad assolutizzare la propria verità considerandola come la Verità e che si esprime in tendenze e orientamenti ultraconservatori, integralisti e rigidi nelle interpretazioni delle fonti e delle tradizioni religiose, sospettosi e chiusi verso gli influssi esterni e, talvolta, intolleranti ed esclusivi anche verso le correnti alternative interne ad una stessa manifestazione religiosa<sup>6</sup>. Il pericolo del fondamentalismo sussiste sempre laddove un fedele o un gruppo caratterizzato da una comune esperienza religiosa ritengono di detenere la Verità e di dover lottare contro chi sembra poter mettere in crisi tale convinzione. È evidente che le posizioni fondamentaliste risultano in serio contrasto con i motivi ispiratori di una cittadinanza che ambisce a strutturarsi in modo aperto e competente su molteplici livelli d'appartenenza e d'azione, facendo appello al consenso propriamente etico conseguito attraverso il dialogo tra le diverse culture, nell'ambito di quel processo dinamico che appunto si snoda tra il riconoscimento dell'originaria istanza etica prosociale e l'attingimento escatologico di un orizzonte valoriale condiviso da tutti.

Lo Stato di Israele, pur avendo la vocazione di garantire una patria agli ebrei, è essenzialmente democratico e garantisce a tutti i cittadini il riconoscimento dei diritti civili e sociali fondamentali. In questo contesto il principale problema concerne l'identità dei cittadini, specialmente delle minoranze non ebraiche poiché, mancando un concetto di laicità di tipo occidentale, l'appartenenza religiosa definisce anche l'appartenenza sociale, culturale e civile della persona. La fede che ciascuno professa, quindi, ha una chiara funzione pubblica e civile. Questo non comporta che tutti i cittadini debbano essere praticanti e osservanti, ma significa che lo Stato ha come scopo primario quello di consentire agli ebrei di vivere da ebrei nel loro contesto. La pratica religiosa è secondaria: ci sono moltissimi atei in Israele, proprio come accade nelle nostre società occidentali, ma sono comunque ebrei. Anche se non credono in Dio, molti osservano lo *Yom Kippur* e festeggiano la Pasqua per esprimere la loro appartenenza al popolo di Israele.

Nei territori palestinesi, segnati da una grave frammentazione territoriale e sociale, la situazione è invece più delicata, mancando spesso i quadri sociali e professionali intermedi e non essendo ancora garantita un'adeguata assistenza socio-sanitaria. Il perdurare del conflitto aggrava la fragilità della situazione. Mentre nello Stato di Israele la Chiesa svolge una funzione soprattutto ecclesiale e pastorale, in Palestina essa assolve anche molti dei compiti propri dello Stato sociale: offre lavoro, assicura l'educazione e la formazione scolastiche, garantisce l'assistenza sanitaria ed

<sup>4</sup> P. STEFANI, "Il fondamentalismo e l'ebraismo", in A. ALES BELLO, L. MESSINESE, A. MOLINARO (a cura di), *Fondamento e fondamentalismi. Filosofia, teologia, religioni*, Città Nuova, Roma 2004, pp. 393-394.

<sup>5</sup> *Ivi*, pp. 395-396.

<sup>6</sup> Per un esame più approfondito della questione del fondamentalismo nell'etica, nella filosofia e nelle diverse religioni, a confronto anche con il tema del fondamento, il quale mette in luce, attraverso un processo logico regressivo, ciò che sta alla base e, dunque, giustifica il senso ultimo della realtà, secondo l'aspirazione dell'uomo a cercare il nucleo profondo in cui le diverse e parziali verità confluiscono, si veda A. ALES BELLO, L. MESSINESE, A. MOLINARO (a cura di), *Fondamento e fondamentalismi. Filosofia teologia religioni*, cit.

economica ai soggetti e alle categorie sociali più deboli. In questo contesto, l'autorità religiosa rappresenta anche un importante riferimento sociale. In effetti, la Chiesa è abituata da secoli a vivere nel mondo islamico e ad avere relazioni con esso, anche attraverso le sue strutture - le scuole soprattutto, che sono molto importanti non solo per preservare l'identità cristiana, ma anche per sviluppare il dialogo col mondo musulmano.

Le difficoltà, le sofferenze e i traumi che attraversano la storia dei popoli che abitano la Terra Santa sottraggono spesso energie e motivazione all'impegno per il dialogo. Come si è accennato, la religione è particolarmente legata all'identità individuale e sociale, è una manifestazione ed un'affermazione del sé, ma è anche un canale di espressione del senso di vulnerabilità personale e del sentirsi sotto pressione. Nel Medio Oriente questo fenomeno è particolarmente intenso: ciascuno si sente vulnerabile e minacciato e perciò è spesso più difficile in questo contesto aprirsi all'altro ed affermare la comune umanità non soltanto attraverso il riconoscimento del fatto che ogni essere umano è creato a immagine di Dio, ma anche grazie al fatto che tutte le religioni monoteistiche sostengono il valore della pace come ideale della società umana e considerano la violenza e la guerra come manifestazioni indesiderate. Le diverse fedi, se intese nella loro genuinità e nella loro vocazione profonda, sono portatrici di risorse di riconciliazione e di pacificazione e non rappresentano quasi mai la sola o la principale causa delle incomprensioni e dei conflitti, né costituiscono di per sé un fattore di rischio in questo senso. In Terra Santa esistono anche molte iniziative di dialogo interreligioso condotte a diversi livelli e ciascuna ha il proprio significato e la propria importanza. Anche quelle che si realizzano a livello ufficiale ed istituzionale devono essere supportate da un capillare lavoro di base. Come precisa David Rosen, "il dialogo interreligioso in Terra Santa deve essere testimonianza di una prospettiva in cui la religione non è vista come parte del problema, bensì come parte della soluzione. Anche la leadership politica deve prendere seriamente in considerazione la religione come un elemento costruttivo nell'ambito di un processo di riconciliazione, con il preciso intento di affermare che è soltanto attraverso il rispetto delle proprie tradizioni e di quelle degli altri che si potrà creare un clima in cui la pace possa effettivamente concretizzarsi e fiorire"<sup>7</sup>.

Si tratta di costruire una vera cultura di pace e di raggiungere una "politica del dialogo credibile"<sup>8</sup>, stabilendo una relazione più efficace tra l'approccio teorico e la realtà concreta degli eventi e sviluppando delle strategie culturali e politiche efficaci per favorire lo sviluppo umano e la responsabilità civile in una società pluralista e multireligiosa come la Terra Santa. La consapevolezza critica deve aprirsi ad una seria riconsiderazione del ruolo della religione e della politica, non soltanto nel loro ambiguo sincretismo e nella loro coesistenza sovente problematica, ma anche nelle loro risorse positive, al fine di costruire un'autentica cittadinanza di pace.

A questo proposito, nelle realtà che sono attraversate da situazioni acute di conflitto o di tensione, una delle principali sfide consiste nel promuovere il passaggio da una "cittadinanza belligerante"<sup>9</sup> ad una "cittadinanza di pace" attraverso un'"educazione aperta", che trova riscontro nel corrispettivo inglese "expansive education"<sup>10</sup>. Essa costituisce un prezioso strumento per costruire una cultura della pace condivisa e giungere ad una nuova conquista di democrazia, diritti, libertà, giustizia nelle istituzioni pubbliche nel contesto di una società complessa, multiculturale e multireligiosa. Infatti, "l'educazione aperta rappresenta la via di cui il sistema educativo può servirsi

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<sup>7</sup> D. ROSEN, *Faithfulness to tradition and peacemaking in the Middle East*, in [www.rabbidavidrosen.net/articles.htm](http://www.rabbidavidrosen.net/articles.htm), May 2002, p. 7 [traduzione mia].

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. U. BECK, *The reinvention of politics. Rethinking modernity in the global social order*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1997, pp. 206; ID., *Democracy without enemies*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1998, pp. 189; ID., *Living in world risk society*, Giappichelli, Torino 2008, pp. 256; ID., *World at risk*, Polity Press, Cambridge 2009, pp. 269.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. D. BAR-TAL, *The Rocky Road toward Peace. Societal beliefs in times of intractable conflict. The Israeli case* (in ebraico), The Hebrew University Press, Jerusalem 1996; ID., *The rocky road toward peace. Beliefs on Conflict in Israeli Textbooks*, in "Journal of Peace Research", 1998, 6, pp. 723-742; ID., *Societal beliefs in times of intractable conflict: The Israeli case*, in "The International Journal of Conflict Management", 1998, 1, pp. 22-50.

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. S. R. BEN-PORATH, *Citizenship under Fire. Democratic Education in Times of Conflict*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2009 (I ed. 2006), pp. 159.

per contribuire alla realizzazione di una società democratica impegnata per la pace e preparata ad affrontare gli ostacoli che si trovano lungo il percorso che conduce ad essa. Tale modello si basa su un concetto di cittadinanza che prende in considerazione le sfide create da uno stato di conflitto e le incorpora nelle forme esistenti di educazione civica e democratica. Operare per un rafforzamento dell'impegno nei confronti dei valori strettamente connessi alla democrazia e alla pace, specialmente nell'ambito di Paesi coinvolti in situazioni di tensione e di conflitto e costretti ad affrontare minacce alla loro sicurezza, può servire come investimento a lungo termine nel futuro della democrazia.

In un Paese e in una società che sopportano un conflitto prolungato e sono in cerca di una via di pace, pur senza sacrificare i compiti e le strutture democratici, il modello dell'educazione aperta intende rispondere pedagogicamente (ossia, pazientemente e in modo aperto) alle tensioni e alle sfide che il contesto problematico crea. Nei momenti di conflitto, i *leaders* possono finire per rinunciare ai principi e alle pratiche democratici allo scopo di rispondere immediatamente ed efficacemente ai bisogni di sicurezza. L'educazione aperta può offrire a tali difficoltà che coinvolgono l'ordine democratico un modello civico costruttivo. Quando si adoperano per il raggiungimento della pace, i *leaders* lavorano per superare la reciproca diffidenza e per dissipare i timori dei diversi gruppi e dei rispettivi sostenitori; la preparazione degli educatori in termini di attitudini e conoscenze riguardo all'educazione aperta può supportare questo sforzo politico<sup>11</sup>. L'educazione aperta, infatti, deve rappresentare lo sforzo di preservare la democrazia in una società democratica coinvolta in un conflitto prolungato. In questo senso la sfida consiste nell'includere alcuni pressanti bisogni sociali, alcune aspettative e tendenze che, nei momenti di tensione e di conflitto, tutelano le finalità della durata, della stabilità e della sopravvivenza, all'interno di una teoria democratica dell'educazione e di un concetto democratico dell'educazione civica, coltivando attitudini e competenze considerate prerequisiti essenziali di uno stabile ordinamento democratico.

In tal modo, la prospettiva della pace e dei diritti assume una specifica e concreta identità, contro la tendenza, comune soprattutto laddove il conflitto e la guerra divengono una realtà crescente e perdurante, a sviluppare prospettive che assumono il conflitto come un elemento normale della vita sociale. E la cultura della pace e dei diritti diventa una dimensione dotata di caratteristiche positive e sostanziali, non un ideale utopico, che esiste soltanto nel mondo delle idee, o un obiettivo limitato, che risponde soltanto a significati e ad avvenimenti urgenti attraverso una concezione ristretta della pace come "risoluzione dei conflitti" e "riduzione della violenza". Contrariamente a questo approccio minimalista, che può comunque offrire alcuni specifici ed originali strumenti per l'educazione alla pace e al rispetto dei diritti umani, l'effettiva e condivisa cultura di pace dovrebbe essere il risultato di un approccio costruttivo che sostenga, attraverso l'educazione aperta, le condizioni sociali in grado di generare una *pace positiva*, la quale fa riferimento all'esistenza di pratiche e relazioni economiche, culturali, intellettuali, umane e politiche che contribuiscono al benessere globale dei cittadini, integrando tutte le dimensioni esistenziali<sup>12</sup>, fino all'estremo suggestivo orizzonte della ricostruzione dei rapporti interpersonali e sociali come rapporti etici e nonviolenti.

#### *Fondamenti della pace, riconciliazione e nonviolenza nelle tradizioni religiose monoteiste*

Il dialogo interculturale ed interreligioso dev'essere colto non soltanto nel suo significato filosofico e teologico, ma anche per il contributo che può recare al rafforzamento dell'eredità di valori umani, sapienza, solidarietà, compassione che tutte le religioni condividono. Tale sensibilità favorirà il riconoscimento e la difesa di alcuni importanti diritti umani, civili, religiosi e culturali, il raggiungimento di soluzioni condivise per problemi universali, l'esercizio di una cittadinanza attiva e responsabile. Ciò fa emergere l'influenza che gli approcci culturali e religiosi esercitano sugli atteggiamenti della vita quotidiana e civile.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ivi*, p. 4 (traduzione mia).

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. J. GALTUNG, *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research*, in "Journal of Peace Research", 1969, 3, pp. 167-191.

Ebrei, cristiani e musulmani, in quanto credenti e in quanto cittadini di una società civile, possono condividere tra loro e con i non credenti responsabilità e compiti per il bene comune. Benché nate dall'unica tradizione abramica, le tre comunità hanno prevalentemente tenuto, nel corso dei millenni, un reciproco atteggiamento di diffidenza e di esclusivismo, sviluppando sistemi dottrinali e scuole di pensiero a volte molto differenti. A parte alcuni esempi di vero dialogo, solo a partire dal XX secolo, grazie a protagonisti come Louis Massignon, Jules Isaac e Papa Giovanni XXIII, si è compiuta una vera svolta che ha avuto nel Concilio Vaticano II l'espressione più alta e significativa, grazie alla Dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate*<sup>13</sup>.

Paradossalmente, come si è detto, la religione o, meglio, le religioni, quando vengono intese nella loro genuinità e alla luce della loro vocazione profonda, che consiste nel porre l'uomo in intimo contatto con Dio e in comunione sincera con gli altri, presentano non tanto il rischio di produrre conflitti, quanto piuttosto sono portatrici di risorse di riconciliazione e di pacificazione, di un patrimonio di valori grazie al quale l'apertura all'universale e l'interpretazione/comprendimento della diversità diventano possibili e di strumenti nonviolenti per affrontare e risolvere i conflitti, passando anche attraverso un'ermeneutica dei testi e delle tradizioni religiose umanamente e moralmente sensibile. Questa prerogativa è propria di tutte le religioni, specialmente delle tre grandi religioni monoteiste, nelle quali è chiaramente espressa la necessità di riconoscere a ciascun soggetto, anche se di fede diversa, condizioni di uguale libertà e dignità. Scrive Martin Buber riguardo all'Ebraismo: "Precisamente nella religione di Israele è impossibile fare un idolo del popolo come un tutto, perché la tendenza religiosa alla comunità è precipuamente critica e opinabile. Chiunque attribuisce alla nazione o alla comunità gli attributi dell'assoluto e dell'autosufficienza, tradisce la religione d'Israele.

Che cosa, comunque, significa, divenire un «popolo di Dio»? Una fede comune in Dio ed il servizio al suo nome non costituiscono un popolo di Dio. Divenire un popolo di Dio significa piuttosto che gli attributi di Dio rivelatigli, giustizia e amore, vengono resi effettivi nella sua stessa vita, nelle vite dei suoi membri, l'un con l'altro: una giustizia che si materializza nelle mutue relazioni indirette di quegli individui; amore nelle loro mutue relazioni dirette radicate nella loro personale esistenza. Dei due, tuttavia, l'amore è il più alto, il principio trascendente. Questo diventa chiaro inequivocabilmente per il fatto che l'uomo non può essere giusto verso Dio; egli, può, tuttavia, e dovrebbe, amare Dio. Ed è l'amore di Dio che si trasferisce all'uomo; «Dio ama il forestiero – ci è stato detto – così anche tu devi amarlo»<sup>14</sup>. Precisa Judah L. Magnes, uno degli intellettuali che hanno dato vita all'Università Ebraica di Gerusalemme, in una sua lettera del 1939 al Mahatma Gandhi: "La letteratura ebraica, per molti versi, è letteratura del martirio [...] accettare il martirio piuttosto che cedere «all'idolatria, all'immoralità, agli spargimenti di sangue». [...] Se mai ci fu un popolo non-violento nello svolgersi dei secoli, quello fu il popolo ebraico"<sup>15</sup>. Dunque, così come ci sono autori, tra cui anche il rabbino Marc Gopin<sup>16</sup>, che hanno messo in luce il potenziale nonviolento e la ricchezza di risorse di pacificazione propri della religione ebraica, anche con specifico riferimento alla complessa dinamica mediorientale, allo stesso modo ci sono studiosi, come Abdul Aziz Said<sup>17</sup>, Mohammed Abu-Nimer<sup>18</sup> e Chaiwat Satha-Anand<sup>19</sup>, che hanno operato in

<sup>13</sup> Il testo completo latino-italiano della Dichiarazione, con introduzione, si trova in P. F. FUMAGALLI, *Fratelli Prediletti. Chiesa e popolo ebraico. Documenti e fatti: 1965-2005*, (Prefazione di Walter Kasper), Mondadori, Milano 2005.

<sup>14</sup> M. BUBER, *Secondo Discorso*, in C. LEVI COEN (a cura di), *Martin Buber*, ECP, Firenze 1991, pp. 141-142, citato in R. ALTIERI, *Presentazione. Un conflitto irrisolvibile?*, in "Quaderni Satyagraha", 2004, 5, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> J. L. MAGNES, *Lettera al Mahatma Gandhi*, Gerusalemme, 26 febbraio 1939, in "Micromega", 1991, 2, p. 178.

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. M. GOPIN, *Between Eden and Armageddon. The future of world religions, violence and peacemaking*, Oxford University Press, New York 2000; ID., *Holy war, holy peace. How religion can bring peace to the Middle East*, Oxford University Press, New York 2002; ID., *L'Ebraismo e la costruzione della pace nel contesto del conflitto Medio Orientale* (trad. dall'inglese), in "Quaderni Satyagraha", 2004, 5, pp. 61-102.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. A. A. SAID, *Peace and conflict resolution in Islam. Precept and practice*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham 2001; A. A. SAID, A. KADAYIFCI, N. FUNK, *Peace and conflict resolution in Islam*, University Press of America, 2002; A. A. SAID, *Cultural diversity and Islam*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham 2003; ID., *La nonviolenza come metodologia del cambiamento sociale nell'Islam* (trad. dall'inglese), in "Quaderni Satyagraha", 2004, 5, pp. 103-121.

modo analogo a partire dalla religione islamica, alla luce di quei valori universalistici fortemente enfatizzati nell' Islam.

Israele, depositario della Rivelazione ed eletto ad uno speciale rapporto con Dio, i cui doni e la cui alleanza sono senza pentimento, chiamato a vivere come una "nazione santa"<sup>20</sup>, è la fonte che comunica a tutta la famiglia umana la conoscenza del Dio uno, unico e vero e la fedeltà verso di Lui, attraverso la sostanza del suo messaggio etico universale. Per questo, afferma papa Giovanni Paolo II, "la fede e la vita religiosa del popolo ebraico così come sono professate e praticate ancora oggi, possono grandemente aiutarci a comprendere meglio certi aspetti della vita della Chiesa" (Allocuzione del 6 marzo 1982). Ciò significa ripensare anche i diversi modelli ermeneutici proposti per comprendere la relazione tra Cristianesimo ed Ebraismo, fino al modello dell' adempimento recepito dal Concilio Vaticano II, che stabilisce tra ebrei e cristiani un rapporto di complementarità e non di sostituzione. Si intende così favorire il superamento della reciproca chiusura di fronte alle rispettive interpretazioni delle Scritture, accettando anche il valore della differenza perché "Israele e la Chiesa, benché partecipi di comuni tesori spirituali tanto grandi, mantengono tuttavia distinta identità per molti aspetti delle loro convinzioni religiose, quindi costituiscono due distinte comunità di fede, senza che l'una sostituisca l'altra"<sup>21</sup>. Tuttavia, i cristiani possono apprendere molto dalle interpretazioni ebraiche della Bibbia, mentre gli ebrei dovrebbero leggere il Nuovo Testamento con i cristiani, poiché le Sacre Scritture costituiscono una preziosa base per il dialogo spirituale e per l' impegno etico.

Un cammino indispensabile, ma lungo e difficile<sup>22</sup>, inevitabilmente condizionato da un contesto ancora, per molti aspetti, ideologicamente connotato, che tende a riprodurre e a perpetuare, specie attraverso le sue pratiche educative, stereotipi e pregiudizi da lungo tempo esistenti. Posizioni e atteggiamenti reciprocamente esclusivi, alimentati spesso dai gruppi più chiusi ed estremisti, rendono più incerto e faticoso un confronto che tocca aspetti e problemi particolarmente delicati e che non può svolgersi soltanto sul piano culturale o istituzionale, senza mettere in discussione le coscienze, senza appassionare gli uomini ai significati etici, soteriologici e pratici dell'incontro con l'altro, del dialogo e della comune ricerca della Verità. In riferimento allo Stato di Israele, ciò comporta anche una riflessione sul rapporto tra religione e Stato, tra autorità religiosa e civile, sui diritti civili delle minoranze, per i cattolici anche alla luce degli accordi diplomatici con il Vaticano a partire dal 1993, e sull' impegno per la libertà religiosa e la tutela dei Luoghi Santi. La Commissione bilaterale per il dialogo cattolico-ebraico in Israele ha affermato, nell' ambito della VII sessione tenutasi a Gerusalemme nel marzo 2007, che "grava sulle autorità e sulle comunità religiose l'obbligo di prevenire l'uso improprio della religione, e di educare al rispetto per la diversità, il che è essenziale per assicurare una società sana, stabile e pacifica. A questo proposito, un ruolo speciale spetta alle famiglie, scuole e autorità dello Stato e della società, così come ai media, nel trasmettere questi valori alle future generazioni"<sup>23</sup>.

Per costruire una cultura di pace a partire dalla Terra Santa, è dunque necessario che "i figli di Abramo" lavorino attivamente per sviluppare un' autentica cittadinanza di pace, con effetti umani e politici, operando insieme per la giustizia, la libertà, la dignità, i diritti umani e la "cura del

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. M. ABU-NIMER, *Dialogue, conflict resolution and change. Arab-Jewish encounters in Israel*, SUNY, New York 1999; ID., *Reconciliation, justice and coexistence. Theory and practice*, Lexington Books, Lanham 2001; ID., *Nonviolence and peace building in Islam. Theory and practice*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville 2003; ID., *Azione diretta nonviolenta in Israele e Palestina: possibilità e sfide* (trad. dall'inglese), in "Quaderni Satyagraha", 2004, 5, pp. 127-174.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. C. SATHA-ANAND, *Islam e nonviolenza* (trad. dall'inglese), Ed. Gruppo Abele, Torino 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. M. BUBER, *La fede dei Profeti* (trad. dal tedesco), Marietti, Genova 2000 (II ed.; I ed. tedesca 1950), pp. 237.

<sup>21</sup> CARD. W. KASPER, *Quando i Cristiani vanno incontro agli Ebrei nella Terra di Santità. Alla scoperta dell' eredità comune*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 2009, p. 18.

<sup>22</sup> Cfr. P. F. FUMAGALLI (a cura di), *Fratelli prediletti. Chiesa e popolo ebraico: documenti e fatti (1965-2005)*, Mondadori, Milano 2005, pp. 142; ID., *Roma e Gerusalemme. La Chiesa cattolica e il popolo d'Israele*, Mondadori, Milano 2007, pp. 328.

<sup>23</sup> CARD. W. KASPER, *Quando i Cristiani vanno incontro agli Ebrei nella Terra di Santità. Alla scoperta dell' eredità comune*, cit., pp. 69-70.

mondo", la sua riparazione e la sua custodia, in collaborazione con tutte le altre comunità di fede. Anche il documento *Dabru Emet*, concernente le relazioni tra Cristianesimo e Giudaismo, firmato da 172 rappresentanti dell'Ebraismo negli Stati Uniti, in Canada, in Gran Bretagna e in Israele e pubblicato sul "New York Times" il 10 settembre 2000, sottolinea l'importanza della collaborazione interreligiosa per promuovere i valori morali e spirituali che trovano fondamento nelle convinzioni di fede: "*Ebrei e cristiani devono lavorare insieme per la giustizia e per la pace*. Ebrei e cristiani riconoscono, sebbene in modi diversi, che lo stato di irredenzione del mondo si riflette nella persistenza di persecuzioni e povertà, e nella miseria e degradazione degli uomini. Sebbene la giustizia e la pace appartengano ultimamente solo a Dio, i nostri sforzi congiunti, insieme a quelli di altre comunità credenti, possono aiutare la realizzazione del regno di Dio che attendiamo con speranza. Separatamente e assieme, dobbiamo lavorare per portare la giustizia e la pace nel nostro mondo"<sup>24</sup>.

Dopo il Concilio Vaticano II, anche il dialogo islamo-cristiano ha avuto un notevole sviluppo, proseguendo sulla via aperta da teologi come Piero Rossano e Hans Kung<sup>25</sup>. Alcune aree fondamentali di questo dialogo sono: la necessità della reciproca conoscenza e stima, come indispensabile premessa; il riconoscimento dei valori religiosi, sia comuni alle fedi monoteistiche rivelate, sia specifici di ciascuna di esse; una comune tensione etica religiosamente fondata; una comune responsabilità nella vita sociale e civile. Recentemente è nato un forum cattolico-musulmano al quale partecipano il Pontificio consiglio per il dialogo interreligioso e una delegazione dei 138 firmatari musulmani della lettera *Una Parola comune tra noi e voi* indirizzata a Papa Benedetto XVI nel 2007. L'obiettivo è di accrescere la consapevolezza condivisa dei valori trascendenti e dell'importanza dell'educazione morale e religiosa nel rispetto del pluralismo culturale e religioso<sup>26</sup>.

Da un lato, la riflessione a molteplici livelli (teologico, filosofico, pedagogico, socio-politico ecc.) sui temi della pace, della riconciliazione, della nonviolenza nelle tre religioni monoteiste si propone di demistificare la relazione tra religione, violenza e potere politico e di condannare l'abuso violento della religione, il fondamentalismo e l'intolleranza. Dall'altro lato, essa mira a rafforzare la filosofia e la pedagogia della nonviolenza e il loro ruolo profetico ed educativo nella gestione dei conflitti e nel sostegno di processi politici positivi, testimoniando l'uso costruttivo della religione e la sua importanza come forza di riconciliazione. Quest'analisi deve passare attraverso l'approfondimento dei Testi Sacri, la riflessione sulla pedagogia della nonviolenza, dell'incontro e del dialogo attuata da Dio nella storia e lo studio delle teologie di Gerusalemme. La sfida, soprattutto in Terra Santa, consiste nel facilitare la più ampia espressione dei valori religiosi universali da parte di comunità religiose particolari e nel promuovere l'apprendimento di una nonviolenza attiva e creativa, da esprimere nelle attitudini personali, nelle parole e nelle azioni. La cultura di pace è infatti uno stile di vita e "la religione assume un ruolo cruciale nel favorire un atteggiamento di rispetto e di responsabilità nei confronti degli altri, atteggiamento basato sui profondi insegnamenti etico-religiosi che tutti condividiamo. Ma la vera sfida sarà superata soltanto se le nostre religioni insegneranno il rispetto verso gli altri non solo sulla base del principio universale della nostra comune umanità, ma anche attraverso il riconoscimento e il rispetto delle nostre diverse particolarità. Tale insegnamento e tale attitudine ci trasmetteranno tutto il senso di

<sup>24</sup> *Dabru Emet. A Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity*, in [www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1014](http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1014) [versione italiana].

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. F. SERRI, "Cristianesimo e teologia delle religioni" e A. T. NEGRI, "Relazioni e dialogo tra cristiani e musulmani", in CENTRO FEDERICO PEIRONE, *L'Islàm. Storia, dottrina, rapporti con il cristianesimo*, Elledici, Leumann 2004, pp. 249-267 e pp. 269-295. Per una prima introduzione generale si veda G. RIZZI, *Cristianesimo e Islam alle soglie del duemila*, Centro Ambrosiano – ITI, Milano 2000; J. JAMIER, *Dialogo cristianesimo-islam*, in *Dictionnaire des Religions*, diretto da Paul Poupard, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1984, tr. it. *Grande dizionario delle religioni. Dalla preistoria ad oggi*, Piemme, Casale Monferrato, pp. 543-544.

<sup>26</sup> Cfr. *Cattolicesimo e islam: verso un incontro storico, Intervista al cardinale Jean-Louis Tauran, responsabile del dialogo interreligioso*, in "L'Osservatore Romano", 30 dicembre 2007, p. 8; *Dichiarazione finale del Forum*, in "L'Osservatore Romano", 8 novembre 2008, p. 6.

sicurezza psicologica che, insieme allo sviluppo delle condizioni politiche ed economiche, renderà nel futuro capaci le nostre comunità di relazionarsi concretamente e positivamente ad ogni altra"<sup>27</sup>.

### *Vivere da cristiani in Terra Santa*

Vivere da cristiani in Terra Santa significa avere una vocazione particolare ed una universale. Qui la Chiesa latina è composta essenzialmente da tre gruppi: la comunità dei cristiani arabi locali, l'antico gruppo dei palestinesi che rappresenta la presenza cristiana tradizionale in questi luoghi; la *qehila* di lingua ebraica, una chiesa nuova, in fermento, che accomuna con proprie specificità gli evangelici, gli ebrei messianici e i cattolici e che celebra la liturgia in lingua ebraica; la comunità internazionale, che comprende molti lavoratori stranieri, soprattutto filippini, sudamericani e indiani, che risiedono stabilmente in Terra Santa, e alcuni altri gruppi di diversa provenienza che, per molteplici ragioni e con diversi ruoli, trascorrono qui periodi più o meno lunghi. Accanto alla Chiesa latina vivono ed operano altre importanti realtà cristiane, di cui le principali sono la Chiesa greco-ortodossa, la Chiesa armena e quella copta. Anche all'interno dello stesso mondo cattolico esistono gruppi con riti diversi da quello latino.

In questo mondo complesso e affascinante, dove si incontrano culture, lingue e tradizioni diverse e che si pone al centro della fede delle tre grandi religioni monoteiste, i cristiani vivono i disagi e le contraddizioni che deve affrontare una piccola minoranza in un contesto caratterizzato da una vasta maggioranza ebraica e musulmana e, talvolta, anche le frammentazioni all'interno dello stesso mondo cristiano, rendono difficile testimoniare coerentemente e serenamente la propria fede. Nella particolare condizione della Terra Santa, che vede da lungo tempo due popoli, israeliano e palestinese, divisi dal conflitto e incamminati nella ricerca di una via pacifica di convivenza, i cristiani possono essere fermento di unità, "ponte" tra due mondi, quello musulmano, grazie ai molti cristiani di origine araba, che condividono con la maggioranza musulmana la lingua e molti altri fattori culturali, e quello ebraico, attraverso la piccola comunità cristiana locale di lingua ebraica. Nello stesso tempo, i movimenti dei pellegrinaggi di cristiani e di ebrei verso la Terra Santa sembra aprire alla visione di Isaia, che guarda a Gerusalemme come al Santo Luogo che riunirà presso di sé tutti i popoli della terra (Is 2,1-4). Attraverso gesti concreti, iniziative pastorali e sociali, attività educative ed accademiche, la comunità cristiana internazionale che qui si raduna, e soprattutto i religiosi che vivono ed operano in Terra Santa, cercano di testimoniare il volto profetico della Chiesa e l'universalità del Cristianesimo al di là delle tensioni locali, superando e abolendo le distanze, le diversità culturali e linguistiche, le discriminazioni e i nazionalismi. Anche in Terra Santa, e soprattutto qui, la Chiesa cerca di ricordare agli uomini che sono tutti fratelli, uniti in un'unica famiglia per nel rispetto dei singoli valori particolari, impegnati a costruire la comunità ecclesiale abbattendo le barriere che dividono l'umanità. La storia della Chiesa di Gerusalemme, fin dalle sue origini, è attraversata da tensioni e divisioni, ma sempre mira a perseguire la sua vocazione universale. Scrive S. Paolo ai Corinzi: "Quando uno dice: «Io sono di Paolo», e un altro: «Io sono di Apollo», non vi dimostrate semplicemente uomini?" (1Cor 3,4). S. Paolo denuncia in molte occasioni l'incompatibilità del Cristianesimo con i particolarismi faziosi: "Non c'è più giudeo né greco; non c'è più schiavo né libero; non c'è più uomo né donna, poiché tutti voi siete uno in Cristo Gesù" (Gal 3,28). E la testimonianza dell'amore universale ci rende autentici segni di Cristo: "Egli infatti è la nostra pace,/ colui che ha fatto dei due - giudei e pagani - un popolo solo,/ abbattendo il muro di separazione che era frammezzo" (Ef 2,14), fino all'amore per i nemici che annulla ogni divisione. Ecco dunque l'orizzonte della Chiesa madre di Gerusalemme, la cui maternità non può che essere universale.

Gerusalemme e i Luoghi Santi cristiani rimangono fino ad oggi un segno fondamentale della fede, la testimonianza della vita, morte e resurrezione di Gesù, che proprio qui, realmente, si sono compiute. Tutti i cristiani, anche i più lontani, guardano alla Terra Santa per trovare in questi segni le proprie radici e il senso autentico della loro missione in tutto il mondo. In Terra Santa si può

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<sup>27</sup> D. ROSEN, *The role of religion in the pursuit of peace*, in [www.rabbidavidrosen.net/articles.htm](http://www.rabbidavidrosen.net/articles.htm), [s.d.].

leggere la vita di Gesù, scuola di Vangelo. Qui si può imparare a guardare, ascoltare, meditare, assaporare il silenzio per cogliere il significato profondo e misterioso del Suo passaggio. L'ambiente che incornicia il Suo soggiorno fra noi ci rimanda a luoghi, costumi, colori, profumi; gli stessi che Gesù ha conosciuto quando si è rivelato al mondo.

Anche la Chiesa di Terra Santa attinge da questo patrimonio inestimabile, da questo dono di vita, la forza per continuare ad alimentare la sua maternità universale e per sostenere e promuovere le piccole comunità cristiane locali, instillare in esse la passione per Cristo, sviluppare i loro talenti, serbare desta la loro speranza anche quando tante promesse disattese insinuano sentimenti di delusione e di sconforto.

In Terra Santa i cristiani sono sempre stati una minoranza, una presenza esigua ma dal cuore ardente, e non sono mai scomparsi. Essi sono chiamati a dare un'alta testimonianza di fede, ad essere una presenza viva, innamorata della propria storia e delle proprie idee, a non temere i cambiamenti e gli incontri con le diversità, bensì ad essere aperti, sereni, liberi, positivi e, nello stesso tempo, chiari, radicati nel proprio senso di identità e di appartenenza, propositivi verso il futuro, attivi nel custodire i Luoghi Santi, che sono depositari della tradizione e della memoria dell'intera Cristianità.



## ***Possibilità di una didattica laboratoriale interculturale a partire dalla Convenzione internazionale sui Diritti per l'infanzia***

Mariangela Giusti

Nei primi decenni del Duemila le diversità osservabili nei contesti educativi formali e informali inducono a parlare di *complessità dell'educazione*, in virtù dell'insieme relazionale «di molteplici fattori e numerose variabili che chiamano in causa non solo realtà individuali ma anche realtà interpersonali o sociali: le une e le altre con tutte le loro determinazioni particolari di ordine biologico, emotivo-affettivo, intellettuale, etico, culturale, economico, ecc.» (Bertolini, 2005, p.101). I fatti complessi dell'educazione non sono chiusi in se stessi, sono empirici, suscettibili di trasformazioni e avanzamenti, «sono costitutivi dell'esistere umano, presenti e operanti nella quotidianità»(cit. p.105); non devono essere visti come moduli fissi, costanti, immutabili, ma da specificare di volta in volta sia su un piano quantitativo che qualitativo. Se è vero che nessun fatto educativo è «visibile nella sua totalità ma sempre secondo la particolare angolatura spazio-temporale in cui ci si trova, consapevolmente o meno» (cit.p.106), è inevitabile dover fare delle scelte di metodi, contenuti, strumenti. Seguendo questa convinzione, il gruppo di ricerca ha impostato e condotto, nell'arco di quasi quattro anni, una ricerca-azione sulla costruzione di laboratori in grado di formare nuovi insegnanti e nuovi educatori al diritto all'educazione, ispirati agli articoli della *Convenzione internazionale sui diritti dell'infanzia*.

La *Convenzione* è un documento la cui conoscenza non rientra (di solito) nella formazione iniziale dei docenti, al quale invece sarebbe bene ispirarsi *proprio* nella fase della formazione<sup>1</sup>. Gli articoli contengono indicazioni e regole che propongono una visione inclusiva della scuola e dell'educazione, in grado di indicare all'insegnante buoni principi generali a cui ispirarsi per svolgere al meglio il lavoro educativo. L'idea del diritto all'educazione per tutti non dovrebbe essere intesa come *emergenziale* ma caratterizzare sempre il lavoro docente. A partire dagli articoli della *Convenzione* è stata avviata una

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<sup>1</sup> La *Convenzione ONU sui Diritti dell'Infanzia e dell'adolescenza (Convention on the Rights of the Child)* fu redatta cercando di armonizzare differenti esperienze culturali e giuridiche e fu approvata dall'Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite il 20 novembre 1989. E' composta da un preambolo, 54 articoli e due Protocolli opzionali (sui bambini in guerra e sullo sfruttamento sessuale).E' previsto un meccanismo di controllo sull'operato degli Stati, che devono presentare a un Comitato indipendente un rapporto periodico sull'attuazione dei diritti dei bambini sul proprio territorio. La *Convenzione* è stata ratificata da parte di tanti Stati (oggi sono 193 gli Stati parti della *Convenzione*). L'Italia l'ha ratificata con la legge n. 176 del 27 maggio 1991 e ha presentato al Comitato sui Diritti dell'Infanzia quattro Rapporti. Su vari siti web istituzionali (Camera dei deputati, Senato) si trova il testo integrale della *Convenzione*, come pure su [www.unicef.it](http://www.unicef.it) o [www.amnesty.it](http://www.amnesty.it) (in versioni adatte a lettori bambini e a lettori adolescenti).

ricerca-azione mirata alla costruzione di eventi didattici laboratoriali che potessero rappresentare buoni materiali per la formazione iniziale e in servizio degli insegnanti. Ciò ha significato: i) tenere presenti i principi della *Convenzione* e seguirli al fine di proporre occasioni educative ispirate al diritto all'educazione per tutti; ii) immaginare la costruzione di percorsi laboratoriali che consentissero a chi li progettava e li realizzava di maturare in sé il paradigma riflessivo; iii) fare in modo che gli eventi laboratoriali prodotti aiutassero altri insegnanti e educatori a dare un'impronta riflessiva alla propria professionalità.

Seguendo Lipman (2003, p. 18), i laboratori si sono configurati come eventi didattici e educativi rivolti a gruppi vari di partecipanti (a seconda dei casi: bambini o ragazzi o adolescenti) intesi come piccole comunità di ricerca, guidate da un docente o da un educatore esperto, con l'obiettivo di far acquisire conoscenze e buone capacità di giudizio a partire da alcuni diritti sanciti dalla *Convenzione*. I partecipanti sono stati sollecitati a riflettere sugli articoli della *Convenzione*, anche per comprenderne il significato in proporzione all'età. Gli educatori e gli insegnanti coinvolti nella fase iniziale di ideazione dei laboratori (e, in seguito, di sperimentazione e conduzione) sono stati invitati a progettarli tenendo aperta la possibilità di apportare modifiche e avere un atteggiamento riflessivo in tutte le fasi. Ciò ha avuto una ricaduta positiva sugli studenti in quanto ha mostrato la validità di un atteggiamento progettuale e riflessivo, incline al ragionamento e al giudizio. Il focus dei laboratori si è concentrato sulla possibilità di comprendere le relazioni, i nessi fra gli articoli della *Convenzione* e i vissuti dei partecipanti (bambini e ragazzi). I membri del gruppo di ricerca hanno proceduto sempre di pari passo con gli insegnanti delle scuole, gli educatori, gli esperti, i pratici con l'obiettivo comune di portare un contributo di riflessione e di pratica al diritto all'educazione di tutti, sancito dalla *Convenzione*.

Il lavoro di ricerca ha inteso far incrociare alcune finalità/compiti del pensiero interculturale con gli articoli della *Convenzione* per ribadire che non si tratta di finalità vaghe ma da esplicitare nella concretezza delle azioni didattiche e educative. Si è posto l'accento su alcune finalità/compito del pensiero interculturale che contengono rimandi al vissuto degli allievi e consentono collegamenti agli articoli della *Convenzione*: il pluralismo culturale nell'azione educativa; la competenza crossculturale nella professionalità docente; l'attenzione alla ricostruzione sociale delle famiglie degli allievi provenienti da altrove; la progettazione educativa attenta alle relazioni umane e all'uguaglianza delle opportunità.

a) *Il pluralismo culturale*- Gli insegnanti e gli educatori devono mostrare nelle azioni un rispetto totale nei confronti della diversità di tutti, sia a scuola sia nella società. Il

pluralismo culturale si collega alla nozione di vissuto in quanto per i bambini e i ragazzi che cambiano paese già grandi (al seguito della migrazione della famiglia) la cultura e la lingua d'origine rappresentano patrimoni da tenere in considerazione e rilevanti dal punto di vista pedagogico e educativo, sia sul piano della costruzione di relazioni significative (docente/studente; educatore/educando) sia sul piano gnoseologico, della formazione della conoscenza. Questa prima finalità/compito sottende un collegamento all'articolo 2 della *Convenzione* (che riconosce gli stessi diritti a tutti), al 28 e al 29 che ribadiscono l'importanza dell'educazione per la crescita e lo sviluppo della personalità del bambino.

*b) La competenza crossculturale-* Gli insegnanti e gli educatori devono mostrare un interesse genuino a costruire una possibile competenza professionale crossculturale, ciò significa maturare in sé l'interesse a conoscere le culture dei loro allievi provenienti da altrove (e saperglielo manifestare), conoscere i loro valori e, per quanto possibile, entrare in comunicazione con loro con tutti i mezzi: linguistici, cognitivi, esperienziali, prassici, operativi, prossemici. Ciò si collega agli articoli 28 e 29 della *Convenzione* e all'articolo 30 che riconosce ai bambini delle minoranze il diritto a mantenere la loro cultura, professare la loro religione, parlare la loro lingua.

*c) La ricostruzione sociale-* Gli insegnanti e gli educatori devono tenere in considerazione la possibile necessità di una ricostruzione sociale che spesso è collegata ai processi migratori e che interessa principalmente gli adulti (i genitori), ma di conseguenza anche i figli coi quali essi lavorano a scuola. Ciò significa avere un atteggiamento professionale aperto, essere interessati al confronto, dialogare sulle rispettive convinzioni, credenze, comportamenti. Il collegamento è con gli articoli 9 e 10 (che prevedono che i bambini vivano insieme ai genitori) e al 18, che prevede che i genitori siano aiutati dalle istituzioni (dunque anche dalla scuola!) a crescere i figli nel miglior modo possibile.

*d) Le relazioni umane-* Gli insegnanti e gli educatori devono essere consapevoli che nei contesti educativi multiculturali devono tener conto delle relazioni umane; costruire rapporti individuali e di gruppo che possano influenzare in positivo i ragazzi nel recupero dell'autostima, nel miglioramento delle relazioni fra i genitori degli allievi delle minoranze e le figure educative, l'istituzione scuola, gli altri allievi, gli altri genitori. Ciò si collega agli articoli già ricordati (28,29, 30, 9,10,18) e all'articolo 8, che fa espliciti riferimenti all'importanza dell'identità e alle relazioni familiari nella crescita del minore.

*e) L'uguaglianza delle opportunità-* Gli insegnanti e gli educatori devono prestare attenzione a garantire l'uguaglianza delle opportunità nell'offerta didattica e educativa. Ciò può significare tante cose nella pratica di scuola. In certi casi può voler dire operare dei

cambiamenti nelle abitudini della classe o della scuola stessa; in altri casi può voler dire operare modifiche nel programma della propria disciplina; in altri casi ancora significa adeguare le proprie aspettative alla personalità, alla situazione di vita, alle possibilità del singolo allievo, ma anche adeguare i metodi di valutazione, le prove da sottoporre al gruppo in apprendimento. In altri casi può voler dire valorizzare il curriculum nascosto di ciascun allievo, le tante esperienze di vita e di scuola vissute prima della migrazione nel nuovo paese. Il vissuto dei bambini e degli adolescenti si riflette sul modo con cui ciascuno di loro sceglie di stare in aula, essere disponibile al dialogo, ascoltare, mettersi in gioco, entrare nella dimensione della consapevolezza di sé e del micromondo rappresentato dall'aula. L'apprendimento, l'insegnamento, la comunicazione educativa, la formazione della conoscenza sono eventi legati ai vissuti degli allievi. Secondo Lévinas (1991, p.39), « le cose si scoprono e si apprendono nelle loro qualità, ma queste qualità si scoprono all'interno del vissuto che è temporale»: il docente e l'educatore devono essere consapevoli che le cose si apprendono all'interno di un percorso che richiede tempo, è costituito di vissuti e *diventa* vissuto esso stesso. Oltre agli articoli citati è chiamato in causa l'articolo 23 che fa riferimento ai bambini che necessitano di una didattica individualizzata per la loro educazione.

La ricerca ha rappresentato una modalità per leggere la *Convenzione* dal punto di vista della scuola e intendere le relazioni educative come incontri di vissuti. I bambini, i ragazzi esprimono se stessi primariamente nei volti, nei corpi, nei gesti; gli insegnanti devono garantire espressione nel linguaggio, nella parola, negli atti di reciprocità, nella comunicazione condivisa, nel tentativo della scoperta di sé. In classe e nei gruppi di apprendimento i primi atti sono lo stare insieme fisicamente in uno stesso spazio, la vicinanza dei corpi, guardarsi, parlare, ascoltare: ciascuno si porta dietro il proprio vissuto interiore, legato ai suoi spazi e ai suoi tempi. Spetta all'adulto tenere presente che per alcuni allievi quella vicinanza in classe può significare non solo stare insieme in uno stesso spazio ma anche inquietudine e disagio perché si sentono inadeguati al luogo, al ruolo e al compito richiesto.

A questa possibilità di disagio si può tentare di ovviare attraverso la scelta metodologica di proporre situazioni didattiche laboratoriali. Gli articoli della *Convenzione* lasciano intendere che (dato che tutti gli atti educativi in presenza si realizzano in una vicinanza fra persone) i vissuti di ciascun partecipante all'azione educativa (insegnante e allievi) rappresentano i punti di partenza per qualunque possibilità d'insegnamento reale. Il percorso di ricerca-azione proposto e condotto ha inteso essere uno strumento di

autoformazione per i nuovi insegnanti, legato ai fatti concreti dell'educazione, non improntato a visioni utopiche. La professionalità docente matura col tempo, necessita di passaggi; accompagna l'insegnante in tutte le fasi della sua carriera. Riprendiamo da Barth (1980, p.147) alcune indicazioni sullo sviluppo del corpo docente che riguardano la quotidianità del compito: «Condividere tutti i giorni coi colleghi diversi stili d'insegnamento, metodologie; imparare a tollerare e rispettare le differenze di tutti; interrogarsi gli uni con gli altri sulle rispettive pratiche educative; essere interessati a quello che fanno i colleghi, non gelosi né invidiosi se qualcuno ha una buona nuova idea; offrire agli insegnanti le opportunità per immaginare e perseguire alcuni obiettivi professionali (l'organizzazione del tempo è un modo per consentire loro di realizzare questi sogni); lavorare intensamente tutti i giorni con un altro insegnante su un gruppo di allievi; aspettarsi dagli insegnanti che si assumano ampie responsabilità educative, fare in modo che il loro curriculum personale cresca».

L'inizio della ricerca ha previsto un lavoro individuale e interno al gruppo: sono stati letti, conosciuti, commentati gli articoli della *Convenzione*; di seguito sono stati fatti circolare e fatti conoscere a docenti, allievi, educatori nelle occasioni di incontri che capitava di avere. Ciò è avvenuto anche attraverso un lavoro teso a rendere gli articoli più leggibili da parte di lettori/ragazzi e a tradurli nelle lingue straniere parlate in famiglia da moltissimi bambini e bambine provenienti da altri paesi e presenti nelle scuole. In un primo momento questo lavoro di diffusione è stato condotto attraverso l'uso di fotocopie; in seguito si è stampato un libricino presso una copisteria in edizione artigianale. Il libretto è stato distribuito gratuitamente a un numero complessivo di circa milleduecento allievi delle scuole primarie e secondarie di primo grado, alcune del centro di Milano, la maggior parte di cittadine dell'interland. Questa prima fase ha avuto come obiettivo conoscere la *Convenzione* e farla conoscere, disseminarla, attivare pensiero su di essa con l'obiettivo di togliere l'aurea di fissità *all'oggetto/Convenzione*, familiarizzare con essa, affinare nella pratica una maggiore capacità di leggerla e usarla come strumento normativo che difende i diritti dell'infanzia e amico della didattica.

Nelle riunioni coi membri del gruppo allargato e con un numero iniziale ampio di insegnanti e educatori esperti esterni al gruppo si è iniziato a interrogarci sulle prime domande di ricerca. Si è pensato di progettare e condurre in vari contesti alcuni laboratori didattici che si ispirassero a uno o più articoli della *Convenzione*, attraverso metodologie attive, sperimentali e alla portata di tutti, in particolar modo alla portata degli allievi con minori strumenti linguistici, culturali, cognitivi. Ai singoli microricercatori e ai singoli esperti in vari

ambiti disciplinari veniva richiesto che il laboratorio progettato e sperimentato (o in via di sperimentazione) avesse una specifica funzione formativa per i neo-insegnanti e per i neo-educatori. In altre parole, nelle riunioni veniva richiesto (a coloro che volevano partecipare) di avviare un'azione orientata in due direzioni: 1) la progettazione e la realizzazione di un laboratorio educativo-didattico; 2) la successiva interrogazione euristica ed ermeneutica su di esso. Si chiedeva di interrogarsi sul senso del laboratorio attraverso una riflessione da fare dopo che quel procedimento didattico fosse stato avviato e condotto. Questa riflessione condivisa avrebbe potuto, in seguito, generare nuovo sapere in se stessi (partecipanti) e in altri. La finalità era di configurare un micromodello di formazione per i nuovi insegnanti attraverso un'attività di ricerca-azione sul campo che, senza la pretesa di generalizzare dati o conoscenze, fosse in grado di mostrare un campionario di elementi, variabili, possibilità, risorse presenti in varie situazioni educative.

E' apparso evidente che *non tutti* gli insegnanti e gli educatori esperti a cui ci eravamo rivolti erano in grado o avevano intenzione di restituire con una determinata tecnica narrativa riflessiva l'esperienza di laboratorio progettata e condotta, in modo da renderla formativa. In certi casi la proposta didattica e l'obiettivo erano interessanti ma la restituzione del laboratorio (nonostante incontri e consigli dati al docente) restava schematica, apodittica, non riflessiva, leggibile solo da chi già conosceva attività e contenuti del laboratorio stesso. In altri casi i laboratori sono stati discussi, progettati, sperimentati, condotti, ma non ne è stata realizzata una documentazione, una descrizione, un resoconto fenomenologico in grado di aiutare altri nuovi insegnanti o nuovi educatori nella lettura, nella comprensione e nella formazione.

Le descrizioni esemplari per il fatto (già di per sé notevole) di partire *tutti* dagli articoli della *Convenzione* e per il fatto che erano stati progettati per essere poi anche rivisti e narrati, potessero concorrere a determinare situazioni educative con molte caratteristiche positive, che potevano essere trasmesse e apprese. Ci doveva essere una doppia attenzione: alla funzione *educativa* (per la ricaduta sugli allievi partecipanti) e alla funzione *formativa*, in quanto attività che, nella reiterazione e nella poliedricità dei temi, potesse mettere a punto un'azione in grado di definire e orientare la competenza iniziale degli insegnanti e degli educatori. I laboratori che rispondevano alle richieste si andavano collocando in tre ambiti: quello ispirato all'osservazione, a tematiche e azioni scientifiche; quello dell'espressività narrativa e artistica; quello legato ad attività diverse: manipolative, di gioco con la musica, di movimento, di produzione di suoni, ecc.

La prima sperimentazione è stata estesa e sono stati invitati *altri* esperti esterni al gruppo, con la richiesta di ideare e condurre *altri* laboratori improntati agli articoli della *Convenzione*. Gli esperti avevano completa libertà riguardo alla scelta dell'articolo (o degli articoli) cui ispirarsi e alla scelta delle metodologie laboratoriali. Il vincolo era che il laboratorio progettato venisse poi realmente sperimentato, messo a punto, realizzato e successivamente descritto e narrato. Non tutti coloro che sono stati invitati hanno accettato: alcuni hanno ritenuto il testo della *Convenzione* troppo impegnativo per farlo diventare occasione o spunto per la realizzazione di un laboratorio. In questa fase diversi laboratori hanno coinvolto bambini e ragazzi in varie abilità linguistiche, operative, espressive attraverso la metodologia del dialogo, del fare insieme, dello sperimentare. Si richiedeva ai conduttori attenzione alla creazione di contesti favorevoli al dialogo, proprio se le lingue parlate dai partecipanti erano diverse; alla creazione di un clima di collaborazione inteso come parte del metodo. Ai conduttori veniva richiesto di predisporre i materiali, di organizzare lo spazio che avevano a disposizione e di usarlo in tutte le sue dimensioni, di porre attenzione al tempo necessario per spiegare, fare, riflettere, sostare. Per gli aspetti relativi al clima dei laboratori si sono riprese (e fatte circolare fra i conduttori coinvolti) alcune indicazioni di Celestin Freinet, che raccomandava ai suoi insegnanti delle *scuole nuove* di mantenere il gruppo degli allievi in armonia di lavoro e soddisfazione: «Nessuno dei ragazzi passa il tempo a fare cose che lo annoiano. L'attività di classe qualche volta richiede anche dei lavori noiosi, ma in questi casi i ragazzi devono sentire quello che sentiamo noi adulti nella vita di tutti i giorni, cioè *che anche quella cosa va fatta...*» (1968, p. 92). Se ci occupiamo di laboratori da un punto di vista progettuale e operativo Freinet risulta attualissimo quando scrive che nelle attività di classe ciascun allievo deve sentire le attività come *semplici, facili, piacevoli da svolgere*; quando scrive (sembra un paradosso ma ora, a ricerca conclusa, abbiamo verificato che non lo è...) che si deve arrivare a un punto che *le attività si organizzano quasi da sé*. Per Freinet il docente o l'educatore ha il dovere di spiegare bene l'attività, dare le indicazioni, essere disponibile a rispondere e correggere, ma poi, se il laboratorio è stato progettato bene, ciascun *ragazzo sa cosa può o non può essere fatta* e addirittura sono i ragazzi stessi (senza bisogno dell'intervento dell'adulto) che si rammentano fra di loro cosa c'è da fare, «ciascuno sta attento per tutto il gruppo».

Nella fase della seconda progettazione è stato definito un altro tratto metodologico: sviluppare una narrazione fra animatore e partecipanti. Coloro che conducevano i laboratori didattici dovevano essere certo competenti in un'abilità o in una disciplina, ma

dovevano anche essere consapevoli della significatività del dialogo, di *come* catturare l'ascolto, *come dire* le cose da fare insieme. In altre parole, il significato delle attività proposte e svolte nei laboratori non doveva essere visto come staccato dai modi con cui quel significato veniva trasmesso a chi partecipava e nemmeno staccato dalla modalità con cui il laboratorio veniva poi descritto, raccontato e comunicato ad altri. Coloro che partecipavano alla ricerca con sempre maggiore consapevolezza comprendevano che era necessaria attenzione alla maniera di condurre il laboratorio e alla sua struttura complessiva fatta di pochi oggetti significativi, spazi e tempi, ma anche di parole che, successivamente, sarebbero confluite nella descrizione, non momento accessorio ma conclusivo del laboratorio stesso. S'impara dall'esperienza, e si può insegnare *anche* attraverso la nostra esperienza. Perché ciò accada è necessario ripercorrere in forma narrativa l'esperienza condotta. Il laboratorio didattico era inteso come opportunità per favorire la creazione di una struttura connettiva, che consente di creare processi di crescita coevolutivi: il conduttore deve guidare con decisione le azioni che propone, osservare le reazioni di chi partecipa ed essere in grado di connettere questi elementi in una descrizione.

Nell'insieme dei laboratori progettati e svolti, un numero circoscritto è stato ricondotto al centro dell'analisi ed è stato inteso come *fenomeno* da rimembrare, osservare, comprendere. L'obiettivo di questa fase della ricerca era prospettare a noi stessi e successivamente ai futuri insegnanti la necessità di ricercare sempre un'autenticità (di conduttore, educatore, docente), di non soffocare la propria individualità nella costruzione della propria futura professionalità. Un modo possibile per far questo è lasciare spazio alla scrittura riflessiva che aiuta a riesaminare ciò che si è fatto a scuola o nelle situazioni educative e allo stesso tempo consente di mantenere un contatto fra se stessi e gli allievi. E' stato chiesto agli ideatori e ai conduttori dei laboratori (in alcuni casi i due ruoli coincidevano, in altri casi erano diversi) di realizzare una descrizione fenomenologica che contenesse riferimenti precisi alle attività, ai contenuti, ai metodi messi in atto e proposti ai bambini o ai ragazzi partecipanti. Descrivere un laboratorio significa mettere in moto un'operazione di ricostruzione di carattere emotivo, sociale, intellettuale; significa provare a cogliere lo stupore diverso (se c'è stato) nei bambini o nei ragazzi che hanno partecipato. La fase delle descrizioni è stata importante perché ha posto il gruppo in ricerca di fronte a nuove necessità. Per consentire agli ideatori/conduttori un confronto su ciò che avevano progettato e realmente condotto e la maniera individuale di restituire la ricchezza dell'esperienza attraverso la scrittura, si è pensato di organizzare (per tutto il gruppo in



ricerca e per chi avesse voluto partecipare) tre incontri di formazione con tre esperti delle tre aree delineate: artistica, scientifica, musicale. La ricerca consentiva di disegnare una prospettiva educativa. La pedagogia dei diritti che stavamo costruendo avrebbe dovuto tenere conto degli apporti delle diverse situazioni educative sperimentate nei laboratori e raccontate, ma anche degli scambi con punti di vista e prospettive di studio esterne al gruppo in ricerca.

Alcune descrizioni sono state sottoposte a un lavoro ermeneutico: una docente del gruppo di ricerca (Anna Chiara Lugarini) è stata incaricata di interpretare, ampliare alcune descrizioni pervenute. La conoscenza incomincia e si forma partendo dall'oggetto, rivedendo ciò che è accaduto attraverso diverse possibilità conoscitive: la descrizione, l'intenzionalità, la sensibilità, la soggettività. Ragionando e scrivendo su quanto è accaduto ed è stato descritto da qualcuno, s'impara. In qualche maniera, da spettatori di un evento educativo se ne diventa anche un po' attori, parti in causa; non ci si limita a leggere ciò che è accaduto, ma si prova a entrare nel merito delle attività, che si possono ampliare, commentare, immaginare in una prosecuzione circolare che torna su se stessa, per poi uscire di nuovo con nuove idee arricchite, attraverso l'interpretazione, che invitano a proseguire. Per la pedagogia fenomenologica va rifiutato il tentativo di ingabbiare in formule e schemi precostituiti l'esperienza educativa, «dal momento che essa è sempre e comunque un'esperienza "in situazione". L'esperienza educativa non è un percorso caratterizzato dalla certezza e dalla sicurezza è un processo continuo » (Bertolini, 2005, p.23). Si è proceduto mettendo in circolazione un sapere sull'educazione *critico, dinamico, complesso problematico, rigoroso, intenzionale, programmato, controllato* basato sulla costruzione intersoggettiva.

L'intento della ricerca-azione era aiutare i nuovi insegnanti e gli educatori nella formazione iniziale e in servizio. I laboratori progettati a partire dagli articoli della *Convenzione* possono essere proficuamente attivati nei più diversi contesti educativi scolastici ed extrascolastici; sono stati condotti in scuole di vari ordini e gradi (primarie, secondarie di primo e secondo grado, gruppi di bambini di scuole d'infanzia), in situazioni dell'associazionismo e del volontariato.

Per attivare e condurre dei laboratori validi basati sul proposito di lavorare in modo corretto sul diritto all'educazione di tutti, è necessario interrogarsi sulla scelta del contesto adatto e sulla validità del luogo da individuare o scegliere. E' poi necessario dotarsi della concreta volontà di progettare attività non stereotipate, con l'obiettivo di migliorare i rapporti di amicizia e collaborazione fra i partecipanti, aumentare l'autostima dei singoli e

la cooperazione fra pari. Dalla ricerca condotta i giovani insegnanti e i giovani educatori dovrebbero comprendere che un laboratorio sui diritti all'educazione è valido quando parla alla mente, al cuore, alla coscienza dei bambini o dei ragazzi. Un laboratorio è valido quando diverte, educa, lascia delle idee, fa crescere la volontà di fare, aumenta la fiducia nei diritti positivi di tutti, abitua i ragazzi a conoscersi meglio, «consente di imparare qualcosa di più su se stessi» (Sedgwick1997, X)<sup>2</sup>.

I giovani insegnanti non devono dare per scontato né trascurare il diritto all'educazione di tutti nella nostra società opulenta e evoluta: questa è una tematica viva, da collocare al centro dell'attenzione, parte integrante, non accessoria, del ruolo docente, su cui è necessario interrogarsi con un atteggiamento genuinamente euristico.

L'atteggiamento professionale necessario per garantire a tutti il diritto all'educazione è attento, riflessivo, descrittivo; non è innato né vocazionale: è una maniera euristica di porsi nella professione cercando soluzioni, che si può e si deve imparare. Il metodo di ricerca e di formazione consisteva in alcuni passaggi:

- tornare su quanto era stato fatto all'interno di *quel* particolare laboratorio;
- girarci intorno col pensiero;
- esplicitare attraverso la descrizione e la memoria, le azioni svolte durante la sua conduzione, i contenuti, gli obiettivi formativi, i metodi, le fasi di lavoro;
- cercare di individuare idee, valori, possibilità educative che, nel momento del suo svolgersi e del suo fluire, potevano essere non del tutto chiari e rimanere nel vago.

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<sup>2</sup> I laboratori che Sedgwick ha condotto e su cui ha scritto sono di poesia. Il suo metodo prevedeva una serie di attività: lettura di versi di poeti e poetesse famose, conversazioni coi ragazzi, momenti di silenzio e riflessione, scritture e riscrittura di prove poetiche da parte dei ragazzi, analisi e commento da parte sua dei lavori prodotti; analisi dei propri lavori da parte dei ragazzi stessi. Spesso i partecipanti, nelle loro riflessioni, manifestavano lo stupore di conoscere, attraverso il laboratorio di poesia, cose su se stessi che prima non sapevano.

**Popular Culture as a Site of Critical Pedagogy:  
A New Soundtrack for Intercultural Learning**

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## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

### Introduction

At first thought, the loud, dissonant sounds of experimental rock might not seem like a pedagogical exercise. But the projects of Canadian band Yamantaka//Sonic Titan (YT//ST) extend into the realm of education. In specific and important ways, YT//ST's work intersects with the projects of critical educators. They present a nuanced view of culture and power, and make efforts to articulate the political reasoning behind their artistic decisions. Their ideas resonate as important resistances to the essentialized views of culture that surface in a neoliberal, globalized context, and can serve to inform critical approaches to intercultural education.

Political engagement through popular music has an extensive history. For example, African-American jazz musicians made musical decisions that affirmed black identity and resisted racist readings of their style (Seago, 2000). Later, British punk bands used music and performance to mount an anarchic attack on the U.K.'s traditions (Epstein, 2000). These are only two examples of many. As Bowman (2004) wrote, "recognizing popular music practices as potential purveyors of musical and educational value ... replaces habitual practices with questions—a highly desirable turn of events" (p. 43). Participation in popular music has emotional and cognitive benefits, but can it serve as an educational exercise? This paper is informed by my view that schooling is just one of many sites of pedagogy (albeit an important one). Everyday activities have the potential to host important critical dialogues.

Yamantaka//Sonic Titan's critical pedagogy extends through their music, performances, and media coverage. Through critical self-reflection, they identify problems with dominant (static) conceptions of ethnicity, race<sup>1</sup>, and culture. By employing a hybrid<sup>2</sup> conception of culture in their practices, they bring new ideas to their listeners. And they do so in a way that garners attention and interest from diverse audiences. In their own words, "We want people to think about race in a different

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<sup>1</sup> A comment on the use of the word 'race' in the context of this paper: Portera (2010) notes that, in biological terms, "the only race on earth is the human race" (p. 15). Spreading this knowledge is an important move in the fight to eliminate racism. But, we do not yet live in a world where perceived somatic differences are no longer a source of discrimination. On the contrary, we live in a world where bodies are racialized, and this has deep and pervasive effects on the lived experience of individuals and communities. My privileged educational background allows me to reflect academically on the nature of race vs. racialization, but in everyday discourses in Canada, race is still a meaningful term, and it is one that the members of Yamantaka//Sonic Titan have chosen to use in relation to their identities and their music. In keeping with these comments, I will use the word 'race' at times throughout this paper.

<sup>2</sup> 'Hybrid' is used here to denote a dynamic view of culture that acknowledges change, reciprocal influence, and the influence of history and power relations on cultural identities, as I will explore later in this paper.

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

way. [We] want to be the one with the pots and pans screaming in the middle of the conversation” (B, as quoted in Arsenault, 2012). With these ‘screams,’ they transform pop-culture outlets into sites of critical discussion.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A specific set of ideas underlies Yamantaka//Sonic Titan’s actions, and my analysis. *Critical democratic theory* starts from a concern with how power drives the social construction of experience, and applies these ideas to explore the subversion of democracy through education and everyday experiences (Kincheloe, 1999). Democracy here is more than a system of governance; it is a way of life oriented toward justice (Portelli, 2001). Critical democracy as a way of life involves fighting to end oppression, through our daily actions and in our bigger projects (Kincheloe, 1999). *Critical pedagogy* takes this mission into the realm of education. Paulo Freire saw dominant modes of schooling as acutely harmful for the education of the poor and disenfranchised, as they served the interests of those in power while “certifying the inferiority” of marginalized students (Freire, 1998; Kincheloe, 2008, p. 71). Freire developed pedagogies that engage teachers and students in resisting these power dynamics. For Freire, a crucial component of this resistance is *conscientization*, described as gaining “a sense of autonomy and responsibility” in escaping and fighting oppression (Freire, 1998, p. 79). Through critical pedagogy, teachers and learners “come to know themselves by bringing to consciousness the process by which their viewpoints are formed” (Kincheloe, 1999, p. 72). Critical teaching values lived experience and respects the knowledge that learners bring to educational encounters. Foundationally, it requires ongoing critical reflection on practice—this is the joining of theory and practice known as *praxis* (Freire, 1998). The success of Yamantaka//Sonic Titan as pop-music educators depends on these processes of critical self-reflection, as I will go on to discuss.

Henry Giroux, a foundational critical educator, has worked to weave cultural studies into the work of critical pedagogy, treating popular culture as a pedagogical space (Kincheloe, 2008). The field of cultural studies is based in the ideas of Louis Althusser (1971/2005), who argued that the products of mainstream culture (including arts and entertainment) function to maintain the hegemony of the ideologies of the ruling class. Pop-culture, of course, can also serve as a site where hegemony is contested (Said, 1993). Althusser, and those who followed, see popular culture and mass media as inherently politicized, and employ analyses of these modes of communication as an important window into the workings of capitalism, neoliberalism, and globalization (Johnson, 1986-1987). Drawing on this work, the interconnections between identity, culture, and politics are central to Giroux’s critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1993; Kincheloe, 2008). He wrote of “the political side of culture,” forwarding the

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

notion that identity and difference must be addressed within the frameworks of “power, agency, and history” (Giroux, 1993, p. 2). Tracing these complex pathways, we can encounter the work of Yamantaka//Sonic Titan as a site of pedagogy where critical democracy points the way towards an expanded problematic of cultural identity.

### **Who are Yamantaka//Sonic Titan?**

Yamantaka//Sonic Titan occupy a unique space in the Canadian music scene. They are an “Asian, Indigenous, and diasporic art collective” based in Toronto and Montreal, the two largest cities in the nation (YT//ST Research Labs, 2012). The group, headed by Ruby Kato Atwood and Alaska B, engages in multidisciplinary projects in visual art, video, performance, opera, and popular music. Over the past year, the band’s profile has steadily increased in Canada: their debut album was shortlisted for the Polaris Music Prize (a juried \$30,000 award for Canadian album of the year), and they have joined the roster of a leading independent record label (Paper Bag Records).

Kato Atwood and B describe themselves as “mixed-race” (multiracial), with each having one white parent and one of Japanese or Chinese descent, respectively (Trapunski, 2012). The collective also includes two First Nations members. In interviews the band are vocal on the topics of racism, cultural appropriation, and the specific challenges faced by “mixed-race” people, who face exclusion on multiple fronts. The careful articulation and critical force of their rhetoric would be notable in any domain, but merits particular interest in the realm of popular music.

YT//ST’s desire to reclaim and redefine identity means that their artistic choices are political ones, too. The collective nods to the diversity of its members in a variety of ways—with nods to religion and spirituality, venerated ‘high culture’ practices, and the idiosyncrasies of rock music fandom. Their name refers to a Buddhist deity (Yamantaka) and an American “doom metal” song (Sonic Titan; Pelly, 2012). They call their sound “Noh-Wave,” simultaneously referencing traditional Japanese Noh theatre, and the dissonant sounds of the No Wave movement in punk music. YT//ST draw from Western popular music movements such as prog rock and metal, as well as Japanese pop, Chinese opera, and First Nations storytelling. From these many inspirations, they create a sound that is cohesive and accessible to rock fans.

The YT//ST collective includes visual artists, and their skills are harnessed in the construction of their visual messaging. The music video for their album’s first single (selected as one of 10 nominees for the Prism Prize for best Canadian music video of 2012) was co-directed by Kato Atwood and includes artwork by Alaska B (Yamantaka//Sonic Titan, Kato Atwood, & Pellstring, 2012). The group also works with props and set pieces. They dress the stage in layers of 2-dimensional, black-and-

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

white, graphic scenery, dubbing this style “Neverflat,” a play on “Superflat,” a contemporary Japanese art movement that achieved popular and commercial success in the West in the 2000s (Bottenberg, 2011). The band’s grand entrance brings together Chinese and Japanese mythology and dance, as a dragon puppet meanders over the crowd atop the heads of several band members. White face paint in the style of Kabuki theatre also serves as a conscious nod to the campy, exuberant hard rock band KISS (Pelly, 2012). Japanese fan dances, hand drums, and striking staging and lighting add to the high drama of a Yamantaka//Sonic Titan concert. For attendees, the audiovisual spectacle is impossible to ignore.

In addition to the communicative avenues of media, sound, and performance, YT//ST employ more traditional educational and activist sites. They have partnered with the YWCA to present arts and culture workshops, and appeared at feminist and LGBTQ youth gatherings and fundraisers (North By Northeast & Kato Atwood, 2012).

### YT//ST and Cultural Hybridity

Yamantaka//Sonic Titan’s artistic projects and critical views are influenced by ideas of *culture*. To effectively analyse their work, it is helpful to take some time to consider what is meant by this term. Grant & Brueck (2010) point to several definitions. Culture is one way in which we ascribe characteristics to groups. We may describe this in terms of commonalities of material conditions, of beliefs, of norms. Often these are reduced (essentialized) to static conceptions, unchanging identities. In response, notions of culture have been influenced by identity politics, as marginalized groups have fought to claim space for their own voices and perspectives in the face of a dominant white middle-class culture (Giroux, 1993). It has been noted by critical, postcolonial, and racialized scholars that identity politics with a strong focus on difference can sometimes drive a perceived ‘return’ to essentialized cultural identity, supporting uncritical racial and ethnic nationalism in marginalized groups, rather than nurturing a critical democratic worldview (Giroux, 1993; hooks, 1992; Said, 1993). However, some have contested these ideas, instead positing that marginalized or minority groups see difference as a source of “cooperative cross-cultural dialogues” (Igbino, 2011, p. 64).

Given the complexity of identity politics, can we attempt to define culture in a way that is compatible with critical democracy? Grant & Brueck (2010) point towards a possible solution, describing a conception of culture that is *hybrid*. A hybrid culture constantly re-forms, incorporating new elements and eliminating others, in response to external pressures. (I would add that hybridity is also an emergent property of culture—the flow of new ideas can come from within, not only from outside, and this is equally important.) Engaging with hybridity invites important questions:

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

What dynamic processes are involved in the development of culture? What types of knowledge are valued? Who gets to decide? What are the implications and accompanying roles for various educational stakeholders? (Grant & Brueck, 2010, p. 4)

This notion of hybridity is taken up to prevent and to challenge essentializing of culture in social science and education.<sup>3</sup> bell hooks (1992) makes a related distinction, noting that a critical view of ‘minority’ culture acknowledges that it is “formed in resistance to contemporary situations” and does not rely on an “essentialist cultural nationalism” (p. 370). Drawing a similar critique, Edward Said (1993) describes hybridity as a permissive, philosophically liberal approach to culture, that exists in opposition to the construction of a ‘traditional’ culture that invites “rigorous codes” and “fundamentalism” (p. xiii). Cultural hybridity is also recognized in the *creolization* view of culture, where it is noted that “cultures, like languages, can be intrinsically of mixed origin, rather than historically pure and homogeneous” (Hannerz, 1997, p. 127).

In conversations about culture, there is a tension between static and hybrid conceptions. This dualism depends in large part on *Othering* (Jensen, 2011). The colonialist story of culture tells us that the dominant culture is changing and progressing over time. “Others,” oppressed groups, are seen as fundamentally different. They exist outside of history—their perceived traits and practices (and even their situations of oppression) are attributed to an essentialized, ahistorical, unchanging culture. For example, Berkhofer (1978) examined pop-culture images of the American Indian, finding that “[i]n spite of centuries of contact and the changed conditions of Native American lives, [w]hites picture the ‘real Indian’ as the one before contact or during the early period of that contact” (as cited in Harding, 2006, p. 227). More broadly, Said (1993) theorises media and pop-culture representations of cultural identity as sites where the colonizing or dominant group defines the oppressed subject. Through popular discourse, the oppressed subject is described (constructed) as inferior, allowing the dominant group to justify the oppression. The singular, stereotyped cultural identity of the oppressed group is never entirely natural, timeless, self-emergent, or self-evident, but is constructed and naturalized as such by the dominant group, to serve the purposes of the dominant group. However, for Said, cultural production is also a site of opposition, wherein the colonized/oppressed may construct their own

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<sup>3</sup> Starting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the term ‘hybrid’ has also been used pejoratively within the racist ideology of miscegenation, which built fear around the mixing of ‘the white race’ with non-whites, who were seen as biologically inferior. In this context, multiracial children were described as having a hybrid (meaning: unnatural, or even mutated) racial identity (Squires, 2007). I am employing this term in a very different sense, in the tradition of the theorists I have cited.



## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

identities. As a “source of identity” (p. xiii), Said reminds us that culture is inextricably linked to power relations.

The prejudiced view which contrasts a dominant, changing culture against an oppressed, static culture relates to YT//ST’s critical reading of culture: Where is cultural hybridity permitted in popular discourse? Where is it restricted? They communicate the idea that, even for so-called ‘traditional’ (often racialized) communities, “there really is no authenticity in this world. The way that things are done now is not the way they were done 200 years ago or 500. These ideas of cultures being frozen in time ... [are] just foolish” (Trapunski, B, Kato Atwood, & Loft, 2012).

YT//ST have noted that the First Nations members of the group “weren’t raised incredibly traditionally. We kind of have access only to the pop-cultural versions [of First Nations identity]” (Trapunski, B, Kato Atwood, & Loft, 2012). This statement should be viewed in the context of Canada’s long history of assimilatory policies with regards to Aboriginal peoples (and more than half of Canada’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people now live off-reserve, in urban areas; Statistics Canada, 2009). Analysis of Canada’s news media has revealed that First Nations identities and concerns are systemically misrepresented, tokenized, and decontextualized (Harding, 2006). As Kincheloe (1999) noted, controlled and simplified identities are generally incongruous with lived experience, and some consumers will rebel against them. YT//ST’s desire to resist and redefine these identities is reflected in the group’s incorporation of elements of Iroquois social song, where the message is one of relevance, value, and currency (Art Gallery of Ontario, 2012). Their careful and deliberate pastiche of Asian, First Nations, and Western elements reminds us that these are active traditions, open to change, hybridity, and reinterpretation.

### **“I’m Going to Culturally Appropriate Myself”**

In interviews, Yamantaka//Sonic Titan have often returned to the concept of *cultural appropriation*. I wish to situate this idea politically, using this term to describe the act of a dominant group using the stories, images, or practices of a subordinated or ‘minority’ group. When cultural elements are employed separately from their culturally-defined meanings, this decontextualization can produce or reinforce harmful stereotypes. As such, cultural appropriation plays a role in the denial of sovereignty and identity. For example, Indigenous peoples in the Americas are struggling for control over their traditional stories as they seek to escape colonial control and regain self-governance (Tsosie, 2002).

In response to questions about their own use of cultural symbols, YT//ST have added an additional layer of critique to this discussion. They argue that dominant groups are often given carte

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

blanche to borrow (or steal) from other cultures, but when racialized people employ their own cultural symbols, they are pigeonholed. Says Kato Atwood, “[white] artists... were constantly appropriating Asian art ... but if I even touch it then you just stick me in a box” (Trapunski, B, Kato Atwood, & Loft, 2012). In other words, an artist of Asian descent is not free to reference Asian art in her work in the same way that white artists are. In using (what is seen as) ‘one’s own’ cultural referents, the racialized artist risks being pegged as the historical Other, locked into an essentialized cultural tradition. Further complicating matters, YT//ST have noted that “as mixed-race people, you’re [told you’re] not Asian enough, you’re not white enough. These lines are drawn because of very obvious lines of oppression” (B, as quoted in Arsenault, 2012). Doubly-Othered, denied a sense of membership in either white or racialized communities, the artists came to resist static and restrictive cultural identities. They embrace a critical, hybrid view of culture, and in doing so they complicate the idea of cultural appropriation. For Yamantaka//Sonic Titan, making reference to their Japanese and Chinese backgrounds “was about saying ‘You use it, okay I’m going to use it. You want to culturally appropriate? Fine. I’m going to culturally appropriate myself. And I’m going to do it so much that you feel uncomfortable ... so brashly and over-the-top and in-your-face that it forms a new cultural identity for Asian Canadians” (Trapunski, B, Kato Atwood, & Loft, 2012). Here is an explicit case of hybridity in action, where “creole [hybrid] cultures result as people actively engage in making their own syntheses” (Hannerz, 1997, p. 127). There is also palpable frustration in the above statement, and here I see a strong link to Freire’s treatment of anger. He describes an educational role for the expression of “appropriate anger against injustice” (1998, p. 45). Here, anger draws attention to a serious concern and results in a significant goal: the explicit desire to form a ‘new cultural identity.’

These declarations rely on conscientization and critical self-reflection. The deep importance of these processes goes beyond the mental act of reconstructing one’s consciousness: practical steps should follow (Freire, 1998; Kincheloe, 1999). Yamantaka//Sonic Titan’s actions embody the applied focus of critical self-reflection. Alaska B comments, “[a]s a band, we’ve formed a culture for ourselves” (Arsenault, 2012). This culture is reflected in YT//ST’s evident reflexivity, in their careful selection and use of artistic influences, in their unified, critical voice, and in their desire to create change. Their ideas are attracting interest and extending to build a community beyond the immediate group. The fact that I am writing this particular paper speaks to the band’s power to make deep and lasting impressions. In relation to critical pedagogy, “[a]n institution schooling fails to understand that one of the most important exercises of power in a postmodern world involves the prerogative to define meanings and to specify what knowledge is valuable ” (Kincheloe, 1999, p. 75).

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Yamantaka//Sonic Titan do not make this error, and instead have made a point of redefining meanings and reevaluating what knowledges are valuable. As a result, they have established themselves as a powerful critical force in music.

### **Applications to Intercultural Education and Student Engagement**

The ideas and practices of critical democracy lay the groundwork for intercultural dialogue. We must educate for deep understanding of the fluidity of culture and the structures of oppression (and their interrelations) if we are to educate one another across cultural differences.

Views of interculturalism in education range from holistic approaches encompassing the spirit of the educational project, to the systemic employment of a defined set of competencies, and even a combination of the two (Portera, 2010; Santerini, 2010). Portera (2010) argues that intercultural education must not concern itself only with ethnic, cultural, or somatic (racialized) difference, but must seek to address all of the diversity which students bring to the classroom, along axes such as gender and socioeconomic class. This approach requires that educators attend to “views, meanings, and relationships” when considering culture (Portera, 2010, p. 21). From a critical-democratic perspective, this means understanding that constructions of cultural difference are influenced by power structures, and striving to avoid reproducing the oppression of these same power structures in the classroom. Freire (1998) saw this kind of liberatory education as key to engaging marginalized students. Thinking about cultural hybridity draws attention to assumptions about cultural identity, and turns them into reflexive questions. Hybridity is a theory that centralizes the active role of community-building in culture, which should resonate with educators who seek to build an inclusive learning community with all of their students.

Yamantaka//Sonic Titan employ the communicative methods of youth cultures and independent music communities to develop and define their own relationship to cultural identity. In the spirit of intercultural education and critical pedagogy, I see an opportunity for their example to influence classroom practices. Informed by the insights of cultural studies, mainstream education has taken steps towards taking pop-culture and mass media seriously. Led by a teacher-driven movement, in 1986 Ontario, Canada introduced media literacy into the provincial curriculum (Duncan & Arcus, 2009). Currently, media literacy is included in the Language curriculum for grades 1 to 8 (elementary grades, ages 6/7 to 13/14), and the English curricula for grades 9 to 12 (secondary grades, ages 13/14 to 17/18; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). In media literacy education, rock music and music journalism can serve as ‘texts’ for study (in the Foucauldian sense) as well as pedagogical exercises in their own right.

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Bringing mass media and popular culture into the classroom can also influence student engagement in an intercultural-educational context. Following in Freire’s footsteps, the theories and practices of critical pedagogy hold that student disinterest and ‘underachievement’ are not a result of group differences in ability, but are directly related to systemic discrimination against poor and non-white students, whose “cultural backgrounds [and cultural forms of knowledge] ... are deemed by middle-class, white schools to be inferior to those of the dominant culture” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 15). To combat this, media and pop-culture provide a fruitful starting point from which critical teachers can explore the world *with* their students, acknowledging that both teachers and students bring valuable knowledge to the learning situation. The youth-oriented nature and wide appeal of pop-culture mean that students can easily access and contribute their own subject-area expertise—allowing pop-culture to serve as an important departure point for opening lines of communication. This can move classroom dynamics towards the dialogical teaching of critical pedagogy and the direct exchange of ideas sought by intercultural education.

### Conclusion

In exploring their work as a band, I have attempted to demonstrate Yamantaka//Sonic Titan’s vocal and sonic mission to recalibrate concepts of culture and identity. Yamantaka//Sonic Titan demonstrate that cultural hybridity and critical democracy can effectively be explored through artistic practice. They have built a playful relationship with symbols and traditions, while still attending to the problematic hierarchies that surround their influences. As musicians, YT//ST’s engagement with these concepts takes on unique forms that extend into new sites of learning in popular media and arts communities. As pop-cultural social critics, groups like YT//ST present a way for classroom educators to open up dialogue with students and to start to problematize cultural identity (important goals of a critical intercultural education).

Moving beyond anger and oppression, Yamantaka//Sonic Titan have harnessed self-reflection to build a multi-dimensional, dynamic culture of beautiful images and soundscapes, articulate speech, humour, and play. These artists are out to remake the world in their hybrid, radical image. And it is in every resistance, whether small or large, that we can start to see a new vision for the future.

## POP-CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

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**Quality of Schools in the Migrational Society:  
“Qualification for Intercultural Coordinations in Hamburg” - a new way for  
intercultural opening of schools?**

Abstract:

In Hamburg - as in the most bigger cities in Europe - schools have become multicultural institutions where students with different origins study together. In order to give students the chance to develop their full potential in a global world it is necessary that institutions and staff are prepared to deal with cultural, linguistic and social heterogeneity. Studies have shown, that schools that change their structures towards diversity education and diversity management improve their learning atmosphere and contribute to an improvement of students' results (e.g. Toronto, Zürich etc.)

The *department of intercultural education of the Hamburg Institute of teacher training and school development* and the project „BQM“ (literally translated: Counselling Qualification Migration) have developed a curriculum for a qualification for teachers as “intercultural coordinators“ and started it in summer 2012. The aim of the course is to qualify interested teachers to initiate intercultural change processes at their schools. They are encouraged to connect to ongoing school development processes, bring in relevant stakeholders rising the school's expertise in leading multicultural classes to better results. The qualification connects three threads in every module:

- 1.) Awareness raising by anti-bias-approach (coming from the US over South Africa to Germany) - sensibilizing for discrimination and prejudices
- 2.) Knowledge-transfer in Intercultural school development (curriculum development, staff development and organizational development)
- 3.) Coaching in change management (counselling participants concerning projects and concepts they develop during the qualification)

Content of the article:

1. Germany - country of immigration and the role of education
2. Intercultural Education in the City State of Hamburg
3. The Qualification for intercultural coordination
  - 3.1 Aims/ Why it started/ Partners
  - 3.2 Characteristics
    - 3.2.1 Anti-Bias-Training
    - 3.2.2 Intercultural School Development
    - 3.2.3 Change Management
    - 3.2.4 Organisational Framework
  - 3.3 Resonance
  - 3.4 State of the Art
4. Appendix
  - Program of the Qualification

**1. Germany – country of immigration and the role of education**



Germany's population nowadays is characterized by cultural, social and religious diversity. 18.6% of the total population has a "migrational background". In other words: 15.7 million people have either immigrated themselves or their parents did.

Germany used to be one of the most important target countries within Europe for migrants after the Second World War.

The forms of immigration can be roughly divided into the following stages:

- the systematic recruitment of the so called 'guest workers' between 1955 and 1968 from Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Yugoslavia (and other mostly mediterranean countries) in Western Germany
- followed by the moving in of their family members at the end of the sixties/ beginning of the seventies
- the recruitment of Vietnamese workers in Eastern Germany in the seventies
- the immigration of German "resettlers" from the former Soviet Union immediately after the Fall of the Wall
- the reception of refugees and so called undocumented people around the same time until the right on asylum was restricted
- and the migration especially of members of the European Union due to the free movement of labour act in the European Union since 2005.

The proportion of people with migrational background within the population varies significantly from state to state, with few migrants in rural areas and in Eastern Germany and a concentration in urban centers in Western Germany. At present, the highest migration quota amongst the under-25-year-olds can be found in the city-states of Hamburg and Bremen with over 40%.

Despite the social normality of diversity it was not until 2005 that politics reacted on the increasing multicultural diversity. The adoption of the Immigration Act, which amongst other things provides obligatory language-courses for all new immigrants – can be seen as one step from political side towards the attempt to cope with the challenges and potentials due to this diversity. In 2007 the National Integration-Plan was passed, in which all German states commit themselves to support and intensify measures for the "integration" of migrants in the sense of participation and more equality of opportunity.

The PISA-study (Programme for International Student Assessment) in 2006 revealed in Germany that the success in schools in Germany highly relied on the social and ethnic origin of the students. In the average migrant students are underrepresented in grammar schools and overrepresented in special schools or in secondary modern schools.

The ministeries in the different German states reacted in the majority with obligatory programs for German as a Second Language and recommendations to enhance intercultural competence in teacher training. But they did not take the whole system into focus like successful projects like Toronto or Zürich do it.

## **2. Intercultural Education in the City State of Hamburg**

Every German federal state is responsible for its own educational policy. According

to the Hamburg school-act of 1997 intercultural education is a cross-sectional task in all subjects, in school projects and in school life. In 2002 the first curricula for intercultural education in schools were completed by the ministry of education in Hamburg. They were updated in 2010 focusing on the didactic approach of competence orientation.

Already since 1990 – unique for Germany – a Department for Intercultural Education (Beratungsstelle Interkulturelle Erziehung – BIE) has been established within the Institute for Teacher Training and School Development (LI), responsible first of all for the qualification of teachers and trainee teachers in the field of intercultural education, offering central seminars on different topics, train-the-trainer-seminars, seminars for special groups (such as principals, advisory teachers and others) or workshops on conferences as well as inhouse-training and school development. Since 2006 it has the official task of the city-state of Hamburg to consult the teachers of Hamburg in intercultural questions and problems in schools. In order to make their service more efficiently known to the schools, the department focuses - as a sort of third thread - on the publication of thematic brochures (see [www.li.hamburg.de/bie/material](http://www.li.hamburg.de/bie/material) )

Additionally, in 2010 a coordination of a “network of teachers with migrational background” working on the intercultural opening of schools through more teachers with migrational background was established.

It provides at the same time a platform for the needs and interests of this special group, which has been so far underrepresented in German schools. (It is estimated that around 3% teachers with migrational background work in schools in Hamburg, whereas nearly every second child has a migrational background). A group - which according to studies - can overtake an important role as a bridge between school and families with migrational background aswell as a role model for all students.

### **3.The Qualification for intercultural coordination**

#### **3.1 Why it started/ Partners/ Aims**

Although Hamburg has quite good conditions in the field of intercultural education (see chapter before) it was not until the Hamburg “network of teachers with migrational background”stressed, that there was missing something fundamental in the qualification of teachers in Hamburg: a systematic longterm qualification which enables teachers to act as experts and “change manager” in the field of intercultural education in their own school.

The impulse by the coordination “network of teachers with migrational background” was taken over from the Department of Intercultural Education: together they designed a project for a qualification and looked for support for their project.

They found them in the following strong partners:

- the project “BQM Beratung Migration Qualifizierung - literally translated: counselling migration qualification) developing and outlining the concept together with the Department of Intercultural Education into a curriculum
- the Helmut-Schmidt-university with Prof. Mechtild Gomolla, asking her, as an expert for intercultural school development in Switzerland (project QUIMS, quality in multicultural schools in Zürich) and other countries for the evaluation of the project.
- The Ministry for Education in the city-state of Hamburg financing the evaluation and giving also expertise.

And as financial partners:

- the Foundation Ebelin and Gerd Bucerius (a quite known foundation in Germany, acting in projects motivating more students with migrational background to study to become teachers)
- the “Unfallkasse Nord”, a statutory accident insurance, supporting for years intercultural projects as a measure of prevention.

The aim of this longterm-course is to qualify interested teachers to initiate intercultural change processes at their schools. They are encouraged to connect to ongoing school development processes, bring in relevant stakeholders rising the school’s expertise in leading multicultural classes to better results.

The qualification connects three threads in every module:

- 1.) Awareness raising by anti-bias-approach - sensibilizing for discrimination and prejudices
- 2.) Knowledge-transfer in Intercultural school development (curriculum development, staff development and organizational development)
- 3.) Coaching in change management (counselling participants concerning projects and concepts they develop during the qualification)

## **3.2 Characteristics**

### **3.2.1 Anti-Bias-Training**

The anti-bias approach is an approach which was originally developed by Louise Derman-Sparks in the U.S. and came over the reconciliation work in South Africa after the period of apartheid to Germany. The fundamental hypothesis is that it is normal for every human to be biased towards others, in all kind of categories - not only in the ethnical categories but in all categories. In order to become aware of our biases and prejudices, we have to become aware of them trying to overcome them. Teachers, as matter of fact, are part of a power system. With their task in school, they can overtake a significant role in a student’s life. On one hand, they can decide about the student’s future recommending which school type would be the fittest for the student (and often recommending students with migrational background and lower social-economic situation not the grammar school, because they fear, the students might not be successful there without the help of their parents). On the other hand, they can overtake a key role in students life: A lot of successful students with “difficult background” (migrational background, socially not privileged persons) in Germany reported that they had an important person in their life from the majority society who was trusting in them, their potentials and that they would make it - a big part of them were teachers.

In the qualification, the participants get to know the anti-bias-approach by exercises “for all senses”: role play, discussions, and others, accompanied with theory. As authors of this qualification we find it very important to begin the qualification with the anti-bias-approach, as it is the base for the common definition for the group of central basics.

The anti-bias approach was on the focus in the first two weekends, but continues as a conductory file in all the elements.

### **3.2.2 Intercultural School Development**

What is meant with “intercultural school development”? In principal it means to examine the three levels of school development under intercultural/ diversity

categories.

That is:

### 3.2.2.1 Curriculum Development

Questions like the following are presented, discussed and answered:

- How can I manage to activate the competences of all students, in our case: especially the ones with migrational background in the lesson e.g. their bilingual or multilingual competences, their knowledge of the world without tending to “culturalize” them, i.e. to perceive them only through “ethnic glasses” as “Turkish, Afghan, Ghanaian” etc.
- How do I change the material used in the lessons in this direction?
- How do I teach in a way, that every student gains intercultural competences, i.e. becomes aware about his/her personal influences, perspectives, learns to change perspective and feel empathy in order to rise his/her horizon? Does it help if I teach World-Literature, World-Religions, or if I work with the students about historical events with two perspectives? (What does a very German topic as “national socialism” has to do with a multicultural class in Germany? How can I find connecting points with the interests and knowledge of my students? Would it be an idea, giving also the possibility to investigate the role of Turkey as an exile country for Germans?) Do I also talk about the story of mathematics and where it first were invented, when I teach mathematics? Do I teach different ways of calculating? Do I discuss about different beauty values, when analysing in chemistry the chemical process of tanning cream and whitening cream?
- How do I understand the difficulties especially a bilingual student has in understanding texts and writing them and how can I help him to get to know learning strategies or maybe other help? And how do I work efficiently with the linguistic coordinator at my school?

Studies of successful schools with difficult circumstances show that one factor of success is to work in this way in order to rise the identification with the school and their activities and can contribute to the improvement of students results.

### 3.2.2.2 Staff Development

This means to analyse if the staff is prepared for the multicultural students and their families or if they need qualification or also if they - when assuming new staff - look for persons with intercultural expertise and perhaps also with migrational background, depending on the job they are assigned to. The assumption of staff with migrational background is in Germany still a matter of high symbolic value for the whole society, as there are probably only 2-3% of teachers with migrational background working in schools (vs. 50% of students with migrational background in the bigger cities...). But one has to keep in mind that the migrational background may only bring the school perhaps intercultural experience which still has to be formed into intercultural professional competences!

In the qualification the participants are not only sensibilized for this challenge - during the “intercultural fair”, integrated in the qualification, they had the possibility to get to know among 80 intercultural cooperation partner who offer schools help in the following sectors:

- intercultural curriculum, projects and trainings
- projects enhancing the cooperation school and parents with migrational background

- supporting systems for students with migrational background
- important consulting institutions for multicultural schools

### 3.2.2.3 Organisational Development

The organisational development is not easy to distinguish from the other levels as the previous named levels interfere always in another. But as the authors of the qualification we find the framework of school development a good structure for our qualification.

Questions discussed here are the following:

- My role as a intercultural coordination: between expert and change manager
- As an expert: what are the basics I have to know to help my colleagues?
  - > Survival addresses: interpreters, counselling institutions, frequently asked questions in school in the intercultural fields and publications answering to them....
- As a change manager:
  - > How do I find out the challenges of my school?
  - > How do I develop a vision for the solution of these challenges?
  - > How do I formulate precise aims for the challenges of my school?
  - > How do I develop measures for my aim?
  - > And: how do I get the system changed?

### 3.2.3 Change Management

The school development chapter already shows, what is necessary for the participants of the qualification:

a solid base in change management - a whole new role for active teachers, who want to improve the situation of their students with migrational background and are now confronted to change a whole system....

The qualification provides the participants with instruments of project management:

- from taking stock of the situation of the school (Who are our students? Where do we have challenges?)
- about formulating aims and measures in relation to the challenges
- getting to know instruments like the swot-analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) and stakeholder-analysis
- And - the most important - varieties of "resistance" and strategies how to cope with it.

The practical application of the change management is realised during the qualification because every participant is asked to develop a project on the basis of a project plan at his/her school.

All three threads are part of the whole qualification and are part in every module.

### 3.2.4 Organisational Framework and Evaluation

In the first year the qualification in the above described elements contains 60 hours, starting only after school, i.e. from 4-7 pm and on Saturdays.

In the second year there will be a coaching on 4 afternoons à 4 hours.

The whole qualification will be evaluated by the Helmut-Schmidt-University with the following setting:

- individual interviews with every participant on the expectations towards the qualification and the concepts of intercultural education
  - a.) before the beginning of the qualification
  - b.) at the end of the first year
  - c.) interviews with two principals per school type and two teachers, interviewing them on the effect of the qualification for the school.

### 3.3 Resonance

The authors of the qualification were very surprised by the resonance the qualification raised among teachers in Hamburg. The organisations framework of 60 hours of qualification (instead of the compulsory 30 hours per year) including a hard time table in the afternoon or on weekends in times of school reforms especially in the field of inclusion raised the expectation that the qualification might not find enough participants. But - on the contrary - on the information workshop on the qualification more than 70 teachers came. In the end 50 applied for the 20 places - and the authors decided to take 23 instead of 20 participants.

The participants were chosen in base of the criteria beforehand decided:

- schools with a high rate of students with migrational background and in a difficult socio-economic situation
- schools who are planning the realisation of intercultural opening in short time
- support of the principal (every principal had to allow the participation on his/her teacher, signing at the same time, that he/she would support the person with resources. It was recommended that the principal should give less time to teach to the intercultural coordination in order to realise his/her task or to create even a special job as intercultural coordination with a higher payment, which is also very common in Hamburg for different tasks (from environmental sustainability to

In the end the commission responsible for the selection of the participants chose a group according to the criteria above named, being itself also very diverse (5 primary schools, 10 comprehensive schools, 5 vocational schools, 1 grammar school, 1 special school for linguistically handicapped students, 1 private school) with a diverse group of beginners and advanced persons in intercultural education of different ages and over all - with 50% of teachers of migrational background! (Thanks to the work of the network of migrant teachers)

### 3.4. State of the Art

Where are we now?

The qualification started on September 2012 - we are now in the last 2/3 of the year.

The participants have got taken insights in the three threads of the qualification. In the last modules they will complete their knowledge, working simultaneously on their school project matrix, which they will present at the end of the first year.

The project work and its effects differ from person to person, from school to school. There are participants who tell us, that they had difficulties to talk to their principals even about taking stock of the schools challenges und potentials and there are others who plan together with the principal on a real change of the school.

The role of the intercultural coordination in this first year of qualification has to get public to the school and the principal - a learning process on the one hand for the authors who will continue their lobbying but on the other hand also for the teachers who are not used to such a new role.

All the participants enjoy the longterm qualification in a group because it helps them to overcome feelings of frustration and senselessness of their work. They also understand, that the time to change something within school needs more than 5 or 10 years and can't only be done by them. But their purely existence, their participation in the qualification already changed something in contrast to the teachers who come and participate in one or the other intercultural seminar.

And indeed - there are already new teachers asking for a new qualification as they see the need at their school. They - as well as the 27 applicants, who were not taken for the qualification refuse to participate in separate central seminars. They want to participate in the special new longterm-qualification with all its elements.

Other federal states in Germany expressed also interest in this pilot qualification. Referents of the qualification consulted the traditional qualification in intercultural education in the city-state of Bremen. The ministry of Hesse, together with the network of migrational teachers there, the university of Frankfurt and the Hertie Foundation want to "import" the qualification from Hamburg to Frankfurt. And others federal states in Germany have shown their interest.

We will report on the results of the qualification as soon as the qualification will end. But one thing is already clear for us as authors - we see the future in such kind of longterm qualification and will put all our energy in the good evaluation and the repetition of this qualification. There is no alternative to it.

#### **4. Appendix**

##### **Program of the Qualification**

##### **2012/2013: 60 hours**

- 1.) Kick-Off "Quality of Schools in the Migrational Society"
- 2.) Anti-Bias-Approach: Prejudices and Discrimination
- 3.) Anti-Bias-Approach: Mediation in Conflicts
- 4.) Intercultural Curriculum Development - teaching subjects interculturally
- 5.) Presentation of Intercultural Focused Lessons (by teachers of different school types)
- 6.) Intercultural School Development and Good Practice
- 7.) Frequently Asked Questions: Religious Questions in Schools
- 8.) Intercultural Parent Cooperation
- 9.) Intercultural Curriculum Development - teaching subjects interculturally
- 10.) Intercultural Fair
- 11.) State of the Art: School Projects
- 12.) Counselling in intercultural context
- 13.) Intercultural Curriculum Development - teaching subjects interculturally
- 14.) Presentation of the School Concepts

##### **2013/2014: 12 hours**

- >Coaching of the group
- > topics will be defined according to the needs of the group

## ***Rick's café network***

### ***An insider's view: The importance of being in a network***

Maria Kavouri

Intercultural Mediator, Aim Network- Association of Intercultural Mediators Network

With this poster we aim to introduce the Comenius network project: *Rick's café network*; through eyes insider's partner *Aim Network*. This is a local Association of Intercultural Mediators, based in Ferrara, Emilia Romagna, Italy. Aim Network was born inside Rick's café network and grows up under its guidance and its influence.

We will exam the concept, the structure, the objects, the activities and the influence on its partners and toward a wider audience, made up from schools, policy makers, stakeholders and specialists in issues related to intercultural education. *Rick's café network* stands for Renewing Intercultural Competences and Knowledge Spaces. It is coordinated by **CECE - Confederación Española de Centros de Enseñanza** of Spain. The main partnership is composed from 16 organisations based all over Europe; they are involved 3 universities, 2 schools and other institutions. In this Consortium are also joined a good number of organisations and schools as hosts.

**Objectives:** The network started working in December 2010 when it embarked on a three year programme of events including training activities, workshops, research, European Intercultural Days and publishing activities. Mainly, it focuses to improve the initial knowledge and especially Intercultural education of teachers and other categories of personnel working in the school education sector. It aims, also to develop strategies, exchange experiences, to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and drive the school toward internationalization. This network of organizations and individuals recognizes the value of open vision in the minds of student and works to preserve it. RICK'S cafe' is not a research network but a network of schools, educators, policy makers and players in education who work together to learn together and from each other.

**Results:** In these two years the network organized 9 online forum, 5 training sessions and 3 international workshops taken in account the most important issues facing education today, particularly early school leaving with a focus on interculturality, religious perspectives and intercultural mediation's issues. Together, they are developing a RICM (Readiness for Intercultural Change Model) after looking around them and exchange views and experience. They pool information about situations and developments happening in different parts of Europe. The next tasks will involve publishing on Rick's café web-site of mini papers on Educational issues and the realization of 2 EYIDs (European Youth Intercultural Days) as one is already realized in Porto in January 2013.

### ***Introduction***

Aim Network who stands for Association of Intercultural Mediators Network is one of the 16 partners who constitute the network RICK'S cafe'. Aim Network will try to offer the imagine of Rick's café from inside. This network is a community of players in education from all over Europe that have set out to bring about positive change in our schools and in education. The partnership of the network is made up of a number of organisations from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Malta, Greece,



Cyprus, Turkey, Germany and Poland. We also have an associate partner from the Palestinian Territories. The partners who are the patrons of RICK'S cafe' are the following:

- 1) **CECE - CONFEDERACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE CENTROS DE ENSEÑANZA, SPAIN**
- 2) **OPPORTUNITIES AID FOUNDATION, MALTA**
- 3) **CEIPES CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE PER LA PROMOZIONE DELL'EDUCAZIONE E LO SVILUPPO, ITALY**
- 4) **PAULA FRASSINETTI SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, PORTUGAL**
- 5) **OPEN UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS,**
- 6) **PROVÍNCIA PORTUGUESA DO INSTITUTO DAS IRMÃS DE SANTA DOROTEIA, COLÉGIO DO SARDÃO, PORTUGAL**
- 7) **BOLU PROVINCIAL DIRECTORATE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION, TURKEY**
- 8) **ANKARA YENIMAHALLE DISTRICT DIRECTORATE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION, TURKEY**
- 9) **CENTRE FOR CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE RESEARCH, GERMANY**
- 10) **CENTRO STUDI INTERCULTURALI OF UNIVERSITY OF VERONA, ITALY**
- 11) **OCEAN NGO, GREECE**
- 12) **AIM NETWORK- ASSOCIATION OF INTERCULTURAL MEDIATORS NETWORK, ITALY**
- 13) **UNIwersytet Łódzki, POLAND**
- 14) **ISTANBUL MILLI EGITIM MUDURLUGU, TURKEY**
- 15) **KOCAELI GOVERNORSHIP EU PROJECTS COORDINATION CENTRE, TURKEY**
- 16) **UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA, GREECE**

### *Story*

RICK'S cafe' was conceived through friendships. It started out in meetings between friends in projects, networks and conferences. Friendships got stronger and so did the discussions. The first mention of this network was vague and ideas cropped up here and there...and this network now brings all this together. We can say that the first friendships that brought about RICK'S cafe' started out in Madrid in 2007 and then went on to grow in Poland, Athens when our institution met future project partners and so on in Slovenia and Italy. This was a lesson that networking can take place anywhere but for network contacts to become friendships it takes time, understanding, listening and sharing instances in our life that later on become funny anecdotes. RICK'S cafe' carries all this

within it and we are sure that as it moves, changes and grows it will produce more anecdotes for our collection.

### ***Concept***

RICK'S cafe' is a network and as such our main aim is networking. This will be carried out in various ways. During the first three years of the life of the network we will meet for coordination meetings, training sessions, international training and youth events. We will interact via this portal in discussion forums. We will be producing a number of reports and create a Readiness for Intercultural Change Model for secondary schools. Why is this a cafe' ? The word cafe' has many meanings to it in our case. A cafe' is a place for interaction between individuals. It is where you read the morning paper, have your coffee, meet with others sometimes for small talk, a quick chat or a heated conversation. Cafe' also hints at the idea of internet cafe' and this network will also use virtual interaction to sustain our networking in between our face to face meetings. Cafe' is also about the smell of coffee, cultures and countries of origin of coffee beans and this hints at intercultural education. Our network is a learning network and it is high on human interaction however our dreams lie beyond the normal parameters of interaction. We started working together in December 2010. Our first coordination meeting and training session took place in Madrid by CECE's establishment, who is the coordinator of the network. RICK'S cafe' immediately embarked on the drawing up of a vision document for the network in fact some of our expert partners have put together a number of definitions and concepts for RICK'S cafe'. These definitions will accompany the network through any change in the future and will form the basis for all our discussions and outputs.

We discuss on Foresight tools and put the basis, on social change : overcoming hurdles and resistance on internationalization of School Environments and internationalizing of my standard curriculum. Fitting Religions into a school of multiple religious and non-religious convictions also policy making: learning, identity and growth, creativity in thinking and decision making. We study on strategies in order to avoid early school leaving or at least decrease the number of leavers.

The network was divided in 3 thematic work groups: Research, dissemination and training group. The research group has to deal with: RICM, CRI intercultural education and case studies. The training group and the dissemination group with tasks related the website, web portal, strategy, forum, newsletters. In that occasion they decided the constitution of scientific committee. A big quantity of other decisions regarding the partnership were taken in this occasion.

In our network you choose

- who to be
- what to do
- how to do it
- when to do it

you choose

- who to work with
- what to give
- what to take

### ***Rick's Cafè Activities***

A network is about networking and that is why RICK'S cafe activities are built around a number of topics that are the subjects of discussions in the European Intercultural Discussion Forums, in our training sessions and our international workshops.

#### **1) *Coordination Meetings***

1<sup>st</sup> Coordination Meeting : Madrid December 2010

2<sup>nd</sup> Coordination Meeting : Malta April 2011

3<sup>rd</sup> Coordination Meeting : Citta' della Pieve November 2011

4<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting : Bolu, Turkey June 2012

5<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting : Krakow, Poland October 2012

6<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting : Madrid, November 2013

#### **2) *International Workshops And Training Sessions***

1<sup>st</sup>: Madrid December 2010: Foresight envisaging social change

2<sup>nd</sup> : Malta April 2011: Strategic reflections on best practices and approaches for the prevention of early school leaving : focus on interculturality.

3<sup>rd</sup> : Citta' della Pieve November 2011- Models towards to internationalisation of the school: readiness and challenges on the way to build a strategic Intercultural and Internationalisation plan

4<sup>th</sup> : Bolu, Turkey June 2012: Building Strategic Intercultural and Internationalisation Plans (taking into account the outputs from previous training activities) in secondary, vocational and professional schools to develop an organizational culture that will invite innovative change and adapt to environmental forces.

5<sup>th</sup> : Krakow, Poland October 2012 Training on intercultural mediation : supportive resources and intercultural learning approaches and methodologies

6<sup>th</sup>: Madrid, Spain 2013 International Cooperation in Education

#### **3) *Fora***

Topics covered by the forums include :

- a) Internationalization of schools - Cross Curricular ideas and activities
- b) Summary of the forum on Political mediation between school and community; interactivity and synergised proactivity
- c) Political mediation between school and community; interactivity and synergised proactivity

- d) School culture, policy and change.
- e) Fitting religions into a school of multiple religious and non-religious convictions

#### 4) *European Youth Intercultural Days - EYID'S*

In 2013 RICK'S cafe' will be organizing three events in its series of European Youth Intercultural Days. These will be three fun and entertaining events for youths and youth leaders, teachers and teacher trainers, parents, policy makers who have intercultural education and global perspectives in education as one of their interests. Porto, Palermo and Athens are the locations where the **EYID's** will be hosted.

#### 5) *Trends Watch is the research activities of RICK'S cafe'.*

Our research activities consist of surveys that we carry out with stakeholders in education to find out what is happening around us, put together a collective scenario made up of the variety of backgrounds and circumstances in which partners and members of the network operate with a will to be actors for positive change in their school. Watching trends is one of way of exchange and interaction in RICK'S cafe'.

#### 6) *Readiness for Intercultural Change Model (RICM)*

The development of a **Readiness for Intercultural Change Model (RICM)** is inspired by the already existent CRI Model. The CRI Model was developed as an assessment tool to determine cultural readiness for internationalisation for the purpose of facilitating organizational adaptation. In a similar way, the new Readiness for Intercultural Change Model will determine cultural readiness for intercultural organizational change in schools, for the purpose of facilitating building and implementing Intercultural Strategic Plans. The model will examine cultural readiness for internationalisation and intercultural change at the micro (individual), meso (organizational) and macro (external stakeholders) levels. They will introduce identified multiple factors impacting cultural readiness for organisational change.

#### 7) *European Courses 2013*

Rick's café network in cooperation with Aim Network organizes short European courses under "in service training" scheme, in Città della Pieve e Ferrara.

European Course in Malta and in Italy 2013	Getting youths to speak about Human Rights
European Course in Malta 2013	Internationalising Education and school curriculae through youth mobility
European Course in Citta	<u>Using Problem Based Learning to enhance thinking as part of strategy to internationalise the standard curriculum</u>

della Pieve and Ferrara 2013	
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### *Considerations*

Being in a big Comenius Network like Rick's café help us to come out from our local dimension and look around globally. This condition make us able to collaborate with a school in Portugal as well as in Athens and thinking about the implementation of our ideas and best practices in Turkey. The contacts between the primary school A. Manzoni of Ferrara, the 151 school Liosion of Athens and Colegio Do Sardao of Porto is the result of this partnership. We have the possibility to share new ideas with our colleagues and we think that the world is not so big that seemed before. These opportunities give us the possibility to develop a full European citizenship by living, working and sharing with our partners. We also are involved and we involve our network partners in other European projects and activities, assured development and continuity for all. We participate actively in the training sessions with contributions and papers and we are learning from our partners. We have traveled around Europe for participation in Rick's café meetings and we brought the outcome of these meetings to the schools which we are in touch. Moreover, we have facilitated teachers participating in Rick's café training sessions by disseminating new knowledge. Intercultural education perspective responds to the challenges that are the issue of our time. Our main focus is thinking and acting in our time.

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## "L'importanza delle TIC nella formazione interculturale degli insegnanti"

Maria Kavouri

Mediatore Interculturale, Association of Intercultural Mediators Network- AimNetwork

### Introduzione

In questi ultimi 40 anni il mondo sta cambiando con grande velocità rispetto al passato, quando i cambiamenti avvenivano lentamente dando alle società il tempo di adeguarsi. Grandi scoperte della scienza ci portano in nuove dimensioni e l'uso delle tecnologie cambia lo scenario della nostra vita. Le TIC tecnologie di Informazione e comunicazione, cioè l'uso dei media, in particolare il computer, entrano prepotentemente in tutti i settori e in particolare in ambito scolastico. Nella nostra società l'informazione ha assunto un ruolo importante e "l'accesso all'informazione" diventa un obbligo per poter accedere alle opportunità di conoscenza e all'impiego dei media come opportunità cognitive e formative specifiche. Per far ciò è necessario che gli insegnanti stessi abbiano assimilato atteggiamenti tecnologici che li mettano in grado di collocare e adattare le tecnologie ai particolari contesti educativi, che abbiano acquisito quindi una sorta di "forma mentis metodologica".

Purtroppo, nessun sistema scolastico è riuscito ad adeguarsi a questi cambiamenti. Tutte le scuole del mondo sono in una fase di transizione, tutti parlano di riforme e riorganizzazioni ma spesso i loro intenti rimangono sulla carta senza una vera realizzazione. Le classi continuano ad avere la disposizione verticale di sempre, gli insegnanti spesso adottano un orientamento centralizzato sulla loro figura come unici e indiscutibili dispensatori di saggezza e fonti di conoscenza. Il matematico Seymour Papert, che è uno dei pionieri dell'intelligenza artificiale, in un'intervista riguardo all'uso delle nuove tecnologie nelle scuole dice: "E io penso che il miglior modo per farlo è quello di creare, all'interno delle scuole, delle situazioni in cui i ragazzi seguono le loro passioni col cuore, portano avanti progetti a cui sono veramente interessati, fanno scoperte prendendo da Internet le informazioni di cui hanno bisogno, lavorano insieme, realizzano cose difficili. L'insegnante li consiglia, li guida. E, quindi, l'insegnante deve abituarsi all'idea di rispettare gli alunni in quanto persone che imparano, di riconoscere che essi producono le loro stesse conoscenze, che la vecchia aspirazione che molti pedagoghi avevano avuto che i ragazzi possano imparare sperimentalmente facendo cose che per loro sono veramente importanti, alla fine, possiamo immaginare di realizzarla in questo modo. Questo discorso riguarda le vecchie concezioni ben radicate su come vorremmo che i ragazzi imparassero, e la tecnologia rende possibile la realizzazione dei sogni dei vecchi pedagoghi".

Qui si crea il paradosso; di fronte a delle classi di alunni di oggi, i cosiddetti "nativi digitali", ci si può trovare completamente sguarniti, privi di ogni bagaglio di conoscenze, di fronte a ragazzi di soli 12 anni. Questo è uno dei paradossi della nostra epoca. La conoscenza delle tecnologie informatiche TIC è dunque un'altra sfida della nostra epoca, che investe il mondo delle scuole. Conoscere, poter applicare agilmente i programmi più utili e sfruttare la tecnologia per l'insegnamento e la comunicazione non è di largo uso nella scuola di oggi, specialmente nella scuola primaria e in quella secondaria di primo grado. Forum, blog, newsgroup, social network, non sono ancora di largo uso fra gli insegnanti mentre gli alunni sono completamente integrati in questo mondo di comunicazione. Inoltre, la consistenza del fenomeno migratorio in scuole europee ha attirato una maggiore attenzione per le altre tradizioni, per cui la molteplicità delle culture, inizialmente vista con sospetto, tende ad essere sempre più riconosciuta come una condizione normale ed inevitabile delle società occidentali. In questo contesto si è imposta l'esigenza del dialogo e dell'educazione interculturale, strumenti necessari per avvicinare le culture e per favorire l'integrazione degli stranieri. Di conseguenza, le pratiche interculturali che si sono affermate sono prima di tutto di tipo "compensativo", dette così perché rispondono principalmente all'urgenza di compensare gli svantaggi patiti dagli immigrati nelle nuove realtà, svantaggi dovuti alla scarsa conoscenza di lingua, norme giuridiche, usi e costumi dei paesi ospitanti. Tuttavia, gli interventi "compensativi" non esauriscono l'ambito dell'educazione interculturale, che è molto più ampio, come hanno fatto notare gli esperti di settore e anche il Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione in diverse occasioni. A titolo esemplificativo, possiamo citare un documento ministeriale del 2007, che recita così: "Scegliere la prospettiva interculturale non significa limitarsi a mere strategie di integrazione degli alunni immigrati, né a misure compensatorie di carattere speciale. Si tratta piuttosto di assumere la diversità come paradigma dell'identità della scuola e come occasione per aprire l'intero sistema formativo a tutte le differenze" (M.P.I., Roma, 23-5-2007). Di qui la necessità di coinvolgere, in campo educativo ma non

solo, competenze interculturali elevate, rivolte alla conoscenza profonda dei diversi universi culturali (intercultural “profonda”), al fine di apprezzarne le differenze e gli eventuali punti di convergenza. Ciò costituisce un requisito indispensabile per un’educazione interculturale non superficiale, capace di promuovere il rispetto del pluralismo (come vuole l’approccio multiculturalista), senza però rinunciare alla possibilità di trovare momenti d’intesa e livelli di armonizzazione tra le dette differenze. In questo ambito, l’educazione interculturale profonda cerca di valorizzare, tra l’altro, le più significative esperienze storiche di dialogo e coesistenza tra culture, poiché da esse possiamo ricavare utili insegnamenti, validi anche per il presente. Una di queste è l’educazione al pluralismo, “il concetto dell’interculturalità è da considerarsi come indissolubile da quello di pluralismo. Così come il pluralismo politico porta alla democrazia quello delle culture dovrebbe aiutarci a raggiungere l’autonomia di pensiero la criticità” [Portera 1997:214] Il valore di queste maggiori competenze interculturali è stato sottolineato, con tonalità diverse, dai principali esponenti contemporanei del dialogo interculturale: si tratta di competenze indispensabili per i docenti, per i mediatori culturali, ma anche per i politici e gli amministratori, al fine di gestire con saggezza certe emergenze di grande attualità.

### Bisogni degli insegnanti

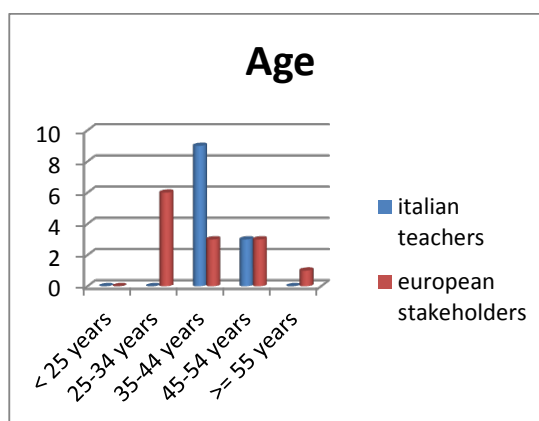
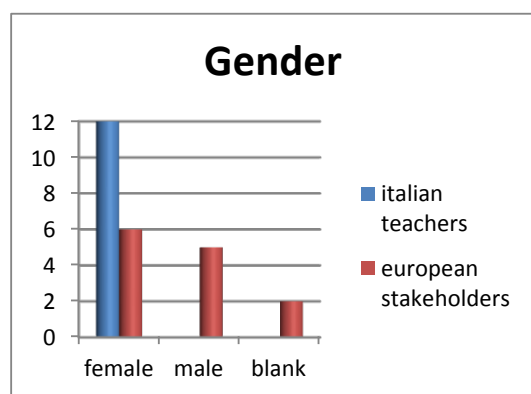
Innovazione e cambiamento vanno di pari passo anche con le competenze linguistiche, la lingua inglese come lingua veicolare è diventata un’indispensabile conoscenza e bagaglio che dovrebbero avere tutti gli insegnanti. Purtroppo, anche in questo ambito ci sono delle grandi carenze che coinvolgono tutto il personale scolastico di tutti i gradi. Questo fatto compromette seriamente il percorso della scuola verso il cambiamento e l’innovazione. La mancanza della conoscenza linguistica costringe la comunità degli insegnanti ad un auto-isolamento e provincialismo che gli impedisce di avere scambi di opinioni, idee e progetti con i loro pari europei, ingredienti che veicolerebbero la scuola verso il cambiamento e la crescita.

Per poter valutare i bisogni degli insegnanti a fronte di classi multiculturali, la loro eventuale apertura verso l’interculturalità e l’aiuto del mediatore interculturale, abbiamo somministrato a 25 soggetti un questionario che prende in considerazione la presenza in classi di alunni stranieri, la difficoltà di gestione di tale presenza, l’aiuto del mediatore interculturale, la conoscenza della figura del mediatore e la loro idea sull’insegnamento della religione a scuola. I primi 12 questionari in italiano, sono stati somministrati agli insegnanti di una scuola elementare del Nord Italia. Lo stesso questionario in inglese, è stato somministrato ad un gruppo di 13 persone, durante il workshop internazionale organizzato dal Comenius, network, Rick’s café. In questo incontro abbiamo avuto la possibilità di trovare riuniti insegnanti, dirigenti scolastici, personale scolastico e persone che si occupano di educazione da tutta l’Europa.

### CONSIDERAZIONI SUI QUESTIONARI

Il campione è costituito da 12 insegnanti italiani, tutte femmine, e 13 stakeholders che partecipano a un progetto europeo: 5 maschi, 6 femmine e 2 che non indicano il genere.

Nel gruppo di insegnanti, 9 rientrano nella fascia di età 3 (corrispondente a 35-44 anni), 3 nella fascia di età 4 (corrispondente a 45-54); nel gruppo degli stakeholders 6 appartengono alla fascia di età 2 (25-34 anni), 3 alla fascia di età 3, 3 alla fascia di età 4, 1 alla fascia di età 5( >= 55 anni). Il secondo gruppo è più eterogeneo rispetto all’età.

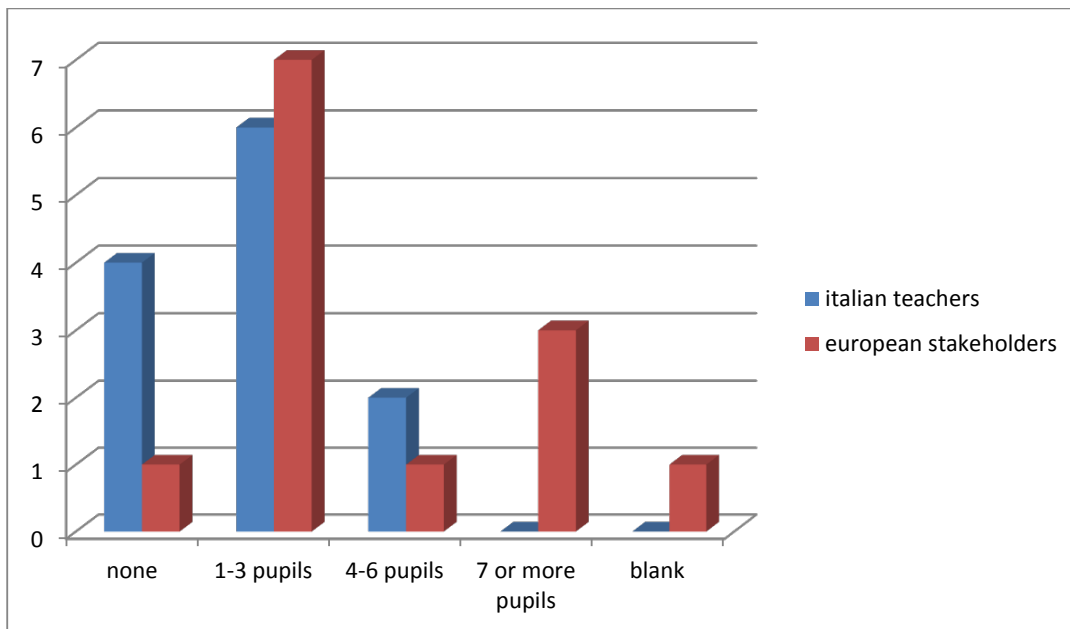


Consideriamo ora le domande proposte:

*1. Ci sono alunni di diversi gruppi culturali e religiosi nella Sua classe? quanti?*

Nel gruppo delle insegnanti italiane emerge la seguente distribuzione: in 4 casi non vi è nessun alunno di diverso gruppo culturale o religioso; in 6 casi, questi alunni sono da 1 a 3, in 2 casi sono da 4 a 6.

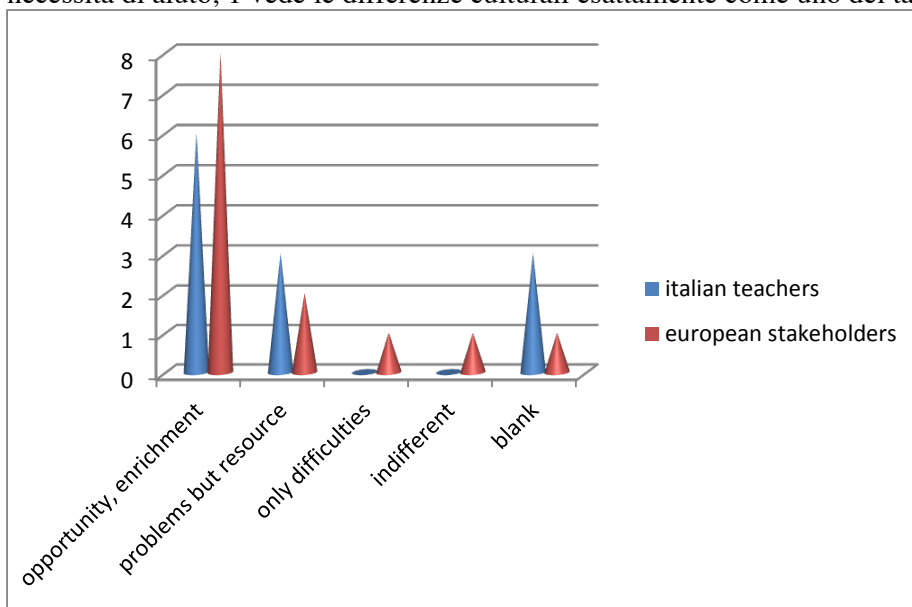
Nel gruppo degli stakeholders, in un caso non vi sono alunni con diversità, in 7 casi ve ne sono da 1 a 3, in un caso da 4 a 6, in 3 casi ve ne sono 7 o più. Un soggetto non risponde.



*2. Come considera la presenza di uno o più alunni stranieri nella classe?*

Nel gruppo delle insegnanti italiane, 3 non rispondono; 2 ritengono questa presenza una opportunità, 3 la ritengono un arricchimento, 1 una fonte di confronto, 2 la considerano insieme origine di ricchezza e di problemi (e lo specificano meglio)

Nel gruppo degli stakeholders uno non risponde; 8 hanno una visione positiva (not bad; easy relation; difference as a source of joy, respect, positive interaction, enrichment, opportunity, osmosis); 2 rilevano difficoltà ma affrontabili (not so bad; small problems but we can cope); 1 vede soprattutto le difficoltà e la necessità di aiuto; 1 vede le differenze culturali esattamente come uno dei tanti aspetti degli scambi in classe.

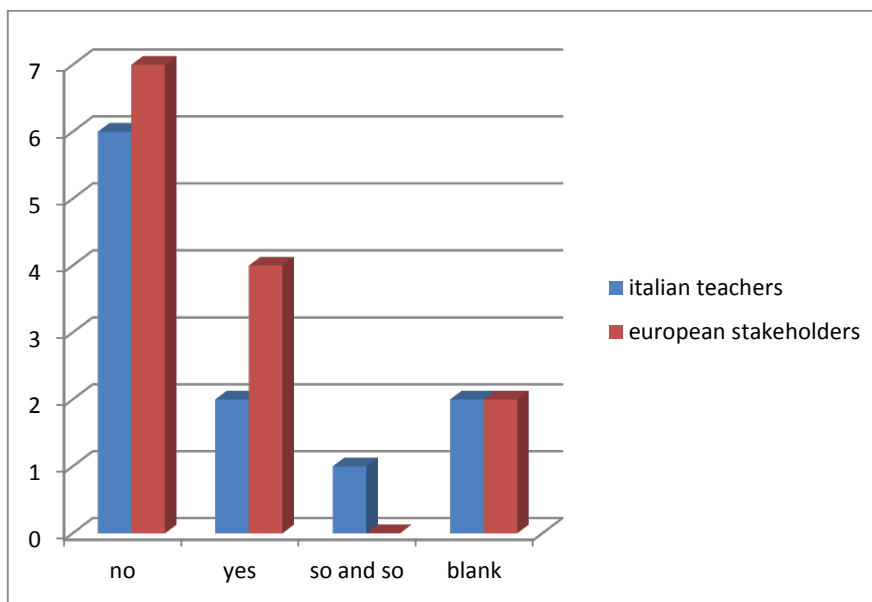




3. *Incontra difficoltà con questi alunni ? Se “SI”, che tipo di difficoltà?( lingua, comportamento, comunicazione, altro)*

Nel gruppo delle insegnanti, due non rispondono, 6 dichiarano di non incontrare difficoltà, 2 di incontrarne, 1 è su posizioni intermedie

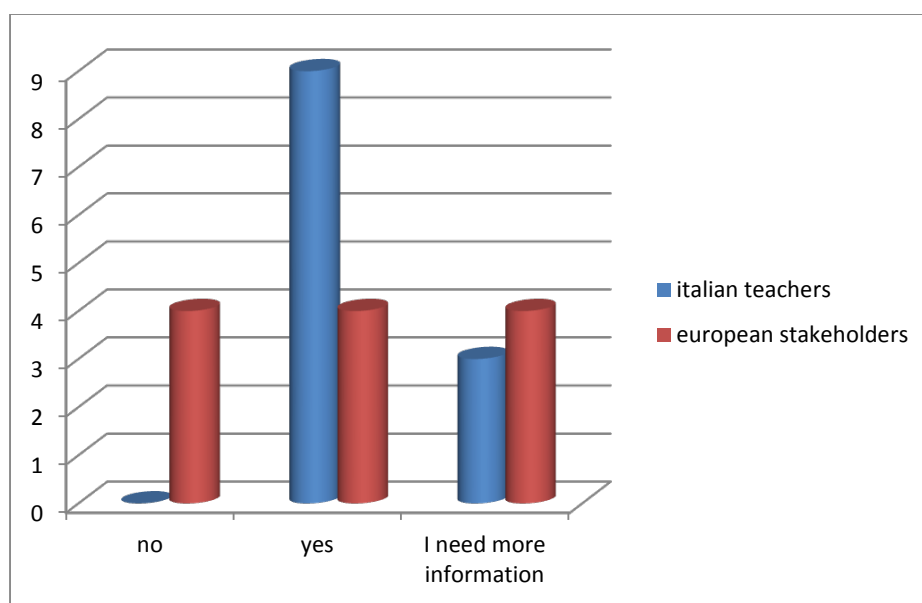
Nel gruppo degli stakeholders due non rispondono, 7 dichiarano di non incontrare difficoltà, 4 di incontrarne (soprattutto problemi di comprensione linguistica)



4. *E' a conoscenza della figura del mediatore culturale nella scuola?*

Nel gruppo delle insegnanti, 9 sono a conoscenza della figura del mediatore, 3 ne sono a conoscenza, ma vorrebbero ulteriori informazioni.

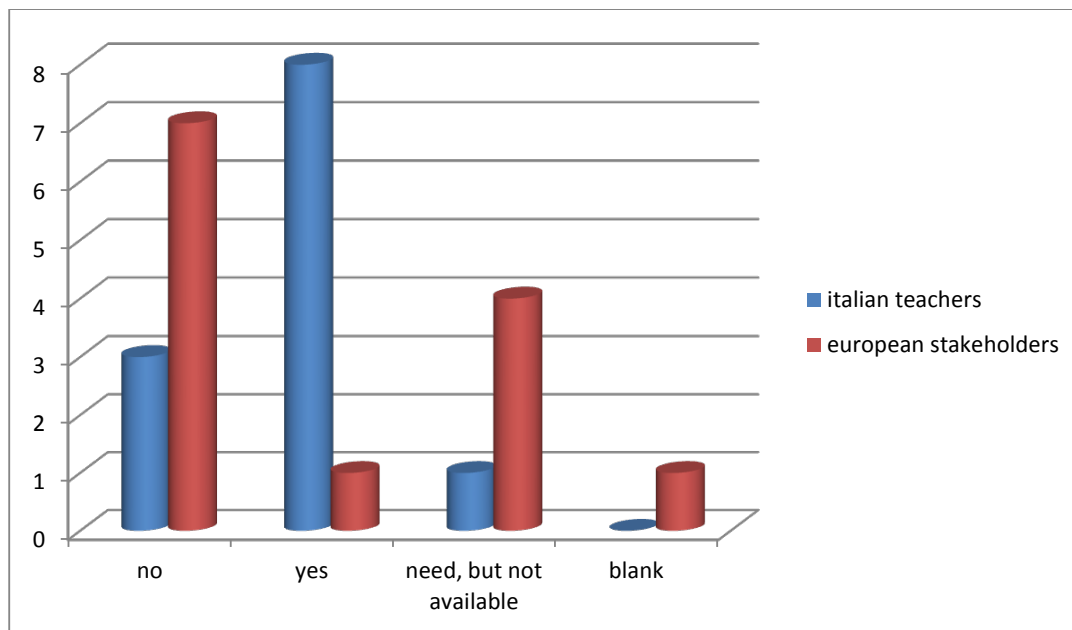
Nel gruppo degli stakeholders 4 non conoscono la figura del mediatore culturale, 4 la conoscono, 5 vorrebbero maggiori informazioni.



5. *Ha mai avuto bisogno di mediazione culturale e accolto un mediatore interculturale nella Sua classe?*

Nel gruppo italiano 3 non hanno mai avuto necessità di un mediatore culturale, 8 hanno usufruito di questa opportunità, 1 ne avrebbe avuto bisogno, lo ha chiesto ma non lo ha ottenuto.

Nel gruppo degli stakeholders europei, 1 non risponde, 7 non hanno mai utilizzato la mediazione in classe, 1 ne hanno usufruito, 4 ne avrebbero avuto necessità, ma non ne avevano la disponibilità.

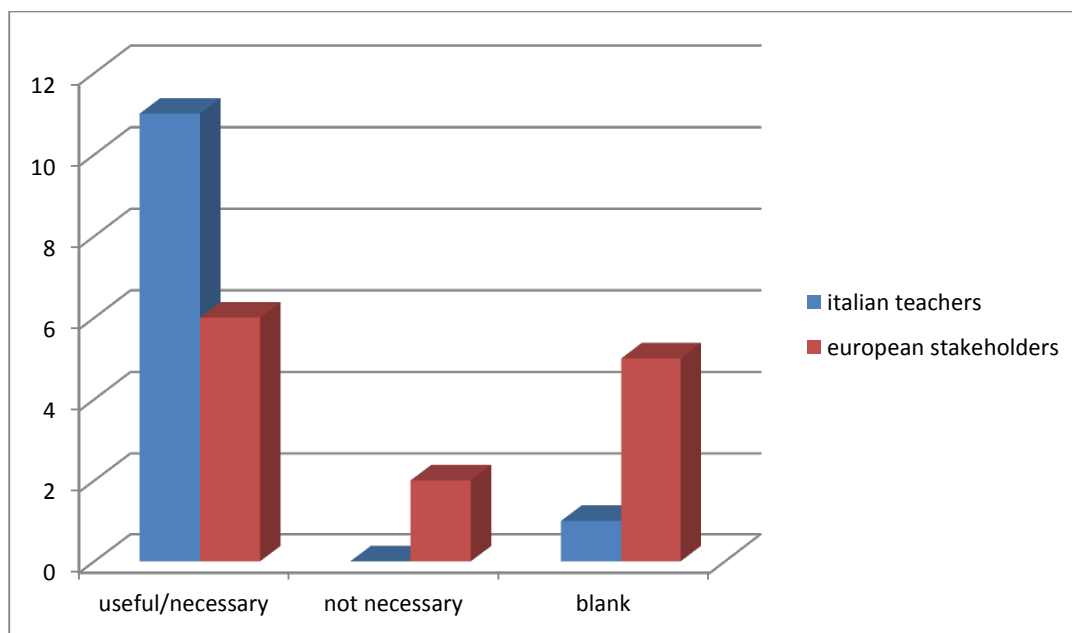


6. *Cosa pensa della sua permanenza nella Sua classe? È necessaria? Non è necessaria? Perché?*

Nel gruppo italiano, 5 la ritengono necessaria, 3 utile/utilissima/preziosa, 3 fondamentale, 1 non risponde.

In sintesi: tutte le 11 che rispondono la ritengono necessaria, se non indispensabile.

Nel gruppo degli stakeholders, 5 non rispondono, 6 la ritengono necessaria/ utile/indispensabile, 2 la ritengono non necessaria.



A. Come viene gestita la materia della religione nella sua scuola, considerando i diversi background religiosi degli alunni?

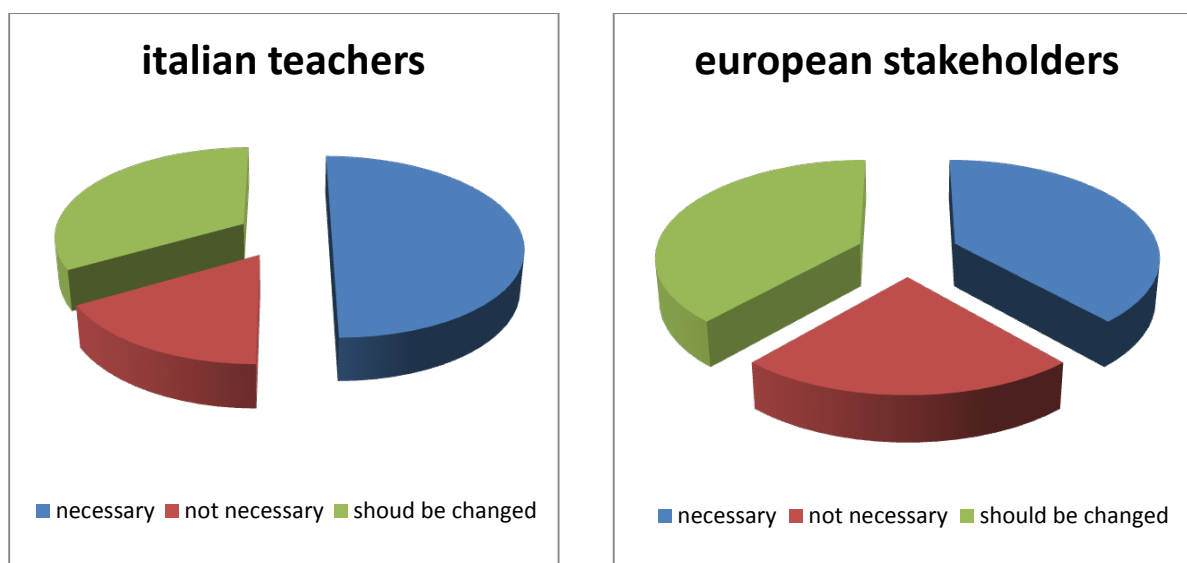
Nel gruppo di insegnanti italiane: 4 non rispondono; 4 sottolineano l' esistenza di attività alternative, 1 afferma che tutti gli alunni seguono la religione cattolica, 1 afferma che l'insegnamento, pur cattolico, tiene conto dell'esistenza di altre religioni, 1 che è necessario, 1 usa un concetto generico ("molto bene")

Nel gruppo degli stakeholders: 3 non rispondono; in 4 casi si insegna solo religione cattolica ( e uno sottolinea quanto questo crei tensioni e conflitti in classe) e in uno la religione del curriculum nazionale, senza specificarla; in 1 caso si insegnano i concetti delle tre principali religioni , in 2 casi si discute sui concetti di diverse religioni; 1 dichiara che nella sua scuola non si impartisce educazione religiosa.

B. Secondo Lei, insegnare religione a scuola è necessario?

Nel gruppo italiano 2 persone rispondono che non è necessario, 6 che è necessario, 4 che non andrebbe insegnata una religione, ma la storia delle religioni, e i valori etici di convivenza civile.

Nel gruppo degli stakeholders 3 persone rispondono che non è necessario, 5 che è necessario, 5 che l'insegnamento dovrebbe essere multiculturale, uguale per tutte le religioni, di rispetto per le differenze.



*Grandi strumenti per l'innovazione della scuola vengono offerti attraverso i programmi Europei finanziati dal Fondo Sociale Europeo*

*1) e-Twinning gemellaggio in rete*

e-Twinning è la comunità delle scuole europee, uno spazio di incontro e crescita professionale per tutti gli insegnanti europei ed uno strumento per creare gemellaggi elettronici, consentire agli studenti di partecipare a progetti didattici in dimensione europea e promuovere l'innovazione nella scuola grazie all'applicazione delle TIC. L'utilizzo delle nuove tecnologie rappresenta una grande opportunità di innovazione per la scuola che e-Twinning coniuga con la dimensione europea. L'obbiettivo di questa azione è di promuovere metodi di cooperazione innovativi e sostenere l'aggiornamento professionale dei docenti sul uso didattico delle Tecnologie dell'Informazione e della Comunicazione (TIC).

L'obbiettivo primario di e-Twinning è sviluppare il lavoro in rete tra scuole e dare agli insegnanti uno strumento per l'aggiornamento professionale, con particolare attenzione alla didattica collaborativa, agli aspetti pedagogici legati all'uso delle tecnologie e al confronto metodologico. Ma ciò che caratterizza e-Twinning e lo rende speciale è la centralità dell'utilizzo delle tecnologie come modalità quotidiana di lavoro

fra i partner, i quali durante il percorso insieme, si servono di blog, e-mail, lavagne digitali e piattaforme condivise, wiki, chat, strumenti web per la comunicazione sincrona e non.

Dal 2004 e-Twinning ha visto crescere la partecipazione di studenti e docenti alle sue attività e sono nati progetti diversi e concrete opportunità di crescita e-Twinning è divenuto una comunità online di docenti europei, una rete sociale per il mondo dell'istruzione e il suo portale si è ispirato ai social network, per facilitare lo scambio e la conoscenza reciproca Learning Events -> **eTwinning Learning Lab**. La registrazione nella comunità oltre alle occasioni di formazione informale tra pari, garantisce anche la possibilità di partecipare a eventi diversi: dalla formazione strutturata alla registrazione ai gruppi e-Twinning e nelle sale insegnanti rivolti a target mirati.

## 2) I Progetti multilaterali Comenius

sono condotti da consorzi che collaborano insieme per migliorare la formazione degli insegnanti e di altre categorie del personale operante nel settore dell'istruzione scolastica allo scopo di incrementare la qualità dell'insegnamento e dell'apprendimento in aula.

Ogni progetto dovrà produrre un risultato identificabile che risponda alle esigenze formative di un determinato gruppo del personale scolastico, tenendo in conto delle realtà di ogni paese partecipante.

## 3) I partenariati Comenius

Offrono alle autorità regionali o locali, competenti in ambito educativo, agli istituti scolastici, ai docenti e agli alunni la possibilità di lavorare insieme ai colleghi e ai coetanei degli altri Paesi d'Europa partecipanti al Programma su uno o più temi di comune interesse nell'ambito della normale attività scolastica. L'obiettivo è quello di incrementare la dimensione europea dell'istruzione e promuovere la cooperazione transnazionale tra istituti scolastici in Europa.

## 4) Formazione in servizio

Quest'attività permette a tutto il personale impegnato nell'istruzione scolastica di partecipare ad attività di formazione in un paese europeo per un periodo che può durare fino a 6 settimane.

I partecipanti ad attività di formazione in servizio hanno l'opportunità di:

- migliorare le proprie competenze d'insegnamento
- ampliare le loro conoscenze
- raggiungere una più ampia consapevolezza dell'istruzione scolastica in ambito europeo.

Altre opportunità didattiche costituisce l'uso di:

Skype, blogger, wiki e social network come facebook.

## Considerazioni finali sulle nuove tecnologie a scuola

L'uso dell'internet è una finestra nel mondo che accorcia le distanze e porta una scuola verso l'internazionalizzazione lontano da ogni stereotipo ed etnocentrismo. La rete ci avvicina a delle possibilità di innovazione e sviluppo attraverso i progetti europei.

Le nuove tecnologie favoriscono la visione che pone lo studente al centro del processo formativo con la conseguenza di aumentare la partecipazione dell'alunno nelle attività scolastiche e favorire l'apprendimento attraverso l'azione e cooperazione evitando la passività e l'abbandono scolastico.

Inoltre favoriscono l'apprendimento della diversità culturale, che dovrebbe aiutare gli alunni a sviluppare i valori di rispetto e di tolleranza se non proprio dell'accettazione del diverso evitando dei conflitti.

L'internazionalizzazione che, attraverso lo studio della storia del fenomeno della migrazione e delle sue cause, fornisce la comprensione della diversità culturale odierna nel suo contesto storico e sociale

Promuovono la dimensione europea, incentrata sulla comprensione delle caratteristiche culturali dei popoli europei, la storia dell'integrazione europea e il ruolo svolto in Europa dal paese considerato, permette agli alunni di sviluppare un senso di identità europea.

L'uso delle nuove tecnologie nella scuola dovrebbe essere il mezzo che aiuta in una classe multiculturale a superare molti ostacoli di comprensione sia linguistica e culturale.

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The Face of Privilege: One Canadian Principal's Reflections on Leading for Interculturalism

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Author Note

A similar paper was first submitted in July 2012, to Dr. Portelli Ph.D. and Dr. Portera Ph.D. for the OISE course *Intercultural Competences and Critical Democracy in Education: Issues of Globalization and Neoliberalism*.

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

### **The Face of Privilege: One Canadian Principal's Reflections on Leading for Interculturalism\*\***

Issues of diversity are not new in Canada. Neither is the need for social cohesion and inclusion. Canada in general, and Ontario specifically, take pride in seeing themselves as a multicultural society. If we are truly a multicultural society, how can both federal and provincial governments continue to treat Aboriginal people with so little dignity and respect? How can they tolerate inordinate numbers of Aboriginal children being pushed out of school before completing a high school diploma? If the status quo continues much longer, Canada's Aboriginal society is at risk of collapsing.

The root of this social justice problem is amply documented in Canada by historians and academics who see it as the legacy of the historical colonization of Aboriginal peoples. Colonization is a form of invasion that dispossesses original inhabitants (Dion, Johnston, & Rice, 2011, LaRocque, 2010). The effects of colonization are segregation, assimilation, and discrimination, not inclusion. Two striking examples are part of Canada's legacy: first, the reservation system, an organization of segregation designed to 'house' First Nations people; and secondly, the residential schooling system, whose intent was the assimilation of Aboriginal children into 'mainstream' Canadian culture.

Schools, and schooling as a construct of society, reflect societal goals. To this end, it can be argued that Canadian schools and schooling perpetuate this colonial legacy. Yet, it is in schools that educators and leaders can engage in "that specifically human act of intervening in the world" (Freire, 1998, p. 90) and help those schools become the democratic platform for a social movement to address the social consequence of colonization: discrimination.

As one such educator and a white privileged female, I sought to enact equity and social justice for Aboriginal students in the school that I led. Arguably, each of us arrives at answers to

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\* "a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

our questions based on our different backgrounds and our lived experiences. This study explores the intercultural insights (competences) gained through my own experience and my reflective insight into Freire’s concept of “intervening in the world”.

### **Historical Background and Identification of Problem**

Almost half of the Aboriginal population consists of children and youth under the age of 24—a rapidly growing demographic (Statistics Canada, 2008). Of this group, 58% do not have a secondary public education (Robertson, 2003), compared to 16% of the total Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2008). This staggering statistic has not changed in the last 10 years (Statistics Canada, 2008). Evidence of this crisis is supported in other documented social systems. In Ontario, Aboriginal children represent 3% of all children but account for 17% of the child welfare system caseload (Aboriginal Affairs Government of Ontario). The youth suicide rate is two to five times the national average and even higher in isolated northern First Nations communities (Aboriginal Affairs Government of Ontario).

Two pieces of legislation, in isolation of each other, govern Aboriginal education: federal and provincial.

Federal policy, based on the Indian Act of 1867 (Canada, 1906), governs the education of Canada’s Aboriginal children living on reservations. Dickason (1996), as cited in Carr-Stewart (2001) argues its purpose is to “civilize . . . protect, and cherish this helpless Race” (p.127). Pacquette (2010) contests its commitment is to induct Aboriginal students “forcibly if necessary, into superior Euro-Canadian ways of being, thinking, and acting” (Pacquette, 2010, p. 4). The state, church, and educators at the time believed the only ways to achieve full assimilation were separation of the child from the parents and family, and repression of ancestral cultures and languages. So began the legacy of residential schooling for Indian children in Canada.

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linguistically and culturally different from oneself” (Fantini, 2007, p. 9).



## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

By 1923, 71 residential schools governed by either the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church, and funded by the Canadian government, existed across Canada (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada). Substantial documentation is available on the horrifying suffering endured by these students and their families (Milloy, 1999). Respectfully, I acknowledge these experiences but cannot adequately go into detail about them in this limited space. It is widely known that their impact has spanned generations—an important fact historically because it places the current problem in the context of the decision making and decision makers of the past.

The Hawthorne Report of 1967, The White Paper of 1969, Indian Control of Indian Education position paper of 1972, the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples in 1992, the Kelowna Accord of 2005 and the First Nations Control of First Nations Education document in 2010 have all failed to develop a policy that effectively addresses the educational needs of Aboriginal students (Pacquette, 2010). Clearly, history has taught us that the legacy of the structural failure of education will endure as long as the central philosophical assumptions of Aboriginal education remain entrenched in mainstream cultural tradition (Pacquette, 2010).

In response, many provinces have developed policies to accommodate two groups of First Nation students: status students living on reserve whose community has a tuition agreement with the public education provider, and students living off reserve. For example, in 2007 in Ontario, the government developed the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Policy Framework as part of its overall Aboriginal Education strategy (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). While the framework was an attempt to move public schools boards to action, many have responded in only tokenistic ways. Arguably, this policy may be widening the void, rather than closing the gap (Cherubini, Hodson, & Manley-Casimir, 2010).

### **Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

The way in which a problem is theoretically framed situates its plausible solutions. The research question, how did Aboriginal students and families engage in a school that was led by a white privileged female? is examined from two theoretical frameworks: neoliberalism, because it shapes the theoretical context in which schooling in Canada is positioned, and critical theory, in order to gain insights from my school leadership experience.

Neoliberalism is a term transposable with globalization and capitalist or market democracy (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2006). It is a compound of values and practices that influences economic, political, cultural, and social contexts; its ideological aim is to maintain the status quo. Social change focuses on equality, on a one-size-fits-all design, and on what works best for the economy (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2006). Neoliberalism, which is the predominant theoretical perspective, gains and retains its power by serving the interests of the dominant, most powerful members of society (Kincheloe, *Critical Democracy and Education*, 1999). The purpose of schooling is to “prepare students as politically passive and compliant workers for the dynamic labor market conditions” (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2006, p. 15). However, Neoliberalism’s focus on equality of opportunity fails to address the problem of inequity and economic disparity that exist in every classroom—a problem subsequently placed squarely on teachers (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2006).

Critical theory asks, “What is the foundation of the problem?” In applying critical theory, scholars of philosophy and social thought are concerned essentially with how power works to shape individual consciousness and ways of seeing (Kincheloe, 1999). Critical theory focuses on critiquing and changing society and on correcting social injustice. It asks how knowledge is constructed: What are the assumptions and values that underpin knowledge? How do we come to this knowledge? Whose voices have been included in such a perspective? And crucially, it asks, whose voices have been silenced, marginalized, or ignored?

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

In education, critical theory is demonstrated in critical pedagogy (Freire, 1998). Freire adamantly argues that neutrality in education does not exist. He challenges teachers and students to empower themselves for social change and to advance democracy through the reciprocal process of critical teaching and critical learning: “Whoever teaches learns in the act of teaching, and whoever learns teaches in the act of learning” (Freire, 1998, p. 31).

Critical democracy is underpinned by the tenets of critical theory and critical pedagogy. It is a democracy that takes differences seriously (Portelli J., 2012). Critical democracy is concerned with “how democracy is subverted, domination takes place, and human relations are shaped in schools, in other cultural sites of pedagogy, and in everyday life” (Kincheloe, 1999, p. 71). Freire (1998) argues that critical democracy, or what Dewey referred to as “democracy as a way of life” (Portelli J., 2001), is achieved through critical inquiry: challenging the existence of unequal power relationships and the perpetuation and legitimization of the dominant and status quo neoliberal ideology.

From a critical democratic perspective, the issue is complex and multilayered. The work of Said (1993) supports this study’s insights. He argues that narratives from the colonized world have shaped the identity, imagination, subjectivities, history, culture, and interactions of the oppressor and the oppressed. One can reason then, that the problem is rooted in the systematic devaluation of the Aboriginal culture into the dominant culture or colonization. Portera (2012) argues that colonization follows a path of elimination, segregation, and then assimilation. Canadian history supports this path from its accounts of massacres, reservations, and residential schools. Battiste (2011) claims colonization is “a system of oppression” (p. xvii). In turn, the system of oppression becomes a cycle: it produces the notion of *privilege* by the dominant culture, which creates *deficit thinking* and *discrimination*: this leads to *marginalization* and *disengagement* and *distrust* of Aboriginal children and families.

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

### **Conceptual Framework**

To reiterate, the way in which a problem is theoretically framed situates its plausible solutions. If the problem can be seen to be rooted in the systematic devaluation of the Aboriginal culture into the dominant culture or colonization, then a fundamental understanding of critical democracy, along with a disposition of critical consciousness, sets the foundation for an intercultural approach (Abdallah-Preteille, 2006). An intercultural approach shifts the focus from multiculturalism to an ‘inter’culturalism—from a concept that historically celebrates only indifference towards diversity to one that “emphasizes the processes and interactions which unite and define the individuals and the groups in relation to each other” (Abdallah-Preteille, 2006, p. 476). This focus is a paradigm for thinking about diversity. It begins with “[t]he questioning of one’s identity in relation to others . . . . Then the work of analysis and of acquiring knowledge applies to others as much as oneself” (Abdallah-Preteille, 2006, pp. 476-477). This approach is fundamental to achieving interculturalism, defined as that which “takes into consideration both opportunities and limitations, . . . transcends them and builds up a new synthesis, with improved chances of dialogue, exchange, and interaction” (Portera A., 2010, p. 20).

There are a “multiplicity of frameworks and approaches to defining and assessing intercultural competence” (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanable, 2008, p. 2). However, the concept of intercultural competence is briefly defined as “a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself” (Fantini, 2007, p. 9).

Freire’s perception of education as “that specifically human act of intervening in the world” (Freire, 1998, p. 90) conceptualizes my understanding of intercultural competence. It is not prescriptive, but encourages critical inquiry, thinking, and reflection. In practice, I take Freire (1998) to mean that educators in schools must possess the disposition of critical self-

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

consciousness and of taking differences seriously. We must have the skills to critique accepted truth and knowledge, and then we must act—with resistance, subversion, and dialogue. Freire (1998) argues that both disposition and skills are needed to take on the political and equity issues of social justice and to bring about change.

To this end, it is necessary to clarify the difference between intercultural consciousness and intercultural competence. Karim (2003) posits that they differ in one critical way: “ethical and moral responsibility” (2003, p. 35). He reasons that a leader may be interculturally competent but if he/she is “motivated by egocentric and ethnocentric concerns and interests at the expense of those across the cultural divide” (Karim, 2003, p. 35), then the goals of an intercultural approach—equity and social justice—are usurped by the individual’s self interest and competitive attitude.

### **Methodology**

This case study examines and provides insight into my experience as a principal seeking to enact equity and social justice in the school that I led. It is grounded in critical theory and how that theory constructs knowledge (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Cazabon, 2010; Portelli J., 2001; Merriam, 2009). Critical inquiry has influenced this work because I want to “critique and challenge, transform and empower” (Merriam, 2009, p. 34).

### **Case Study**

Whereas data collection in this case study is limited to one personal experience, and is described in briefest detail due to space constraints, it is representative of how a situation can be transformed “through reflective consideration of ideas” (Foster, 1986).

Paulo Freire (1998) wrote that in order to free the oppressed, we must first free the oppressor. I include myself in the latter category. Freire (1998) supports the need for “incessant struggle” for each of us to understand the impact of our lived experiences on our subjectivity. I

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

now understand that both the essence of who I am as a teacher and the purpose I believe education is intended to fulfill are determined by how I understand my identity based on my lived experience.

St. Pierre (2005), as cited in Waite, Nelson and Guajardo (2007), argues that the use of “our biographies and the meaning we attach to them become, in the first instance, the raw data and field notes of our lived experience, and, in the second instance, inform our interpretation, our ‘storying’ of our lives” (p. 201).

Living on the Canadian border with the United States of America, and growing up through childhood and adolescence in the 1960s, I clearly remember the impact of the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. I began to understand on a personal level the relationship between race and power and what it meant to be white.

A very personal experience further awakened my interest in equity and social justice and my consciousness of my privileged white position in Canadian culture. In 1969, in my small prairie 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, Janet from a nearby Indian reservation sat in front of me. I observed that classmates, teachers, and administrators all treated her differently from me—Janet was excluded and punished for being ‘a dirty Indian’.

To this day I feel shame and guilt, as I did then, for my white privilege and for not standing up for Janet. Freire (1998) argues that my guilt and discomfort are positive. They lead me to critically self-reflect: to ask questions, to develop knowledge, to act, and then to ask more questions, in an ongoing cycle of learning—and then to act on this learning.

Alexander Public School is a fictitious name of the small, rural elementary school that I led in Canada. Status and non-status, resident and non-resident First Nations and Métis identities dominate the catchment population. Tuition agreements exist between the public school board and the two First Nations reservations. Low readiness skills and literacy rates plague these

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

distinct groups. Thirty percent of the student population is identified as having significant special education challenges; only just over half consistently meet the standards on standardized provincial assessments. Poverty, domestic violence, and substance and sexual abuse are pervasive. Poor health and nutrition are problematic. Absenteeism and lateness are prevalent. One of every two students receives social agency intervention. Most of the teachers have been at the school for five years, and there is a small representation of Aboriginal support staff.

Yet, after four years, while economic and social conditions did not change for the children and their families, the vast majority of students who had not met the readiness targets for school entry met the provincial standards in the ministry's standardized tests! Most importantly, the entire school community—the students, their parents, the teachers, community volunteers and Elders were engaged in the school and its focus on student academic and social success.

### **Reflections and Insights**

The theoretical and conceptual frameworks outlined above lead to the following insights.

*Insight #1 – Embrace your unfinishedness.*

According to Freire, a sense of “unfinishedness” leads to permanent searching, or “epistemological curiosity” (Freire, 1998, p. 37). This curiosity manifests itself as restless questioning and knowledge construction, identity bound by critical democracy. Permanent searching guides “conscientization,” Freire’s word for critical self-consciousness and transformation. In turn, both of these concepts focus on achieving an in-depth understanding of the world (Freire, 1998). They allow for the perception and exposure of social and political contradictions, and encourage taking action against the oppressive elements in one’s life that are illuminated by this understanding.

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

Freire claims that unfinishedness is “integral to the phenomenon of life itself” (Freire, 1998, p. 51). It is in our deep understanding that we are unfinished as individuals that the “very possibility of learning, of being educated, resides” (Freire, 1998, p. 66) and where transformative change, equity, and social justice reside.

*Insight #2 – Honor your subjectivity.*

Each of us is the summation of our political, social, emotional and cultural experiences, all of which influence our ideological awareness and our judgment. Understanding our discrimination requires each of us to address our notion of privilege. We can do so by seeing ourselves as part of the colonial legacy and cycle of colonization. This grounding prevents thinking or acting in a discriminatory way, or accepting the thoughts and actions of those who marginalize others. Honoring our subjectivity opens our pedagogy to possibility and hope.

*Insight #3 – Peel back the layers.*

Freire (1998) argues that neutrality does not exist. He pleads for teachers and learners to acknowledge both their privilege and their power and to take differences seriously so as not to reproduce the inequities present in the neoliberal context or the colonial legacy. “It is my belief that today the progressive kind of teacher needs to watch out as never before for the clever uses of the dominant ideology of our time, especially its insidious capacity for spreading the idea that it is possible for education to be neutral” (Freire, 1998, p. 90). By peeling back the layers, obstacles to equity and social justice can be exposed.

*Insight #4 – Listen, listen some more, and then listen again.*

Unfinishedness (Freire, 1998) supports the confidence necessary to embrace critical resistance, which in critical democratic terms, means open dialogue. The participants in such a dialogue are, as the term implies, open “to approaching and being approached, to questioning and being questioned, to agreeing and disagreeing” (Freire, 1998, p. 119). Open dialogue is a



## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

fundamental intercultural competence and a disposition for change. It is a communication that regards silence and listening as superior to speaking.

In my own experience, a disposition for change occurred when I engaged in a respectful intercultural dialogue in which each of us told the other about our cultural identity and then tried to convince one another of our position. In an intercultural dialogue, it is advisable to first seek to understand the other person's identity, culture, and lived experiences in a respectful way, and then to explain yours. This approach builds stable identities, an understanding of cultural traditions and ideology, along with political policies that govern practice for both participants in the interaction. In the end, respect and trust built the opportunity for change (Portera A., 2010).

*Insight #5 – “Be the change you want to see in the world.” (Gandhi).*

In finding our voice, we can find hope, the necessary ingredient for change. As Freire says, “I know things can get worse, I also know that I am able to intervene to improve them” (Freire, 1998, p. 54).

In my view, it is the responsibility of each of us to find our voice, and to use that voice—to speak of privilege, the colonial legacy, critical thinking and inquiry, democracy as a way of life; deficit thinking, discrimination, marginalization, student engagement, and also distrust. I found my own voice in my unfinishedness and in the intercultural dialogue I experienced in Verona during the summer of 2012. The task that lies ahead professionally for me now is to use my voice in continuing to make a change.

*Insight #6 – Lead for change: the praxis of insight.*

Freire (1998) argues that leadership requires praxis, which combines thought and action to critically question the marginalization of people. I would like to challenge those reading this study to find their *voice*, and then lead for change.

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

Freire warns, “Critical reflection on practice is a requirement of the relationship between theory and practice. Otherwise theory becomes simply blah, blah, blah and practice, pure activism” (Freire, 1998, p. 30). Over the last decade or more, I have both studied and practiced a variety of educational leadership frameworks. Upon critical reflection, I have concluded that one style of educational leadership was never adequate to guide my practice in effectively addressing the challenges I faced. Through insight into my experience, I now propose that to lead for change one needs to practice a conceptual and practical disposition of critical democratic leadership.

*Insight #7 – Schools can be the platform for change.*

Freire (1998) critiques traditional schooling because it contributes to the marginalization of minorities and those who are impoverished. He exhorts teachers and learners in schools to be responsible for taking action to make changes in society that disrupts the ‘givenness’ or status quo of the world. In this way, schools can be the platform for change that supports learners as they reflect on their experiences historically, giving their future a reality and empowering them to take transformative social action (Freire, 1998). Portera (2010) argues that intercultural education—education that rejects cultural hierarchy and encourages dialogue and the interaction of ideas, where critical democracy and critical thinking can be taught—is the most practical approach to initiating collective change in schools.

### **Conclusion**

It is my sense of unfinishedness (Freire, 1998) that propels me in my search for an understanding of the plight of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. It is what fuels my interrogation of educational leadership to search for a theory that can guide school leaders, politicians, and policy makers to act—to change the education structure so that equity is not the exception for Aboriginal students but the norm, and so that social justice does not happen only in isolated circumstances, but flourishes throughout public education in Canada.

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

The purpose of this study was to reflect on the intercultural insights (competences) gained through my experience as a white privileged female who sought to enact equity and social justice for Aboriginal students in the school that I led. I have illuminated insights and made a case for an intercultural approach that “emphasizes the processes and interactions which unite and define the individuals and the groups in relation to each other” (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2006, p. 476). This goal was achieved through a focus on my unfinishedness and my subjectivity, by peeling back the layers of the status quo, then listening in an open intercultural dialogue in order to enact the social justice change that I want to see in the world. Finally by utilizing the school in which I was principal as the platform for change and accessing a critical democratic conception of leadership, change for equity and social justice was possible.

Future research needs to ensure that we hear the voices and experiences of other leaders, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who have successfully interrupted the colonial legacy in their schools. Together, our voices would be stronger. Furthermore, the development of a policy on Intercultural education might precipitate actions by those educators who are steadfast in their belief that equity must exist for Aboriginal students in public education in Ontario.

## INTERCULTURAL COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

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## COOPERATIVE LEARNING NUTRIMENTO PER GHIANDE RIDICOLMENTE MINUSCOLE: PROPOSTE D'AZIONE

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Lo stimolo delle riflessioni di Bauman in riferimento all'educazione ritengo possa diventare un orizzonte di senso alquanto significativo per credere, come egli stesso afferma che “ogni maggioranza all'inizio era una minuscola, invisibile e impercettibile minoranza. E che perfino le querce centenarie provengono da ghiande ridicolmente minuscole”<sup>1</sup>.

Una lettura attenta del contesto sociale nel quale oggi viviamo e in cui i giovani si stanno formando fa emergere alcune caratteristiche non sottovalutabili a livello pedagogico-educativo. La liquidità delle relazioni, l'incertezza che caratterizza le nostre vite, il multiculturalismo che connota piazze e scuole sono solo alcuni tra gli elementi costitutivi dell'orizzonte in cui quotidianamente ci troviamo ad essere. I repentini e drammatici mutamenti, che investono il nostro pianeta, destabilizzano, spaventano e talvolta determinano la costruzione di arroccamenti in cui l'io si isola o ancor peggio si difende da presunti pericoli. Eppure, ci si rende conto che si è parte di un unicum, si è soggetti interconnessi e il nostro esistere qui ed ora dipende da relazioni che vanno oltre il microsistema. Secondo un approccio ecologico potremmo definirci parte del macrosistema Terra. A fronte, quindi, dell'interdipendenza planetaria, della globalizzazione, dell'avvento delle società multietniche, della “perdita” di certezze è inevitabile interrogarsi rispetto a quale futuro, quali possibilità si prospettano per evitare il *clash of civilization* teorizzato da Huntington. Come far sì che gli inarrestabili cambiamenti possano essere considerati opportunità e non si riducano invece a rischi, sopraffazioni o distruzioni dell'altro?

In tale orizzonte, la pedagogia, in quanto discorso teoretico dell'educazione, ha il compito di accettare le sfide per tentare di rispondere a quesiti che investono il settore educativo-scolastico e, a differenza di tempi passati, assumono oggi inedite valenze. A tal riguardo mi sembra interessante un'ulteriore riflessione/narrazione di Bauman che ben descrive il “nuovo” contesto e suggerisce gli assi educativi fondamentali: “... da più di quarant'anni della mia vita a Leeds vedo dalle mie finestre i ragazzi e le ragazze che tornano a casa dalla vicina scuola secondaria. È raro che camminino da soli per la strada, preferiscono camminare nel gruppo dei loro amici. Questa consuetudine non è cambiata. Tuttavia, quel che vedo dalle mie finestre è cambiato nel corso degli anni. Quarant'anni fa, ciascuno di questi gruppi era «di un solo colore»; oggi, non lo è più quasi nessuno di essi ...”<sup>2</sup>

Il sociologo polacco evidenzia il bisogno di relazione sociale, i giovani stanno assieme ieri come oggi e forse, più facilmente degli adulti, oggi sono capaci di vivere relazioni interculturali. Nonostante le evidenze, i fatti di cronaca talvolta smentiscono queste mie affermazioni. Probabilmente è necessario leggere in maniera integrata i bisogni degli esseri umani con le caratteristiche dei contesti sociali. A mio parere, pur riconoscendo alcuni bisogni, quale ad esempio quello di rapporti sociali e di appartenenza<sup>3</sup> come comuni a tutti gli esseri del pianeta Terra, ci si accorge che il loro soddisfacimento è di difficile realizzazione se il contesto è caratterizzato in

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<sup>1</sup> Bauman, Z., *Conversazioni sull'educazione*, Erickson, Trento, 2012, p. 35

<sup>2</sup> Bauman, Z., *Conversazioni sull'educazione*, Erickson, Trento, 2012, p. 15

<sup>3</sup> Per un approfondimento sulla teoria dei bisogni dell'essere umano cfr. Portera A., *Tesori sommersi* Franco Angeli, Milano, 1997, pp. 173 – 178.



modo tale da affievolire o connotare negativamente ciò di cui ognuno di noi ha necessità. In effetti, la presenza di stereotipi o ancor peggio di pregiudizi fa sì che alcuni giovani creino bande, ghettizzino i pari ed esercitino nei confronti dei più “deboli” comportamenti da bulli. A tal riguardo, se condividiamo il paradigma pedagogico dell’educabilità di ogni essere umano, ne consegue che la pedagogia ha il compito di definire per ogni soggetto la propria e specifica *forma migliore di vita*. Ad oggi, come afferma A. Portera, la sfida consiste nell’acceptare i cambiamenti in atto, senza chiudersi acriticamente nel passato e senza sposare superficialmente tutte le mode del presente. Per dirla con le parole di E. Morin, una delle sfide prioritarie dell’educazione è far diventare ogni essere *cittadino terrestre*.

Il bisogno di educazione socio-emotiva-relazionale è reso manifesto da pensatori di differenti campi, la stessa Montalcini ci ricorda che “nell’epoca attuale, testimone di un formidabile sviluppo delle facoltà intellettuali, come dimostrato dai progressi in ogni campo dello scibile umano, il divario tra facoltà cognitive e capacità emotive è andato aumentando. Le prime hanno investito l’uomo di un potere quasi assoluto di controllo del globo terrestre, mentre le seconde sono riamste al livello di quelle dell’uomo preistorico”<sup>4</sup>.

Tale educazione trova livello teoretico la risposta più idonea nella pedagogia interculturale che, come l’ha definita A. Portera, è una vera e propria rivoluzione copernicana in quanto pone al centro concetti come *identità, cultura, alterità, dialogo, ...* non in un’accezione statica, ma dinamica e per questo in grado di concepire l’incontro e le migrazioni come opportunità. L’alterità, le differenze non sono considerati rischi, disagi, ma opportunità, arricchimenti sia per la crescita personale che per quella collettiva. Ancora, l’incontro con lo straniero, con il soggetto etnicamente e culturalmente differente, rappresenta una sfida, una possibilità di confronto e di riflessione sul piano dei valori, delle regole, dei comportamenti. La pedagogia interculturale si colloca quindi tra universalismo e relativismo, supera entrambi in una nuova sintesi aggiungendo la possibilità del dialogo, del confronto e dell’interazione. Rifiuta staticità e gerarchizzazioni di culture, promuove il dialogo, si fonda sul confronto paritetico del pensiero, dei concetti e dei preconcetti, insegna a riconoscere e gestire emozioni e conflitti diventando quindi come l’ha definita L. Secco *pedagogia dell’essere*.

Credo che tali riflessioni teoretiche, volte a ridare valore alla dignità della persona, possano essere considerate i fini dell’azione educativa che necessariamente dovrà essere congruente rispetto ai valori della pedagogia interculturale che mira a costruire un nuovo umanesimo attraverso peculiari modalità didattiche.

L’intreccio interessante sta quindi tra pedagogia, educazione e didattica, rispettivamente nella definizione dei fini, dell’azione e delle modalità dell’agire che, dato il contesto sociale, non possono che essere interculturali. L’educazione interculturale metaforicamente in un mio lavoro<sup>5</sup> l’ho considerata come una luce bianca che rifrangendosi in un prisma si differenzia nello spettro multicolore. Tale metafora assume ancor più significato congiunta alle riflessioni di Panikkar secondo il quale abbiamo il compito di difendere le differenze, i colori dell’arcobaleno, la bellezza delle cose, impossibili da ridurre ad un unico comune denominatore. Precipuamente l’educazione interculturale credo debba considerare ogni educando come una luce bianca, e in tal caso ogni persona deve essere riconosciuta ontologicamente come entità degna di valore. Allo stesso tempo,

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<sup>4</sup> Levi Montalcini R., *Abbi il coraggio di conoscere*, Bur, Milano, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Lamberti S., *Apprendimento cooperativo e educazione interculturale. Percorsi e attività per la scuola primaria*, Erickson, Trento, 2010.

però, non si può rinunciare a cogliere e valorizzare la molteplicità di colori e sfumature che connota ogni essere umano come unico e irripetibile. Pertanto *siamo tutti parenti, seppur tutti differenti*.

Nella condivisione della cornice dei fini pedagogici, l'azione educativa dovrà, necessariamente, essere congruente. Più nello specifico, nei contesti scolastici l'educazione interculturale non può essere/rimanere pensata e agita come una disciplina, o concretizzarsi in progetti, essere materia di studio per commissioni o funzioni strumentali. La trasversalità dell'educazione interculturale è ciò di cui le nostre scuole necessitano oggi, e l'approccio interculturale sembra essere quello che meglio risponde ai quesiti generati dal contesto. Pertanto l'educazione interculturale deve essere promossa quotidianamente, in modo trasversale e soprattutto con un cambio d'approccio che va nell'ottica di "rivoluzione copernicana". Si concretizza sia nell'affrontare le discipline secondo una visione altra, sia nel connotare i contesti in modo tale che promuovano lo sviluppo di competenze relative alla capacità di riconoscere e gestire emozioni e sentimenti, favorire l'incontro e le relazioni attraverso la comprensione, l'ascolto, il dialogo, permettano di cogliere nel pluralismo, nella legalità opportunità di sviluppo di cittadinanza attiva volti a costruire la pace sapendo gestire i conflitti. L'educazione interculturale si sostanzia anche nell'educazione all'amore.

Un'ulteriore riflessione, soprattutto in riferimento ai contesti scolastici possiamo compierla nel tentare di definire come didatticamente sia possibile promuovere l'educazione interculturale.

Da anni, il Centro Studi Interculturali dell'Università di Verona, diretto dal Prof. A. Portera e di cui io faccio parte, è coinvolto in ricerche nazionali e internazionali finalizzate ad indagare quali possano essere gli approcci metodologico-didattici più efficaci per l'educazione interculturale. Da analisi comparative e da risultati di ricerche-azione, si evince che le metodologie a mediazione sociale, e tra queste il Cooperative Learning, sembrano rispondere ai bisogni educativi delle giovani generazioni, così come definiti anche da organismi internazionali quali l'UNESCO: *imparare ad essere, imparare a vivere con gli altri, imparare ad imparare, imparare a fare*<sup>6</sup>.

In effetti, il Cooperative Learning si fonda sul valore dell'**interdipendenza positiva**, sull'importanza di educare alla relazione io/tu/noi insegnando i comportamenti e le abilità sociali necessari. Precipuamente, **l'insegnamento diretto delle abilità sociali** impegna i docenti a pensare e definire un curriculum socio-emotivo-relazionale che educa l'io a divenire persona, "essere sociale". Un altro elemento peculiare del Cooperative Learning è il **lavoro in piccoli gruppi eterogenei**. La caratteristica dell'eterogeneità offre ai membri del gruppo l'opportunità di vivere le differenze, di imparare a cogliere non solo le difficoltà che esse possono generare, ma soprattutto le ricchezze che possono scaturire. Inoltre, il lavoro in gruppo diviene medium per lo sviluppo di responsabilità individuale e condivisa. Vi sono altri due elementi che caratterizzano il Cooperative Learning rispetto ad altre metodologie del lavoro di gruppo o a mediazione sociale: **l'interazione promozionale faccia a faccia e la verifica - valutazione individuale e di gruppo**. Anche questi sono aspetti che sottolineano come vi sia indissolubile connessione tra la dimensione cognitivo-metacognitiva con quella socio-emotivo-relazionale. Nella fase di verifica e valutazione l'io non si perde nel gruppo, ma attraverso il gruppo può potenziare i personali apprendimenti. La duplice modalità di verifica e valutazione coinvolge il singolo come membro del gruppo, ma anche come individualità. L'interazione promozionale faccia a faccia viene definita come l'insieme dei comportamenti efficaci che i soggetti in interazione sono in grado di mettere in atto per "star bene". Riguardo a tali capacità, niente è innato e tutto necessita di educazione e *training* continui.

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<sup>6</sup> Delors J., *Nell'educazione un tesoro*, Armando, Roma, 1997.

Dopo un'attenta analisi della letteratura sia in merito ai principi fondanti del Cooperative Learning che ai tentativi di definizione epistemologica di educazione interculturale, personalmente ho definito sei motivazioni a sostegno dell'efficacia del Cooperative Learning per l'educazione interculturale:

- Sviluppo del sé: responsabilità individuale e condivisa
- Scuola come comunità di apprendimento
- Sviluppo di capitale sociale *versus* coesione sociale
- Valorizzazione (diritto) delle differenze
- Comunicazione efficace (interculturale)
- Successo insuccesso scolastico (cognitivo-socio-relazionale)

Oltre alle sei motivazioni sopra riportate, mi sembra di poter cogliere nell'essenza del metodo un valore etico-pedagogico, un'attenzione e una cura volte a far sì che ogni studente si possa sviluppare e attraverso l'interazione positiva possa divenire persona. In effetti la dimensione relazionale *essere con* è costitutiva sia del Cooperative Learning che dell'educazione interculturale.

Pertanto se il Cooperative Learning:

- Si fonda sull'incontro cognitivo e relazionale
- Considera la RELAZIONE come potenziale di sviluppo integrale della persona (*imparare ad imparare, imparare ad essere*)
- Fa vivere il passaggio dall' *io* al *noi* attraverso la processualità nella costruzione del gruppo
- Si fonda sull'etica di *aver cura e ricevere cura*
- L'INCONTRO diviene concreto, si sperimenta il vedere (faccia a faccia) e il toccare (carezza)
- RESPONSABILITÀ *l'altro mi guarda e mi ri-guarda*
- Il gruppo è "l'ambiente" in cui vivere rapporti di riconoscimento, di fiducia e di interdipendenza positiva

e l'educazione interculturale riconosce:

- La RESPONSABILITÀ come atteggiamento fondamentale nella relazione di cura
- La CURA come pratica del: farsi responsabili, avere rispetto, agire in modo donativo
- La FIDUCIA per apprendere e vivere rapporti paritetici, dialogici, fondati sul riconoscimento, sul rispetto e sulla reciproca fiducia
- Il contesto globale connotato da INTERDIPENDENZA

ecco ulteriori motivazioni per ritenere il Cooperative Learning efficace per l'educazione interculturale.

La prospettiva che il Gruppo Studio-Ricerca-Formazione Cooperative Learning, di cui sono la responsabile, sta sostenendo assieme agli studi neuroscientifici del Prof. Albertini è quella di *Cooperative Learning filosofia di vita*. Pertanto la cooperazione diviene davvero l'essenza del nostro esistere, l'humus che può far germogliare, crescere e trasformare anche la più piccola ghianda in quercia centenaria.

Oltre alle motivazioni fondate teoricamente, credo sia necessario suggerire interventi d'azione per vivere a livello educativo quanto finora teorizzato. A tal fine ho elaborato un curriculum strutturato in tre aree:

- Sensibilizzazione

- Interazione responsabile
- Verso un nuovo umanesimo, ossia saper vivere nell'incerta complessità

Ogni area è strutturata in sei interventi pensati per gli alunni di una classe, in più è prevista una proposta da realizzare con i bambini e le bambine dell'intera scuola.

La prima area *Sensibilizzazione* è finalizzata a comprendere come ogni persona sia unica e irripetibile, portatrice di differenze che, se valorizzate, possono essere ricchezza per tutti. Introduce ad una riflessione sulla possibilità di rapporto io-tu nella scoperta della differenza e nel riconoscimento che ogni persona è portatrice di uguale dignità.

Le sei proposte educativo-didattiche intendono far sperimentare, attraverso l'uso delle intelligenze multiple, situazioni in cui l'io si scopre unico e irripetibile. Inizia, quindi, un percorso che dovrebbe favorire la consapevolezza di sé, vivendo esperienze di decentramento cognitivo ed emozionale. In tale processo l'io si rende conto che non è solo, esistono gli altri, persone differenti da sé. Le differenze divengono elemento su cui riflettere per imparare a riconoscerle, a rispettarle e a scoprirle come valori. Uno degli obiettivi di questa prima area consiste nel comprendere che ogni persona, pur nella sua unicità, ha un'identità multipla che si "costruisce e ricostruisce costantemente all'interno degli scambi sociali"<sup>7</sup>.

La seconda area quella dell'*interazione responsabile* è finalizzata ad insegnare comportamenti che rendano consapevoli gli studenti che *si è nel mondo* e che il personale esserci è incontro, ibridazione, scambio, conflitto e continuo fluire di *essere-con-gli-altri*. Pertanto, l'*azione-tra* o interazione può essere considerata alla base di ogni relazione.

Per dare suggerimenti didattici a queste riflessioni sono state ideate sei proposte educative in modo da costruire un micro percorso fondato sul valore intrinseco della pedagogia del dialogo<sup>8</sup>.

L'elemento portante su cui si fonda è la *comunicazione* intesa come strumento essenziale per favorire le relazioni. In ambito scolastico educare al dialogo significa promuovere comportamenti efficaci all'incontro con l'altro, in una logica di disponibilità e di desiderio in cui si costruisce la dimensione per la convivenza civile e democratica.

Nell'educare alla relazione si promuove il superamento di ristretti egocentrismi e di dogmatici etnocentrismi. Si facilita, invece, l'assunzione di un punto di vista capace di porsi tra simpatia, empatia, verso l'exotopia<sup>9</sup>.

La terza area *Verso un nuovo umanesimo: saper vivere nell'incerta complessità* è finalizzata a stimolare negli studenti comportamenti e riflessioni che li rendano consapevoli che per vivere pienamente nelle società multiculturali è necessario non temere né l'incertezza né la complessità perché entrambe sono caratteristiche ineludibili di contesti fluttuanti come quelli in cui oggi viviamo. È altresì fondamentale riconoscere che il *nuovo umanesimo* può realizzarsi solo se vi è in ognuno la capacità di reinvestire sull'essere umano inteso come persona e come detentore di dignità umana. Per questo il riconoscimento delle differenze, dei diversi punti di vista, dell'appartenenza a culture altre rispetto alla propria sono alcune delle abilità e prerequisiti necessari per costruire modalità di relazione altre che permettono di concretizzare il *nuovo umanesimo*.

<sup>7</sup> B.M. Barth, *Présentation général: l'émergence d'une psychologie culturelle et le processus de l'éducation*, in *Revue Française de Pédagogie*, 111, 1995, p.110.

<sup>8</sup> Per approfondimenti Cfr. Secco L., *Educazione umanistica della pedagogia interculturale: fondamenti teorici e problemi pratici*, in Secco L., Portera A. (a cura di), *L'educazione umanistica interculturale nelle agenzie educative*, Cedam, Padova, 1999, pp. 1-10.

<sup>9</sup> Per uno sviluppo dei tre concetti Cfr. Dusi P., *La problematicità dell'essere- insieme- agli- altri: comunicare tra simpatia, empatia ed exotopia*, in Portera A., *Educazione interculturale nel contesto internazionale*, Guerini, Milano, 2006, pp. 73-85.

A livello didattico quest'area vuole offrire stimoli in tal senso. Pertanto propone esercitazioni in cui gli alunni sperimentano la convivenza (saper vivere con gli altri) intesa anche come occasione o opportunità per non soffocare i conflitti. Ne consegue la necessità di un insegnamento di come sia possibile dallo scontro arrivare all'incontro esercitandosi sulle abilità di risoluzione dei conflitti fino ad arrivare ad apprendere il valore della cooperazione. In effetti gli studenti hanno già vissuto esperienze in tal senso negli interventi delle due aree precedenti del curriculum. Hanno provato la cooperazione a livello di interdipendenza oggettiva: era la struttura del compito che la prevedeva. In quest'area si vuole portare la riflessione verso un'interdipendenza soggettiva in cui l'io veramente comprende il valore dell'interazione che si qualifica e assume maggior significato se l'io e il tu cooperano per raggiungere obiettivi condivisi.

Un'ultima riflessione credo si debba fare pensando ai più recenti sviluppi del Cooperative Learning quindi non solo come metodologia per la classe, ma come insieme di tecniche finalizzate a costruire una filosofia educativa di istituto, o ancor più un modo congruente d'essere o filosofia di vita. *Dirigere la scuola in contesti multiculturali* può voler dire impegnarsi a promuovere cultura cooperativa finalizzata a costruire *scuole comunità*. Far vivere a tutti i soggetti coinvolti nell'istituzione scolastica il valore della relazione come potenziale di sviluppo integrale della persona (imparare ad imparare, imparare ad essere), attraverso una processualità di costruzione di gruppo/i (dal collegio docenti ai consigli di classe o interclasse ...) sperimentando positivamente il passaggio dall'io al noi.

La concretezza dell'incontro tra dirigente e studenti, tra docenti, tra docenti e studenti, tra docenti e genitori, tra genitori e personale ausiliario ..., si sostanzia nel vedersi (faccia a faccia) nel toccarsi: un gesto, una carezza che possono essere anche espressioni metaforiche di un accorgersi che l'altro ha bisogno di cura e per questo come afferma E. Lévinas: *mi guarda e mi ri-guarda*.

Se l'istituzione scolastica si fonda su tali principi permette ai soggetti che la frequentano di sviluppare responsabilità e di vivere il gruppo come un "ambiente" capace di favorire rapporti di riconoscimento e di fiducia. In altre parole la scuola, tutta, diviene luogo in cui sperimentare quotidianamente interdipendenza positiva, in cui ognuno contribuisce al raggiungimento di obiettivi comuni.

Sono convinta che il ruolo del Dirigente Scolastico, così come quello degli insegnanti e dei genitori, non sono secondari nel promuovere il radicale cambiamento che ho delineato e inevitabilmente dovrebbe coinvolgere sia l'organizzazione delle risorse umane che le modalità di istruire ed educare le nuove generazioni. Se vogliamo investire in un cambiamento di qualità, capace di rispondere, quanto meno in parte, alle sfide che il nuovo contesto sociale delinea dobbiamo avere il coraggio di cambiare strada per sceglierne una, forse assai in salita, ma che può farci intravedere il valore "dei gruppi, delle classi come comunità che apprendono, all'interno delle quali l'egocentrismo cede il passo alla capacità di prendersi cura degli altri e le esigenze dell'io si armonizzano con quelle del Noi"<sup>10</sup>.

In conclusione, dobbiamo reinvestire sullo sviluppo della miglior forma di vita di ciascuno e Sennet ci dice che "Gli uffici e le strade diventano inumani quando vi dominano la *rigidità*, l'*utilità* e la *competizione*; diventano umani quando al loro interno vengono promosse *interazioni informali, aperte e cooperative*". Non possiamo attendere oltre, educare alla cooperazione è un dovere che ci fa essere corresponsabili nel limitare l'exasperato individualismo e la sfrenata competizione che stanno distruggendo il nostro Pianeta sia livello ecologico che umano.

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<sup>10</sup> Sergiovanni T., *Costruire comunità nelle scuole*, Las, Roma, 2000.

Ci pare una scommessa utopica?

Proviamoci comunque, perché concludendo con la constatazione d'apertura come afferma Z. Bauman: “*Perfino le querce centenarie provengono da ghiande ridicolmente minuscole*”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Bauman Z., *Conversazioni sull'educazione*, Erickson, Trento, 2012.

# ELEMENTI DI EFFICACIA DEL COOPERATIVE LEARNING NELL'EDUCAZIONE INTERCULTURALE: UNO STUDIO DI CASO LONGITUDINALE NELLA SCUOLA PRIMARIA.

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## **Introduzione**

Profonde e rapide trasformazioni economiche, sociali e culturali della nostra società complessa pongono in primo piano il problema dell'inclusione dell'altro e della realizzazione di una convivenza pacifica tra soggetti con identità culturali diverse.

Nell'attuale scenario multiculturale, una *scelta interculturale* non diventa una semplice opzione ideologica, legata a particolari visioni del mondo, ma si innesta in una reale necessità di coesione sociale per mediare conflitti e contraddizioni. Formare *cittadini del mondo* e promuovere competenze interculturali si declina, infatti, come un obiettivo prioritario dell'Unione europea (Council of the European Union, 2008) e dell'Educazione stessa (Grant & Portera, 2011), in particolare della scuola, che riveste un ruolo centrale nel favorire processi di *social justice education* (Torres & Noguera, 2008), facilitando percorsi di accoglienza e di integrazione (Tarozzi, 2006a) e fornendo strumenti di mediazione (Tarozzi, 1998; Novara, 2006; Tarozzi, 2006b).

Le *Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo di istruzione* (2012) del Ministero, accogliendo la sfida universale di pratica dell'uguaglianza nel riconoscimento delle differenze, assegnano alla scuola non solo il compito dell'insegnare ad apprendere, ma anche quello dell'insegnare ad essere, promuovendo legami cooperativi fra gli studenti ed educando alla convivenza attraverso la valorizzazione delle diverse identità; la classe diventa così "luogo di *comunicazione e di cooperazione*, in cui sviluppare strategie di apprendimento cooperativo che, in un contesto di pluralismo, possono favorire la partecipazione di tutti ai processi di costruzione delle conoscenze" (Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, 2007, p. 15).

Le metodologie cooperative possono offrire in tal senso validi strumenti: la ricerca mostra che la *Complex Instruction* (Cohen, 2003) pone e promuove direttamente l'equità nella classe, attivando capacità molteplici e facilitando l'attribuzione di competenza anche agli studenti di basso status (Gobbo, 2007); il *Learning Together* (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994) non solo promuove

competenze cognitive, ma educa anche alla convivenza sociale, facilitando competenze socio-relazionali: “tendenza a cooperare, altruismo, capacità di comprendere le opinioni e le prospettive degli altri, abilità ad assumere un ruolo all’interno di un gruppo, a comunicare, a gestire le differenze di opinioni, ad agire dimostrando apertura e infondendo fiducia” (Comoglio & Cardoso, 1996, p. 402) e favorendo in modo significativo rapporti migliori tra individui di etnie diverse più delle esperienze competitive o individualistiche (Johnson & Johnson, 1989), che attraverso la meritocrazia scolastica annullano i vantaggi del conflitto socio-cognitivo (Butera, 2006).

La strategia educativa del *Cooperative Learning*, pertanto, basandosi sull’insegnamento diretto delle abilità sociali in una visione di interdipendenza positiva, di cooperazione e di mediazione sociale, può offrire importanti contributi all’educazione interculturale (Lamberti, 2006): considera la scuola una comunità di apprendimento; riconosce e valorizza le differenze (*educazione all’alterità*), offrendo ampio spazio alle competenze plurali; pone al centro dell’azione educativa il gruppo stesso, promuovendo relazioni di mutuo beneficio tra i partecipanti (*win-win*); facilita un senso di appartenenza al contesto sociale, alla costruzione di un sé consapevole e di un “noi” (Traversi, 2006).

Emerge una stretta interconnessione tra educazione interculturale e apprendimento cooperativo (Lamberti, 2010), efficace strumento per promuovere nella scuola equità e giustizia sociale (Gobbo, 2008; Tarozzi, 2011 ) in una visione di educazione globale dell’uomo.

Queste sono le considerazioni che fanno da sfondo al presente contributo, che riporta alcuni risultati di uno studio di caso, riferito ad un gruppo classe multiculturale di una scuola primaria del Trentino. La specificità metodologica del lavoro è data dalla particolare postura di un ricercatore del team, che è anche un docente coinvolto direttamente sul campo.

### **Contesto di ricerca**

Il presente studio è contestualizzato in una classe terza multiculturale di una scuola primaria del Trentino ad alta densità di alunni/e di origine migrante (6 su 19), caratterizzata da numerosi progetti interdisciplinari di educazione interculturale e da modalità di apprendimento cooperativo, condivise tra i docenti del team, riferibili in particolare al *Learning Together Technique* (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994).

La ricerca è stata generata dalle difficoltà presenti nel gruppo e dall’urgenza di individuare direzioni percorribili per promuovere un clima facilitante l’apprendimento, ma ancor prima per creare un gruppo interculturale basato su relazioni di fiducia, potenziando gli elementi di efficacia del percorso cooperativo ed esplorando nel contempo anche l’atteggiamento mentale reale nei confronti dell’intercultura e la valenza della collaborazione dei genitori.



## **Partecipanti**

L'indagine in oggetto ha coinvolto in particolare 19 alunni/e, 38 genitori, 8 docenti e 3 esperti esterni.

Dai dati quantitativi depositati in Segreteria, questo gruppo classe in terza risulta composto da 11 femmine e 8 maschi di un'età compresa tra 8 e 10 anni ( $M = 8.1$  anni); 16 di cittadinanza italiana e 3 non italiana (algerina, marocchina, tunisina); 16 nati in Italia, 3 in altro stato (India, Marocco, Tunisia).

I genitori, di un'età compresa tra 26 e 47 anni ( $M = 39.4$  anni) sono: 31 nati in Italia, 7 in altro stato (Colombia, Algeria, Marocco, Tunisia).

Rispetto il titolo di studio: 1 genitore dichiara il diploma di scuola elementare, 11 di scuola media inferiore, 15 superiore, 9 la laurea e 2 non rispondono.

## **Metodologia**

Come strategia di ricerca si è adottato lo studio di caso, così come concepito da Robert Yin (2003), pianificando in un dettagliato disegno di ricerca (*protocollo*) procedure, tempi, metodi e strumenti. Si sono scelte molteplici *fonti di prova* (docenti, genitori, alunni, esperti esterni) in un processo di triangolazione e di convergenza di significati, con l'intento di raccogliere elementi rilevanti da *Sources* di diversa tipologia e da testimoni privilegiati con punti di vista divergenti, procedendo in un campionamento *intenzionale* (Richards & Morse, 2007) fino al raggiungimento di dati ridondanti secondo un criterio di saturazione (Tarozzi, 2008).

## **Procedure**

In conformità al *Codice Etico*, si sono adottate procedure trasparenti, con una particolare attenzione alle variabili spazio-temporali.

## **Tempi**

Lo studio longitudinale è stato condotto nel 2007-2008 (classe terza), con una ricostruzione retrospettiva del caso fino al 2005 (classe prima).

## **Metodi e strumenti**

In base alla focalizzazione della domanda di ricerca, si sono considerati dati documentali, verbali osservativi, visivi, concreti e note di campo. Si sono predisposti: una traccia d'intervista focalizzata rivolta ai genitori, ai docenti e agli esperti esterni (Charmaz, 2001; Tierney, 2001); una traccia di intervista alunni/e in piccolo gruppo (Eder & Fingerson, 2001); un questionario di autovalutazione rivolto agli alunni/e.

## **Analisi dei dati e risultati**

### **Dati**

Si riassume ex-post la quantità e la tipologia dei dati progressivamente raccolti e codificati: verbali d'archivio e documentazione prodotta dal team docenti in tre anni scolastici (circa 2000 pagine); 17 interviste focalizzate a testimoni privilegiati e 6 interviste alunni in piccolo gruppo, registrate e trascritte *verbatim* (di una durata complessiva di 14 ore); somministrazioni (4) di un questionario alunni; osservazioni partecipanti e partecipate di un intero anno scolastico; report fotografico; materiale significativo prodotto dagli alunni; diario di ricerca.

### **Strategie analitiche**

Mentre lo studio di caso ha rappresentato il disegno teorico di ricerca, a livello analitico si è utilizzata una strategia basata sulla *Grounded Theory* nel suo approccio costruttivista (Charmaz 2001; Charmaz,2006), suddividendo idealmente la *codifica* in tre fasi progressive, talvolta sovrapposte: una *codifica iniziale*, di esplorazione analitica e aperta dei dati raccolti; una *codifica focalizzata*, di sintesi, mirata a identificare alcuni elementi di efficacia emergenti; una *codifica teorica*, con la costruzione di possibili direzioni di senso trasferibili ad altri contesti educativi.

### **Dati descrittivi: la situazione di partenza in classe prima**

Si è inclusa nell'analisi una visione retrospettiva del caso, cercando di *ricostruire l'evoluzione del processo* per poter riflettere in modo più completo sull'esperienza, individuando e valutando criticamente i possibili elementi d'efficacia, utili per progettare possibili nuovi interventi.

Come afferma L. Mortari (2003), infatti, è fondamentale:

analizzare ogni evento accaduto, individuare quali erano i desideri che hanno innescato l'azione, come hanno agito nel contesto e come eventualmente si sono modificati nel corso dell'azione, e se tale cambiamento è avvenuto a cosa può essere dovuto e quali implicazioni ha comportato. Occorre interrogarsi sul perché è stata decisa quella precisa azione, quali esiti ha consentito di conseguire e quale congruenza sussiste tra tali esiti e il paradigma pedagogico che si ritiene essere stato assunto come riferimento. (p. 29-30)

Le ricorrenze significative qui presentate (Tabella 1) sono suddivise in tre categorie (alunni, docenti, genitori) in base alle diverse fonti considerate (docenti, esperti esterni, genitori).

FONTI	RICORRENZE SIGNIFICATIVE		
	ALUNNI	DOCENTI	GENITORI
<i>DOCENTI</i>	Atteggiamenti esplosivi ed implosivi. Dinamiche negative ricorrenti. Necessità di interventi di contenimento e di atti psichici positivi. Apprezzamenti positivi. Legame affettivo. Clima gioioso di condivisione. Buon inserimento nel gruppo. Buona partecipazione alle attività. Poco rispetto delle regole	Linea educativa comune. Assertività. Inclusione e attenzione ai rapporti. Metodologia cooperativa. Importanza del lavoro di team. Clima positivo di condivisione. Formazione comune. Attenzione educativa condivisa. Programmazione condivisa con attività trasversali. Senso di frustrazione. Sovraccarico implicito di problematiche.	Disponibilità iniziale e condivisione. Contrasti e fazioni. Atteggiamenti impliciti di non accettazione, rivendicazione. Momenti conflittuali. Difficoltà di comprensione, diffidenza, paura dei genitori stranieri. Contatto diretto. Procedure di coinvolgimento dei genitori stranieri. Rottura definitiva con una famiglia.
<i>ESPERTI ESTERNI</i>	Bambini stranieri chiusi. Senso di non appartenenza. Curiosità. Disaccordi in classe. Caratteri emergenti.	Attenzione alle dinamiche. Approccio cooperativo.	Genitori stranieri chiusi. Mediazioni difficili.
<i>GENITORI</i>	Gruppetti di amici dalla scuola materna. Isolamento di qualche bambino. Buon inserimento, a volte alterno. Dispetti, tensioni e conflitti. Confusione, agitazione in classe. Vivacità, maleducazione. Sensazione di peso della scuola, ingiustizia e limite. Atteggiamenti discriminatori.	Capacità professionale.  <i>Cooperative Learning</i> come scelta metodologica applicata con continuità e convinzione.	Buoni rapporti tra i genitori che si conoscevano dalla scuola materna. Qualche genitore isolato. Adulti come intermediari delle relazioni tra bambini. Fazioni contrapposte: condivisione e difficoltà di accettazione del metodo proposto. Chiacchiere, lamentele. Isolamento dei genitori stranieri: solo qualche contatto.

**Tabella 1 – Ricorrenze significative nella situazione di partenza.**

### **Alcuni risultati alla fine della classe terza**

I risultati raccolti in base alle diverse fonti considerate (docenti, esperti esterni, genitori, alunni) presentano ricorrenze comuni, che mostrano cambiamenti migliorativi rispetto la situazione di partenza.

Sono emerse, dalle numerose occorrenze individuate nelle tre aree tematiche considerate (intercultura, collaborazione dei genitori, Cooperative Learning), elementi condivisi tra gli attori coinvolti nella ricerca, che permettono di convalidare da diversi punti di vista l'efficacia del *Cooperative Learning* come strumento per favorire le relazioni interculturali e offrono un possibile sentiero percorribile per mediare le difficoltà che si incontrano in contesti multiculturali.

Di seguito alcune considerazioni essenziali, illustrate secondo le tre aree tematiche considerate.

- *Dalla multiculturalità all'interculturalità: "l'importanza del fare insieme"<sup>1</sup>*

L'attenzione ad un'educazione interculturale è maturata da punti di partenza differenti in tutte le componenti coinvolte nel processo, che pur convivendo con i propri pregiudizi e fantasmi magari impliciti connessi alla multiculturalità, si sono messe ugualmente in gioco per costruire un progetto comune di lavoro, con un coinvolgimento che ha facilitato l'inizio di una rete di relazioni e la sperimentazione diretta di un'esperienza interculturale d'inclusione.

Gli alunni/e hanno respirato un clima di condivisione e sinergia, che si è tradotto da una parte in atteggiamenti di curiosità, inclusione e accettazione dell'altro e dall'altra ha rilanciato nuovi stimoli di riflessione per gli adulti, innescando un processo di crescita comune progressiva, con un nuovo spazio mentale nei confronti della diversità culturale.

Questo percorso ha richiesto molta energia, tempo, capacità e modalità di intervento anche istituzionalizzate, con progetti specifici e presenza di risorse adeguate al 'carico' percepito. La mediazione, a volte difficile, ha stimolato una costante condivisione di obiettivi educativi, necessari per programmare in itinere le esperienze più adeguate al contesto in continuo cambiamento, e un arricchimento reciproco, con la trasformazione delle difficoltà percepite in opportunità possibili.

- *Collaborazione dei genitori a scuola: "una porta che si apre"*

La collaborazione dei genitori a scuola ha stemperato in parte preoccupazioni e tensioni, spostando il focus dell'attenzione dal pensiero all'azione: il laboratorio di cucina e le esperienze dei nonni in classe sono state opportunità per uno scambio proficuo di ruoli, per conoscere il contesto scolastico dall'interno, poter offrire un contributo e cooperare in modo attivo, intrecciando nuove relazioni e colorando di un vissuto personale l'esperienza interculturale. Docenti e genitori si sono riconosciuti in un clima sereno di disponibilità reciproca e di fiducia, che ha coinvolto anche le famiglie migranti.

L'esperienza, vissuta da tutti con entusiasmo, ha avuto importanti ripercussioni anche sul clima della classe, contribuendo alla creazione di linee comuni di intervento educativo, basate sulla conoscenza dell'altro, e alla costituzione di un gruppo di genitori di supporto al progetto, coordinato dalla rappresentante di classe.

- *Cooperative Learning: una strategia educativa come "punto di riferimento"*

Il *Cooperative Learning* si è rivelato un valido strumento per promuovere, osservare, valutare ed autovalutare alcuni comportamenti sociali. Molte sono state le ricorrenze trasversali che hanno confermato l'acquisizione da parte degli alunni/e di competenze sociali utili alle relazioni

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<sup>1</sup> Si riportano qui e di seguito tra virgolette in corsivo alcune ricorrenze codificate *in vivo* (con le parole dei partecipanti).

interculturali e alla mediazione dei conflitti: la condivisione, l'inclusione, la capacità di sapersi aiutare, collaborare e negoziare, la capacità di organizzazione, il rispetto dei ruoli ed una crescita emotiva. In particolare gli alunni/e hanno identificato nella capacità di sapersi aiutare e di collaborare i parametri migliorativi dello stare insieme; sono consapevoli di saper lavorare rispettando il proprio ruolo, alzare la mano per intervenire, prestarsi le cose, ascoltarsi *“senza arrabbiarsi troppo”*, accettarsi e ridere divertendosi insieme.

Gli adulti hanno confermato le riflessioni degli alunni/e, sottolineandone una crescita emotiva, una maggiore autostima, capacità di negoziare, un atteggiamento più critico e tollerante verso i compagni, curiosità e inclusione verso la diversità.

Le competenze acquisite hanno avuto ripercussioni anche in contesti extrascolastici: i genitori hanno osservato un clima di gioco sereno, più equilibrato e meno litigioso, la capacità di saper spiegare i propri comportamenti *“senza passare alle mani”*, il rispetto del turno di parola ed una suddivisione di ruoli, con la capacità di dividersi lo spazio nella relazione e di proporre soluzioni alternative in modo autonomo. Gli esperti esterni hanno evidenziato capacità di organizzazione, di ascolto, di rispetto dei ruoli, di partecipazione attiva e di incoraggiamento.

Dalle diverse osservazioni è emerso un gruppo classe eterogeneo, vivace, *“con un forte impatto”*, ma coeso, più tranquillo, con minori tensioni e con un'identità espressa attraverso un *“noi”*, costruito in tre anni di percorso educativo, con un clima percepito dagli alunni/e come piacevole e positivo.

Le famiglie migranti hanno trovato un loro spazio di ascolto e di accoglienza, sviluppando un progressivo senso di appartenenza alla comunità. Gli alunni/e *“stranieri”*, in particolare, da un atteggiamento iniziale di chiusura e diffidenza hanno vissuto la scuola *“come una casa”*, sperimentando alcuni contatti con i compagni anche al di fuori della classe.

L'esperienza dei gruppi cooperativi, proposta dai docenti fin dalla classe prima, è stata vissuta volentieri da tutti i bambini/e. Validò supporto nella costruzione di un'identità di gruppo e nella gestione efficace dei conflitti, ha aiutato gli studenti a controllarsi meglio, a mediare nelle relazioni e a sciogliere le tensioni attraverso il fare insieme; è diventata un'occasione per trovare nuovi amici, aiutarsi, conoscersi meglio e in profondità, modificando le opinioni iniziali verso i compagni, in un processo in cui amicizia e conflitto potessero coesistere.

### ***Possibili elementi di trasferibilità***

Una lettura globale delle ricorrenze individuate nello studio di caso evidenzia la presenza di alcuni possibili elementi di trasferibilità in altri contesti scolastici multiculturali per la progettazione di interventi educativi efficaci, mirati a promuovere con un processo intenzionale l'inclusione sociale.

L'applicazione di una metodologia attiva come il Cooperative Learning, infatti, agevolerebbe le relazioni interculturali solo se in sinergia con altre condizioni (Tabella 2), che mostrano come denominatore comune la condivisione, sperimentata a diversi livelli: sia come condivisione di obiettivi e pratiche educative all'interno di ogni categoria considerata (docenti, esperti esterni, genitori, alunni) sia in modo trasversale tra tutti i partecipanti, nel rispetto dei differenti ruoli e personali gradi di adesione al progetto.

Questi elementi tracciano un possibile sentiero da percorrere per sperimentare nella scuola un'educazione interculturale, la cui attuazione richiede sicuramente dei tempi lunghi e una sinergia anche politica con il territorio, per favorire un processo di uguaglianza e giustizia sociale. E solo in un equilibrio autentico tra uguaglianza e differenza, pari opportunità e riconoscimento delle diverse culture, l'educazione interculturale può assumere un reale valore formativo, declinandosi anche come educazione ad una cittadinanza interculturale, priorità condivisa dall'Unione Europea.

CONDIZIONI di EFFICACIA	<i>Sintesi OCCORRENZE</i>
<i>condivisione metodologica</i> <i>condivisione formativa</i> <i>condivisione educativa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Cooperative Learning</i> come scelta metodologica applicata con continuità e flessibilità, in modo aderente al contesto.</li> <li>– Formazione comune, aggiornamento e capacità professionali dei docenti coinvolti.</li> </ul> <p>Lavoro in team come:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– attenzione educativa condivisa nell'Istituto;</li> <li>– attenzione dei singoli docenti alle dinamiche relazionali, con atteggiamenti di assertività ed inclusione;</li> <li>– programmazione condivisa nel team docenti, progettazione mirata di interventi anche trasversali, analisi e verifica in itinere delle attività per delineare nuove proposte aderenti al contesto in trasformazione;</li> <li>– condivisione di obiettivi e modalità educative con genitori e personale di supporto alla didattica;</li> <li>– coerenza educativa casa-scuola.</li> </ul>
<i>condivisione concreta</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– attività quotidiana degli alunni in piccoli gruppi strutturati per condividere l'esperienza scolastica;</li> <li>– attività, laboratori e feste in cui interagiscono diverse componenti: alunni, genitori, docenti.</li> </ul>
<i>clima positivo di</i> <i>condivisione ascolto attivo</i> <i>apertura al territorio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– disponibilità di tutte le componenti a mettersi in gioco;</li> <li>– atteggiamento di apertura;</li> <li>– fiducia e motivazione al cambiamento.</li> <li>– spazio di ascolto e di incontro delle famiglie (in particolare delle famiglie migranti) per accogliere opinioni divergenti;</li> <li>– collaborazione con un centro interculturale, come "terra di incontro" ed iniziale riconoscimento sociale dei bambini e delle famiglie migranti;</li> <li>– collaborazione e supporto di esperti esterni.</li> </ul>

**Tabella 2 – Condizioni di efficacia del Cooperative Learning.**

## **Riflessioni critiche**

Il processo indagato mostra un andamento dinamico e fluttuante, con la presenza di molteplici variabili influenti oltre quelle considerate, tra cui quelle legate ai processi di maturazione dei soggetti in età evolutiva, in parte indipendenti dalla metodologia adottata, la diversa condizione socio-economica e culturale degli attori coinvolti, l'impatto con il territorio e con le politiche locali e globali. Anche se la progressiva implementazione sul campo degli elementi di efficacia percepiti ha consentito di convalidare questo modello nel contesto in cui è riferito, ulteriori ricerche longitudinali estese nel tempo permetterebbero di monitorare in modo forse più adeguato i processi di efficacia del *Cooperative Learning* e di costruzione di relazioni condivise con diversi attori sociali.

I risultati ottenuti possono comunque offrire elementi di riflessione per sperimentare modalità alternative alle prassi di relazione quotidiana, per incontrarsi in una sorta di “*terra di mezzo*” tra rifiuto e assimilazione, dove costruire un nuovo modello di relazione, basato sull'interazione e sulla condivisione di tutti, in una visione di dialogo interculturale. E fondamentale diventa poter offrire agli alunni/e un percorso strutturato per apprendere in un luogo protetto, la scuola, una mediazione efficace dei conflitti nell'incontro con l'altro.

L'efficacia del processo esaminato risente sicuramente delle problematiche presenti in contesti complessi, in quanto le difficoltà multiculturali nella scuola rappresentano metaforicamente solo la punta di un iceberg di processi sociali di più vasta portata e non risolvibili esclusivamente in un contesto educativo. Come educatori abbiamo, comunque, il compito di intervenire innanzitutto nel nostro territorio di competenza, il nostro *luogo di potere* (Parry, 1991), la scuola, per facilitare con strumenti adeguati un processo di coesione sociale. La scuola potrebbe così declinarsi come una *scuola aperta*, che riscopre la forza della sua vulnerabilità e delle sue contraddizioni per accogliere il conflitto come opportunità, offrendo uno spazio costruttivo per poterlo esprimere, sia agli alunni/e sia alle loro famiglie, in una pluralità di idee che permettono un arricchimento reciproco (Torres & Noguera, 2008).

L'aspetto più importante di questo studio, pertanto, crediamo che non si debba ricercare nei risultati ottenuti, ma nel cammino intrapreso da tutti coloro che hanno partecipato al progetto, che con coraggio si sono messi in gioco per incontrare non solo l'altro, ma anche le proprie zone d'ombra, riconoscendo quello *straniero* che prima di essere fuori di noi è in noi.

E questo è un processo sicuramente lungo e difficile, fatto di piccoli passi, con esiti fluttuanti e talvolta instabili, con momenti di fallimento alternati alla percezione di “*essere sulla strada giusta*”, ma diventa una sfida, che non può che rafforzare l'impegno di ogni educatore, per tendere verso quello spazio utopico di intercultura e giustizia sociale.

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# QUALITÀ E EQUITÀ IN CONTESTI INTERCULTURALI. UNA GROUNDLED THEORY CRITICA NEL PRIMO CICLO D'ISTRUZIONE.

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## **Introduzione**

Una scuola pubblica di qualità capace di garantire pari opportunità formative per il successo scolastico di tutti, evitando che la differenza si trasformi in disuguaglianza (MIUR, 2012): questa è la sfida che caratterizza l'attuale dibattito pedagogico e politico, in uno scenario scandito dalla globalizzazione, dalla complessità di un pluralismo culturale e da contesti sociali sempre più multiculturali e multietnici.

Nel sistema scolastico italiano, infatti, la presenza di alunni/e di cittadinanza non italiana è ormai un dato strutturale e consolidato in progressivo aumento (MIUR, 2011) e pone in primo piano la necessità di promuovere una scuola democratica, equa e di qualità che sappia accogliere, interpretare e sostenere le diverse identità in un processo diffuso di apprendimento, rimuovendo quegli *“ostacoli di ordine economico e sociale, che, limitando di fatto la libertà e l'eguaglianza dei cittadini, impediscono il pieno sviluppo della persona umana e l'effettiva partecipazione di tutti i lavoratori all'organizzazione politica, economica e sociale del Paese”* (art. 3 Costituzione italiana).

Ma i dati nella scuola mostrano una realtà ben diversa.

Tassi di insuccesso più alti dei loro coetanei emergono dalle statistiche italiane (MIUR, 2011) ed internazionali (OCSE-PISA, 2010) negli alunni migranti in Italia: in presenza di queste evidenze, parlare di successo formativo per tutti risulta difficile e quale sia la giustizia sociale promossa attraverso l'Istruzione, una domanda retorica. Infatti, mentre il Consiglio dell'Unione Europea (2008) ribadisce il ruolo dell'istruzione e della formazione come fattore indispensabile per garantire cambiamenti economici e sociali, diventa sempre più evidente una distribuzione disuguale dei redditi e della povertà (OCSE, 2008), segno tangibile di un'asimmetria sociale delle società complesse e di un'incapacità anche politica di promuovere un reale processo di equità sociale.

Queste sono le considerazioni che fanno da sfondo al presente articolo, che riporta alcuni risultati di uno studio longitudinale, riferito ad un gruppo classe multiculturale dalla prima della scuola primaria alla prima di una scuola secondaria di primo grado del Trentino.

La specificità metodologica del lavoro è data dalla particolare postura di un ricercatore del team, che è anche un docente coinvolto direttamente sul campo.

## **Contesto di ricerca**

All'inizio del lavoro si intendevano esplorare gli elementi di efficacia per favorire l'apprendimento in un gruppo classe ad alta densità di alunni/e di origine migrante (6/18). Ma mentre si cercavano di implementare gli esiti della prima fase di ricerca, mutamenti del quadro politico-istituzionale nazionale e locale, pregiudizi nel territorio, incongruenze tra scelte dichiarate nel Progetto d'Istituto e agite nell'Organizzazione scolastica di riferimento hanno fatto emergere una consapevolezza politica sempre maggiore di quanto fosse importante il ruolo dei docenti in una scuola che avrebbe dovuto essere equa e democratica. Diventava urgente promuovere un reale percorso formativo per tutti, e in particolare per quegli alunni/e maggiormente in difficoltà, accogliendo e valorizzando identità culturali diverse. E come riuscire in questo intento, attraverso quali modalità ancora percorribili, un interrogativo a cui trovare risposta.

Sono state le molteplici zone d'ombra, ancor più che le certezze, a stimolare una progressiva domanda di ricerca, *generata* (Torres, 2011) dal contesto scolastico stesso, per poter organizzare la speranza di una possibile sfida educativa.

## **Metodologia**

La scelta di una metodologia di ricerca qualitativa coerente con le dimensioni socio-politiche della *Social Justice Education (SJE)* si è rivelata indispensabile per un progetto *aderente* al contesto educativo e *costruito* progressivamente nella relazione con i partecipanti (Charmaz, 2005); si è adottata, pertanto, la *Grounded Theory* (d'ora in poi GT) nel suo approccio costruttivista (Charmaz, 2006), con l'intento di superare il semplice piano descrittivo del fenomeno indagato e di elaborare in modo *critico* (Charmaz, 2005) un possibile modello pedagogico, traducibile in linee di intervento educativo, in una prospettiva di trasformazione sociale (Torres & Noguera, 2008; Gorski, 2009; Tarozzi, 2011a).

La GT, infatti, è un approccio sistematico, induttivo e comparativo per condurre ricerche allo scopo di costruire una teoria (Charmaz, 2006) aderente ai dati, rilevante e funzionante. In congruenza ai suoi assunti metodologici, si è definito il disegno di ricerca a partire dai significati di un *campionamento teorico* (Morse, 2007) in un intreccio continuo tra analisi e costruzione dei dati stessi, con una costante comparazione in ogni livello analitico di una codifica progressiva (aperta, focalizzata e teorica) connessa strettamente con la base empirica (Tarozzi, 2008).

## **Partecipanti**

L'indagine in oggetto, contestualizzata in un Istituto Comprensivo del Trentino dal 2007 al 2011, ha

coinvolto in particolare 19 alunni/e, 38 genitori, 22 docenti e 4 esperti esterni<sup>1</sup>, selezionati nella seconda e terza fase di ricerca seguendo un campionamento teorico, necessariamente però vincolato al contesto dello stesso Istituto Comprensivo.

### **Tecniche e strumenti**

Con procedure conformi al *Codice Etico*, si sono raccolti in 6 sessioni successive, in base alla focalizzazione della domanda di ricerca, elementi significativi comprendenti dati verbali, osservativi e visivi, organizzandoli successivamente in un *database*, corredato da annotazioni e *memo*.

In fase di codifica ci si è avvalsi in particolare del supporto di *QSRNVivo9.2*, un *Qualitative Data Analysis Software* coerente con questa metodologia.

### **Tempi**

La ricerca longitudinale si è articolata in tre fasi: una *prima* (2007-2008), riferita ad una classe terza della scuola primaria, con una ricostruzione anche retrospettiva descrittiva fino alla classe prima; una *seconda* (2008-2010), relativa prevalentemente allo stesso gruppo-classe in quarta e quinta; una *terza* (2010-2011), con un ampliamento di contesto coincidente con l'ingresso degli alunni/e considerati in quattro nuove classi, con diverse modalità orarie e d'insegnamento, della scuola secondaria di primo grado.

### **Processo analitico**

#### **Dati**

Assumendo che le operazioni di catalogazione contengono, in una GT, un primo significato analitico (Tarozzi, 2008), queste sono le diverse tipologie di dati codificati: verbali d'archivio e documenti (dal 2005 al 2011); osservazioni dirette partecipate e partecipanti di quattro anni scolastici; 43 interviste focalizzate (Charmaz, 2001; Tierney & Dilley, 2001) registrate a testimoni privilegiati (14 docenti, 25 genitori e 4 esperti esterni) e 19 interviste in piccolo gruppo agli alunni/e (Eder & Fingerson, 2001), sempre registrate, con una durata complessiva di circa 36 ore; 10 somministrazioni di un questionario individuale alunni; documenti concreti prodotti nel percorso didattico; memo.

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<sup>1</sup> Dai dati quantitativi depositati in Segreteria, questo gruppo classe risulta composto da 11 femmine e 8 maschi. Rispetto la nazionalità: 16 sono di cittadinanza italiana e 3 non italiana (algerina, marocchina, tunisina); 16 nati in Italia, 3 in altro stato (India, Marocco, Tunisia); i loro genitori: 31 sono nati in Italia, 7 in altro stato (Colombia, Algeria, Marocco, Tunisia).

Dei docenti coinvolti nella ricerca, 10 sono della scuola primaria e 12 della secondaria, con differenti metodologie di insegnamento e di riferimenti valoriali.

## Analisi

Si è trasformato tutto il materiale in testo, in particolare con una trascrizione *verbatim* di ogni intervista, codificandolo secondo le procedure tipiche della GT (Charmaz, 2006; Tarozzi 2008). Ne sono emersi complessivamente 742 *codes* e 3193 occorrenze ad essi riferite, su un totale di 405 *sources* esaminate (Tabella 1). Nella codifica focalizzata sono progressivamente diminuite le etichette concettuali, in base alle occorrenze più frequenti o più pregnanti di significato, e si sono identificati induttivamente 20 fenomeni, raggruppati in 9 categorie interpretative, successivamente ridotte a 7 e disegnate in uno schema interpretativo, riassunto dal diagramma della Figura 1.

Fasi di ricerca	Durata (anni)	DOMANDA PROGRESSIVA DI RICERCA	Sessioni di raccolta dati	Nodes	References	Cases	Sources
1	3	Quali elementi di efficacia del <i>Cooperative Learning</i> nell'educazione interculturale?	Studio di caso			68	145
2	2	Quale processo supporta strategie efficaci per un apprendimento di qualità per tutti in contesti multiculturali?	I	148	735	19	175
			II	405	1680	13	
			III	136	331	8	
				<b>635</b>	<b>2746</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>320</b>
3	1	Quale transfer del processo in un nuovo contesto scolastico?	IV	65	253	Istituto	85
			V	42	194	Compr.	
				<b>742</b>	<b>3193</b>		<b>405</b>

Tabella 1 – Volumi della codifica iniziale.

## Il modello emergente

Il modello costruito, non generalizzabile se non teoreticamente, vorrebbe offrire un'interpretazione, radicata ('grounded') nel particolare contesto e momento socio-culturale in cui è stata generata: questa è l'accezione con cui si utilizza il termine 'modello', in congruenza con i presupposti teorici di una GT costruttivista, nell'ambito di quella pedagogia critica che vorrebbe contribuire a fornire strumenti operativi di cambiamento sociale (Denzin, 2007).

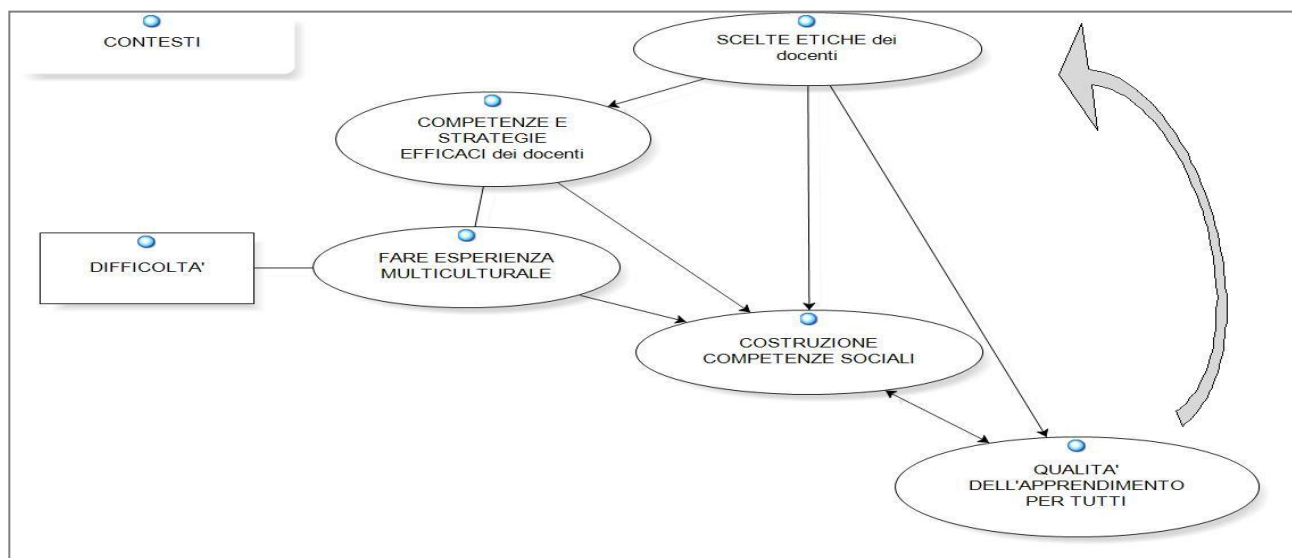


Figura 1 – Codifica teorica. Il modello emergente.

Dai dati di ricerca emergono 7 categorie principali contraddistinte da proprietà specifiche (tra parentesi il numero di ricorrenze):

1. *scelte etiche dei docenti* (127), finalità educative dichiarate e agite nella pratica didattica;
2. *strategie e competenze efficaci dei docenti* (393), comprendenti competenze, metodologie attive e progettualità della prassi educativa e dell'interazione con i genitori;
3. *fare esperienza multiculturale* (159), come vissuto positivo mediato con competenza dai docenti;
4. *costruzione di competenze sociali negli alunni* (1163), riferibili alla gestione di sé, del gruppo, alle capacità comunicative, socio-affettive e di mediazione.
5. *qualità dell'apprendimento per tutti* (555), declinato come benessere relazionale (sentirsi tutti bene a scuola), e successo formativo;
6. *difficoltà* (589), vissute dai docenti, dai genitori, dagli alunni/e, dalla loro reciproca relazione e dall'interazione con i contesti;
7. *contesti socio-politici locali e globali* (156), differenti richieste politiche cui la scuola pubblica ha dovuto rispondere negli ultimi quattro anni, che costituiscono uno sfondo globale influenzante in parte le politiche scolastiche locali, caratterizzate dall'autonomia, e i particolari percorsi pedagogici in atto.

Sviluppando i rapporti concettuali fra queste diverse categorie, pur in presenza di una spiegazione sistemica del processo indagato, con interrelazioni ed influenze reciproche, si sono individuate in successione quattro fasi del processo che, in una circolarità temporale riflessiva e progressiva, potenziano ed affermano il sistema stesso nella costruzione di percorsi efficaci.

### ***Fasi di un processo efficace***

#### *1. Scegliere a livello etico*

Sfondo di riferimento che pervade tutte le fasi successive, questa categoria rappresenta il livello etico come preconditione essenziale del processo. Comprende scelte agite nella pratica educativa e supportate dal credo pedagogico dei docenti: il valore del successo formativo per tutti, della coesione sociale, dello sviluppo del pensiero critico e creativo, nel rispetto di ogni individualità, per promuovere un'accoglienza educativa anche in uno 'spazio mentale' empatico, in cui possano coabitare differenze e bisogni socio-culturali diversi.

Nei piani annuali, riferiti alla classe osservata, i riferimenti valoriali sono ripresi con frequenza ed esplicitano *“l'attenzione al bambino/a come persona, a favorire un clima positivo, alla mediazione dei conflitti e ad un apprendimento cooperativo”*, considerando il *“benessere dell'allievo come presupposto del suo successo formativo”*.

Ma sono soprattutto le affermazioni di docenti coinvolti nel processo a colorare di pregnanza questa categoria, in contrasto talvolta con alcune scelte di politica scolastica locale e globale, come ribadiscono alcuni insegnanti, che in prima persona sentono la responsabilità di garantire percorsi efficaci soprattutto per le fasce sociali più svantaggiate, per promuovere opportunità reali di apprendimento attraverso metodologie attive.

Viene dipinto un quadro in cui emergono sia la *'passione educativa'*, riferibile ai temi della SJE, sia l'efficacia del ruolo trainante di *'almeno'* un insegnante, che crea un gruppo di lavoro coerente con questi principi.

### *2. Facilitare l'esperienza con strategie efficaci*

Il confine fra scelte etiche dichiarate, agite e progettate dai docenti è sfumato: lo step successivo del modello, infatti, è rappresentato da una coerenza a livello mentale (progettualità), emotivo (motivazione) e concreto (attività), che si declina nel facilitare l'esperienza multiculturale attraverso strategie efficaci, gestite con competenza ed in modo aderente ai bisogni espressi dal gruppo.

Nella categoria considerata si profilano 5 proprietà tra loro interrelate: la presenza di competenze sociali nei docenti, una progettualità condivisa tra colleghi, l'impiego di metodologie attive di insegnamento in classe ed il coinvolgimento dei genitori nella scuola, attenta ad offrire loro uno spazio diretto di dialogo. Numerosi *codes* affermano, da diversi punti di vista, la necessità di questi elementi come condizioni di attuabilità del processo, che si svolge in un contesto classe non solo complesso ma, spesso, difficile nelle relazioni ed interrelazioni tra alunni/e, docenti e genitori.

In tal senso, quindi, il *modo* in cui viene vissuta l'esperienza (*Fare esperienza multiculturale*) diventa un elemento essenziale per promuovere un percorso efficace: è la *visione costruttiva* del vissuto eterogeneo della classe, che permette di potenziare e facilitare inclusione e successo per tutti, attraverso metodologie efficaci, *'pensate e condivise'* nel team e adattate con flessibilità e creatività.

### *3. Costruire competenze sociali*

Terzo step del processo, la *Costruzione delle competenze sociali* in alunni/e e genitori rappresenta il centro tematico più denso nell'analisi, in quanto risulta sia prodotto dall'interazione tra scelte etiche, strategie efficaci dei docenti ed un vissuto costruttivo dell'esperienza multiculturale, sia direttamente correlato al successo formativo per tutti.

Il nucleo maggiormente rilevante di questa categoria è rappresentato dalle *competenze sociali negli alunni/e*: con diversi livelli di consapevolezza, alunni/e, genitori e docenti, riconoscono ed osservano maturate competenze relazionali in diverse aree tematiche inerenti la gestione di sé e del gruppo, comprendenti una crescita socio-affettiva, lo sviluppo di capacità comunicative, di mediazione e decisionali (pensiero critico e sociale).



Gli alunni/e autoctoni e migranti le sperimentano direttamente nell'attività quotidiana scolastica: dalle ricorrenze emerge che sono consapevoli della propria capacità di sapersi aiutare, lavorare in gruppo, collaborare, rispettare ruoli e persone, accettare il conflitto come parte integrante dell'amicizia, utilizzando ed inventando anche strategie di mediazione, elementi correlati direttamente allo stare bene a scuola di tutti e al successo formativo.

#### 4. *Qualità dell'apprendimento per tutti*

Fine ultimo del processo pedagogico è la *Qualità dell'apprendimento per tutti*, non solo dell'insegnamento, che se mancasse evidenzerebbe la “*possibilità di una deresponsabilizzazione didattica della scuola e del docente nei confronti di quegli allievi che, per vari motivi, incontrano difficoltà*” (Vannini, 2009, p. 74).

In questa quarta ed ultima fase, emergono due proprietà concettualmente dense e correlate: *sentirsi tutti bene a scuola e successo scolastico*, risultato delle scelte etiche iniziali che pervadono ogni fase del processo.

*Star bene a scuola* e sentirsi inclusi sono vissuti dichiarati ripetutamente da tutti gli alunni/e, anche stranieri, e dai loro genitori: emerge un quadro caratterizzato da relazioni affettive e gioiose tra bambini/e, con un senso di appartenenza alla classe (*'sentirsi come fratelli e sorelle'*), in cui l'essere compagni di scuola e l'essere amici sono significati spesso coincidenti.

Attraverso il piacere di *'fare le cose insieme'* viene cementata quella conoscenza necessaria per mediare i ripetuti conflitti relazionali, gestiti spesso in modo autonomo e sperimentando creative modalità di mediazione.

I sociogrammi rivelano una classe coesa, con dinamiche interne anche accese, ma che comprendono tutti gli alunni/e, senza distinzione rispetto la provenienza, in quella “*varietà integrata*” in cui ciascuno può esprimersi per quello che è.

Tale clima di benessere relazionale e di costruzione delle competenze sociali influenza l'apprendimento cognitivo degli alunni/e, permettendo un approccio attivo e critico alle materie studiate, da parte di tutti, con l'acquisizione progressiva dei saperi di base da parte degli alunni/e più deboli.

L'attenzione ad un successo formativo diffuso conferma la validità del percorso pedagogico, ne rinforza significati e valori, potenziando le fasi che ne permettono la costruzione, in un processo sistemico circolare e riflessivo.

E il modello costruito rivela il suo punto di forza proprio nella capacità di valorizzare le risorse presenti, anticipando alcune difficoltà, invece di agire direttamente su queste: metaforicamente, si potrebbe affermare, ampliando e potenziando le *zone di luce* anziché lottando esclusivamente contro le *zone di ombra*, comunque esistenti.

## **Riflessioni conclusive**

Numerose sono state le piste offerte dall'analisi di questo processo, denso di dati anche a livello temporale: necessariamente si sono dovuti porre dei limiti d'indagine, per non rischiare di perdere la pregnanza dei risultati con descrizioni ingenuie e generali delle situazioni, operando talvolta difficili scelte. Ed ogni opzione ha presupposto qualcosa da includere e/o qualcosa da rimandare: ma già a partire da questi atti intenzionali e motivati si è espresso un primo gradino di costruzione teorica, che ha privilegiato maggiormente i percorsi correlati al ruolo attivo dei docenti.

Sarebbe interessante verificare i risultati in altri contesti complessi della scuola primaria, per derivare un modello maggiormente acontestualizzato, limite di cui questa GT ha risentito, in quanto solo nella terza fase il campionamento si è allargato a nuovi casi inseriti nei diversi ambienti scolastici della scuola secondaria di primo grado.

La relazione progressivamente costruita con alunni/e, docenti e genitori ha costituito, crediamo, l'elemento maggiormente validante di un percorso non neutrale, dichiaratamente dalla parte delle situazioni più difficili, non necessariamente associate a differenti nazionalità, ma ai diversi bisogni emergenti. E a questi speriamo che il modello elaborato contribuisca a fornire risposta, nel rispetto del contributo attivo di ogni attore che si è messo in gioco.

## **Successo formativo per tutti: una sfida possibile?**

L'efficacia del processo pedagogico esaminato nella ricerca si fonda su alcune condizioni interagenti, in una visione sistemica che coinvolge attori e situazioni differenti.

Emergono con particolare densità concettuale alcune categorie che, seppur radicate nel particolare contesto che le ha generate, forse potrebbero essere trasferibili almeno come riflessione nel più ampio contesto scolastico nazionale, per favorire una maggiore consapevolezza nelle scelte socio-politiche correlate all'Istruzione.

Di seguito si evidenzieranno alcuni nuclei essenziali, in un ordine non relato alla loro priorità, trasponendo i significati nella metafora del pane, sigillo da sempre di cultura e condivisione nei popoli.

- *Equità sociale come scelta etica*

Questo significato pervade tutta la ricerca con intensità, concretizzandosi nei diversi piani di realtà considerati, siano essi di un livello mentale (progettualità), emotivo (motivazioni) o concreto (prassi).

Metaforicamente rappresenta il lievito che permette di fermentare opportune azioni (e non reazioni) e scelte sociali.

Le scelte di valore, infatti, prendono forma autonoma nel contrasto con le difficoltà vissute, declinandosi come precondizioni essenziali che permettono la realizzazione mirata di un progetto, voluto innanzitutto a livello etico. Ma l'*Ethos* emergente (Tarozzi, 2011b; Tarozzi, 2012) non è colorato dal buonismo del *'vogliamoci-tutti-bene'* o *'siamo-tutti-uguali'*, bensì è intriso di una gravidanza pedagogica focalizzata a promuovere eque opportunità formative, offrendo più risorse a chi ha di meno, per colmare le disuguaglianze di partenza.

- *Contesti socio-politici-economici coerenti*

I contesti di riferimento, acqua dell'impasto, occupano una posizione fondamentale nel promuovere e potenziare le linee educative scelte.

In particolare, quello in cui sono immersi i processi osservati, appare particolarmente ricco di risorse, sia in quanto descritte nelle occorrenze dai partecipanti sia in quanto oggettivamente presenti nel territorio: seppur respirando un clima di tagli pubblici nei finanziamenti riservati al settore dell'Istruzione, le scelte di politica locale si profilano ancora orientate ad investimenti economici nella Scuola per promuovere, pur in un clima di sobrietà, *"crescita, innovazione e coesione sociale"*, con dati concreti in controtendenza rispetto quelli nazionali degli ultimi anni.

In particolare, poi, l'Istituto Comprensivo in questione, anche se mostra talune criticità focalizzate nella ricerca, appare in ogni modo collocato in una fascia medio-alta di qualità organizzativa, con una *mission* che si propone di essere attenta ai bisogni dell'utenza, a cui risponde con una molteplicità di proposte, sostenute da stanziamenti economici disponibili, e con spazi formativi per i docenti, progettati e/o favoriti.

Con queste evidenze, anche le fasi individuate nel modello teorico assumono una potenza propositiva maggiore, sottolineando la valenza di una necessaria congruenza tra scelte pedagogiche e politiche, per poter concretizzare con reali modalità operative quanto previsto nell'art. 3 della Costituzione.

- *Competenze e strategie efficaci dei docenti*

Protagonisti del percorso, i docenti si confrontano quotidianamente con la loro competenza professionale e relazionale di interazione in contesti complessi. Il caso studiato comprende realtà differenti, che costituiscono quasi una sfida educativa per gli insegnanti coinvolti.

Le competenze esibite sono, nella metafora, farina indispensabile per una panificazione fragrante, con un'equilibrata miscela di ingredienti differenti, che si declinano in capacità relazionali solide, una progettualità condivisa e l'apertura dello spazio scuola al dialogo e alla partecipazione dei genitori anche stranieri, per favorire un'interazione educativa di supporto alla *mission* formativa assunta.

Questi elementi, però, vanno costruiti e facilitati: la progettualità necessita di tempi adeguati di confronto, non ritagliati esclusivamente dal volontariato personale, ma preventivati in un contratto professionale che valorizzi maggiormente questo aspetto pedagogico; le competenze hanno bisogno di una formazione anche esperienziale, prevista nei corsi attivati anche nelle Università pubbliche e non solo derivante da scelte fluttuanti di autoaggiornamento; la condivisione di intenti con le famiglie richiama la necessità di un'apertura al dialogo interculturale, in cui ognuno possa sentirsi accolto con le proprie peculiarità, e non forzatamente assimilato in una cultura "nostra".

Scuola come "terra di mezzo", quindi, luogo di co-creazione partecipata di un successo formativo per tutti.

Con questi presupposti la realtà complessa della scuola si può declinare come effettiva esperienza formativa per tutti, in quella valenza positiva necessaria per promuovere, attraverso la costruzione di competenze, la crescita dei cittadini di domani.

Investire, anche economicamente, su queste scelte permette di dipingere sfondi sociali coesi ed includenti ciascuna differenza, in quell'integrazione che nel rispetto di tutti si può trasformare in una vera *interazione* tra identità solide e attive, in un processo partecipato di costruzione della Conoscenza.

Terra d'incontro di dispute ideologiche, l'*Ethos* così inteso può offrire un nuovo spazio mentale in cui progettare la sfida di un Sogno educativo ancora possibile.

Quali le azioni focali? *Scegliere, permettere, costruire.*

Perché di questo pane ce ne sia, e per tutti.

### **Note degli autori**

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## **Listening to students from migrant background. Some notes from research.**

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### **Introduction:**

Research on children from migrant background in Spanish context has developed rapidly in the last two decades and it is still does, as the trend of growth of the immigrant population in Spain has not stopped since the 90s until now.

According to the census data published by the Ministry of Labour and Immigration, whereas during '90s, there were reported almost 1 million immigrants, representing only 2, 5% of the total population, at January 1st, 2011, the total number of foreign residents in Spain was of 5,730,667 representing 12.2% of total of the Spanish population. Even if, the economic crisis has produced a significant decline in the migration flows (OECD, 2011), the presence of the migrant population has highly influenced the economic, social and political life of Spain

In the light of these trends, schools accurately reflect demographic changes experienced by Spanish society. If in 1999-2000, in Spain were registered 107,303 students from migrant background, in 2009-2010, according to statistical data of the Ministry of Education, the number of students of migrant background has reached a total of 762,746 and represents 9.6% of the total student body.

### **A brief review of the research on children from migrant background**

Clearly, the evolution of migration flows in Spain has been a major issue for the academia, for the national official bodies and for all teachers and educators fully immersed in the daily practice in schools. Moreover, it constitutes the top agenda of a whole range of studies and research and scientific events around immigration and the impact on education.

Hitherto, authors like Aguado, (2004); Bardaji, Ruiz, (2006), García Fernandez (2006), García Castaño et all. (2008) have already done an up-to-date detailed analysis

of the research literature on children from migrant background and education in terms of the variety of topics and methodological approaches, in order to advance the systematization and further understanding of the field.

Aguado (2004) informs us that the field of intercultural education research can be structured in four thematic areas, taking into account the conceptualization of intercultural education made by the well-known American author Banks (1989). These areas are: intercultural competence, equity and social inclusion, individual differences and curriculum reform. Intercultural competence has been developed around the construction of cultural identity and attitudes and prejudices. Equity and inclusion refers to topics such as demographics and school maps and inclusive education. Individual differences and curricular reform have been developed around the following issues: on one hand: the cognitive and learning styles, affective and motivational variables and academic achievements and, regarding the reform of the curriculum, subject as: how knowledge is constructed and discussed, the Eurocentric curriculum, historical research, detection of bias in textbooks and teaching resources, and school climate, on the other.

Bardaji Ruiz (2006) develops a laborious thematic classification of the research on immigration, grouping studies from various disciplines and from all regions of Spain in some general trends. His reviewed studies, published between 1980 till 2006, addresses issues related to intercultural policies and practices such as: intercultural mediation, the teaching of the language and culture of origin, didactics materials and other learning experiences, ethnocentrism in textbooks and teacher training. Regarding the methodology used in the studies, he makes specific reference to the life histories as a preferred method to investigate the phenomenon of immigration from the emic perspective.

Similarly, García Fernández (2006) wrote a historical analysis of the evolution of research in intercultural education in Spain, from the 80s-90s until 2006, examining both the most salient themes (initial training, immigration and gender relationship, intervention in educational contexts, immigrant population distribution and concentration in school, relationships between external and internal variables and school and their influences on the integration), as the methodology used, both quantitative and qualitative.

Garcia Castaño et al. (2008) also make an analysis of the studies about the education of children from migrant background in Spain, from 2000 to the date of publication. Their findings can be synthetized in 5 areas: 1) statistical sources about students characteristics, students enrolment en school, course arrangements and so on 2) educational policies and measures intended for welcome and support immigrant students 3) teaching and learning Spanish as a second language, or promoting the mother tongue teaching and learning 4) immigrant family – school relationships 5) school success/dropout of immigrant students.

To summarize, all authors, above mentioned, agree in their analysis on the lines of research in education of children from migrant background and show that, if almost two decades ago, there was some sporadic research, now we can affirm that it is a



consolidated field, always in the process of change and development. The topics addressed we can synthesize them as follows:

- In the first phase, most of the studies respond to the need to make a diagnose of the situation of the children from migrant background in the education system, given the novelty of the presence of these students in schools and the urgency and necessity to respond to this cultural diversity
- The practices and educational interventions in schools have a compensatory nature (Spanish language learning, language immersion, welcome programmes). All refers to diversity from a cultural, linguistic, behavioural deficit perspective.
- Teacher training and professional training is seen as having a key role in advancing inclusive intercultural education.
- The research made use of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods, although the ethnographic studies prevailed (especially related to cultural identities and learning Spanish as a second language) (Colectivo IOE, 1994; Garcia Castaño 1995; Aguado, 1996; Soriano, 1997; Giménez Romero, 1997; Franzé, 2002)

We briefly presented the main features of the landscape of educational research in this field, acknowledging the contribution of these studies to understanding of the phenomenon of immigration and its effects on education, knowing that it is a relatively new area, in continuous growth, but with its own identity.

### **Student's perspective**

Reviews of research on immigrant education in Spain make clear that insufficient attention has been given to questions of knowing the schooling experiences of children of immigrants from a more holistic perspective (Garcia Castaño et. all, 2008). In particular, there has been a tendency to overlook the aspects of the personal, subjective life of immigrant students and their families, so that there is a marked predominance of evidence on outcomes, but very little about the processes, their lived experiences, their needs and expectations or their goals, and notion of success. Few provided a close-up perspective on immigrant students as they interact in education systems, in order to get an insight into the educational experiences as understand and portrayed by the students themselves. (Mena Cabeza, 2009).

While the students are the beneficiaries of immigrant education policies, they are the less listened to, consulted or involved in the education that will decide their future. Usually, these students are seen as mere passive receivers of a "better" intended education "for them" (Banks, 1989; Sleeter & Grant, 2003; Nieto, 1999; Moore, 2000). We almost do not know anything about the lives of these children and their families and what it means to be born, raise and educated in a family of migrant background in Spain. Despite this, politicians, teachers, academics are involved in the lives of these boys and girls; theorize about their lives and about the "best educational models and practices for them".

This issue calls further attention if we think in the widespread use and interest in this topic on international research that advocated and used students' voice and experiences as a foundation to defy discrimination, stereotypes and myths in education (Griffiths & Troyna, 1995; Nieto, 1999, 2000; Phillion, 2008) to respect and legitimize students' own lives (Freire, 1972; McLaren, 1989), to improve school practice by listening to what students have to say about their own education (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004).

However, as Soojin & North (2011) asserted "all children deserve an accurate and fair exploration of their lives told by their own textured voices and experiences" (p.398) to uncover the multiplicity of experiences and make visible the difficulties as well as the outcomes.

We agree with Nieto (1999) that "the insistence that students must be involved in the process of their own education, a central tenet of critical pedagogy, has inspired the inclusion of student voice that had heretofore been missing from most treatments of multicultural education"(p. 210) Their "voice" constitutes a real testimony on how these children live and experience "school", how social and educational structures affect their learning and what we- educators can do to provide a high quality education for them. From a critical perspective, the students of migrant background are not seen as "objects" of the study, silenced, invisible in the academic discourse, but as the real protagonists, the "experiential experts" of the educational services. This means a turning shift from the individual towards the surrounding socio-educational context, from the student, seen as "the problem", towards the context and how it responds to his specific learning styles, needs, fears, tensions, and previous lived experiences. What these students have to say about the current educational practices, the pedagogical strategies of their teachers, how they feel about the national or hidden curriculum, the assessment procedures or any aspect of the education they experienced, may inform, resonate as well as challenge current educational theories and official narrative of schooling.

**S case:**

In the light of these situation, our study was thought to make a contribution to the current debates on minority ethnic pupils' experience in schools, and to modestly fill in the existing gap in the intercultural education, stressing the importance of understanding the impact of education policy and practice on shaping individual lives.

Our study focused on the immigrant students' perspectives on schooling by accessing and documenting contextualized experiential accounts of one particular student from a Chinese background and the way in which she interpreted and experienced her trajectory in the Spanish educative system. We were concerned to understand their experiences and perspectives to make them "visible" by providing the chance for their stories to be told, in order to learn from them.

There was a need to select a research method that allows in depth exploration of the specificity of those stories and also, "includes the missing voice" (Denzin, 1989).

Our chosen approaches to research are qualitative methodologies, particularly life history and narrative inquiry as a valuable choice for exploring these experiences and to locate them within historical, economic and cultural contexts. (Pujadas, 1992) .

Recounting the stories of people represent the fundamental way in which knowledge reveals to us. The method has been widely used social sciences in general (Marinas & Santamarina, 1993; De Miguel, 1996; Bertaux, 1999) and, the field of education, in particular, for example, Goodson (1992) in the study of teachers; Bolivar, Domingo, & Fernandez (2001) in studying the effects educational reforms; Susinos & Parrillas (2008) in the field of inclusive education. It was considered a powerful methodology in feminist research, social/ class history, holocaust research, reminiscence work etc. (Cole and Knowles, 2001)

International authors as Clandinin and Connelly (1994), Carger (1996), Phillion, (2008) have carried on research with biographical-narrative methodologies focused on the understanding of the educational experience of students from migrant background, with emphasis on emerging issues such as teaching English as a second language teaching and learning strategies in multicultural schools, intercultural conflict, the construction of identity an so on.

During a two years period we have had the opportunity to be engaged in the study of a young woman of Chinese background, located within the particular social context of city of Malaga (of 22 years old), born in Spain and educated in the Spanish educational system. Besides her, in the research were also involved, “key informants” like members of her family, friends, ex teachers, etc. The gathering information process included a wide range of instruments such as in depth interviews, biographical interviews with the protagonist, interviews with secondary characters (parents, teachers, and friends) in order to gather complementary information and all kind of personal and official documents, a field diary and artifacts: photos, videos. All were recorded, transcribed and analysed. All these instruments provided information on school experience in terms of the relationship with teachers, with peers and pedagogical and curricular responses of the school system to her specific needs. Findings suggest that educational trajectory, keeping engaged with post-compulsory school and academic success is far from straightforward. Her narrative is a vivid portrait, rich in details and emotional power of the most important factors that facilitated and hindered a meaningful education.

Let us make an observation here, as we acknowledged differential experiences of girls of Chinese origin in different context. Moreover, we have to underline: the purpose of the study was not to understand the “Spanish Chinese experience” but to expose us to one of the many experiences within a broader context. A single case study cannot be taken as representing the wider situation of the Chinese students in Spanish schools, is not a “walking stereotype”. This research was meant to look closely to ordinary life in the specific context of Andalucía, Spain and to provide an example of how educational professionals, teachers and researchers can use narrative and life history research to illuminate and address issues related to intercultural education. The perspectives this student brings up here are probably alike to other young students of

similar background as they are part of a common story of immigration in western societies that share the same socio-economical and cultural structure.

Also, by undertaking this type of research, we challenge the misconception of “Asian origin students” as a homogeneous group, and present them with diverse backgrounds, cultures, and languages or lived experiences. Phillion (2008) states that "compared to theoretical studies, this research is full of people with names, faces, experiences, actions, feelings and emotions." (p.296). Therefore, one of the contributions to the advancement of knowledge in intercultural education is to show the people behind the labels, the theoretical or statistical data.

### **Some findings**

She has a large family; she is the second of five children. Each of them had a very different life trajectory, which has influenced the future personal and social development and in the identity negotiating processes. Her parents came from a small village of poor peasant families. After a short immigration process in Europe, they arrived in Spain in the '80 years and since then they have made their lives in Spain.

In her life narrative, our protagonist is talking about the challenges faced by her family in relation to immigration and their transition from a Chinese environment to a European urban one. The student's family entered in Europe illegally and owed money to “snakeheads” (the smugglers of humans). The circumstances of the migration process of the family and its subsequent adaptation to the new society led to an uncertain future for all family members and extreme economic hardship. As a result of this situation, parents decided to separate even from their own daughters, sending one of the girls to China, to the grandparents and finding an adoptive “Spanish family” to look after the little one, while they were working day and night, to survive and pay their economic debts.

The childhood of the protagonist is marked by the situation in which she had literally to live in between two families: the "adoptive" Spanish family and the Chinese one. On the one hand, she developed feelings of emotional security, harmony and closeness towards her adoptive family and on the other hand, the extended physical absence of her biological parents due to the endless hours of work, generated in her inner deep world a kind of fear towards her parents, alienation, loneliness, absence of emotional ties and communication problems.

The protagonist is aware of her parents' hardships and sacrifices. Similar findings are common for Chinese children in different contexts (Francis and Archer, 2005). Her family immigrated for economic reasons and in order to improve the economic and educational chances of their children. The internalization of the high expectations of parents toward her and her sisters carried a great pressure that eventually produced feelings of guilt, anxiety and stress. Parents immigrated for economic reasons, to offer a better life and a promising future for her daughters, therefore, our protagonist and her sisters were aware of this and somehow they felt

obliged to achieve academic success as a form of appreciation and recognition to the sacrifice made by the parents. (Zhou, Peverly, Xin, Huang and Wang, 2003).

We must not forget that she had to deal many of these challenges together with the normal challenges of growing up as a teenager.

As a pupil she is considered to be a high achiever and a successful student, judging by her school trajectory and her current situation (she is finishing her MA studies in a UK University). However, her own voice reveals a much more complex reality, not a straightforward trajectory.

Since the early years, both her sisters and the protagonist have been good students, getting top grades, always ranking among the best students in the school. At what emotional, social costs? The protagonist and her siblings have been aware of power and the impact on their life by mastering the vehicular language, getting top grades, getting good recommendations from teachers. To be the best, was a high pressure from parents on the one hand, from teachers and last, but not least, from her peers. Academic success was perceived to be a precondition for social acceptance in school. On basis of her own academic strength and its recognition by her schoolmates, S. remarks *“only when they realized they could get help from me in Math, Physics, English, I became desirable company. In school I was seen as the girl who got the best note always, and if they have problems they came to me, but only because of that, not for anything else.”* This situation is like a vicious circle. Being a good student represents a form of acceptance, recognition and promotion by her teachers and classmates. Throughout her schooling, constantly appeared the fact that all her sisters and the protagonist, despite their great desire to feel "integrated" from the beginning and to be "a member of the group", despite the struggle in order not to feel alone, isolated, rare, the truth is that, they had often been left on one side, without friends, in time managing to find their own places.

From an early age she was working seven days/week in school, afterschool activities, helping parents with the family business, leading to an overload of work, learning from a very early age the culture of effort. Little free time and leisure led to difficulty in socializing and few relations of friendship.

The lack of interest and participation of parents in school led to a false perception by the teaching staff. However, parents value school and education as the only way for social mobility and inclusion. They see it as the appropriate institution to educate their daughters to learn the social and cultural values of the Spanish society. By pushing strategies or by limiting their children free time, parents conceive and enact their role in the process of schooling of their children. They believe that through education their children will not have to deal with the difficulties they had to face. In school they will learn the necessary skills to develop and function in the best possible way, and also to protect against possible discrimination. Parents appreciate the knowledge of other languages so they encourage their daughters to learn Spanish, but also English, without forgetting the Chinese Mandarin, as skills necessary in order to have better employment opportunities.

Research showed discrimination and racist manifestation in the education system (Li, Wang, 2008.). Similar to previous mentioned studies, our study indicates

she has suffered discrimination, being the victim of prejudice, from verbal assault, that may seem unimportant as pronouncing the name in a wrong way, to expressions like “Chinorra”, “go back to China”, “you are so ugly” and harassment or even serious physical assaults. Our protagonist talked at length about experiences such as: her little brother and sisters being beaten, bullied, hit in the head, pushed, kicked, etc, both inside school, and outside (the city bus, bus station near school, on the street). Also, my respondent talked about being bullied for “getting good grades”, “being too smart”- by native and other immigrant students from the same school. Bullying related “to model minority” stereotype revealed also more subtle nonverbal forms of treatment: being avoided, ignored, and socially ostracized.

Our protagonist frequently reported being bored in school and saw little connection with her life outside school, having the feeling that school life is separate and unrelated to real life (home life). In terms of strategies of teaching she told that the language of instruction was Spanish and all regular classroom teachers followed a curriculum design for the mainstream children. (No reference at all on China).

Mentoring culturally diverse students was not perceived to necessitate change in teaching style by some teachers. (Li, 2004).

Some of the teachers referred to them by making comparisons like this: “*she is not as prepared/ intelligent as her two older sisters*”, “*it is not a serious student*“. In her narrative, the protagonist is describing how she felt about this unfair comparison: “*They (teachers) were disappointed because my academic results were lower,*” etc. Compared to the rest of my colleagues, I had got very good grades and despite the efforts I had made, it had always passed unnoticed” This small incident and others, unfortunately confirms and describes how some teachers are embracing this dangerous stereotype of the “model minority”. Chinese students in general were seen as good students, very respectful, hard workers, their attitude is to learn, to work, and to get high grades. Girls are quiet, docile, and polite, always with a smile. When she rebelled, she was the one to be punished, as she does not ascribed to the predominant representation. Anyway, when the teacher recalled the incident, she finally stated that: “*Their behavioural problems or learning problems, as if there are any, are temporary*”. Unfortunately, as these small incidents are not seen as racist, teachers do not acknowledge the real damage they could cause to these children, how they can affect the further relationship teacher-student, the development of the learning processes, the construction of identity, just to mention a few.

This “narrative in construction” brings us closer to the experiences that our protagonist and her family had to face in schools and in society in general. Her story helps us generate new questions, new interpretations

### **Some conclusions:**

Throughout this paper we have tried to reflect how the student’s perspective and the biographical-narrative methods could contribute to

- Better understand and conceptualize schooling as embedded in a larger social and economical structure.
- To approach educational experiences inside and outside of school, the nuanced, complex educational situations and the factors that shaped them
- To highlight the injustices and the ignored realities, which usually have been silenced in the academic discourse.

The biographical narrative methodologies for their ability to report, "evoke, inspire and be thought to thinking" is an invitation to a dialogue to all education professionals who care about the future of these children. The life of every child needs and deserves to be known, narrated, honoured and respected and most of all, linked to the school curricula. We agree with Clark and Rossiter (2006) that the pedagogical potential of these methodologies it is not only about knowing the story of a certain student, his lived experiences, is about "to transcend those experiences and see the larger social and cultural structures that shape their lives and their meaning-making. What more powerful tool could any educator want?"(p. 31) Therefore, as Kouritzin (2000) specified "researchers and practitioners need to take responsibility for ensuring that Other histories are recorded, and that these histories inform policy and practice"( p. 11) Thus, listening to the students from migrant background and taking them seriously into account, could be especially relevant for the critical intercultural education, as they could provide valuable insights on how to make school more democratic and just.

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Storia globale e storia dell'altro

## **Decostruire la presunzione di superiorità morale**

di

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L'obiettivo dell'educazione interculturale: costruire un "nuovo noi"

L'educazione interculturale si propone l'obiettivo di superare la contrapposizione tra "noi" e "loro", tra autoctoni e immigrati, tra italiani e stranieri creando le condizioni per un impegno sulla cittadinanza che vada al di là della semplice "accoglienza". Si tratta di costruire un "nuovo noi" e non soltanto di aiutare gli autoctoni ad accettare la coesistenza nel "loro" territorio di persone che "appartengono" a culture diverse. In questo l'approccio interculturale si differenzia nettamente da quello multiculturale che propone un mondo in cui le diverse "culture" possono coesistere ma rimangono separate (Mantovani, 2004).

Il multiculturalismo si basa su una concezione "reificata" della "cultura" (Baumann, 1996, 1999) secondo cui la "cultura" è una realtà a sé stante, una "cosa" che le persone hanno, anzi qualcosa che "ha" o "possiede" le persone, che le spinge ad agire in un certo modo ed è responsabile delle loro azioni. Per la prospettiva multiculturale la "cultura" definisce l'"identità" della persona, come se le persone avessero una sola identità e questa fosse immutabile, definita in base al paese di nascita o alla religione dei genitori. Il premio Nobel Amartya Sen ha mostrato (2006) che l'insistenza fondamentalista sull'identità contiene un grande potenziale di violenza.

L'approccio multiculturale fa ricorso anche al termine "radici", un termine che vincola ineluttabilmente le persone al passato del loro gruppo. Spesso la "cultura" di una persona viene identificata con la "religione" in cui essa è nata, ignorando i profondi cambiamenti che la modernità impone alle credenze religiose delle persone e alle stesse strutture istituzionali delle religioni. L'approccio multiculturale punta ad una situazione in cui gli scambi tra persone di "culture" diverse siano ridotti al minimo e i gruppi rimangano impermeabili alle influenze "esterne": le "frontiere" tra "culture" sono, in questa visione del mondo sociale, sbarramenti che difendono il gruppo dalle influenze corrottrici esterne. La cristallizzazione delle "culture" è caratteristica della concezione multiculturale che non può fare a meno di ricorrere a stereotipi: cristiani vs musulmani, italiani vs stranieri, padovani vs marocchini e così via.

L'approccio interculturale non crede che ci sia una "cosa" che si chiama "cultura" posta al di fuori delle pratiche quotidiane delle persone ma che ci siano delle persone – chiamati spesso "attori sociali" per sottolineare che non sono soltanto "menti" ma esseri umani che agiscono nel mondo sociale - che nelle loro pratiche quotidiane attraversano continuamente i confini reali e/o immaginari tra "culture" (Baumann, 1996). Gli "attori sociali" non "possiedono" una cultura cristallizzata ma la formano momento per momento attraverso gli strumenti di cui si servono nella loro vita quotidiana (Mantovani, 2004). La responsabilità delle azioni è della persona che le compie, non della sua "cultura", come presuppongono invece sentenze di tribunali statunitensi come quella che, in California, ha comminato una pena ridotta ad una donna di origine giapponese che, tradita dal marito, si era vendicata uccidendo i due figli, seguendo nel compiere il crimine i supposti dettami della sua "cultura". Sono gli attori sociali che costruiscono gli strumenti che mediano le loro interazioni quotidiane; consideriamo il linguaggio, che è lo strumento culturale più pervasivo: non è il linguaggio che parla attraverso le persone, ma sono le persone che parlano usando il linguaggio.

La prospettiva interculturale non considera la cultura monolitica ed immutabile. La presunta omogeneità delle "culture" è frutto di uno sguardo esterno, nato da scopi amministrativi specialmente nell'epoca coloniale: "qualsiasi visione delle culture come sistemi chiaramente delineati è una visione che viene dal di fuori e che genera coerenza a fini di comprensione e di controllo» (Benhabib, 2002, p.5). Una visione della "cultura" che rende conto degli intensi scambi attraverso le frontiere che possiamo osservare nella vita di ogni giorno è quella della cultura come narrazione. Non una narrazione autoriale e immutabile ma "un insieme di narrazioni condivise, contestate e negoziate": "chi partecipa di una cultura sperimenta tradizioni, riti, storie, rituali e simboli, strumenti e condizioni materiali di vita attraverso narrazioni condivise, contestate e negoziate. Vista dall'interno una cultura non appare come un tutto compatto ma come un orizzonte che si allontana ogni volta che si va nella sua direzione" (Benhabib, 2002, p. 5).

L'approccio interculturale non punta al riconoscimento di un "altro" separato da "noi" ma di "noi con l'altro", un "nuovo noi" in cui "noi" e "loro" ci vediamo come cittadini di una società che deve utilizzare tutte le sue risorse per affrontare le sfide della globalizzazione. Uno dei maggiori ostacoli è costituito dalla diffidenza e dal disprezzo reciproci. In molti paesi "occidentali", e nel nostro in particolare, è tuttora viva la presunzione di superiorità morale del "nostro" mondo rispetto ai mondi "altri", specialmente quelli coinvolti in passato nelle sanguinose esperienze coloniali italiane. Echi delle espressioni razziste prodotte

durante il periodo fascista sono risuonate negli scorsi anni e risuonano tuttora nei media e nel discorso politico italiano. La presunzione di superiorità morale del “nostro” mondo nasce da una profonda rimozione e dalla diffusa ignoranza della storia, sia globale che del nostro paese, un’ignoranza per la cui nascita e mantenimento la nostra scuola dell’obbligo ha purtroppo una grossa responsabilità.

### *Storia globale e storia dell’“altro”: dalla conoscenza al rispetto*

La presunzione di superiorità morale era la principale fonte di giustificazione delle imprese coloniali. Gli stati europei occupavano paesi lontani e ne succhiavano le risorse per promuovere anche in quelle lande desolate “la civiltà”: “si riteneva che la direzione di marcia andasse da povero a ricco, da magico a scientifico, da analfabeta a capace di leggere e scrivere, da non istruito a istruito, da semplice a complesso, da malato a sano, da autoritario a democratico, da poligamico a monogamico, da pagano a cristiano, da oppresso a libero. L’ essenziale era che il nostro modo di vivere fosse riconosciuto come il più vero, buono, bello ed efficiente e che le credenze, i valori e le pratiche degli altri, nella misura in cui differiscono dalle nostre, risultassero false, vergognose, sgradevoli e irrazionali” (Shweder, 2003, p. 348).

Il senso di superiorità si fondava sulla fiducia nella forza militare, economica, industriale, e scientifica dei paesi “occidentali” - una fiducia che ora appare alquanto scossa - ma soprattutto sulla certezza della propria superiorità morale, religiosa e politica. La componente religiosa giocava un ruolo chiave nelle vicende coloniali: gli “europei” avevano l’obbligo di diffondere la religione cristiana per liberare i “pagani” dalle credenze erronee e dalle pratiche immonde delle loro false religioni. La storia “occidentale” poggiava su una genealogia immaginaria (Wolf, 1982) che collegava le pagine più luminose della Grecia classica (i versi di Omero, la difesa della libertà alle Termopili, le sculture di Fidia, il pensiero di Platone, le conquiste di Alessandro Magno) e della Roma imperiale (le vittorie di Cesare, l’ Eneide di Virgilio, l’ordine imperiale di Augusto e così via) alle glorie dell’Umanesimo e del Rinascimento, e poi dell’ Illuminismo con particolare riferimento alla nascita della democrazia rappresentativa in Inghilterra e poi negli Stati Uniti ed in Francia. I successi scientifici, tecnologici e militari delle società “occidentali” erano presentati come corollari della superiore moralità, operosità ed intelligenza dei popoli europei. Il nome in codice scelto dal governo americano per la guerra in Afghanistan iniziata nel 2001 – “*Enduring freedom*”, “*Libertà duratura*” – mostra quanto ancora oggi le autorità politiche

degli Stati Uniti ritengano di potere e dovere insegnare la democrazia ai paesi “arretrati” (specie se ricchi di preziose materie prime).

L’idea stessa di “occidente” contrapposto ad un “oriente” che era di volta in volta impersonato dal mondo arabo, o dall’India, o dall’ “estremo oriente” (la Cina o il Giappone ma anche la Birmania, la Malesia, le Filippine), riflette una visione coloniale, “the West versus the Rest”: da una parte “noi”, dall’altra gli altri, “il resto del mondo”, una massa indifferenziata accomunata solo dal fatto di non essere “noi”, di essere “arretrata”. La storia dell’ “occidente” è immaginata come un percorso di perfezionamento morale in cui emergono valori universali - la libertà personale e l’ indipendenza politica – che culminano nel diritto alla “felicità” riconosciuto dalla costituzione americana. L’idea che nella sua storia l’ “occidente” europeo nasca contrapposto all’ “oriente” è però falsa: il mondo greco riconobbe scambi profondi con l’ Egitto, la Persia, i Fenici; l’impresa di Alessandro mise in contatto proficuo e durevole i popoli dell’ Egeo e dei Balcani con quelli dell’ Anatolia, della Siria, della Palestina, della Fenicia, dell’ Egitto, della Persia arrivando fino all’ attuale Afganistan, dove prosperò per secoli il regno buddista/ellenistico di Gandara; l’impero romano inglobò l’Asia minore, la Siria, la Libia, l’Egitto accettandone e portandone a Roma le divinità, da Iside a Cibele ed ebbe fin dal secondo secolo d.C. degli imperatori africani; per non parlare del cristianesimo che introdusse nel mondo ellenistico e poi germanico la tradizione ebraica con il suo libro, i suoi riti e le sue preghiere.

Per superare l’etnocentrismo è necessario modificare il modo di costruire la storia che una tradizione coloniale, cristallizzata nel periodo fascista, ha impiantato nelle nostre scuole. Occorre raccontare una storia non più focalizzata su un’Italia isolata dal “resto” del mondo ma una narrazione globale in cui ciò che accade nel mondo spiega ciò che accade da “noi”. Che cosa possono rispondere gli insegnanti ai ragazzi “stranieri” che chiedono perchè nei testi di storia delle medie si inizia a parlare dell’Africa con le “esplorazioni” e la tratta degli schiavi? O ai ragazzi peruviani che chiedono perchè non si parli dei costi umani della “conquista”? O ai ragazzi indiani che chiedono perchè non si dica nulla delle terribili carestie di fine ottocento nel Bengala dominato dagli inglesi in cui morirono decine di milioni di persone? Per costruire una storia globale dobbiamo non solo ampliare la visuale ma anche cambiare il punto di vista per far posto al punto di vista dell’ “altro” (Mignolo, 2011, Quijano, 2007). Non è facile, perchè in molti casi la voce dell’ “altro”, che è stato emarginato o sconfitto, è troppo flebile. Ma se proveremo ad ascoltarla capiremo meglio anche la “nostra” storia. La storia dell’altro non potrà evitare serie riflessioni autocritiche, come osserva opportunamente Todorov (1996): è proprio da queste riflessioni che

possiamo imparare ad essere migliori. Avremo una visione più adatta ad affrontare le sfide della globalizzazione. Faremo sentire a casa loro i ragazzi “stranieri” che frequentano le nostre scuole. Inizieremo a costruire, a partire dai banchi di scuola, un nuovo “noi”, con molte lingue, tradizioni, “culture”.

*Un esperimento di “storia globale”: “spezzando ogni cuore”*

La “storia globale” che proponiamo non è una sorta di collage delle storie dei vari paesi considerati isolatamente, una “mosaico” multiculturale, ma una narrazione che mette l’accento sulla relazione tra aree diverse del pianeta, collegando ciò che accade in Europa con ciò che accade in America, in Africa, in Asia. Un modello di questo tipo di storia, preparato come strumento per l’educazione interculturale, è il volume “Spezzando ogni cuore. Dal Messico di Cortez alla Roma dell’Inquisizione” (Mantovani, 2012). Il volume è ambientato nel Cinquecento, il secolo in cui “il mondo diventa più grande, scenario di grandi avventure: Cabeza de Vaca, partito con seicento compagni per conquistare la Florida, naufraga e diventa sciamano tra gli indios, presso cui vive per sette anni; lo schiavo moro Esteban, catturato dagli spagnoli e portato nel nuovo mondo, riguadagna la libertà fingendo di avere scoperto la città d’oro di Cibola; la Malinche, fanciulla schiava azteca donata dai maya a Cortez diventa l’amante, l’interprete e la consigliera politica del conquistatore del Messico, e la madre di suo figlio. Il mondo diventa anche, nello stesso periodo di tempo, più piccolo: un documento scritto a Roma, la bolla papale che dona il nuovo mondo ai sovrani di Spagna e di Portogallo, decide la sorte dei popoli originari delle Americhe; gli immensi tesori inviati in Spagna dal Messico e dal Perù permettono all’imperatore Carlo V di armare gli eserciti che gli danno il controllo dell’Italia; la controriforma cattolica lancia i missionari nel mondo, verso l’India, la Cina, il Giappone” (Mantovani, 2012, p. 165).

Il primo capitolo del volume parla della Roma dell’inizio del Cinquecento, con gli affreschi di Raffaello, la scoperta dell’antichità, l’amore per la cultura classica spinta così esplicito che Erasmo rimprovera agli umanisti italiani di non essere più cristiani ma pagani, devoti più di Venere che della Vergine Maria. I nudi eroici di Michelangelo nella Sistina destano scandalo. Il rinascimento appena sbocciato incontra gravi difficoltà culturali e anche politiche: il sacco di Roma ferisce mortalmente la città, i suoi artisti e i suoi tesori. La riforma protestante sconvolge la cristianità identificando il papa con l’Anticristo. Il papa che all’inizio del secolo ha consegnato il nuovo mondo ai sovrani di Spagna e Portogallo

perchè vi portino la fede in Cristo. Il secondo capitolo racconta la conquista del Messico, rievocando le immense sofferenze ed il genocidio che essa inflisse alle popolazioni indigene. Il terzo capitolo racconta il fallimento del tentativo spagnolo di conquista della Florida e il successo di Pizarro nella distruzione dell'impero inca, negli odierni Perù, Ecuador e Cile. Il quarto e il quinto capitolo, ambientati in Italia, sono dedicati alla battaglia che oppone moderati e intransigenti al vertice della chiesa, alla vittoria degli intransigenti, alla nascita e all'azione dell'Inquisizione romana che opera contro ebrei, eretici e liberi pensatori. Il sesto ed ultimo capitolo è ambientato alla fine del secolo a Fathepur Sikri, la capitale del gran moghul Akbar, il sovrano musulmano dell'India. Akbar invita a colloqui di religione i gesuiti installati nell'enclave portoghese di Goa. I padri gesuiti sperano di convertire Akbar ma egli, al contrario, proclama la libertà religiosa nei suoi domini. Negli stessi anni in cui l'Europa precipita nell'orrore delle guerre di religione in India un sovrano musulmano promuove la più ampia tolleranza: chi erano in quel caso i Talebani?

Lo scopo di queste narrazioni non è però quello di ribaltare gli stereotipi xenofobi che hanno largo corso nel nostro paese ma quello di mostrare come le vicende romane, italiane ed europee siano legate inestricabilmente a ciò che accade in India o in Messico (pensiamo non solo alle bolle papali che donano le nuove terre agli spagnoli, ma anche al traffico di uomini, donne, religiosi, lettere, decreti, oro, libri, armi, animali, immagini che collega vecchio e nuovo mondo) e come le onde partite dal Messico o dall'India arrivino al Mediterraneo, al Tevere e persino alle montagne della Calabria.

La sperimentazione in corso in alcune scuole superiori italiane mostra un risultato che è sorprendente solo per chi non comprende il valore educativo della storia globale e della storia dell'altro: gli studenti sono partiti da queste storie per confrontarsi con i compagni e con gli insegnanti su argomenti che li toccano personalmente nella loro vita quotidiana come i matrimoni combinati, il modo di vivere la sessualità, il rapporto con la famiglia, i cambiamenti nella religione, i progetti di lavoro. Nelle classi che hanno la fortuna di avere al proprio interno studenti di "altre" culture si è avviato un dialogo collaborativo tra studenti immigrati e studenti autoctoni in cui invece di attivare stereotipi contrapposti gli studenti si sono interrogati sul senso delle rispettive tradizioni e convinzioni. Lo studente musulmano racconta la sua esperienza in materia di matrimoni combinati, di ubbidienza ai genitori, di rapporto con la famiglia e l'autoctono ha modo di riflettere su una cultura che gli ricorda le tradizioni dei suoi nonni. Si parla in classe di sufismo, di Islam, di politica e di fondamentalismo in un modo nuovo, senza contrapposizioni preconconcette.

Quando impareremo a fare una storia globale scopriremo che essa è anche una storia più personale, più interessante, più coinvolgente di quella a cui siamo abituati. Ogni persona o famiglia può trovare spazio per la sua storia. Khalid che studia da geometra a Sassuolo ed è nato in una famiglia originaria di Lahore leggendo “Spezzando ogni cuore” saprà dell’editto di Akbar e forse desidererà approfondire la sua conoscenza delle tradizioni di tolleranza presenti nel mondo musulmano. I suoi compagni di classe autoctoni ma anche quelli cinesi, peruviani o rumeni conosceranno un pagina luminosa della storia globale. Magari Khalid racconterà ai compagni che anche la sua famiglia è sufi, e forse suo padre verrà a scuola a dire qualcosa sul sufismo. La scuola diventerà anche la “sua” scuola. Una scuola in cui storie di tutto il mondo si incontrano per costruire un “nuovo noi” più solido, più informato, più vitale di quello costruito escludendo gli “altri” della cui presenza abbiamo bisogno.

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"La figura dell'adulto facilitatore nell'approccio della *Philosophy for Children*:  
un *medium* dell'educazione democratica, riflessiva e valoriale"

Di Valentina Martini

Obiettivo di questo contributo, rivolto ad insegnanti e pedagogisti, è quello di presentare la competenza argomentativa, metacognitiva e caring della figura del facilitatore nella *Philosophy for Children (P4C)*, alla luce delle prospettive delineate dalla pedagogia interculturale.

La P4C è un progetto educativo e didattico incentrato sulla possibilità di trasformare la classe, o qualsivoglia contesto educativo, in una Comunità di Ricerca (CdR), cioè in una comunità di individui impegnati ad esercitare una democrazia del pensiero, attraverso un'attività autoregolata dal metodo dialogico-argomentativo, che genera un processo di negoziazione di significati per giungere alla condivisione di credenze ragionevoli.

Nasce intorno ai primi anni Settanta negli Stati Uniti, ad opera di Matthew Lipman, docente di Filosofia e Logica presso la Columbia University di New York. Lipman si era reso conto che agli studenti e alla classe politica mancavano gli strumenti per affrontare il dialogo intersoggettivo, mancava un linguaggio comune per affrontare la crisi politica e morale del paese, successiva alla guerra del Vietnam; ed era convinto che il sistema educativo dovesse essere riformato partendo dai primi gradi dell'istruzione, con l'ausilio della filosofia, intesa come lo strumento più adeguato per la riflessione e per l'educazione alla democrazia, il tramite e l'espressione del libero dispiegarsi della personalità.

Quali elementi accomunano la pratica filosofica lipmaniana alla prospettiva pedagogica interculturale? Riteniamo che la pedagogia interculturale non vada considerata come una branca separata della pedagogia generale, ma come una parte integrante: il suo obiettivo consiste nel valorizzare le singole persone, sostenerle nella costruzione di una identità cosciente, educare al dialogo intersoggettivo, nella consapevolezza che i contesti culturali cui tutti apparteniamo non sono più ambienti monoculturali cui assimilarci, ma al contrario sono spazi aperti, dove le differenze sono un bene comune da riconoscere e accettare. Come rileva il *Dizionario di Pedagogia e Scienze dell'Educazione*<sup>1</sup>, qualsiasi esperienza pedagogica è oggi per sua stessa essenza interculturale: «l'educazione interculturale non è solamente una risposta dovuta alle trasformazioni nell'ambito del sociale e della scuola, ma anche e soprattutto un nuovo modo di concepire l'educazione oggi».<sup>2</sup>

A nostro avviso, il concetto stesso di intercultura, inteso come processo in divenire, come direzione da percorrere orientata alla mondialità, può trovare fertile terreno di sviluppo nei percorsi logico-argomentativi della CdR.

Cercheremo qui di argomentare come la condivisione della ricerca filosofica (con specifica attenzione ad alcuni passaggi metodologici), mediata dalla figura del facilitatore, possa essere strumento di apertura verso l'altro in senso globale, oltre che particolare<sup>3</sup>, in una tensione dinamica tra il concetto universale di uomo e la contingente pluralità delle culture umane: il mondo in cui siamo immersi non è astratto nè monolitico, ma è costituito dalle interrelazioni tra le diverse esperienze di vita, dalle interazioni tra linguaggi, religioni, modelli socio-politici.<sup>4</sup>

Rispetto al curriculum *P4C*, il termine *Philosophy* non deve trarre in inganno: non si tratta di anticipare il tradizionale insegnamento di carattere storico-cronologico della filosofia a fasce di età

<sup>1</sup> Bertolini P. (a cura di), 1996, *Dizionario di Pedagogia e Scienze dell'Educazione*, Zanichelli, Bologna.

<sup>2</sup> Borrelli M., 2006, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ci riferiamo qui al concetto di "glocalizzazione", elaborato da Latouche (*Glocalizzazione*, 1999, San Paolo, Milano), e da Bauman (*Globalizzazione e glocalizzazione*, 2005, Armando, Roma) a proposito della *glocal education*: il termine inerisce al complesso rapporto che lega il globalismo al localismo, l'apertura alla mondialità con la presa in carico dei singoli. L'inscindibile rapporto tra universale e particolare.

In Zanetti F., *Pedagogia interculturale*, p. 21, sul sito:

<http://web.unirsm.sm/masterdisagio/Moduli/download/Zanetti/liv1/mod1ZanettiTesto.htm>

<sup>4</sup> L'antropologia contestuale di Apel ha sottolineato "che il soggetto umano, in quanto essere corporeale vivente, mondano e sociale, si personifica attraverso un *contorno* specifico della sua rispettiva contestualità *situazionale* dalla quale non ci si può tirar fuori". In Caputo, 2008, p. 92.

anteriore alla scuola superiore, ma di utilizzare il metodo del *dialogo socratico* per stimolare bambini e ragazzi a una riflessione sui contenuti filosofici propri del loro vissuto.

Per Lipman, la *P4C* si qualifica come esperienza di riflessione, di introspezione, di argomentazione, di ragionevolezza, di responsabilità e di cooperatività, cioè come un'esperienza che attiva quelle facoltà che dovrebbero essere proprie di ciascun cittadino di una democrazia. Infatti, come i cittadini di una democrazia dovrebbero impegnarsi nella ricerca razionale di soluzioni condivise che riguardano problemi della comunità a cui appartengono, così il gruppo o classe, in cui viene elaborato un percorso intellettuale, si trasforma in una comunità di ricerca per l'attiva assunzione di una responsabile partecipazione al confronto e al dialogo da parte di tutti coloro che ne fanno parte.

A tal fine, Lipman ha elaborato un curriculum che vuole *insegnare a pensare*: i suoi racconti (da utilizzare come testo durante le sessioni) si propongono di *fare filosofia* con bambini e ragazzi sviluppando il naturale stupore infantile verso le cose che accadono nel mondo; sono socraticamente strutturati in forma di *dialogo* e pongono questioni di senso e di significato intorno a ciò che è.

I nuclei affrontati dai dialoghi sono inerenti a quelle grandi questioni (verità, giustizia, bellezza, ma anche società, relazioni tra le persone e con il mondo) che hanno per l'uomo priorità esistenziale.<sup>5</sup>

Nella pratica della *P4C* è possibile individuare alcuni momenti metodologici fondamentali (ogni sessione ha una durata media di un'ora). A partire dalla lettura comunitaria del testo-stimolo, i bambini sono invitati a esprimersi e a porre *domande* riguardo a ciò che è sembrato loro più interessante, problematico. Il *setting* è fondamentale: la nascita della comunità inizia dal contatto visivo, dal disporsi in "cerchio", quale simbolica espressione della circolarità del dialogo e della propensione all'ascolto. Il facilitatore compila così l'*Agenda*, ovvero un cartellone che riporta gli interventi dei bambini (con il loro nome accanto), dando modo di visualizzare gli argomenti trattati; osservando le tematiche più ricorrenti, il gruppo potrà individuare gli argomenti di riflessione.

Si passa così al *Piano di Discussione* inerente ai temi comuni; è la fase in cui la CdR si consolida, attuando il percorso di ricerca in forma dialogica, secondo l'assunto deweyano che interpreta l'educazione come ricerca. Nello stesso tempo si avvia anche un percorso individuale: ciascun membro apprende l'uso di strumenti cognitivi (ragioni, criteri, concetti, norme...), integra le proprie opinioni o conoscenze con quelle altrui, per effetto del ragionamento cooperativo che sta sperimentando.

La sessione si conclude con l'*Autovalutazione*: i singoli membri della comunità esprimono come si sono sentiti, ovvero manifestano il contesto emotivo ed affettivo della loro esperienza.

Da questa brevissima illustrazione del metodo lipmaniano si evincono elementi di riflessività e intersoggettività che ci sembrano fondamentali anche per gli intenti della pedagogia interculturale.

Per esempio, la stessa disposizione che i bambini mantengono durante la sessione: stare seduti in circolo, infatti, permette un avvicinamento visivo che pone i bambini in una situazione di incontro senza filtri. Seduti vicini, bambini di nazionalità e culture diverse, si conoscono in una situazione educativa che non si presta ad una deriva conformista, ma che al contrario sprona all'ascolto, all'argomentazione/controargomentazione, promuove un atteggiamento di apertura e rispetto che – con Lipman – riteniamo fondamentali per la convivenza democratica dei futuri cittadini.

Ma soprattutto reputiamo estremamente formativo e significativo per gli studenti il fatto che tale *habitus* democratico non derivi da un insegnamento imposto, ma venga interiorizzato attraverso la

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<sup>5</sup> Ogni testo è corredato di un volume di esercizi per insegnanti/facilitatori che rappresentano delle "istruzioni per l'uso" che guidano nel riconoscimento dei nuclei concettuali salienti dei brani, proponendo suggerimenti operativi che il facilitatore può adattare alla comunità di ricerca in cui si trova coinvolto, in modo da aiutare il conduttore a gestire la discussione favorendo lo scambio dei punti di vista e la formulazione di giudizi ragionevoli.

partecipazione ad una attività comunitaria cui tutti i bambini partecipano, nella quale viene riconosciuta pari dignità a tutti gli interventi espressi e sostenuti dai bambini. Si tratta di un effettivo esercizio di parità di diritti: a tutti è concessa la parola, ogni argomentazione gode di pari attenzione. Un'esperienza reale di democrazia e rispetto reciproco.

Anche la fase metodologica della costruzione del piano di discussione, quando i bambini scelgono i temi da affrontare, riflettendo insieme attraverso la discussione filosofica, costituisce un elemento di convergenza rispetto agli obiettivi interculturali di confronto e integrazione biunivoca.

La proliferazione di significati, concetti, visioni che possono essere esplorati dalla comunità rappresenta un efficace confronto tra l'Alterità e la Singolarità, durante il quale cioè si assiste a un effettivo accrescimento delle capacità di ristrutturare le proprie idee, opinioni e concezioni del mondo, attraverso la differenza, espressa nelle diverse posizioni cognitive e valoriali delle argomentazioni dei membri della CdR, che permettono la conoscenza e il riconoscimento della specificità di ognuno, qualunque sia la provenienza o la storia di vita.

Questo tipo di attività filosofica verrebbe vanificata se fosse svolta riproducendo il rapporto tradizionale e gerarchico tra un docente detentore unico del sapere (ma anche veicolo della monocultura di appartenenza) e la classe o il gruppo: il "facilitatore" non fornisce contenuti da apprendere passivamente, non assume un ruolo etnocentrico, ma si pone come esperto di processi cognitivi e epistemologici che, in virtù delle sue competenze filosofiche e dialogiche, suscita nella comunità interesse e motivazione ad impegnarsi attivamente nella ricerca e nella negoziazione di significati.

In quanto pratica critica, la P4C richiede all'adulto facilitatore una posizione molto diversa da quella della didattica frontale: non solo egli guida la CdR nel suo percorso autonomo, ma deve trovare quel sottile e dinamico equilibrio che gli permette di stare "proceduralmente" all'interno della comunità (offrendo la propria competenza cognitiva e metacognitiva, per favorire un dialogo costruttivo e pertinente), senza però influenzarne in modo direttivo e determinante la crescita con le proprie opinioni, le proprie conoscenze (la cui esplicita manifestazione potrebbe inibire la libera espressione degli allievi) e con i propri processi cognitivi.

Il facilitatore riveste in particolare due funzioni fondamentali: quella epistemica e quella regolativa.

Rispetto alla funzione epistemica, Lipman ha identificato alcune caratteristiche salienti che il facilitatore dovrebbe assumere nei suoi comportamenti: riuscire a far dialogare la CdR verso un interesse comune (direzionalità), agevolare la chiarezza e la condivisione dei concetti (chiarezza concettuale), stimolare l'approfondimento del problema (profondità), far sì che il dialogo si articoli senza intoppi o rigidità (fluidità).

Riteniamo che anche l'attenzione al linguaggio usato dai bambini nell'esprimere le loro opinioni sia fondamentale: il linguaggio non è mai neutro, ma è "gioco linguistico": contiene la quotidianità esperita. Soprattutto alcuni termini più di altri richiamano visioni del mondo e tracce culturali, proprie e/o assunte in seno al proprio contesto socio-familiare di appartenenza.

E' fondamentale qui la ricerca filosofica che la comunità svolge intorno ai termini e ai concetti: un lavoro di deridiana decostruzione, di lettura critica della diversità e delle relazioni tra le differenze, può aiutare a mettere in luce come invece le categorizzazioni siano foriere di stereotipi e pregiudizi (di cui siamo portatori non sempre consapevoli).

Il dialogo intersoggettivo si fa davvero ricerca, a nostro avviso, quando introduce il dubbio e lo smarrimento di fronte ad una conoscenza data per certa fino ad allora. Quando ci pone di fronte a una incertezza esistenziale e muove la necessità dell'indagine. Quando induce a cercare, scoprire, inventare relazioni tra le conoscenze.

Rispetto alla funzione regolativa, il facilitatore dovrà occuparsi degli aspetti disciplinari e comportamentali dell'attività, favorendo un atteggiamento di apertura intersoggettiva e disponibilità

al dialogo e all'incontro con l'altro: agevolare la partecipazione democratica; creare pari opportunità di espressione ed argomentazione; mantenere il rispetto delle regole; garantire il rispetto interpersonale tra i membri della CdR. Il facilitatore cercherà di creare il clima di classe più favorevole all'internalizzazione dei principi democratici di accoglienza della diversità, di interazione fra posizioni o punti di vista diversi.

Si tratta davvero di promuovere un pensiero dinamico, aperto e flessibile, capace di accogliere l'alterità nella sua valenza cognitiva e arricchente, col rifiuto - argomentato e sperimentato nella ricerca filosofica - di posizioni etnocentriche, gerarchiche e/o stereotipate.

Per poter realizzare questo obiettivo, il facilitatore dovrà sostenere i membri della Comunità nella loro libera espressione, guidandoli verso un pensiero autonomo ed epistemologicamente fondato.

Ha a disposizione diverse strategie: sollecitare chiarimenti o riformulazioni al fine di evitare incomprensioni semantiche e *misconception*; rendere chiaro agli studenti il processo attraverso cui il parlante è giunto a ritrovarsi in quell'opinione, incoraggiandolo a pensare ad alta voce e offrendo agli altri i suoi strumenti cognitivi; favorire i processi di interpretazione da parte del gruppo, elicitando ideali di vita e orizzonti di senso posseduti dai partecipanti; far emergere le assunzioni e i presupposti che animano la posizione sostenuta; chiedere le ragioni che hanno condotto a quelle conclusioni e sottolineare le eventuali alternative emerse, nella consapevolezza che la comunità non dovrà necessariamente giungere a qualche conclusione, poiché proprio l'apertura a nuove offerte garantisce, in questa specifica esperienza educativa, la validità della procedura didattica.

Un ruolo fondamentale consiste nel seguire il ragionamento dei bambini dal punto di vista metacognitivo e nel fungere da *scaffolding* alle loro operazioni cognitive in atto. Favorendo l'autonomia di pensiero e l'arricchimento delle risorse personali e della CdR, nel sostegno reciproco.<sup>6</sup>

Così intesa, la CdR è una comunità pratica, un processo dialogico dinamicamente interattivo. Rifacendosi a Peirce, Lipman sostiene dunque che la verità non è un dato assoluto, ma è la risultante delle attività comunitarie di ricerca. La nostra conoscenza poggia sempre su cognizioni precedenti, nate in seno alla nostra esperienza con la realtà.<sup>7</sup> Nella vita sociale, familiare, scolastica, lavorativa, l'uomo si crea un sistema di credenze, che non va inteso come una conoscenza certa e inamovibile, ma come un passaggio attraverso lo stadio del dubbio e dell'interrogazione, per giungere a un sapere che formandosi attraverso la ricerca si presenta mobile ed errante, simile a una nave attraccata al porto ma pronta a salpare e navigare verso nuovi porti.

Come le autorevoli voci di Grice, Habermas e Apel hanno evidenziato, l'interazione dei bambini nella CdR è un esporsi dei singoli membri, che argomentano eticamente il loro punto di vista, secondo criteri di validità in cui sono coinvolte le loro credenze, le loro capacità espositive e di comprensione. Sono davvero "gettati" all'interno di un'esperienza significativa e trasformatrice, in cui ci sostiene «il paradigma filosofico di trasformazione interculturale della filosofia [...] (che) apre alla comunicazione con le filosofie altre, al dialogo cioè tra le distinte culture dell'umanità.»<sup>8</sup>

Ancora richiamandosi al suo maestro Dewey, Lipman chiarisce che l'attività di ricerca filosofica è strumento per lo sviluppo del pensiero complesso, articolato nelle sue dimensioni *critica*, *creativa*,

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<sup>6</sup> Nell'approfondimento dei ruoli del facilitatore, è riconoscibile il modello di Vygotskij relativo all'importanza della relazione del bambino con i suoi pari e con gli adulti, espresso nella teoria dello "sviluppo della zona prossimale", che sottolinea fortemente la possibilità apprenditiva intrinseca alla pratica sociale e dialogica.

<sup>7</sup> «La teoria della conoscenza di Peirce è basata sull'idea che ciò che è *vero* si accorda con una opinione umana universale conseguita dopo che un tempo e una attenzione sufficienti siano stati dedicati al problema, tale che chiunque abbia un'opinione sull'argomento abbia potuto formularla ed esprimerla». Healy, *Peirce, comunità e credenza*, in "Filosofare", n. 10-11-12/1998, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Caputo F., 2009, pp. 86.

*caring*: «il pensiero complesso (...) è un pensiero consapevole delle proprie assunzioni ed implicazioni nonché delle ragioni e dell'evidenza che sottendono questa e quella conclusione. (Esso) tiene conto della sua stessa metodologia, delle proprie procedure, delle proprie prospettive e punti di vista... (Esso) include dimensioni ricorsive, metacognitive, autocorrettive e tutte quelle altre forme di pensiero che implicano una riflessione sulla propria metodologia mentre allo stesso tempo si applicano ad un contenuto».<sup>9</sup>

La Cdr delineata da Lipman presenta caratteristiche fondamentali per una crescita orientata all'apertura e alla consapevolezza dell'altro: è un'esperienza di *inclusione*, dal momento che tutti i partecipanti possono aderire alla ricerca, e nessuno è escluso dall'attività senza adeguata giustificazione; di *partecipazione*, poichè la CdR incoraggia ma non obbliga nessuno a dare il suo contributo<sup>10</sup>; di *cognizione condivisa*, poichè gli stessi atti possono essere compiuti da membri diversi della CdR, dalla domanda alla risposta alla contro-affermazione; di *ricerca del significato*, intesa come attività derivante dalla naturale curiosità dei bambini. E ancora, è un'esperienza sociale di *solidarietà*, che stimola un confronto argomentato che può promuovere uno sguardo diverso sui compagni. Ciò che infatti ciascuno pone in gioco di sé può essere molto diverso dal ruolo generalmente assunto durante le lezioni frontali: il coinvolgimento emotivo derivante dal proporre le proprie idee e posizioni, esponendosi a critiche e controargomentazioni forti, consente di far emergere comportamenti e atteggiamenti molto diversi, che nella tradizionale attività scolastica potrebbero non avere modo di manifestarsi.

L'esercizio critico vissuto in seno alla CdR attraverso la pluralità delle argomentazioni dei membri ci sembra lo spazio vivo e reale in cui in cui i bambini riescono a comprendere che il loro sapere non è qualcosa di certo, inamovibile e dato una volta per tutta, ma un percorso dinamico articolato in tappe contestualizzabili e aperte alla trasformazione. La CdR promuove l'assunzione di prospettive altre, in un'ottica di partecipazione corresponsabile che a nostro avviso può favorire la ridefinizione e il rimodellamento delle competenze e delle conoscenze dei piccoli membri.

Abitare la differenza significa accettare possibili conflitti, ma riteniamo che il conflitto tra punti di vista, quando argomentato da buone ragioni, possa essere elemento di crescita cognitiva e cambiamento concettuale<sup>11</sup>, con l'obiettivo educativo di dare a tutti l'opportunità di avere un proprio spazio identitario, non marginale e non emarginato, all'interno della micro-società in cui si trova a vivere.

Nella consapevolezza della centralità del ruolo del facilitatore nella conduzione dialogico-argomentativa della CdR, vorremmo analizzare ulteriori contributi inerenti questa figura di educatore, e li proponiamo in questa sede in virtù dell'apporto dato nel mettere in luce strategie che permettano all'adulto di aiutare gli allievi e realizzare un'interazione dialogica efficace, all'interno di un paradigma di inclusione di tutti i partecipanti e di rispetto delle diverse posizioni.

Ci pare importante soffermarci sul contributo di Neil Mercer che, a seguito di numerose ricerche svolte a partire dagli anni Novanta, indagando il discorso infantile in ambito educativo, osserva come i bambini abituati a pratiche didattiche basate sul dialogo, sulla collaborazione reciproca, sulla negoziazione e discussione dei *feedback* abbiano più successo nelle attività legate alla risoluzione di problemi e nella costruzione del proprio sapere.

<sup>9</sup> Lipman M., 2003, p. 23-24.

<sup>10</sup> Essa si pone come uno schema di relazioni in cui ciascuno è spinto a partecipare sulla base del suo personale interesse. Si vedano gli studi di Wenger, in *Comunità di pratica. Apprendimento, significato e identità*, 1998: Wenger vi afferma il principio della *Partecipazione periferica legittimata*, in virtù del quale tutti i membri della comunità possono acquisire conoscenze e competenze necessarie per ottenere una piena partecipazione alle pratiche socio-culturali della comunità e identificarsi in questa.

<sup>11</sup> Come sostenuto da molta recente letteratura pedagogica; si vedano in particolare i lavori di Santi, Pontecorvo e coll., Mason.

Mercer chiarisce cosa intende parlando di “discussione” in aula: i membri della classe devono presentare le loro idee in modo chiaro ed esplicito, affinché si possa procedere verso la condivisione e la co-costruzione dei saperi; occorre ragionare insieme, analizzare insieme il problema oggetto di indagine, comparare le possibili spiegazioni o argomentazioni, decidere insieme i possibili esiti. Attraverso le sue ricerche, ha identificato un modo distintivo di “parlare e pensare”, che definisce "esplorativo" (*exploratory talk*), che orienta la discussione come costruzione critica e consapevole della conoscenza da parte dei membri, impegnati a valutare e giustificare ragionevolmente ogni punto di vista, al fine di pervenire ad un sapere condiviso.

Riflettendo su quale tipo di insegnamento - e di insegnante, su quali condizioni (*ground rules*) possano favorire un modello di *exploratory talk*, Mercer evidenzia che l'insegnante-facilitatore dovrà adottare degli stili di insegnamento che favoriscano l'internalizzazione di alcuni atteggiamenti cruciali: condividere tra i pari tutte le informazioni e i suggerimenti rilevanti; fornire ragioni per avvalorare asserzioni ed opinioni; chiedere spiegazioni; raggiungere un accordo riguardo le decisioni da prendere, dove possibile; accettare che l'intero gruppo (piuttosto che il singolo membro) sia responsabile tanto del successo quanto del mancato raggiungimento dell'obiettivo a seguito delle decisioni prese.

Invero i modelli educativi occidentali tradizionali non lasciano molto spazio alla discussione tra gli studenti, motivo per cui essi tendono ad avere un atteggiamento passivo e inerte di fronte alla conoscenza. Se gli studenti non hanno modo di sviluppare l'attitudine a discutere e argomentare, faticeranno ad assumere spontaneamente atteggiamenti esplicativi e chiarificatori di posizioni epistemiche.<sup>12</sup>

Altro recente contributo che vorremmo evidenziare è quello di Maughn Gregory (2007), che ha proposto un modello di facilitazione in cui indica quali comportamenti il facilitatore può adottare per sostenere la CdR: il facilitatore può intervenire identificando le assunzioni implicite del gruppo, sottoporre alla CdR eventuali prospettive alternative non discusse dal gruppo, utilizzando domande capaci di portare luce alle questioni discusse, di sollevare dubbi o di far riflettere. Lo schema di Gregory presuppone il concetto di *modeling*, poiché sottintende che le mosse dialogiche del facilitatore possano essere imitate dai partecipanti, favorendo l'internalizzazione delle strategie dialettico-comunicative, facendo sì che i ruoli del facilitatore siano assunti via via da tutti i membri, in un'ottica di autonomia della comunità nella gestione della discussione.

Trasformare la classe in una CdR permette un apprendimento cooperativo, co-costruito, dove i pari imparano gli uni dagli altri, condividono le conoscenze, si nutrono di dubbi e autocorreggono le credenze. Incontro e cooperazione divengono valori vivi e attivi, non ci sono valutazioni accusatorie.

Si pensa insieme, si apprende insieme.

Lipman vedeva nell'approccio della pedagogia della comunità una metodologia efficace per la riduzione della violenza e per la promozione del dialogo interculturale, questioni estremamente sentite negli Stati Uniti, dove la varietà di etnie, la non sempre paritaria possibilità di accesso ai sistemi di istruzione e formazione, rendono l'educazione alla pace e alla convivenza civile un obiettivo prioritario per qualsiasi istituzione o agenzia formativa.

Non a caso, la diffusione del curriculum della *P4C* è testimoniata in paesi con forti discriminazioni e disagi sociali. Quale miglior antidoto alla violenza, al pregiudizio sociale, alla xenofobia, se non la collaborazione, la reciprocità, la condivisione nella ricerca?

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<sup>12</sup> Nella nostra esperienza nelle classi, abbiamo osservato che le prime sessioni sono spesso da dedicare a coltivare e sollecitare l'attitudine alla discussione come valorizzazione dei singoli ma anche del gruppo. Non è un caso che per molti bambini il termine "discussione" sia inteso come litigio più che come opportunità di confronto produttivo.



In tale direzione, una delle testimonianze più forti è quella di Walter Kohan, che nei suoi scritti ha portato a conoscenza i progetti di *P4C* attuati nelle *favelas* brasiliane. Kohan ha più volte rimarcato le drammatiche condizioni di vita di molti bambini e ha sottolineato il ruolo politico della filosofia in quanto esercizio pratico di trasformazione attraverso il cambiamento dello *status quo*, evidenziando «l'incongruenza radicale di un mondo che non è un mondo per tutti. [...] Quando dà luogo al pensare aperto, libero e trasformatore, la filosofia diventa motore e propulsore per l'infanzia.»<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Kohan, 2006, p. 18.

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***Il valore del dialogo in Paulo Freire come fondamento dell'educazione interculturale***

L'analisi del pensiero pedagogico dell'educatore brasiliano Paulo Freire (Recife, 1921 – San Paolo, 1997) nasce non solo dall'oggettiva importanza che questa grande personalità pedagogica ha avuto nella seconda metà del Novecento, ma anche e soprattutto dall'influenza che tutt'oggi questo autore possiede.

La società complessa e multiculturale, in cui ci troviamo a vivere, reclama un mutamento di mentalità, anzi, l'acquisizione di una mentalità nuova, disposta ad andare *oltre* l'appartenenza e ad aprirsi al valore del confronto, del dialogo e dell'intesa. Dispositivi questi che sono tutti da costruire *in interiore homine* e nella vita sociale. Da qui il ruolo dell'educazione, quale mezzo per oltrepassare l'appartenenza, i suoi pregiudizi, le sue autosufficienze e le sue chiusure, per inoltrarci nello spazio del pluralismo e di una socializzazione integrata e dialettica (Cambi, 2006).

È proprio in forza di queste ragioni che il pensiero pedagogico e l'opera educativa di Paulo Freire si svelano come un autorevole e valido esempio di fusione tra teoresi pedagogica e pratica educativa interculturale tale da occupare un "posto" strutturale nell'educazione del nostro tempo proprio perché capace di rispondere alle sfide di questi nuovi scenari culturali e alle necessità fondamentali dell'educazione contemporanea.

La pedagogia di Freire, secondo molti, potrebbe essere lasciata riposta nei manuali di storia delle idee pedagogiche e ad altri, invece, piacerebbe dimenticarlo a causa delle sue scelte politiche. Ma leggere riflessivamente e con spirito critico le sue opere principali, tra cui *La pedagogia degli oppressi* del 1967, induce, inevitabilmente, a comprendere e capire il senso, il valore e il significato che essa racchiude ancora oggi, nonostante siano trascorsi quasi cinquant'anni dalla sua prima edizione. L'opera svela, infatti, un rispetto sempre vivo per la persona, insistendo molto sui modi e sulle forme, sull'importanza e sulla pratica del *dialogo* e della *parola* come elementi fondanti ed essenziali *per riscoprire, rispettare e riconoscere come persona e come risorsa il vero volto dell'Altro*.

Dall'esperienza vissuta nel Brasile degli anni Sessanta del Novecento, che lo vide impegnato con i *campesinos* al fine di migliorare le vite di queste persone, ebbe vita il suo approccio pedagogico esplicitamente orientato all'emancipazione del debole e delle classi marginali e subordinate. La *Pedagogia degli oppressi* è, infatti, espressione di denuncia di ogni forma di disumanizzazione, con particolare riferimento però alla disumanizzazione di questo specifico contesto geografico e sociale, che vedeva coloro che si trovavano in una situazione di privilegio e di dominio, "gli oppressori",

manipolare e sfruttare attraverso mezzi ideologici le masse popolari, “gli oppressi”, i quali, totalmente immersi nella “cultura del silenzio”, venivano considerati incapaci di reagire «non perché fossero naturalmente incapaci, ma perché in loro è stata mortificata, sin dalla più tenera età, la vocazione ontologica “ad essere di più”, che è insita in ogni essere umano» (Freire, 2007, p. 28). Pertanto, Paulo Freire propose l’educazione come valido antidoto capace di indicare all’uomo la strada verso *l’umanizzazione*, mettendo gli “oppressi” nelle condizioni di acquisire consapevolezza circa la propria condizione di sudditanza mentale, rifiutando così quel fatalismo a cui facevano appello per spiegare la loro condizione di emarginati. Ciò significava condurre “l’oppresso” a comprendere che poteva emanciparsi dalla schiavitù dei “falsi miti” inventati dalla classe dominante in funzione dei loro obiettivi (Freire, 2007).

L’opera di Freire possiede, dunque, una forte carica etica, umana e democratica tanto da ruotare tutta intorno al “problema dell’umanizzazione”, denunciando le tante e svariate forme di “disumanizzazione”. La *Pedagogia degli oppressi*, dunque, incentrandosi su questa dicotomia concettuale, che giustifica e risolve la contrapposizione e la condizione “dell’oppressore-oppresso”, può essere trasferita e applicata al binomio *identità-alterità* in quanto molte volte vi si riconosce la stessa disumanizzazione: si è soliti assegnare, infatti, il primato all’*identità* e, di conseguenza, individuare nella *differenza* un elemento perturbante, da controllare, da cancellare anche, riconoscendo così i blocchi tematici del binomio *identità-alterità* non solo come condizione e posizione ontologica ma anche come realtà storica che viene praticata attraverso forme di ingiustizie, di oppressione, di discriminazione, di sfruttamento e di distorsione della vocazione a riconoscere ogni essere umano come persona e come tale “ad essere di più”, indipendentemente da precisi aspetti culturali quali la razza, l’etnia lo *status* sociale, l’orientamento sessuale e il credo religioso. Di qui il bisogno di una via pedagogica e di uno spazio educativo che abbia come compito quello di sfidare abiti mentali, pregiudizi, canoni cognitivi e axiologici, conducendoci *oltre* le identità, pur non negandole e verso un universo etico costruito sull’*incontro* e il *dialogo*. Un bisogno, dunque, che ci condurrebbe verso un orizzonte nuovo di vita, di relazione, di scambio in cui la regola è porsi *con* gli altri, accordarsi *insieme* e far maturare *spazi comuni* rispettosi delle differenze e del loro valore. Tale tipo di paradigma pedagogico, nella nostra società globalizzata e multiculturale, non è solo una teoresi pedagogica e una pratica educativa interculturale necessaria, ma è anche un’occasione di ripensamento e di riflessione critica circa il pluralismo culturale che lo si deve innalzare a *risorsa*, ad *occasione* di crescita in direzione di quei valori di pace, di giustizia, di uguaglianza, di legalità, di diritti umani e di solidarietà, che sono i segni della intercultura e il nuovo cemento dello “stare in società”, in una società planetaria che, come dichiara Franco Cambi, «è ormai squassata da profonde e scandalose ingiustizie, da sperequazioni mostruose, da condizioni

di vita e di diritti troppo asimmetriche, da una “barbarie” ancora diffusa e/o subdolamente ritornante» (Cambi, 2006, p. 8).

Ecco, appunto che *l'educazione problematizzante* di Paulo Freire si riscopre nella sua interezza e attualità. Essa è per l'educatore brasiliano quella pratica che dà vita a quel processo che indica l'acquisizione di una nuova *forma mentis*. Essa è *praxis*, ovvero *riflessione e azione* insieme, capace di dar vita ad un *habitus* e un *habitat* di dialogo, di confronto e di reciproca intesa che edifica la *forma mentis* e i principi-valori della persona al fine di costruire una società democraticamente aperta e responsabile alla vita della comunità, chiamando in causa l'impegno concreto del soggetto in una dimensione di solidarietà e di rispetto per l'*Altro*. Ma per comprendere bene il valore e l'attualità di questo tipo di educazione è indispensabile addentrarsi nel senso e nel significato della *teoria dell'azione dialogica* della concezione problematizzante dell'educazione.

Innanzitutto è necessario riflettere “sull'essenza del dialogo” poiché per Freire l'atteggiamento dialogico è il fondamento dell'educazione. Come afferma l'educatore brasiliano, quando si tenta di penetrare nel dialogo, come fenomeno umano, si scopre qualcosa che si identifica con lui: la *parola*. Scoprendo la parola, come qualcosa di più che un semplice strumento che realizza il dialogo, ci si trova di fronte alla necessità di ricercare i suoi elementi costitutivi che sono *azione e riflessione*. E non esiste parola autentica, precisa Freire, che non sia *prassi*, che non trasformi il mondo. La parola non autentica è quella che non trasforma il mondo; è quella che diviene verbosità, che diviene parola alienata e alienante quando uno dei suoi elementi costitutivi viene a mancare, generando così forme non autentiche di pensiero (Freire, 2007).

Il dialogo è, dunque per l'autore, incontro degli uomini attraverso la mediazione del mondo, che non si esaurisce nel rapporto “io-tu”. Il dialogo è un'esigenza esistenziale, che si impone come cammino per cui gli uomini acquistano significato in quanto uomini. Esso è l'incontro in cui si fanno solidali il *riflettere* e l'*agire* dei rispettivi soggetti, orientati verso un mondo da trasformare e da umanizzare. In questi termini, il dialogo è un atto di creazione che si realizza necessariamente ed esclusivamente attraverso l'amore, l'umiltà, la fede, la speranza e il pensare critico. Nella sua *Pedagogia degli oppressi* Freire afferma, infatti, che l'*amore* è fondamento del dialogo e impegno con gli uomini; asserisce infatti che non esiste dialogo se non esiste amore profondo per il mondo e per gli uomini tanto che non è possibile dare un nome al mondo, in un gesto di creazione e ricreazione, se non è l'amore a provocarlo. Inoltre, precisa che non c'è dialogo senza *umiltà*. Ovvero, il dialogo, come incontro degli uomini nel compito comune di creare e ricreare insieme, si interrompe se uno dei suoi poli perde l'umiltà; cioè se gli uomini, in questo luogo di incontro e di comunione, considerano che ci sono persone di secondo ordine e persone d'eccellenza: sono uomini, precisa Freire, che non hanno umiltà o la perdono e quindi non possono avvicinarsi

all’*Altro*. Non c’è dialogo, prosegue Freire, neppure senza una grande *fede* negli uomini, fede di fare e di ri-fare; fede nella loro vocazione “ad essere di più”, che non è privilegio di alcuni uomini, ma diritto di tutti gli uomini. Non esiste dialogo neppure senza la *speranza*, che si trova, precisa Freire, alla radice stessa della “inconclusione degli uomini” e nella loro disumanizzazione; motivi per i quali risulta utile far crescere la speranza poiché essa porta alla ricerca incessante della creazione di un’umanità negata dall’ingiustizia. Infine, conclude Freire, non c’è dialogo se non esiste nei soggetti un pensiero vero, un *pensare critico*, che percepisce la realtà come un processo in costante divenire dove la presenza di ogni persona non è una presenza massiccia che si adatta, ma si offre come elemento attivo e partecipante di un campo che prende via via forma, nella misura della sua azione (Freire, 2007).

Tale processo educativo che si fonda sull’amore, sull’umiltà, sulla fede, sulla speranza e sul pensare critico è, dunque, espressione di quella che Freire chiama “educazione autentica”, la quale non si fa da A verso B o da A su B, ma da A *con* B, prendendo in considerazione gli educandi come *esseri in situazione*.

L’*educazione problematizzante* è, dunque, un’educazione di carattere autenticamente riflessivo che stimola la capacità di analisi e un pensiero critico ed autentico insieme, che comporta una rivelazione costante della realtà, dando forza al cambiamento attraverso l’annuncio e la denuncia. In altre parole, si educa il soggetto in formazione a capire e comprendere il mondo non come qualcosa di fossilizzato, come una realtà statica, ma come un processo che stabilisce una forma autentica di pensare e di agire, pensando simultaneamente sé stesso e il mondo, senza separare il pensiero dall’azione. Inoltre, l’umanesimo di questa concezione si fonda sulla piena realizzazione dell’uomo alla vocazione ontologica *ad essere di più* e la parola si caratterizza e si costituisce per la sua forza trasformatrice, creativa, inventiva e re-inventiva (il sapere), facendo sì che gli uomini operino *nel* mondo e *con* il mondo.

Questa educazione considera, dunque, gli uomini “corpi coscienti” che possiedono una “coscienza intenzionale e problematizzante” nei confronti di loro stessi e nei loro rapporti *con* il mondo. È un tipo di educazione che si basa su una serie di postulati che richiamano un tipo di rapporti orizzontali che superano la contraddizione educatore/educando fondandosi, invece, su una relazione in cui l’educatore/educando sta *con* l’educando/educatore; cioè l’educatore non è soltanto colui che educa, ma colui, che mentre educa, è educato *nel dialogo con l’educando*, il quale a sua volta, mentre è educato, anche educa; diventando così ambedue soggetti del processo in cui crescono insieme (Freire, 2007).

In tale processo educativo, l’educatore riveste un ruolo di tutto rilievo poiché, dovendo essere dotato di un *corpus* di conoscenze e di capacità teoriche, che costantemente verifica e rinnova attraverso il

contatto *con* i suoi studenti, diventa, come lo definisce il pedagogista americano Joe Lyons Kincheloe un *Critical Researcher*, ovvero “un’insegnante-ricercatore” che deve conoscere e comprendere il contesto socio-economico-culturale dei suoi studenti e saper riconoscere tutte quelle modalità oppressive e discriminanti che potrebbero essere insite in tali contesti e agire negativamente su di loro (Kincheloe, 2008).

In altre parole, l’educatore deve esercitare una funzione di *empowerment* verso quelle persone che vengono etichettate come “differenti” ed assumere la responsabilità di far comprendere loro quale importante “capitale personale” esse rappresentino. Deve, dunque, sorreggere gli studenti nell’acquisizione di una visione critica complessiva della realtà e degli elementi che concorrono a caratterizzarne le sue implicazioni sociali, aiutandoli ad interrogarsi su paradigmi particolari, su strutture di valori, su orientamenti epistemologici e politici, attivando così in loro la capacità di riflettere, analizzare, reinterpretare, confrontare, reagire e mettersi in azione nel mondo.

Dunque, l’educazione prospettata da Freire è, sostanzialmente, un’educazione interculturale che promuove l’autenticità della persona, l’originalità dell’individuo, le diversità degli esseri umani. È un’educazione che problematizza, coscientizza ed intende rompere le catene del fatalismo al fine di far comprendere all’individuo che la sua esistenza ed autorealizzazione non possono essere stabilite aprioristicamente da altri uomini, perché l’essere umano, a prescindere dalle proprie origini geografiche, culturali, religiose, deve poter essere artefice della sua storia. Naturalmente, in questo processo, l’educatore, come abbiamo già detto, gioca un ruolo fondamentale poiché deve essere colui che sa *prendersi cura* dell’allievo, possedendo tutte quelle competenze necessarie per saper accogliere il “culturalmente diverso”, considerandolo nella sua interezza e specificità, senza dimenticare mai la sua assoluta dignità di persona, punto di partenza e fondamento dei diritti di ciascuno.

In definitiva,

una pedagogia che, nell’età postmoderna, voglia essere tale, è centrale, dunque, il bisogno di percorrere strade teoriche in cui le narrazioni dominanti basate su versioni del mondo occidentale, patriarcale e classista siano sfidate e deterritorializzate da un linguaggio teorico che stabilisca nuovi confini capaci di rispettare le diversità (Giosi, 2009, p. 68).

Diviene naturale, a questo punto, chiedersi quali possano essere quei dispositivi o quei percorsi ideali che costituiscono e regolano lo spazio dell’educazione interculturale che procedono *oltre* la multiculturalità, ponendo in luce la sua stessa condizione di grande sfida del presente e del futuro.

Un futuro che sarà sempre più interetnico e globalizzato, in cui le identità si intrecceranno alle differenze e in cui le differenze stesse animeranno le identità, in un continuo gioco dialettico.

Al nostro presente è richiesto, come precisa Franco Cambi,

di interiorizzare questa svolta d'epoca, di elaborare un fronte di strategie atte a gestirla, di guardare a quel futuro già in atto come il modello anche e soprattutto del domani, ma anche di pensare e ripensare l'intercultura in tutta la sua complessità, la sua ricchezza, la sua fisionomia articolata e anche dismorfica, per dare alla società di oggi e di domani un *vademecum* e una bussola, e non abbandonarla a una navigazione incerta che, come spesso vediamo, rischia di riprodurre i mostri del passato dai razzismi, tutt'altro che morti, agli integralismi sempre più vivi e vegeti (Cambi, 2006, p. 15).

Dunque, il saper essere e il saper fare dell'educatore riveste un ruolo cruciale per costruire uno spazio di incontro per ripensare insieme l'*identità* e la *differenza*. Una costruzione pedagogica che nel processo educativo fa sì che l'educatore *con* l'educando non deve essere mai troppo sicuro delle proprie certezze e che, allo stesso modo, stima la sua attività come rigorosamente etica poiché non è conciliabile con la spudorata arroganza di chi è pieno di sé (Freire, 2004). Inoltre, la natura stessa della pratica dell'educatore deve sempre presupporre l'indagare, l'andare alla scoperta, mostrare attenzione e rispetto per i saperi socialmente costruiti nella pratica comunitaria dei suoi educandi, stimolando le loro capacità, rifiutando qualsiasi forma di discriminazione, considerata immorale e lottando contro di essa come un dovere, andando oltre ogni pregiudizio di razza, di classe e di genere, rispettandone la sua curiosità e non facendolo mai sentire inferiore (Freire, 2004).

Dunque, una costruzione pedagogica che è legata, senza alcuna ombra dubbio, al superamento dell'assolutezza-esclusività-difesa della propria cultura d'appartenenza e al riconoscimento dell'alterità come valore che, attraverso il distacco e la decostruzione del proprio sé, implica la revisione della propria identità lasciandosi sfidare, fecondare e attraversare da altri modelli culturali, entrando così nel circuito di una nuova identità culturale.

Da quanto detto si evince molto chiaramente che l'educatore deve adottare, fondamentalmente, un metodo didattico che diverge da quella tipologia di insegnamento che lo identifica come semplice messaggero di informazioni o interprete di un programma preconfezionato ma lo vede, invece, come un educatore che, volendo rispondere pienamente alle sue responsabilità educative, indossa le vesti dell'"intellettuale-ricercatore", rapportandosi dialogicamente con i suoi studenti, al fine di valorizzare ogni aspetto e dimensione di ciò che è considerato "diverso" o "differente".



Perché, dunque, il ruolo dell'educatore, nel processo di cambiamento sociale, diventi fondamentale al fine di realizzare un'educazione interculturale e allo stesso tempo un'educazione critico-democratica e socialmente responsabile, occorre che l'educatore educi gli studenti al senso e al valore di responsabilità e di impegno di fronte ai suoi problemi e a quelli della sua comunità attraverso una pedagogia della domanda, della curiosità, una pedagogia del domani per l'oggi, che si fonda nella *praxis*, «una pedagogia che crede nella possibilità di trasformare il mondo e, che crede nella storia come possibilità» (Gadotti, 1995, p. 92).

È evidente, quindi, come nella teoresi pedagogica e nella pratica educativa di Paulo Freire è rilevante lo sforzo intellettuale e pedagogico di rendere educativamente concreta la speranza di una vita migliore, effettivamente democratica e all'altezza di un mondo sempre più segnato dai mali della globalizzazione. Dunque, una pedagogia che, come afferma Carlo Nanni, assume un valore etico ed ontologico essenziale in quanto svolge

il ruolo di “carica etica”, che spinge alla rigerosità, che chiede senso critico e onestà deontologica e che rafforza l'impegno e la passione per la ricerca di informazioni, prospettive, piste operative finalizzate a progetti educativi di “alto spessore” umano e democratico, sulla base di ciò che è “ontologico” nella realtà e nell'esistenza umana. E soprattutto funzionerebbero da “provocazione” che urge a forzare i limiti del presente, a ricercare “vie nuove”, “possibilità inedite d'azione”, a dirla con Freire, a “dar voce” a chi, in una società che si autoproclama democratica, sembra invece portare a livelli strutturali l'esclusione, il darwinismo sociale, la discriminazione sociale e culturale (Nanni, 2002, pp. 100-101).

Dunque, un'eredità pedagogica

affidata a tutti coloro che sono interessati alle sorti dell'educazione e della pedagogia, in particolare a coloro che credono ci sia ancora spazio per l'impegno per un'equa giustizia sociale, contro ogni forma di dominazione politica o discriminazione culturale o strumentalizzazione economicistica o soggezione politica. In questo orizzonte di problemi e di impegni, la pedagogia di Freire può stimolare a vincere il fatalismo storico e la passività pessimistica. La sua pedagogia può, quindi, spingere ad una speranza impegnata, nella coscienza dei limiti personali e nel rispetto “dialogante” delle diversità; può spronare a uscire dal mutismo interiore e dalla omologazione massificatoria e mass-mediale e a ritrovare la capacità di lettura critica della realtà e la voglia di impegnarsi nel proprio mondo e nella

storia di tutti (Nanni, 2003, p. 37).

Naturalmente, questo sarà possibile nella misura in cui abbandoneremo l'autosufficienza e ci interrogheremo sempre su quanto Freire qui di seguito ha scritto:

Come posso dialogare se alieno l'ignoranza, cioè se la vedo sempre nell'altro e mai in me?

Come posso dialogare, se mi pongo come uomo differente, virtuoso per eredità, di fronte agli altri, semplici "questo", in cui non riconosco *altri io*?

Come posso dialogare, se mi sento chiuso in una élite di uomini puri, padroni della verità e del sapere, per i quali tutti coloro che si trovano fuori sono "questi" o "indigeni inferiori"?

Come posso dialogare, se parto dall'idea che dare un nome al mondo è compito di uomini scelti, e che la presenza delle masse nella storia è un segno del suo logorio, che devo evitare?

Come posso dialogare, se mi chiudo al contributo degli altri, che mai riconosco, e me ne sento persino offeso? Come posso dialogare se temo il superamento, e se solo pensandoci, soffro e mi deprimi? (Freire, 2007, p. 80).

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## **Bambini e famiglie di altre culture: rappresentazioni e pratiche educative nei servizi dell'infanzia**

**Giuseppina Messetti**

### **1. Introduzione**

Il problema che la ricerca indaga sorge in un preciso contesto, quello di un percorso di formazione rivolto ad educatori operanti nei servizi prescolastici del Veneto<sup>1</sup>. Il Veneto si colloca ai primi posti tra le regioni italiane per incidenza di residenti stranieri. L'immigrazione straniera è diventata rilevante nell'ultimo decennio e in particolare a partire dal 2002, anno della "grande regolarizzazione". Da allora gli stranieri regolarmente residenti sono più che triplicati, con un progressivo aumento dell'incidenza percentuale sul totale della popolazione che passa dal 3,4% nel 2001, al 6,8% nel 2006, il 10,7% nel 2011<sup>2</sup>. A seguito dei processi di stabilizzazione delle famiglie migranti, i bambini stranieri che frequentano i servizi prescolastici sono in larga maggioranza nati in Italia come attestano gli ultimi Rapporti del MIUR che registrano il dato delle presenze nella scuola dell'infanzia. Come stanno vivendo il fenomeno migratorio le educatrici e le insegnanti in queste realtà territoriali, dove i nidi e le scuola dell'infanzia accolgono un numero sempre crescente di bambini di altre culture? Abbiamo ritenuto che indagare i loro "pensieri" avesse una duplice utilità: ai fini della ricerca educativa l'allargamento dello sguardo su un settore, quello dei servizi prescolastici, ancora poco esplorato, permette di conoscere il "punto di vista" di chi in essi opera, soggetti raramente coinvolti in ricerche di questo tipo.

#### **1. Domande di ricerca**

- Comprendere "il punto di vista" delle insegnanti riguardo alla presenza di bambini di altre culture nel proprio gruppo-classe
- Conoscere gli aspetti di difficoltà che le insegnanti incontrano nel rapportarsi con le famiglie di altre culture
- Rilevare la percezione che le insegnanti hanno dei problemi che incontrano i genitori di altre culture nel rapportarsi con le istituzioni educative italiane
- Esplorare le opinioni e le pratiche in merito al riconoscimento e alla valorizzazione della lingua d'origine dei bambini di altre culture

In Italia, mentre sono note alcune ricerche sulle rappresentazioni che gli insegnanti di scuola primaria e secondaria hanno degli studenti di cittadinanza non italiana (Bettinelli G., Demetrio D., 1992; Ciccardi F., 1994; Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, 2001; Selleri P., 2005; Kanitzsa, 2007), sono ancora pochi gli studi nel settore prescolastico dei servizi all'infanzia.

#### **2. Partecipanti**

Hanno preso parte alla ricerca 115 soggetti: 53 educatrici di Nido e 62 insegnanti di Scuola d'infanzia che hanno aderito al Progetto di formazione "Leggere per crescere – Intercultura". Il progetto ha coinvolto i servizi educativi di otto Comuni del Veneto, individuati tra i più significativi per l'elevata presenza di residenti stranieri.

#### **3. Inquadramento teorico**

La ricerca si colloca al confine tra la riflessione pedagogica sull'infanzia e i servizi ad essa dedicati (Musatti, 1992; Pontecorvo, 1992; Mantovani, 2003), gli studi di educazione interculturale (Nigris, 1996; Demetrio,

<sup>1</sup> Il progetto "Leggere per crescere – Intercultura" finanziato e organizzato da GlaxoSmithKline in collaborazione con l'Osservatorio Regionale "Nuove generazioni e famiglia".

<sup>2</sup> Osservatorio Regionale sull'Immigrazione (2011). *Immigrazione straniera in Veneto: rapporto 2011*. Venezia: Regione del Veneto.

Favaro 1997; Cambi, 2001; Portera, 2003; Bove, Mantovani, 2006; Favaro, Mantovani, Musatti, 2006; Mantovani, 2007) e il più recente filone di indagine sull'analisi delle pratiche educative e didattiche (Altet, 2003, 2006; Laneve, 2005; Damiano, 2006; Mortari, 2010; Day, Laneve, 2011). In particolare, all'interno di quest'ultimo ambito, alcuni studi fanno della dimensione implicita della didattica e del pensiero "quotidiano" dell'insegnante un fertile terreno di esplorazione empirica (Stadler M.A., Frensch P. A., 1998; Perla, 2010). Secondo questa prospettiva, occuparsi dell'agire educativo significa guardare oltre la dimensione esplicita della pratica, per esplorare quelle dimensioni nascoste (rappresentazioni, precomprensioni, credenze, percezioni soggettive) che tacitamente permeano e guidano le attività didattiche e gli stili relazionali degli educatori, talvolta in contrasto con le convinzioni e gli obiettivi dichiarati.

Dunque l'analisi del come ci si rappresentano i bambini e le famiglie di altre culture "è parte integrante di una pedagogia interculturale intesa come riflessione critica e prospettiva empirica rispetto alla pratica educativa" (Bove, Mantovani, 2006).

#### 4. Metodologia

La ricerca, di tipo qualitativo, si muove nella prospettiva fenomenologica che non prevede la formulazione di ipotesi ma, a partire dall'individuazione di un'area di indagine, una progressiva focalizzazione delle domande di ricerca. Si è optato per un metodo misto (*mixed method*) utilizzando due strumenti secondo un impianto metodologico "ad imbuto". Nella prima fase esplorativa, è stato interpellato con un questionario-intervista, un numero consistente di persone: l'intero gruppo delle partecipanti al Progetto di formazione. La garanzia di anonimato dello strumento e la formulazione delle domande-stimolo hanno inteso salvaguardare ampia libertà e apertura nelle risposte.

Nella seconda fase si è proceduto con interviste a bassa strutturazione allo scopo di approfondire temi e questioni emersi dall'analisi dei dati acquisiti nella prima fase. Sulla base della disponibilità delle partecipanti e di criteri di rappresentatività state effettuate le interviste, fino alla saturazione dei dati.

Si è prestata particolare attenzione alla fase della raccolta dei dati e successivamente alla loro analisi quantitativa e qualitativa. Il processo di codifica ha tenuto conto delle indicazioni derivanti dalla *grounded theory* (B. Glaser e A. Strauss, 1967): attraverso il processo di *open coding* si è pervenuti all'identificazione delle categorie, che secondo questo orientamento di ricerca non vengono stabilite a priori, ma emergono dai dati raccolti. Due ricercatori, separatamente, hanno proceduto ad una provvisoria concettualizzazione dei testi discorsivi integralmente trascritti, attraverso una loro catalogazione in "etichette". Il successivo confronto ha permesso una verifica incrociata e l'accordo sulle "unità di significato" emerse. Successivamente, le "unità di significato" (etichette) sono state raggruppate in ambiti specifici e sono state così identificate le categorie. Ad un secondo livello le categorie sono state successivamente ordinate in macro-categorie.

#### 5. Analisi dei dati

Nelle classi in cui operano le partecipanti alla ricerca, l'incidenza di alunni figli di genitori stranieri, nati in larga maggioranza in Italia, si attesta su valori piuttosto elevati, attorno al 25 %. Per quanto riguarda le aree geografiche di provenienza prevalgono i Paesi africani (Nord Africa 25%, Centro Africa 12%), seguono i Paesi dell'Est Europeo (31%), la Cina (15%), quindi con percentuali sotto la soglia del 10% i Paesi del Subcontinente indiano (9%), del Sud America (5%)<sup>3</sup>.

##### 5.1 La percezione-rappresentazione dei bambini di altre culture

L'analisi delle unità di significato relative alla prima domanda: "Sulla base della sua esperienza, che cosa comporta la presenza di bambini di altre culture nel gruppo classe/sezione?" ha portato all'identificazione di dodici categorie, dall'esame delle quali è scaturito un successivo livello di strutturazione dei dati. Risaltava con evidenza, infatti, il punto di vista adottato dalle educatrici ed insegnanti nel rispondere alla sollecitazione. Tale punto di vista era prevalentemente quello dell'insegnante, rispetto a

<sup>3</sup> La percentuale residua è relativa ad altri Paesi non raggruppabili (3%).

quello dei diversi attori (bambini e genitori) presenti sulla scena educativa. All'interno delle cinque categorie riguardanti l'assunzione del punto di vista dell'insegnante, una soltanto si connota positivamente ("stimolo per l'insegnante"), le altre quattro segnalano ambiti nei quali, la presenza nella propria sezione di bambini di altre culture, viene percepita come problematica.

La tabella n.1 illustra le categorie emerse e i diversi punti di vista adottati nelle risposte.

Dal punto di vista dell'educatrice o insegnante	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stimolo per l'insegnante</li> <li>2. Difficoltà per l'insegnante: maggiore impegno sul piano didattico</li> <li>3. Difficoltà per l'insegnante nella comunicazione verbale con i bambini di altre culture</li> <li>4. Difficoltà per l'insegnante nella relazione con i genitori di altre culture</li> <li>5. Difficoltà per l'insegnante nella relazione con i bambini di altre culture</li> </ol>
Dal punto di vista dei bambini	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opportunità per i bambini: confronto con la diversità</li> <li>2. Difficoltà per i bambini di altre culture</li> </ol>
Dal punto di vista dei genitori	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arricchimento reciproco per le famiglie</li> <li>2. Difficoltà per i genitori</li> </ol>
Non specificato	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arricchimento reciproco</li> <li>2. A volte ostacolo, a volte arricchimento</li> <li>3. Nessun problema</li> </ol>

L'analisi quantitativa delle unità di significato (etichette) evidenzia una prevalenza, se pur minima, della percezione di difficoltà (44%) rispetto a quella di arricchimento (42%), cui fa seguito una posizione ambivalente "ostacolo e arricchimento" (10,5%) ed infine una neutrale "nessun problema" (3,5%).

Si potrebbe sintetizzare con un'immagine questa percezione dei bambini di altre culture: quella di un soggetto metà risorsa e metà problema.

Si tratta di una rappresentazione che non si discosta molto da quella rilevata nei contesti della scuola primaria e secondaria, di cui hanno dato conto alcune ricerche condotte negli scorsi anni (Bettinelli G., Demetrio D., 1992; Ciccardi F., 1994; MIUR, 2001; Selleri P., 2005). In questi ordini scolastici l'alunno straniero - soprattutto se di recente immigrazione - può essere considerato "problematico e suscitatore di ulteriori problemi sia per l'insegnante, che si sente chiamato ad un ulteriore sforzo e impegno senza magari avere la preparazione necessaria, sia per la classe nel suo complesso, nel senso che può far perdere tempo e *rallentare il programma*" (Kanitzsa, 2007). Di segno opposto la rappresentazione dei bambini stranieri come *ambasciatori* di culture diverse, testimoni viventi di altri mondi, usi, costumi e tradizioni.

#### *Bambino problema*

Nella nostra indagine le maggiori difficoltà rilevate sono a carico delle insegnanti che segnalano un aumento del carico di lavoro sul piano didattico e ostacoli a livello di comunicazione linguistica con i bambini, in modo particolare in relazione ad alcune culture di provenienza (quella cinese) e alla fase iniziale del loro inserimento. L'elevato numero di bambini per classe, la scarsità di risorse umane a disposizione (mediatori e ore aggiuntive per le insegnanti) sono le ragioni determinanti la situazione problematica.

#### *Bambino risorsa*

Gli aspetti positivi che emergono maggiormente sono l'arricchimento tra pari derivante dall'incontro di culture ed etnie diverse. In più di una affermazione la diversità appare associata a paure da superare, sia da parte dei bambini che dei loro genitori ed è piuttosto forte l'idea che l'affrontare fin da piccolissimi la diversità sia per i bambini "*un grosso vantaggio per la loro crescita personale*".

I dati provenienti dalle interviste mettono in luce aspetti differenti e decisamente più positivi. I bambini provenienti da altre culture richiedono alle insegnanti una diversa articolazione del fare scuola: disponibilità,

attenzione e apertura “verso stili educativi altri”, “capacità di mettersi in gioco, in relazione”. Sollecitano una crescita dal punto di vista professionale (e personale) attraverso un ripensamento delle pratiche, degli stili relazionali, del proprio modo di porsi di fronte a ciò che è sconosciuto e diverso.

Nella pratica educativa la diversità “porta a rompere schemi rigidi e consolidati, a cercare nuove strategie e soluzioni”. Un’operatrice afferma che “è la condizione più favorevole per misurare veramente il passo su bambine e bambini reali nella progettazione delle attività”. Infatti, “ogni bambino ha caratteristiche e problematiche diverse, alle quali ogni insegnante dovrebbe porre particolare attenzione”.

Altre considerazioni mettono in evidenza come la valorizzazione delle differenze sia una pratica trasversale che avvantaggia tutti i bambini: “tutto cambia in classe quando c’è un bambino di altra cultura”. Sono i bambini di altre culture che pongono prepotentemente il problema dei limiti di una scuola che fa della parola l’asse portante di tutte le attività. Il codice linguistico non è che uno dei cento linguaggi dei bambini, per cui la necessità di diversificare le proposte didattiche e i registri comunicativi conduce a risultati positivi per tutti i bambini.

L’indagine ha consentito di focalizzare ulteriori questioni a proposito dell’integrazione. A fronte di un’idea piuttosto diffusa di una facile e spontanea integrazione tra pari, alcune interviste mettono in evidenza il ruolo centrale che in essa svolgono i condizionamenti pregiudiziali degli adulti (insegnanti e familiari). L’arricchimento reciproco è possibile solo là dove c’è azione consapevole e intenzionale dell’insegnante: la qualità positiva o negativa della diversità dipende sempre dall’adulto che gestisce il gruppo, dal modo in cui egli sente e vive il rapporto con il diverso da sé, con l’altro, in una parola dipende dalle sue competenze interculturali.

Vigilare su questi aspetti attraverso la consapevolezza di sé e delle proprie precomprensioni è *conditio sine qua non* perché la scuola diventi davvero un laboratorio privilegiato dell’integrazione, altrimenti essa non fa che riprodurre gli stereotipi culturali esistenti che incasellano l’altro in una semplificata e anonima diversità.

## 5.2 Il rapporto con le famiglie di altre culture

Nei servizi educativi dell’infanzia il rapporto con le famiglie riveste un’importanza fondamentale. Non è mai un gesto facile e indolore affidare il proprio piccolo alle cure di chi ci è estraneo, così come non è facile accoglierlo e averne cura quando mancano le parole per allacciare mondi lontani.

I dati quantitativi evidenziano che la maggiore difficoltà che le educatrici e insegnanti incontrano nel rapporto con le famiglie riguarda la comunicazione linguistica che raccoglie il 75% delle unità di significato relative a questa domanda. Solo come seconda risposta vengono nominate problematiche connesse a fattori legati alle differenze culturali<sup>4</sup>. “Il problema principale è la lingua”, i genitori “non capiscono quello che noi diciamo loro”. L’analisi qualitativa restituisce a questo proposito l’immagine di un servizio educativo che tende prevalentemente a dire piuttosto che ad ascoltare. Così il problema diffusamente lamentato della scarsa partecipazione dei genitori stranieri alla vita scolastica, mette in luce l’imporsi di una particolare concezione della scuola, ripiegata su se stessa e poco aperta alle differenze culturali.

Dalle interviste emerge una maggiore complessità e una diversa sensibilità delle operatrici. Chi riesce a tener conto delle diverse prospettive, la propria e quella dell’altro, afferma: “noi facciamo più fatica per la lingua, loro per abitudini diverse dalle nostre, anche le più semplici, come quelle di cura del bambino” e diventa quindi comprensibile l’impatto che può comportare l’incontro con “un diverso investimento sull’infanzia”, vale a dire una diversa concezione di bambino, diverse modalità relazionali, differenti metodi educativi e gesti di cura.

Un’insegnante in modo assertivo afferma che il problema per i genitori stranieri quando entrano nei nostri servizi educativi è quello di “sentirsi accolti e accettati per davvero”. Quando ciò avviene sono i genitori stranieri ad esprimere in misura maggiore la gratitudine alle insegnanti per quello che la scuola fa per i loro figli e a confidare le loro perplessità per il passaggio al grado successivo. C’è chi riscontra in loro molta disponibilità “ce ne sono che vorrebbero avvicinarsi a noi, alla nostra cultura, ma anche noi dobbiamo fare un passo in più nei loro confronti”. Per avere la loro collaborazione è fondamentale “trovare le parole giuste, avvicinarli nel modo giusto” con tatto e sensibilità.

<sup>4</sup>In questa categoria il rapportarsi agli usi e costumi italiani appare come l’elemento più problematico delle differenze culturali (44,26%), cui fanno seguito la difficoltà nel capire come funzionano i nostri servizi dell’infanzia (19,67%), nel confrontarsi con metodi educativi e stili di allevamento diversi (11,48%) e infine la difficoltà nel conformarsi alle nostre regole (8,20%).



È interessante segnalare come i problemi dell'integrazione dei genitori stranieri offrano lo stimolo per ripensare più in generale ai rapporti tra scuola e famiglia. La grande crisi educativa che attraversa il nostro tempo impegna tutte le istituzioni (di ogni ordine e grado) alla ricerca di nuove e non formali alleanze con le famiglie, oggi indispensabili se si ha a cuore la crescita delle nuove generazioni.

### 6. *La valorizzazione della lingua e della cultura di origine*

Poiché la lingua è un veicolo fondamentale della cultura, abbiamo esplorato le opinioni e le pratiche delle partecipanti al Progetto "Leggere per crescere – Intercultura", in merito al riconoscimento e alla valorizzazione del patrimonio linguistico del bambino. Sono solite le educatrici e insegnanti parlare della lingua materna con i genitori? Dare consigli circa il suo uso in famiglia?

Il 65% delle educatrici e insegnanti risponde negativamente o afferma di entrare nel merito di questo argomento assai raramente. Dagli enunciati che accompagnano le risposte negative, si evince talora una sorta di pudore ad entrare nel mondo familiare: un'educatrice dice di non dare consigli perchè ritiene *"sia una cosa troppo intima, che non richiede invadenze"*, talaltra un'implicita svalorizzazione: *"nelle assemblee, se capita, viene detto di usare la lingua madre senza sentirsi in colpa"*.

D'altro canto se entriamo nel merito delle risposte positive, scopriamo che i consigli che vengono dati sull'uso della lingua nel contesto familiare sono prevalentemente indirizzati all'utilizzo sia della lingua materna che dell'italiano (45%), solo meno della metà (41%) delle operatrici che hanno l'abitudine di dare consigli (quindi solo il 15% dei soggetti della ricerca) li esprime a favore della lingua d'origine, il restante 14% a favore della lingua italiana. È evidente la preoccupazione delle insegnanti per un adeguato apprendimento della nostra lingua ai fini dell'integrazione scolastica.

Le interviste invece evidenziano un diffuso riconoscimento dell'importanza per il bambino di conoscere e conservare la lingua materna. C'è consapevolezza del fatto che, anche per i genitori, perdere la propria lingua significa perdere la propria origine, la propria identità. La lingua rappresenta la continuità con la propria cultura, con le proprie radici, il sostrato degli affetti più profondi. Talvolta sono i bambini stessi ad essere riluttanti a parlare a scuola nella loro lingua. Racconta un'insegnante che capita qualche volta sentirli parlare tra di loro nel gioco, un gruppetto di tre o quattro provenienti dallo stesso paese: *"Chiedo fatemi imparare qualche parolina. E loro stanno zitti, non dicono niente. Come se la lingua non la sapessero, come se fosse una cosa che non devono fare"*.

### 7. *Osservazioni conclusive*

La ricerca nel cogliere le difficoltà delle operatrici intercetta un diffuso bisogno di formazione. Ma quale formazione? La domanda esplicita va nella direzione di una maggiore conoscenza delle altre culture, culture per lo più intese come realtà statiche e indipendenti dalle persone che le veicolano. Ciò che sembra mancare è la consapevolezza della natura processuale e dinamica propria dei processi di acculturazione e la prospettiva interculturale che chiede all'operatore di mettersi in discussione e assumere la postura di chi è continuamente in ascolto e in ricerca.

Ad essere cruciale è la realtà dell'incontro con l'altro-diverso nella sua dimensione relazionale. Per poter fare spazio all'altro occorre fare un passo indietro, prendere consapevolezza delle proprie griglie mentali, della propria arroganza culturale e della difficoltà tutta umana di affrontare ciò che ci estraneo.

Riflettere sulle rappresentazioni, sulle precomprensioni diventa quindi un momento irrinunciabile al quale ancorare percorsi di crescita professionale, in modo particolare quando essi si muovono nella direzione dell'interculturalità perché si tratta in fondo di trovare uno sguardo diverso non solo *sull'altro*, ma *con l'altro*.

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## Empirical Mirror of Inclusive Education in the Slovak Republic in the International Context of IEA PIRLS Study

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### *Reason for our comparison*

In this article we survey the current situation and developmental trends in education of Roma ethnic minority in several European countries. Education of Roma ethnic minority is still a weak spot of many educational systems which are more or less successful in introducing inclusive education. The main reason for considering this issue was the first decision relating to the segregation of Roma children in education in Slovakia (January, 2012). For the first time, Slovak court sentenced a widespread and illegal practice of segregated education of Roma children, which affects thousands of children. As state by SITA (Slovak news agency), primary school in the Šarišské Michaľany (district Sabinov) commit illegal behave in the education against the Roma children by segregating them into the segregated classes. According to the court, primary school violated the principle of equal treatment, which provides anti-discrimination law and committed discrimination against Roma children because of their ethnicity. These facts indicate that “inclusion” is more just theory than practice.

Roma ethnic minority is a part of education system of the country and the state’s law, regulations, and study plans should have similar impact on majority students as well as on ethnic minority students. We therefore assume that in each analyzed country the trends of reading achievement will be similar in the group of students from Roma ethnic minority and in the group of students from majority of society. We assume that favourable working conditions can be of great importance for educational success. Good teachers’ working conditions can efficiently help students from Roma ethnic minority, whose family background may be not stimulating enough, to overcome these problems and gain good educational results. We therefore assume that students from Roma ethnic minority attend school with good working conditions for teachers have higher achievement score than those who do not attend school with good working conditions for teachers.

### *Background for the data processing*

For our purposes we analyse data from cycles of IEA study PIRLS – 2006 and 2011 (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study). No area of educational research is more central to the educational endeavour than the study of reading achievement and the factors that foster it, and no organization has been more active in the international study of reading than the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). PIRLS is an international large scale assessment of reading literacy of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. It is conducted every five years, and previous PIRLS assessments took place in 2001 and 2006. The next assessment after the 2011 assessment is planned for 2016. Many of the countries participating in PIRLS 2011 also participated in the previous study cycles. These countries will have the opportunity to measure progress in reading achievement across three time points—2001, 2006, and 2011, which was also our primary goal, but we have to abandon this plan. Some items which we would like to observe were not the same in those three cycles (and in the compared countries) and thus so we could not distinguish sample and found the number of students from ethnic minorities.

Generally, PIRLS collected in each study cycle a rich array of information about the context for reading instruction in each participating country. Students, as well as their parents, teachers, and

school principals, completed questionnaires to provide this information. Countries also completed online questionnaires about their education systems, reading curriculum, and resources for teaching reading. In each study cycle there are two sets of instruments. One is designed to measure the reading comprehension – *Test of Reading Comprehension*. And the other part of this study is, previously mentioned, set of questionnaires to collect data about the educational contexts for learning to read.

PIRLS had as its target population students enrolled in the fourth grade of formal schooling, counting from the first year of primary school defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification for Education (UNESCO, 1999). Accordingly, the fourth year of formal schooling should be the fourth grade in most countries. To avoid testing very young children, however, PIRLS has a policy that the average age of children in the grade tested should not be below 9.5 years old.

It is estimated that Roma children represent about 14 % of the overall numbers of school-age children in the Slovak Republic. Several developed European countries have experience with Roma minority education. While the Roma living in the former communist countries are in a hopeless situation, several developed countries have ample experience with the preparation, implementation, gauging and evaluation of educational programs for the Roma and other ethnic minorities. Slovakia should learn from their successes and failures (Anton Marcinčin and Ľubica Marcinčinová, 2009). To identify the number of Roma students is quite a challenging task. While asking for the ethnicity identification is discrimination. In those study cycles we are just wondering about the group of students who are reporting whether they are using the Roma as their language (report from questionnaires addressed to parents or guardians). If so, we determine them as Roma ethnic minority students, and the other one as students from the majority of society. Further on, we are looking to the characteristics of these groups. We are trying to identify the main reasons, of their lower score, to found some factors about their attitudes, from the different viewpoints. The assumption for processing of our data was available data from the IEA PIRLS study in cycles 2006 and 2011. We were compared countries, which have participated in the given years on this study and which also have to face the problems with students from Roma ethnic group (Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovak Republic). Students from Roma ethnic group were according to our need defined according to an answer in the questionnaire designed for parents or guardians. So, if children's guardian give a positive answer in the questions related to the language used before their child started school (*What language did your child speak before he/she began school?*) or what language does the child's father/mother use most often when talking at home with their child. On the bases of these questions we were make a variable<sup>1</sup>. The size of sample in each of the participated country was approximately 4 500 pupils.

### *Educational systems in compared countries*

In the next section we would like to mention the main differences between educational systems of compared countries. We have gathered these information from the PIRLS 2006 Encyclopedia. This section will try to provide an important resource for helping to understand the contexts for the teaching and learning of reading in the compared countries, with particular emphasis on schooling through the fourth grade. A country's education system is the result of a series of decisions and compromises made in response to the specific goals, priorities, politics, resources, and historical traditions of its government representatives and citizens. There is an important distinction between system-level parameters and the school and classroom situations where actual instruction takes place. The decisions

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<sup>1</sup> In the home questionnaire from PIRLS 2006 we have for the Slovak Republic SH1-04C and SH1-17C, for Bulgaria SH1-04B and SH1-17B, for Romania SH1-04D and SH1-17D. From PIRLS 2011 we get followed variables from the same type of questionnaire: ASBH03C – Slovakia and Bulgaria, ASBH03D for Romania and ASH16A/B question item 3 for Slovakia and Bulgaria and item 4 for Romania

about educational organization, structure, resources, facilities, teacher qualifications, and curriculum often are separate from what actually gets taught. There is a difference between the intended curriculum, as specified in official documents, and the implemented curriculum that actually is taught in schools. The learning goals described in the intended curriculum generally result from economic, political, and social priorities, while what is actually taught can be more closely associated with school and classroom conditions including the background and experiences of teachers and students.

When we are going through all educational system in each of the compared country – Bulgaria, Romania and Slovak Republic – we did not found any significant differences. In each of the compared country there is, in general, a Ministry of (usually) Education and in each of the compared country there is organization and management of education in national, regional and local level. In relation to the structure of the education system in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia, the situation is very similar. There is pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education system. Compulsory schooling in each of this country is usually 10 years, or when students reach the age of 16. The only exception is in Bulgaria, where there is compulsory also kindergarten, since 2004. In other countries, pre-primary education is available, not mandatory. When we are comparing the type of school in each of these countries, we will find the same situation. The majority of schools are public, operated and funded by the government, but each country has also private schools, or church schools that are run by an individual, legal entity, or officially approved church.

### *Main findings*

We work on the assumption that each of the students should have the same opportunity to get quality education in each of the compared country. It does not matter whether this student is from the socioeconomically disadvantages environment (e.g. the most students from Roma ethnic minority) or not. Therefore overall achievement score should be similar for both of the compared groups in each of the compared country. We assume that in each analysed country there is similar reading achievement score in the group of students from Roma ethnic minority and in the group of students from majority of society. But when we look at the results of our analyses, we find some differences between those groups and between each country. Table 1 shows differences between overall PIRLS achievement score for majority of society and for students from Roma ethnic minority.

**Table 1 Overall achievement PIRLS score for selected countries**

Country	Items	PIRLS 2006		PIRLS 2011	
		Majority of society	Roma ethnic minority	Majority of society	Roma ethnic minority
Bulgaria	population in %	88.33	11.67	91.58	8.42
	overall PIRLS achievement score	553.75	517.42	540.14	459.09
	standard error	4.36	11.85	3.89	13.19
Romania	population in %	94.29	5.71	94.32	5.68
	overall PIRLS achievement score	495.13	406.64	506.08	429.96
	standard error	4.79	18.25	4.12	12.13
Slovak Republic	population in %	95.99	4.01	95.70	4.30
	overall PIRLS achievement score	537.73	407.44	541.40	436.95
	standard error	2.18	13.05	1.94	10.91

Source: (OMM, NUCEM, 2013)

These differences are significant in each study cycle. The absolute difference is highest in Slovakia. This brings us to questions what could affect such evident differences in overall achievement score between those two compared groups? Which factors affect lower achievement score of students from Roma ethnic minority? Does the number of students from Roma ethnic minority per class impact at the overall achievement score?

In an effort to find answers to some of these questions we have created a variable “*class ratio of students from Roma ethnic minority*” and work with it when we analysing several items, which we want to describe in the following text. The first variable is achieved score according to the number of students from Roma ethnic minority per class. Results show dependency, the more students from Roma ethnic minority are in the class the lower achieved score is.

**Table 2: Reading achievement score according to the number of students per class**

Country	Percentage of students from Roma ethnic minority	Percent of students	Average achievements
Bulgaria	less than ¼	89.8 (2.2)	539 (4.0)
	more than ¼	10.2 (2.2)	470 (15.8)
Romania	less than ¼	93.9 (2.0)	505 (4.3)
	more than ¼	6.1 (2.0)	448 (13.7)
Slovak Republic	less than ¼	95.4 (1.6)	539 (2.1)
	more than ¼	4.6 (1.6)	455 (14.4)

( ) Standard error appear in parentheses.

Source: (OMM, NUCEM, 2013)

As it is evident from Table 2, the better results have children in reading achievement score, when there is in the class less than ¼ of students from Roma ethnic minority. Results are getting worst if there are in the class more students from Roma ethnic minority. Lower achieved score of students from Roma ethnic minority could be affect by various factors. In general, we can divide them into the factors from the school’s environment or from the environment, in which the child from Roma ethnic minority is living.

To answers if worse working conditions of teachers do affect the education of students, we used information from teacher’s questionnaire<sup>2</sup>. We assume that favourable working conditions can be of great importance for educational success. Good teachers working conditions can efficiently help students from Roma ethnic minority, whose family background may be not stimulating enough, to overcome these problems and gain good educational results. We therefore assume that students from Roma ethnic minority who attend school with good working conditions for teachers have higher achievement score than those who do not attend school with good working conditions for teachers. Problematic factors from the view of teachers are shown in the table below.

**Table 3: Problematic factors from the view of teachers**

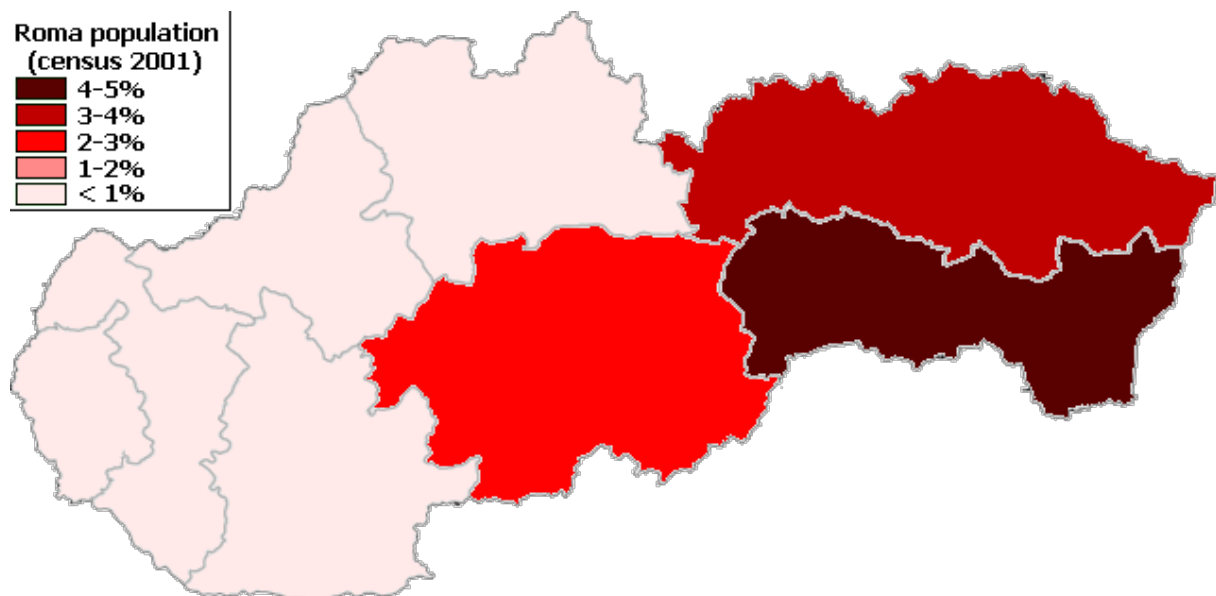
Country	Bulgaria		Romania		Slovak Republic	
	Less than ¼	More than ¼	Less than ¼	More than ¼	Less than ¼	More than ¼
Average achievement	521.6	508.9	521.0	441.9	535.7	456.1
The school building needs significant repair	5.8	-6.6	<b>-13.3</b>	<b>-23.4</b>	1.9	12.3
Overcrowded classrooms	-4.1	<b>-29.6</b>	10.6	31.1	0.0	<b>-25.3</b>
Too many teaching hours for teachers	5.5	14.3	-1.7	-18.0	-2.8	10.6
Inadequate workspace for teachers (e.g. for preparation, meeting with students)	6.0	9.2	0.4	<b>53.0</b>	1.2	23.1
Inadequate instructional materials and supplies for teachers	-2.7	-4.7	-2.2	<b>-23.8</b>	0.4	<b>-12.9</b>

Source: (OMM, NUCEM, 2013)

<sup>2</sup> Used variables from teacher questionnaire were ATBG08A-E.

We were used a regression model for this output, where the dependent variable is average achievement score and all the others are consider as an independent variables. All statistical significant changes that appear in the table are bold and marked with red. Teachers perceive as a most problematic factor overcrowded classrooms in Bulgaria as well as in the Slovak Republic. In those cases is also a class ratio of students from Roma ethnic minority higher (more than ¼). This fact has impact also in the worst students achievements score in those classes. In Romania, teachers state that the most problematic factors are an inadequate instructional materials and supplies in those classes, where there are students from Roma ethnic minority in a higher rate. The other factors mentioned as a significant in Romania is fact, that teachers have too many teaching hours and that school building needs significant repair, which as is shown in the table, also affects the reading achievement score of students from Roma ethnic minority. But, the inadequate instructional materials and supplies, as well as need for school buildings' repair was in Romania mentioned also by the teachers in the classes were there is less than ¼ of students from Roma ethnic minority. In general, we can say that teachers in each of the compared country perceived overcrowded classes, inadequate instructional material and school building's conditions as limited and thus so, they are hindered by these factors to provide quality instruction.

**Figure 1: The Roma ethnic minority in Slovakia according to regions**



Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roma\\_in\\_Slovakia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roma_in_Slovakia)

Teachers from our country also indicated that they are teaching in overcrowded classes. Therefore it is right in the place to ask, if those teachers whose working conditions are not good are those teachers from regions of the Slovakia where there is Roma ethnic minority, in fact, a majority at schools and what is the appropriate distribution, or in a better words should we find the number of students from Roma ethnic minority which still does not affect the reading achievement score in the whole class? Figure 1 shows proportion of Roma population in Slovakia. It is evident that Roma population is larger in the east. Issues with Roma ethnic group are apparent on the east of the Slovak Republic more than in the other regions of our country. Complaints related to segregation of Roma children was also filed in this region. That's why we can assume that schools and teachers in the east of Slovakia have much more problems with students from Roma ethnic group in education that others do. They spend much more effort to reach children educational outcomes comparable to those regions where the proportion of students from Roma ethnic minority is lower. The cause isn't so apparent, for explanation we can take into account several factors, even if it is educational level of teachers, or a

lack of personnel, or inadequacy of technical equipment of schools. On the other hand, it is also questionable, whether this situation and lack of interest in education of students from Roma ethnic minority and adequate preparedness for live arise from inadequate intellectual capacity or simply from copying the common ways of life. Environment, in which children from settlements live is not stimulating enough and has become that people living in such environment have different priorities than majority of society. In several studies it was confirmed that people from Roma ethnic group have not lower mental capacity (as also shown results of achievement scores in the compared countries in the PIRLS study) but it is rather the wrong way of working with these students and maintaining their manners in school or during extracurricular activities<sup>3</sup>. These factors have been one of the main reasons why we take into consideration the number of students in class per regions in the Slovak Republic and the dependence of the reading achievement score in classes with higher ratio of students from Roma ethnic minority.

**Table 4: Number of students in classes according to regions**

Regions of the Slovak Republic	Min	Max	Mean	Std. deviation
Bratislavský	5	27	18	5.2
Trnavský	6	27	18	5.9
Trenčiansky	6	29	<b>19</b>	5.4
Nitriansky	7	29	18	6.1
Žilinský	11	28	<b>20</b>	4.0
Banskobystrický	5	29	18	5.9
Prešovský	3	26	18	5.4
Košický	7	26	<b>19</b>	3.9

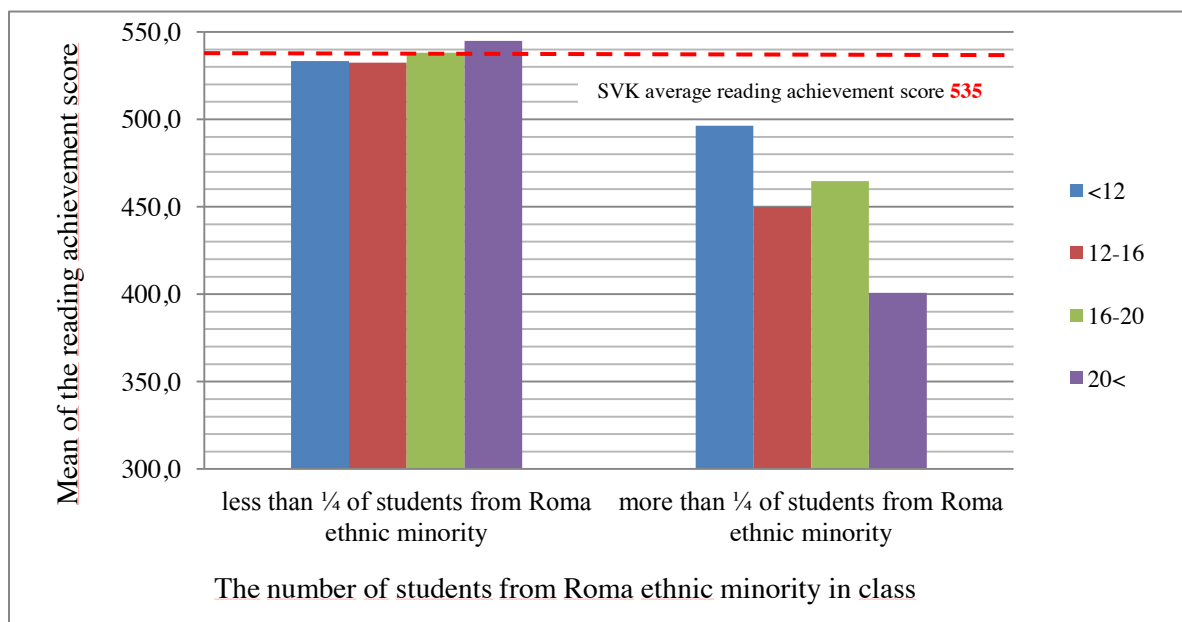
Source: (OMM, NUCEM, 2013)

According to the PIRLS 2011 study the average number of students in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade is 18.5 (minimum: 3; maximum: 29). Classes with higher average number of students are in the Trenčiansky, Žilinský and Košický region. According to the regulations, the approximate number of students per class in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade is 25. In general we can say that, overcrowded classes are not the main problems in Slovakian schools. But when we going into the more detail analyses, we find that teachers indicated overcrowded classes in a more extend exactly in those classes where there is higher class ratio of students from Roma ethnic minority. The average number of students in classes with more than ¼ of students from Roma ethnic minority is 16 and with less than ¼ of students from Roma ethnic minority is 19. Regardless to the number of students in each of the group of compared classes, the reading achievement score is similar. But as the number of students from Roma ethnic minority is going higher, we can find the direct proportion of the descent reading achievement score. The best results are achieved in fact by those children, where the number of students from Roma ethnic minority is less than 12 (reading achievement score is at the level of 500). Children from classes with higher number of students (12-20) achieved score in about 450 and classes where the number of students reaches 20 achieved in average reading achievement score 400. This is the evident fact of dependence in relation to the number of students from Roma ethnic minority and the overall reading achievement score. The chart bellow shows dependency and the fact that there is a descendent linear tendency in those classes where the number of students from Roma ethnic minority is higher. We can say, that mixed classes but also the smaller classes are the most appropriate environment for development of children from disadvantage environment, such as students from Roma ethnic minority that are living in settlements.

<sup>3</sup> eg. (Eben Friedman, Elena Gallová Kriglerová, et al., 2009), (Judit Kontseková, Ctibor Košťál, 2011), (Anton Marcinčin and Lubica Marcinčinová, 2009) **and others.**



**Figure 2: Reading achievement score in dependence to the number of students from Roma ethnic minority**



Source: (OMM, NUCEM, 2013)

### Conclusion

The outputs from our analyses did not confirm that the trend of reading achievement score is similar in the group of students from Roma ethnic minority and in the group of students from majority of society. We found that there is, more or less, a lower reading achievement score in the group of students from Roma ethnic minority in comparison to the group of students from majority of society in each of the compared country and the fact that there is a dependency between the number of students from Roma ethnic minority and achievement score. Another assumption about the influence of teachers' working conditions and reading achievement score was confirmed. In general, we can say, that favourable working conditions for teachers are of great importance for educational success of students either for students from Roma ethnic minority or for the students from majority of society. We can say that classes with higher ratio of students from Roma ethnic minority have lower reading achievement score in all of the compared countries. Their teachers perceived overcrowded classes, inadequate instructional material and school building's conditions as limited and thus so, they are hindered by these factors to provide quality instruction. The last but not least finding from our analyses is that the best results in the Slovak Republic are achieved by those children, where the number of students from Roma ethnic minority is less than 12. Also teachers from that schools mentioned, that they have better working conditions. Therefore we can say that mixed classes are the most appropriate for educational and social development of children from disadvantages environment.

Support of preschool education is one of the most effective steps that could in a large extend help to children from Roma ethnic minority to become integrated. Bulgaria is the only country with compulsory preschool education and as we have found, they have the higher results from reading achievement score. Thus another question is rising, does the preschool education an impact on those scores?

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## The time for “recognising” intercultural learning has come

Victoria Perselli and Diana Moehrke

### Introduction

The literature surrounding international students who come to study at tertiary level in the UK and other majority English-speaking countries seems to prefer the term internationalisation to intercultural learning. Although the term intercultural learning is a familiar jargon in many educational contexts, it is infrequently used to describe actual pedagogical thinking and practice with regard to international students at universities, colleges and language schools in the Western world. That is, educational environments are “internationalised” rather than students provided with opportunities to experience intercultural learning. This paper presents the interim findings from a literature review of different approaches to internationalisation at tertiary level, and will establish why much of the discussion in the literature on international students appears to lack the pedagogic underpinning that one might legitimately seek in these settings. In this paper the term international students will be used in its broadest sense to refer to students ‘who have chosen to travel to another country for tertiary study’ (Ryan and Carroll 2005, p. 3).

Ryan (2011) and Kreber (2009) observe that for many years students have been valued for their financial contributions to the education and economic systems in the countries in which they choose to study. More recently, however Jin and Cortazzi (2013b) and Welikala (2013) detect a positive shift in perception of international students, away from the provision of education as a means of profit generation and adaptation to existing standards, towards a reflexive process that acknowledges, in a critical manner, the cultural dimensions of learning. Welikala (2013, p. 49) offers the following quote by a UK university teacher to illustrate this complex and seemingly conflicting situation:

When international students come here, we have to show that they are important and that their experience counts and so on. We have to treat them as customers and ... they bring revenue and if we are going to be the second highest market for international students, we have to provide more and better learning experience.

In consideration of such economic and educational drivers, our review will focus on two points of major interest to us: firstly, the gradual move from deficit and assimilatory thinking to a “pedagogy of recognition” (Caruana and Spurling 2007, p. 67); secondly, the literature that pursues approaches of recognition and its function towards positively repositioning international students and their learning. Problematised against what we consider to be primarily neoliberal features of education in postcolonial communities (such as revenue generation, the promotion of a predominantly Western ethos), we will apply a critical pedagogical lens throughout this paper to critique hegemonic discourses as these impact on the internationalisation of tertiary education, and thereby obscure what we feel to be the more important issue of intercultural learning.

### Background to the paper

This paper forms part of a research project into the lived experiences of intercultural learning among international students in the UK. It is informed by our work with international students as an educationalist at a private sector college, and a teacher and curriculum builder in a university in London. From these professional perspectives, we seek to challenge what we perceive to be an absence in the literatures of the pedagogical underpinnings that are needed to support learning and teaching at tertiary level of students from culturally diverse settings. We concur with Welikala (2013, p. 36) who states that: ‘Even though there is an emerging richness of research and literature on international higher education curricula in the global North, there is a considerable dearth of literature which focuses on pedagogies within international contexts’. Jin and Cortazzi (2013a), in this context, emphasise that learning ‘from international students who have been successful learners in their own educational contexts’ is ‘[a]rguably [...] the next crucial step in internationalization’. This paper is situated within this distinct approach to internationalisation, and asserts that the time for “recognising” intercultural learning has now come.

### **Applying a critical pedagogical lens**

As indicated earlier, we will use critical pedagogy to unveil hegemonic forces insofar as these have determined and may continue to determine how internationalisation at tertiary level is understood and practised. Critical pedagogical approaches are important towards articulating the theoretical underpinning of our work. Within the context of this paper they enable us to become more alert to social inequalities and injustices which students and educators may encounter in multicultural learning environments (Giroux, 2010; Kincheloe, 2005). We accept the view of exponents of critical pedagogy that education is always already political (Giroux 2010; Apple, 2010; Kincheloe, 2005), and that oppression occurs through the influence of politics and related power struggles. Hegemony, according to Gramsci (1930-1932, p. 200), can be defined as power that is ‘exercised throughout society by the dominant group’. The unmasking of oppressive forces that operate within educational settings thus becomes fundamental to critical pedagogical thinking.

Contemporary critical pedagogy encompasses a diverse group of scholars who draw on shared principles to inform their own practice. Critical pedagogy has generated work in a broad range of educational settings (e.g. McArthur, 2010; Takacs, 2003; hooks, 2003), and in light of this, is likely to continue to encourage educators to address ever-changing appearances of social oppression. To realise its ‘social and educational vision of justice and equality’ (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 6), critical pedagogy employs concepts with a mainly twofold focus: *critique* (to raise awareness of and critique oppressive forces) and *change* (to initiate change towards a more socially just world). The development of a ‘critical consciousness’ is generally regarded as the first of many steps towards opposing forms of social oppression (Freire, 1970). However from a critical pedagogical perspective, being aware of oppressive forces alone does not bring about change. Educators and students are therefore encouraged to act upon identifiable forces of oppression (Shields, 2012; Giroux, 2010; Kincheloe, 2005; Freire and Macedo, 1987). Empowering students and encouraging agency, for example, are understood to be such drivers of change (Kincheloe, 2008; Freire, 1997). By applying a critical pedagogical lens to the

internationalisation literature in this paper, we a) aspire to raise awareness of hegemonic thinking within this educational field, and b) seek to encourage educators to develop resourceful pedagogical approaches to intercultural learning that foster justice and equality inside the classroom and beyond.

### **Approaches to internationalisation and hegemonic thinking behind these**

As stated above, the term intercultural learning is not popular when the teaching and learning of international students at tertiary institutions is concerned. Instead, the term internationalisation predominates in current public and private tertiary education in the UK and elsewhere. However, understandings of the term internationalisation often vary. More specifically, what internationalisation means or implies will depend on the views adopted by the policymakers and educators who use it. Economic, free-market rationales for institutional internationalisation are frequently identified and highlighted in the literature (De Wit, 2011; Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Maringe, 2010). From this perspective, international student recruitment is seen as a money-making initiative, with international students regarded as “cash cows” who help cut institutional budget deficits (Ryan, 2011; Kreber, 2009; Brown and Jones, 2007; Ryan, 2005). Largely as a reaction to such economic rationality, alternative understandings of the term internationalisation have developed, which focus on the socio-cultural and educational merits of diverse learning environments (Jin and Cortazzi, 2013b; Welikala, 2013; Trahar and Hyland, 2011). Accordingly, internationalisation is a value-laden term and ‘is not a phenomenon that is neutral or value free’ (Gu, Schweisfurth and Day 2010, p. 8). Such value-laden understandings are reflected in the various approaches to internationalisation that have been adopted in tertiary education over time. Below, we seek to characterise these, giving special attention to the most recent positioning which appears to lay the foundations for the inclusion of resourceful pedagogies into the learning and teaching of international students. The focus of the literature in this field is on university education and classroom learning, since far less is known about the ways internationalisation is understood in other formal and informal educational contexts such as in further education colleges and language schools; which provide a future focus for our research.

#### *Correcting deficiencies*

Prior to the late 1990s the literature charts a deficit view whereby international students were conceptualised as a homogenous group, needy of the appropriate knowledge and skills required to be academically successful in the academic host environment (Ryan, 2011; Caruana and Spurling, 2007; Ryan, 2005; Louie, 2005). The aim of this approach to internationalisation was to remediate students’ “missing skills”, leaving these with no other choice than to adjust to existing academic standards (Ryan and Hellmundt, 2005; McLean and Ransom, 2005). Learning ‘to master the rules of the game’ is how Welikala (2013, p. 40) describes this approach. In this view, international students were often characterised as passive and linguistically incapable class fellows, rote learners, plagiarisers, uncritical thinkers, and so forth (Leask and Carroll, 2011; Ryan and Carroll, 2005). Such stereotypes and misconceptions rendered meaningful intercultural interactions between students problematic (Harrison and Peacock, 2009), the outcome being a one-sided process of adaptation (Welikala, 2013). Thus the process of internationalisation from this *Weltanschauung* becomes the oppressor and international

students become the oppressed (Freire, 1970), represented by feelings of powerlessness and inequality on the side of international students, as the following quote by a Chinese student who came to study in the UK illustrates: ‘I’m the guest and the guest is always less powerful’ (Gu, Schweisfurth and Day 2010, p. 17).

### *Assimilatory practice*

At the end of the 1990s, the deficit approach to internationalisation as outlined above began to receive widespread criticism for “charging” international students with academic shortcomings (Louie, 2005; Biggs, 1999) and an assimilatory approach to internationalisation emerged (Thom, 2009; Caruana and Spurling, 2007). From this perspective, international students’ diverse cultural origins began to be acknowledged, encouraging educators and peers to develop a meta-cultural sensitivity, to reflect on their own and other cultures, and to foster more inclusive learning (Louise, 2005; Ryan and Carroll, 2005). Nonetheless, the assimilatory approach still failed to recognise the contributions that international students might make to the prevailing learning environment. On the contrary, international students were still required to adjust to existing academic standards (Montgomery and McDowell, 2009) and social expectations, which is reminiscent of the deficit approach (Caruana and Spurling, 2007). Discourse and research that follow an assimilatory approach to internationalisation seem to focus primarily on investigating the dilemmas and challenges that are experienced when international students come to study on Western campuses (Jones and Caruana, 2009).

In their mixed-method study of 1,288 first-year international undergraduates at four UK universities for example, Gu, Schweisfurth and Day (2010, p. 11) emphasise the significance of ‘adaptation processes’. They define adaptation processes as processes ‘through which students change (...) to fit in with the host culture’ (ibid.). Although Gu, Schweisfurth and Day (2010) acknowledge the complexity and individuality of the adaptation processes international students may encounter (not least having to negotiate their socio-cultural identities), international students are not perceived as bearers of new knowledge by the authors, so it seems, as adaptation processes are investigated, leaving little room for students to contribute. On concluding their study, Gu, Schweisfurth and Day (2010, p. 13) found that for the participating international students ‘adapting to a different academic culture appeared to be more acute than adapting to a different cultural and social environment’. This finding is quite revealing, since it suggests that more inclusive pedagogies may result in better educational experiences, thereby supporting the need for a re-evaluation of assimilatory approaches to internationalisation. In common with the deficit approach, we would therefore argue that the assimilatory approach fails to take into account the construction of socially just learning environments.

To reiterate, in accordance with the assimilatory approach, research studies have mainly focused on examining the dilemmas and challenges that result from international students studying at tertiary level institutions outside their countries of origin, for which there is a burgeoning research literature. The focus is mainly on the comparative study of home and international students from a qualitative, practitioner-led perspective (Kimmel and Volet, 2012; Gu, Schweisfurth and Day, 2010; Caruana and Spurling, 2007). Research themes of major concern have been student interaction and group work between students from

different cultural backgrounds, that is to say there is a strong emphasis on classroom based interaction in these studies (Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Gu, Schweisfurth and Day, 2010). The majority of this literature seems to suggest that students do not interact spontaneously with other students who have a different culture, ethnicity, religion or who speak a different language (Volet and Ang, 2012; Peacock and Harrison, 2009; Leask, 2009; Turner, 2009; Hyland, Trahar, Anderson and Dickens, 2008; Volet and Ang, 1998). Language barriers, existing stereotypes, academic pressure (for example in formally assessed group work), pragmatic matters (e.g. missing opportunities for socialising, work commitments after class) and feeling culturally and emotionally more connected with students from similar backgrounds, are all reasons given by home and international students who participated in research studies that aimed to elaborate why students prefer to stay within their own cultural groups (Volet and Ang, 2012; Turner, 2009; Peacock and Harrison, 2009; Hyland, Trahar, Anderson and Dickens, 2008). It should be pointed out however that these reasons are not mutually exclusive but rather complex and interrelated, as Volet and Ang (2012) acknowledge.

To overcome the apparent lack of student interaction, it has been suggested teachers should avoid self-selection in groups and make culturally mixed group work the expected norm (Volet and Ang, 2012; Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Jones and Caruana, 2009; Leask, 2009). Moreover, it has been suggested that sufficient time should be allowed for students to get to know each other prior to and during a group work task (Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Jones and Caruana, 2009; Ippolito, 2007). There is recent evidence that ‘when “forced” to work together in multinational teams for a substantial period [...], students seem to be able to overcome some of the initial cultural barriers that prevent students to learn together in multinational teams’ (Rienties, Hernandez Nanclares, Jindal-Snape and Alcott 2012, p. 17). Rienties et al. (2012) used Social Network Analysis to establish, over the course of 14 weeks, how students from different socio-cultural backgrounds form relationships with other students – in this case, these were 69 mainly international students enrolled on a postgraduate course at a UK university. From a critical pedagogical perspective however, “forcing” students to work together becomes questionable, especially outside of classroom based learning. We therefore, once again, consider the assimilatory approach with critical eyes, searching for alternative ways of doing and thinking.

#### *Pursuing intercultural education*

In the absence of pedagogically justifiable methods of intercultural learning in the literature, there has been an increase in research into contexts where a more positive attitude towards intercultural interactions among students can be realised (Welikala, 2013; Kimmel and Volet, 2012; Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Ryan, 2011). Studies have shown that not all international student cohorts are resistant to working together and socialising with students from different cultural backgrounds (Volet and Ang, 2012; Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Montgomery, 2009; Montgomery and McDowell, 2009; Peacock and Harrison, 2009). Montgomery (2009, p. 263), for example, found that for the majority of the 33 international and 37 British business, engineering and design students interviewed in her study, mixed group work was a welcome opportunity, and was perceived to be ‘commonplace’ and ‘more fun’. Montgomery (ibid.) concludes that

there seemed to be a ‘different social atmosphere’ and that the participating students enjoyed the international dimension of their courses, as it would enable them to acquire skills relevant to working in a multicultural environment. Conflicts of opinion arising from work on a group task were thus not perceived to be the result of language barriers or academic incapability on the part of international students, but rather the students’ varied approaches to completing the task. Overall, personal and professional benefits were identified in studies conducted in this context. On the interpersonal plane, developing new friendships and intercultural skills as well as an awareness of stereotyping were reported (Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Montgomery, 2009; Peacock and Harrison, 2009). Volet and Ang (2012), for instance, observed that as a result of working together in a group, a number of students noticed that they had wrongly stereotyped group members. On a professional level, students reported that they felt better prepared to work in a culturally diverse company and showed respect for the knowledge and skills of their peers (Montgomery, 2009). Despite seemingly increasing awareness among home and international students of the benefits of intercultural interaction, this would appear to be of a rather ad hoc nature, as the following statement by Peacock and Harrison (2009, p. 502) illustrates:

The examples given tended to be incidental; shiny anecdotes which point to a very surface level of understanding and awareness, rather than being bound into a wider context of cross-cultural communication, appreciation of diversity, or global awareness.

Nonetheless, these findings do appear to have initiated greater reflexivity and discussion on what the internationalisation of tertiary education might look like in future.

For us one of the most significant developments within the literature currently is the appreciation of international students as resourceful peers from whom everyone can learn (Jin and Cortazzi, 2013a; Welikala, 2013). That is, within this critique, economic rationales (such as the marketisation of education and income generation) seem to recede in significance as primary drivers for the provision of intercultural education. Concurrently, discussions on pedagogies that afford opportunities to empower students to become active agents of their own learning are emerging (Jin and Cortazzi, 2013b; Welikala, 2013). For example, Caruana and Spurling (2007, p. 67) speak of a ‘pedagogy of recognition’ but without elaborating what this might look like. Jin and Cortazzi (2013b, p. 5) propose ‘cultures of learning’ to signal

how learning has cultural dimensions, how it is a culturally pluralistic process, and that participants in international and multicultural contexts may well bring quite different social practices and cultural expectations with them.

This is good news for us as reviewers and researchers, in that this approach to internationalisation seeks to make learning processes more inclusive and transformative, by recognising international students for the contributions they might be able to make in diverse study contexts.



This alternative discourse of internationalisation becomes explicit in the following propositions made by educators who support this approach:

- International students, like home students, are not to be regarded as a homogenous group, since they hold a wide array of experiences and expertise, often differing between conational students (Welikala, 2013; Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Montgomery, 2009; Louie, 2005; De Vita, 2002).
- Diversity should be celebrated and not approached as a problem (Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Ryan and Viete 2009). International students should thus be understood as ‘fully integrated partner(s) and active agent(s)’ (Harrison and Peacock 2009, p. 125), and pedagogical underpinnings should reflect this empowering approach (Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Caruana and Spurling, 2007).
- Teaching and support staff should be provided with professional training that addresses questions of inclusivity and otherization to increase awareness of reflective and critical educational strategies that foster meaningful intercultural exchange (Leask and Carroll, 2011; Trahar and Hyland, 2011).
- Students and educators are encouraged to oppose oppressive forces by, for example, challenging the superiority of Western ideology (Trahar, 2009; Haigh, 2009; Turner, 2009; Kreber, 2009).
- Interconnecting formal and informal curricula are considered to promote student interaction inside and outside the classroom (Leask and Carroll, 2011).

### **Emerging themes and concluding thoughts**

The most useful finding to emerge from our review, as we have characterized it in this paper, is that the provision of intercultural *education* at tertiary level is situated within positive attitudes to internationalisation – an approach that recognises international students’ rich cultural backgrounds as well as the need for inclusive pedagogies that underpin teaching and learning processes in diverse educational settings. However, as it has also been shown there is very little literature that examines how this new approach to internationalisation is being realised in practice; what we refer to as intercultural *learning*; which is our way of semantically differentiating these pedagogical features of internationalization. Moreover, it is interesting to note that there does not seem to be much discussion at educational policy level that responds to our major focus: how is this achieved through practice? A number of key questions have emerged from this review therefore, such as: In what ways could students be empowered to act as active agents? How can educators ensure that they foster socially just learning environments through their teaching, especially when the provision of education is firmly rooted in capitalist, if not overtly neoliberal, educational settings? How can formal and informal curricula be intertwined to foster inclusive learning within and beyond the classroom, without “forcing” students to interact?

There are of course many other questions that remain unexplored in this paper and perhaps within the literature on internationalisation generally. The following interim conclusion can thus be drawn from our particular reading of the literature to date: Although the most recent trend in the internationalisation literature is to re-think existing approaches and to include a stronger pedagogical dimension, there seems to be some way

to go before diverse learning environments are utilised as spaces that foster intercultural learning and teaching.

Finally, it can be said that offering a “recognising” intercultural education at tertiary level is likely to be a complex endeavour, requiring reflexivity, flexibility and commitment on the part of educators, students and policymakers. More precisely, carefully planned and constructed study contexts for international students are likely to embody elements of celebration, but also considerable challenges (Welikala, 2013). Our current hypothesis regarding why some students cherish the experience of working together in diverse groups, whilst others object to it hinges in part on the prevailing social atmosphere (Montgomery, 2009), not least the context and setting in which students from different socio-cultural backgrounds interact (Kimmel and Volet, 2012) and, we would add, the pedagogies that might generate a positive social atmosphere. This relies in turn on a complex matrix of attitudes and positionalities of the actors concerned, the curricular (and extra-curricular) content, the learning and teaching methods engaged. Future research could therefore explore what makes diverse study contexts celebratory for students and staff in internationalised settings such as our own.

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## EDUCAZIONE INTERCULTURALE E INTEGRAZIONE SCOLASTICA IN CLASSI MULTIETNICHE ATTRAVERSO L'APPRENDIMENTO COOPERATIVO

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### **Introduzione**

Negli ultimi decenni, gli effetti della migrazione sulla salute mentale e il benessere socio-emotivo in età evolutiva sono stati oggetto di approfondimento teorico ed empirico. Gran parte della ricerca psicologica e pedagogica sull'adattamento psico-sociale ha indagato il potenziale rischio per bambini e adolescenti di sviluppare disturbi psichiatrici e difficoltà adattive.

Nella presente indagine sono stati valutati la prosocialità, l'aggressività, l'instabilità emotiva, l'accettazione sociale e i legami amicali a scuola, utilizzando sia autovalutazioni degli stessi alunni, sia le valutazioni delle insegnanti.

Inoltre è stata rilevata, in termini descrittivi, l'offerta formativa interculturale erogata da due scuole di Roma, aventi gruppi-classe caratterizzati da una composizione etnica eterogenea.

### **Quadro teorico**

Nell'infanzia e nell'età adulta l'esperienza migratoria può provocare un trauma (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989), una destabilizzante perdita e lacerazione interiore (Bleger, 1979; Serrano, 1980), uno sradicamento, (Mirski, 1997), tanto da divenire uno stato psicologico di vulnerabilità, e un fattore di rischio per lo sviluppo identitario (Moro, 2001).

Tra le difficoltà di adattamento psicologico sono state rilevate nei bambini immigrati sintomi psicopatologici (Minde & Minde, 1976), alti livelli di ansia e depressione (Bengi-Arslan et al., 1997), ansia e disturbi post-traumatici da stress (Barrett et al., 2002). Alcuni studi hanno riscontrato nei bambini immigrati una più bassa autostima (Aurelius, 1980), un'immagine di sé più negativa (Lackand, 1994), un più basso concetto di sé, più alti livelli di ansia (Roebbers & Schneider, 1999), tendenza all'esteriorizzazione (Gonneke et al., 2003), maggiori problemi comportamentali ma una migliore salute mentale (Crosnoe, 2006). Alcuni studi internazionali hanno rilevato nei bambini immigrati problemi di adattamento

socio-emotivo senza confrontarli ai pari nativi (Goldenberg, 1973; Takac, 1976). Numerosi studi comparativi sull'adattamento sociale ed emotivo nei bambini immigrati hanno riscontrato maggiori problemi comportamentali (Derbyshire, 1969; Nicol, 1971; Bagley, 1972; Rutter et al., 1974; Gaertner-Harnach, 1981; Xin Ma, 2002).

Sono stati rilevati anche minori disturbi del comportamento nei bambini immigrati (Kallarckal & Herbert, 1976; Touliatos & Lindholm, 1980 a e b) ma in associazione a maggiori psicopatologie (Cocharne, 1979). Nei Paesi Bassi è risultato che i bambini turchi di II generazione mostravano minori comportamenti aggressivi e delinquenti rispetto ai bambini immigrati di I generazione (Sowa et. al, 2000). Altri contributi empirici, invece, non hanno messo in luce differenze significative di adattamento sociale tra immigrati e nativi di età scolare (Osborn, 1971; Touliatos & Lindholm, 1980 c; Bengi-Arslan et al., 1997; Kolaitis et al., 2003; Atzaba-Poria, 2004).

La pedagogia interculturale ha individuato variabili proprie della migrazione (Aluffi Pentini, 2002): oggettive (economiche, socio-culturali, familiari e linguistiche) e soggettive (emozioni e percezioni di sé). Consistenti differenze tra la cultura d'appartenenza e quella ospite possono causare problemi a livello corporeo, geografico, culturale, linguistico e familiare (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992; Favaro, 1996). Molti pedagogisti di indirizzo interculturale hanno definito l'integrazione come un indice dell'integrità del sé, la cui qualità è determinata da:

- la situazione dell'inserimento e la qualità dei risultati scolastici;
- la competenza nella lingua italiana;
- la qualità (intensità e ricchezza) delle relazioni in classe con i compagni;
- la qualità e la quantità degli scambi nel tempo extrascolastico;
- la competenza nella lingua madre;
- l'autostima (Favaro & Fumagalli, 2004; Favaro & Luatti, 2004).

La pedagogia interculturale ha sottolineato l'importanza di attuare progetti educativi intenzionali, rivolti a tutti gli alunni (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992; Demetrio & Favaro, 2002; Susi 1999; 2005; Aluffi Pentini 2002; Pinto Minerva, 2002; Fiorucci, 2004).

Nella riflessione interculturale, la relazione con l'altro, in quanto nucleo centrale della mediazione, significa sostanzialmente:

“avvicinare, facilitare il contatto, includere, favorire l'interazione e lo scambio, promuovendo opportunità equivalenti nel rispetto delle diversità (... ) La mediazione si origina, quindi da una *necessità* e da una



*consapevolezza*: la necessità di integrare i nuovi cittadini e di integrarsi tra diversi su tutti i piani sociale, economico, culturale e politico e la consapevolezza che l'integrazione è un processo di negoziazione reciproca tra cittadini e istituzioni" (Favaro, 2004, p. 19 ).

In ambito psicologico la Teoria del Contatto di Allport (1954) ha sostenuto che, l'incontro tra gruppi può ridurre il pregiudizio e la tensione intergruppi, solo a determinate condizioni: l'interdipendenza reciproca, lo status paritario tra gruppi, la frequenza e l'intensità dell'interazione tra gruppi e il sostegno sociale di un'autorità. La suddetta teoria ha trovato larga applicazione in ambito scolastico tramite il *Cooperative Learning*, che risulta avere benefici effetti nella promozione di maggiori abilità cognitive e sociali, di un migliore adattamento psico-sociale e delle relazioni interpersonali e amicali nelle classi multietniche (Kagan e Madsen, 1972; De Vries et al., 1978; Slavin 1979 a; 1979 b; Ziegler, 1981; Sharan et al., 1984; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 1996; Slavin et al., 1994; Slavin e Cooper, 1999).

Sotto il profilo metodologico il Cooperative Learning e il Counseling condividono i principi fondamentali dell'educazione interculturale, focalizzandosi sulla dimensione relazionale, ossia il saper essere (British Association for Counseling – BAC, 1990). Ne deriva un trinomio inscindibile: la relazione di counseling incentrata sul dialogo paritario è protesa a rinforzare la consapevolezza di sé, migliorando le relazioni interpersonali e la creatività (Fabiani & Passantino 2007, p. 46), in accordo sia, con i presupposti teorici del Cooperative Learning basato sull'interdipendenza positiva, sia con la pedagogia interculturale che promuove un reciproco interscambio e riconoscimento (Fabiani & Passantino 2007, p. 46).

## **Metodo**

### **Partecipanti**

Nella presente ricerca sono state coinvolte due scuole statali di Roma, una ubicata in un municipio a medio flusso migratorio, e l'altra in un municipio a forte flusso migratorio.

Al primo studio empirico hanno partecipato 64 bambini di 9 anni - bilanciati per genere - (età media in mesi 119, 49; d.s. 4,42), di cui 45 immigrati di II generazione nati in Italia e 19 italiani, frequentanti la IV elementare.

Il campione è stato suddiviso in due sottogruppi:

- uno di 34 bambini (23 immigrati e 11 italiani), come gruppo sperimentale, che ha partecipato all'intervento didattico;
- uno di 30 bambini, caratterizzato da una simile percentuale di immigrati, che ha costituito il gruppo di controllo, non partecipando al medesimo intervento (cfr. tabella 1).

Tabella 1 - *Distribuzione dei partecipanti per sottogruppo, nazionalità e genere*

<b>Gruppo</b>		<b>Gruppo Sperimentale</b>	<b>Gruppo di controllo</b>	<b>Gruppo Totale</b>
Immigrati	<i>M</i>	13	13	26
	<i>F</i>	10	9	19
	<i>Tot.</i>	23	22	45
Italiani	<i>M</i>	7	4	11
	<i>F</i>	4	4	8
	<i>Tot.</i>	11	8	19
Immigrati+Italiani	<i>M</i>	20	17	37
	<i>F</i>	14	13	27
	<i>Tot.</i>	34	30	64

Al secondo studio hanno partecipato 60 docenti di scuola primaria, di cui:

- 25 docenti in servizio in classi caratterizzate dalla presenza di alunni immigrati superiore al 50%;
- 35 docenti in servizio in classi caratterizzate dalla presenza di alunni immigrati inferiore al 30% (cfr. tabella 2).

Tabella 2 - *Distribuzione degli insegnanti per titolo di studio, età e composizione della classe*

Titolo di studio	Composizione etnica della classe d'insegnamento		Fascia d'età in anni			
	< 30 % alunni immigrati	> 50% alunni immigrati	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65
diploma di scuola superiore	18	12	2	3	13	5
diploma universitario	2	0	0	16	5	0
laurea a universitaria	12	9	3	3	7	0
laurea + master	3	4	1	1	1	0
TOTALE	35	25	6	23	26	5

## Obiettivi

Il primo studio empirico si è proposto di analizzare l'adattamento psico-sociale dei bambini immigrati, a confronto con i pari italiani, inseriti in classi dalla composizione etnica eterogenea, per poi verificare l'efficacia di un programma d'intervento basato sul Cooperative Learning, volto a favorire un migliore adattamento;

- il secondo studio esplorativo si è proposto di descrivere la programmazione didattico-educativa attuata in due scuole primarie.

## Strumenti

### Primo studio

Ai bambini del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo, prima e dopo l'intervento, sono stati somministrati i seguenti strumenti standardizzati:

- le tre Scale degli Indicatori della Capacità di Adattamento Sociale in età evolutiva per rilevare il comportamento prosociale, l'aggressività fisica/verbale e l'instabilità emotiva (Caprara et al., 1992);
- Five-Scale Test of Self-Esteem for children per rilevare l'autostima nelle cinque dimensioni, ossia globale, scolastica, corporea, familiare e interpersonale (Pope, 1988; trad. it Di Pietro, 1992);
- il Test Sociometrico per rilevare il grado di accettazione sociale da parte dei pari (Moreno, 1953; Reffieuna, 2003);
- il Questionario sulle Amicizie di classe per rilevare la qualità delle relazioni amicali all'interno del gruppo-classe (Hallinan, 1982).

## **Secondo Studio**

E' stato predisposto un apposito questionario semi-strutturato, articolato in 58 domande, raggruppate nelle seguenti sezioni tematiche:

- dati personali;
- esperienza personale in ambito interculturale;
- programmazione didattica interculturale;
- metodologie di accoglienza;
- insegnamento dell'italiano come seconda lingua;
- didattica interculturale;
- progetti di educazione interculturale in corso.

## **Procedura**

In una prima fase di rilevazione empirica sono stati somministrati individualmente ai bambini i suddetti strumenti durante l'orario scolastico, fornendo loro istruzioni. Un sottogruppo che ha presentato maggiormente la tendenza all'aggressività e all'instabilità emotiva, ha partecipato a una preliminare fase di training cooperativo, poi a un progetto didattico, di durata trimestrale, in cui sono stati assegnati, per piccoli gruppi cooperativi, compiti di comprensione e analisi di fiabe di varie culture.

Sulla base della valutazione iniziale sono stati definiti dei criteri di raggruppamento dei bambini, considerando la diversità di:

- origine culturale e genere;
- prosocialità, aggressività e instabilità emotiva;
- autostima globale, scolastica e interpersonale;
- reciprocità delle scelte, dei rifiuti e delle nomine amicali.

Terminato l'intervento didattico-educativo, sono stati somministrati a tutti i bambini gli strumenti precedentemente impiegati. Le valutazioni iniziali e finali del gruppo sperimentale sono state confrontate con quelle di un gruppo di controllo con simile presenza di immigrati.

In una seconda fase di rilevazione empirica è stato somministrato alle insegnanti un questionario relativo all'offerta formativa. A ciascun insegnante sono stati messi a

disposizione 45 minuti per la compilazione individuale del questionario in orario extrascolastico.

## **Risultati**

### **Primo Studio**

#### **Adattamento Sociale**

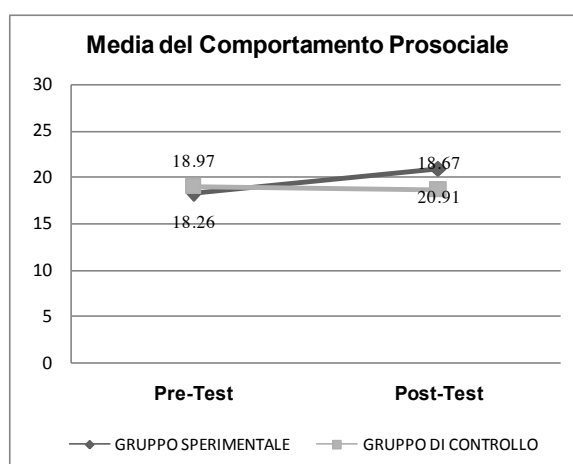
Per confrontare i punteggi medi e le deviazioni standard del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo, nelle fasi di pre-intervento e post-intervento, sono state effettuate analisi della varianza a modello misto  $2 \times 2 \times 2$ , i cui fattori sono stati il Gruppo (Sperimentale vs. Controllo), la Nazionalità d'origine (Immigrati vs. Italiani) e il Test (Pre-test vs. Post-test), per i tre indicatori dell'adattamento sociale quali, CP, AFV, IE, l'autostima e le nomine amicali nel gruppo-classe d'appartenenza. L'ANOVA ha evidenziato effetti significativi dell'intervento sugli indicatori dell'adattamento sociale. L'analisi della varianza per la variabile CP ha evidenziato gli effetti significativi dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 10.37$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 21.15$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ] (cfr. tabella 3).

Tabella 3 - Medie (e deviazioni standard) dei punteggi dell'Adattamento Sociale prima e dopo l'intervento

	Gruppo	N°	Prosocialità		Aggressività Fisica/Verbale		Instabilità Emotiva	
			PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
GRUPPO SPERIMENTALE	Immigrati	23	18.35 (2.97)	20.83 (2.32)	13.78 (4.32)	12.48 (3.56)	19.04 (5.26)	16.09 (3.89)
	Italiani	11	18.09 (2.38)	21.09 (1.75)	17.00 (5.74)	14.55 (4.71)	21.18 (6.22)	19.36 (6.00)
	Immigrati+Italiani	34	18.26 (2.76)	20.91 (2.13)	14.82 (4.98)	13.15 (4.02)	19.74 (5.58)	17.15 (4.84)
GRUPPO DI CONTROLLO	Immigrati	22	18.55 (2.79)	18.45 (3.17)	16.05 (3.94)	15.36 (3.59)	19.00 (4.38)	19.00 (4.39)
	Italiani	8	20.13 (2.35)	19.25 (2.31)	17.75 (4.49)	18.13 (5.71)	22.63 (4.03)	22.63 (4.50)
	Immigrati+Italiani	30	18.97 (2.73)	18.67 (2.95)	16.50 (4.09)	16.10 (4.33)	19.97 (4.52)	19.97 (4.64)
	<i>Gruppo Complessivo</i>	64	18.59 (2.75)	19.86 (2.77)	15.61 (4.62)	14.53 (4.39)	19.84 (5.08)	18.47 (4.92)

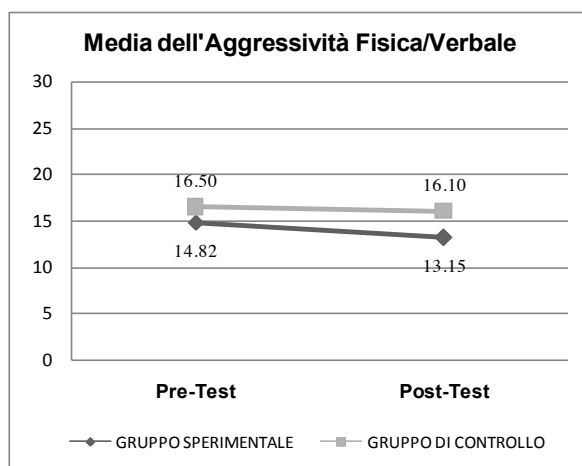
I dati dei due gruppi sul comportamento prosociale registrato al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 1).

Figura 1 - Comportamento Prosociale medio del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



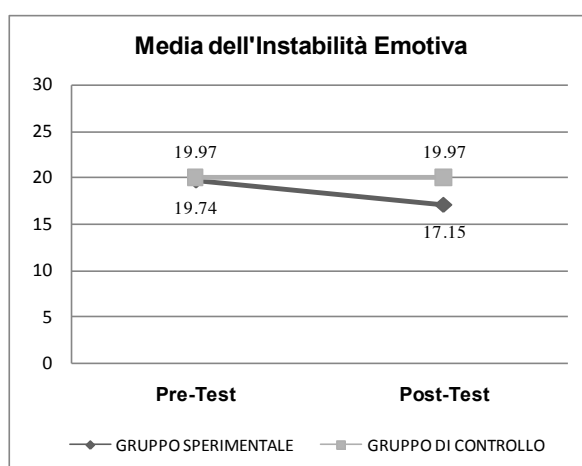
I dati dei due gruppi relativi all'aggressività fisica/verbale registrata al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 2).

Figura 2 - Aggressività media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



L'ANOVA per la variabile AFV ha evidenziato gli effetti statisticamente significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 8.46; p = 0.005$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo sull'aggressività fisica/verbale dei bambini [ $F(60) = 6.10; p = 0.016$ ]. Anche i dati del gruppo sperimentale e del gruppo di controllo relativi all'instabilità emotiva registrata al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 3).

Figura 3 - Instabilità Emotiva media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



L'ANOVA per la variabile IE ha messo in evidenza gli effetti significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 11.03; p = 0.002$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 11.03; p = 0.002$ ].

### Autostima

L'ANOVA per l'autostima globale ha messo in luce gli effetti statisticamente significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 13.54; p = 0.001$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 22.56; p < 0.001$ ; (cfr. tabella 4)].

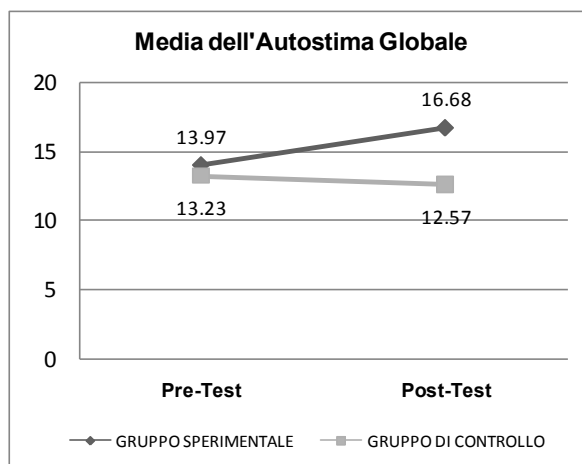
Tabella 4 - *Medie (e deviazioni standard) dei punteggi dell'Autostima prima e dopo l'intervento*

	Gruppo	N°	Globale		Scolastica		Corporea		Familiare		Interpersonale	
			PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
<b>GRUPPO SPERIMENTALE</b>	Immigrati	23	13.70 (3.84)	16.52 (2.23)	13.30 (2.63)	14.52 (2.25)	14.52 (3.01)	15.74 (2.17)	15.39 (4.16)	17.04 (2.34)	12.00 (3.59)	15.26 (2.22)
	Italiani	11	14.55 (2.84)	17.00 (1.89)	13.55 (2.87)	14.73 (3.19)	15.82 (1.66)	15.73 (2.32)	17.27 (2.49)	17.82 (1.07)	14.91 (2.66)	16.91 (1.86)
	Immigrati+Italiani	34	13.97 (3.52)	16.68 (2.11)	13.38 (2.67)	14.59 (2.54)	14.94 (2.69)	15.74 (2.19)	16.00 (3.77)	17.29 (2.03)	12.94 (3.55)	15.79 (2.22)
<b>GRUPPO DI CONTROLLO</b>	Immigrati	22	12.95 (2.17)	11.91 2.26	10.86 (3.39)	10.50 (3.30)	12.55 (2.04)	12.50 (2.36)	13.95 (3.31)	13.32 (2.45)	10.86 (2.27)	10.77 (2.15)
	Italiani	8	14.00 (2.92)	14.38 (2.92)	12.88 (4.61)	13.50 (4.14)	15.13 (2.41)	14.75 (2.55)	16.75 (1.39)	17.13 (2.03)	13.38 (3.06)	13.13 (2.74)
	Immigrati+Italiani	30	13.23 (2.38)	12.57 (2.64)	11.40 (3.78)	11.3 (3.72)	13.23 (2.40)	13.10 (2.57)	14.70 (3.16)	14.33 (2.88)	11.53 (2.70)	11.40 (2.51)
	<i>Gruppo Complessivo</i>	64	13.63 (3.04)	14.75 (3.13)	12.45 (3.36)	13.05 (3.53)	14.14 (2.68)	14.50 (2.70)	15.39 (3.53)	15.91 (2.86)	12.28 (3.23)	13.73 (3.22)



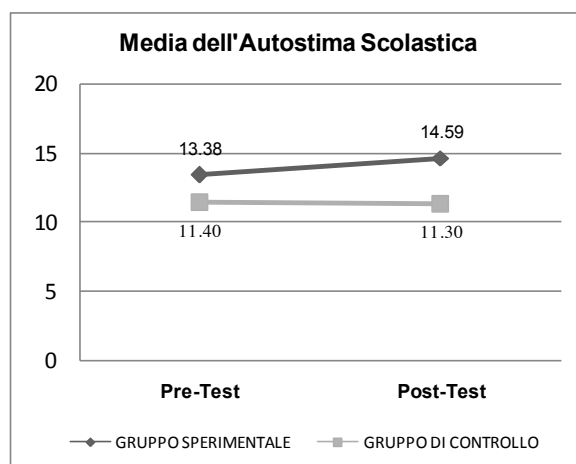
I dati dei due gruppi relativi all'autostima globale del pre-test e post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 4).

Figura 4 - Autostima Globale media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



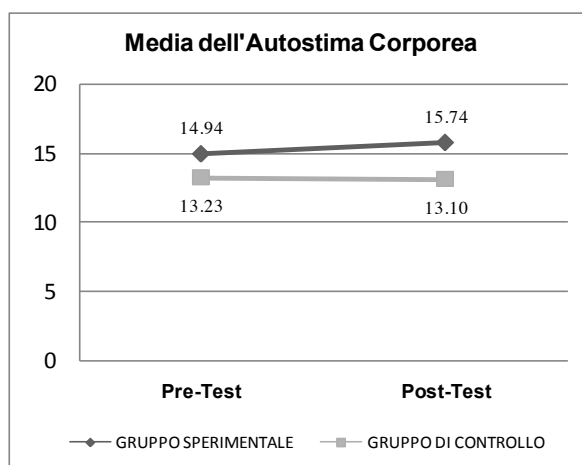
L'ANOVA per l'autostima scolastica ha messo in evidenza gli effetti significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 5.69$ ;  $p = 0.020$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 3.67$ ;  $p = 0.060$ ]. I dati dei due gruppi relativi all'autostima globale del pre-test e post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 5).

Figura 5 - Autostima Scolastica media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



L'ANOVA per l'autostima corporea non ha messo in evidenza gli effetti significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo (cfr. figura 6).

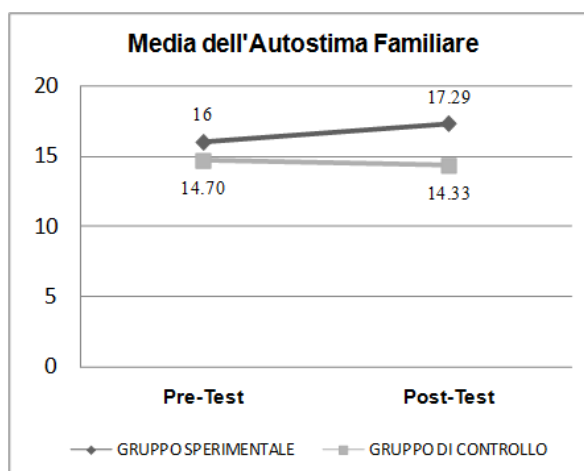
Figura 6 - Autostima corporea media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



Infatti i bambini di entrambi i gruppi mostrano nella fase di post-intervento simili livelli di autostima corporea a quella mostrata nella fase di pre-intervento.

L'ANOVA per l'autostima familiare non ha messo in evidenza gli effetti statisticamente significativi del fattore Test né dell'interazione tra il Test e il Gruppo (cfr. figura 7).

Figura 7 - Autostima familiare media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento

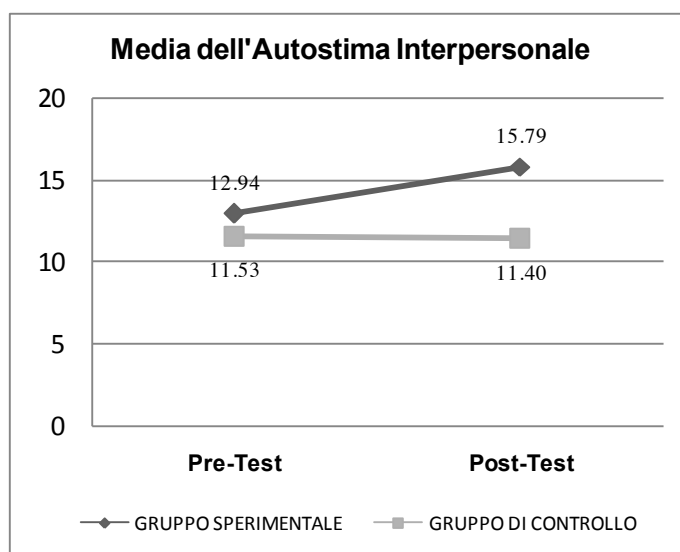


Anche i controlli post-hoc dei dati registrati per mezzo del *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti confermano che non vi sono differenze significative tra le medie riportate per questa variabile dal gruppo di controllo sia nella fase di pre-test che in quella di post-test.

L'analisi della varianza per l'autostima interpersonale ha messo in evidenza gli effetti statisticamente significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 19.07$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 24.73$   $p < 0.001$ ].

I dati del gruppo sperimentale e del gruppo di controllo relativi all'autostima interpersonale registrata al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 8).

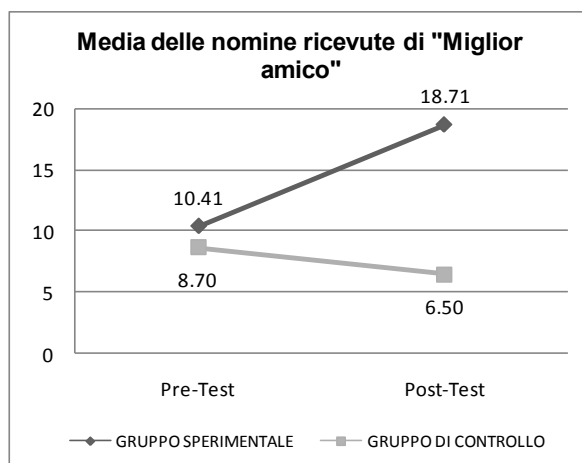
Figura 8 - Autostima interpersonale media del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo valutata prima e dopo l'intervento



### Nomine amicali ricevute

I dati del gruppo sperimentale e del gruppo di controllo relativi alle nomine ricevute di "miglior amico" registrate al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti (cfr. figura 9).

Figura 9 – Nomine amicali medie del gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l'intervento



L'ANOVA condotta per le varie nomine amicali ricevute ha messo in evidenza diversi effetti significativi del fattore Test preso in considerazione. L'ANOVA condotta per le nomine di "miglior amico" ha messo in luce gli effetti statisticamente significativi del Test ossia dell'intervento didattico-educativo realizzato [ $F(1, 60) = 6.36; p = 0.014$ ] e dell'interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 14.84; p < 0.001$ ; (cfr. tabella 5)].

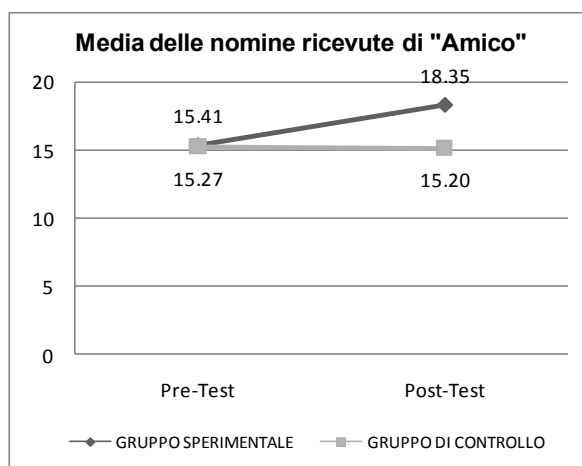
Tabella 5 - Medie (e deviazioni standard) dei punteggi delle Nomine Amicali ricevute prima e dopo l'intervento

	Gruppo	N°	Miglior amico		Amico		Conoscente	
			PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
<b>GRUPPO SPERIMENTALE</b>	Immigrati	23	10.96 (7.38)	16.04 (9.68)	15.39 (3.21)	19.13 (4.96)	4.87 (3.19)	2.61 (2.46)
	Italiani	11	9.27 (3.66)	24.27 (25.75)	15.45 (5.06)	16.73 (4.31)	3.18 (2.22)	1.09 (1.44)
	Immigrati+Italiani	34	10.41 (6.40)	18.71 (16.96)	15.41 (3.83)	18.35 (4.83)	4.32 (2.99)	2.12 (2.28)
<b>GRUPPO DI CONTROLLO</b>	Immigrati	22	8.05 (6.76)	5.73 (5.06)	16.00 (6.50)	16.45 (4.53)	3.09 (2.24)	4.36 (2.23)
	Italiani	8	10.50 (5.31)	8.62 (5.18)	13.25 (1.48)	11.75 (2.25)	3.75 (1.83)	5.75 (1.98)
	Immigrati+Italiani	30	8.70 (6.41)	6.50 (5.17)	15.27 (5.71)	15.20 (4.53)	3.27 (2.13)	4.73 (2.22)
	<i>Gruppo Complessivo</i>	64	9.61 (6.41)	12.98 (14.00)	15.34 (4.76)	16.88 (4.92)	3.83 (2.65)	3.34 (2.59)

I dati del gruppo sperimentale e del gruppo di controllo relativi alle nomine ricevute di “amico” registrate al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti.

L’ANOVA condotta per le nomine di “amico” ha messo in evidenza gli effetti statisticamente significativi dell’interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 4.31; p = 0.042$ ]. E’ risultato, infatti, che nella fase di post-intervento i bambini facenti parte del gruppo sperimentale ricevono un maggior numero di nomine di “amico” rispetto alle nomine di “amico” ricevute nella fase iniziale di pre-intervento (rispettivamente 18,35 e 15,41). I bambini facenti parte del gruppo di controllo ricevono in misura pressocchè equivalente le nomine di “amico” rispetto alle nomine di “amico” ricevute nella fase antecedente l’intervento (rispettivamente 15,20 e 15,27; cfr. figura 10).

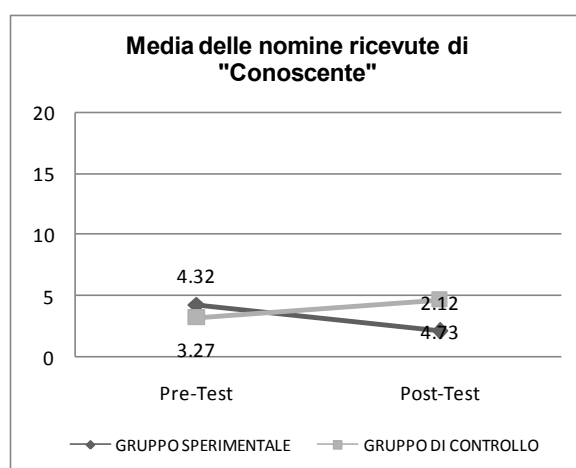
Figura 10 – Nomine medie di “Amico” ricevute dal gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l’intervento



I dati del gruppo sperimentale e del gruppo di controllo relativi alle nomine ricevute di “conoscente” registrate al pre-test e al post-test sono stati sottoposti per i controlli post-hoc al *t*-test di Student per campioni appaiati e indipendenti. I bambini del gruppo sperimentale ricevono un minor numero di nomine di “conoscente” rispetto a quelle ricevute nella fase di pre-intervento.

L’ANOVA condotta per le nomine di “conoscente” ha messo in luce gli effetti statisticamente significativi dell’interazione Test x Gruppo [ $F(1, 60) = 4.82; p = 0.032$ ]. E’ risultato, infatti, che nella fase di post-intervento i bambini facenti parte del gruppo sperimentale ricevono un minor numero di nomine di “conoscente” rispetto alle nomine di “conoscente” ricevute nella fase iniziale di pre-intervento (rispettivamente 2,12 e 4,32). I bambini facenti parte del gruppo di controllo ricevono in misura maggiore le nomine di “conoscente” rispetto alle nomine di “conoscente” ricevute nella fase antecedente l’intervento (rispettivamente 4,73 e 3,27). I bambini del gruppo di controllo ricevono nella fase di post-intervento un maggior numero di nomine di “conoscente” rispetto ai bambini del gruppo sperimentale (rispettivamente 4,73 e 2,12; cfr. figura 11).

Figura 11 – Nomine medie di “Conoscente” ricevute dal gruppo sperimentale e di controllo prima e dopo l’intervento



### Nomine amicali effettuate

In riferimento alle nomine amicali effettuate sono state considerate due tipologie, corrispondenti ad un maggiore grado di intimità e condivisione sociale: “miglior amico” e “conoscente”. In merito alle scelte amicali dei bambini immigrati e italiani si è rilevato che nella fase di pre-intervento il 65% dei bambini immigrati del gruppo sperimentale nomina come migliori amici solo i compagni immigrati, mentre nella fase di post-intervento il 56%, nomina come migliori amici sia i compagni italiani che immigrati; diversamente il 55% dei bambini immigrati del gruppo di controllo nomina come migliori amici sia i compagni immigrati che quelli italiani, sia nella fase di pre-intervento che in quella di post-intervento. Nella fase di pre-intervento il 64% dei bambini italiani del gruppo sperimentale nomina come migliori amici, sia i compagni italiani che immigrati, il 9% solo i compagni italiani. Al contrario il 38% dei bambini italiani del gruppo di controllo nomina come migliori amici in modo equivalente sia i compagni italiani e immigrati, sia solo quelli italiani.

Nel complesso, nella fase di pre-intervento il 53% del gruppo sperimentale nomina come migliori amici solo i compagni immigrati, mentre il 50% del gruppo di controllo nomina come migliori amici sia i compagni immigrati che italiani (cfr. tabella 6).

Tabella 6 - Frequenze assolute e percentuali delle nomine effettuate di “Miglior Amico”

Gruppo		N°*	NOMINA DI MIGLIOR AMICO					
			Italiano		Immigrato		Italiano e Immigrato	
			PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
SPERIMENTALE	Immigrati	23	1	1	15	9	7	13
			5%	5%	65%	39%	30%	56%
	Italiani	11	1	1	3	4	7	6
			9%	9%	27%	36%	64%	55%
	Immigrati+Italiani	34	2	2	18	13	14	19
			6%	6%	53%	38%	41%	56%
CONTROLLO	Immigrati	22	2	2	8	8	12	12
			9%	9%	36%	36%	55%	55%
	Italiani	8	3	3	2	2	3	3
			38%	38%	25%	25%	38%	38%
	Immigrati+Italiani	30	5	5	10	10	15	15
			17%	17%	33%	33%	50%	50%

\*: N°si riferisce al numero di bambini che hanno individuato tra i compagni di classe i loro migliori amici

Rispetto alle nomine di conoscente effettuate dai bambini del gruppo sperimentale si è osservato che il 48% bambini immigrati nella fase di pre-intervento dichiara di conoscere solo i compagni immigrati e i compagni sia immigrati che italiani; nella fase di post-intervento il 42% del gruppo sperimentale nomina comunque in modo equivalente sia i compagni immigrati che quelli italiani e immigrati. Nella fase di post-intervento solo la metà di questo gruppo effettua nomine di “conoscente”. Invece il 46% dei bambini italiani dichiara di conoscere sia i compagni italiani che immigrati prima dell’intervento (cfr. tabella 7).

Tabella 7 - *Frequenze assolute e percentuali delle nomine effettuate di conoscente dal gruppo sperimentale*

Gruppo		N° *	NOMINE DI CONOSCENTE						
			PRE-TEST			N°	POST-TEST		
			Italiano	Immigrato	Italiano e Immigrato		Italiano	Immigrato	Italiano e Immigrato
SPERIMENTALE	Immigrati	21	1	10	10	12	2	5	5
			4%	48%	48%		16%	42%	42%
	Italiani	11	3	3	5	6	2	2	2
			27%	27%	46%		33%	33%	33%
	Immigrati+Italiani	32	4	13	15	18	4	7	7
			12%	41%	47%		22%	39%	39%

\*: N° si riferisce al numero di bambini del gruppo sperimentale nominato tra i compagni di classe i loro conoscenti

Nella fase di post-intervento i bambini del gruppo sperimentale dichiarano di conoscere, per il 39% dei casi, compagni immigrati e compagni sia italiani che immigrati.

I bambini immigrati del gruppo di controllo nella fase di pre-intervento dichiarano di conoscere per il 50%, sia i compagni immigrati, sia quelli italiani; nella fase di post-intervento il 59% dei bambini immigrati del gruppo di controllo nomina sia i compagni italiani che immigrati. Anche il 62% dei bambini italiani dichiara di conoscere nella fase di pre-intervento sia i compagni italiani che immigrati, mentre nella fase di post-intervento essi comunque dichiarano per il 50% di conoscere sia i compagni italiani che immigrati. Di fatto le nomine di “conoscente” effettuate dal gruppo di controllo non subiscono particolari variazioni rispetto alla fase di pre-intervento (cfr. tabella 8).



Tabella 8 - *Frequenze assolute e percentuali delle nomine effettuate di conoscente dal gruppo di controllo*

Gruppo		N° *	NOMINE DI CONOSCENTE						
			PRE-TEST			N°	POST-TEST		
			Italiano	Immigrato	Italiano e Immigrato		Italiano	Immigrato	Italiano e Immigrato
CONTROLLO	Immigrati	18	4	5	9	17	3	4	10
			22%	28%	50%		18%	23%	59%
	Italiani	8	0	3	5	8	1	3	4
			0%	38%	62%		12%	38%	50%
	Immigrati+Italiani	26	4	8	14	25	4	7	14
			15%	31%	54%		16%	28%	56%

\*: N° si riferisce al numero di bambini del gruppo di controllo che hanno individuato tra i compagni di classe i loro conoscenti

Nel complesso si è rilevato un miglioramento, a livello qualitativo, delle amicizie interetniche per i bambini immigrati: Nella fase di pre-intervento i bambini italiani del gruppo sperimentale scelgono, per più della metà, come migliori amici, sia compagni italiani che immigrati, mentre i bambini immigrati tendono a “segregarsi”, scegliendo maggiormente come migliori amici solo i compagni immigrati. Nella fase di post-intervento, per i bambini del gruppo sperimentale, diminuiscono maggiormente le nomine effettuate di “conoscente” rispetto ai bambini del gruppo di controllo.

### Status Sociometrico

I bambini sono stati classificati in cinque categorie sociometriche: popolare, rifiutato, ignorato, controverso e medio.

Alcuni bambini immigrati del gruppo sperimentale sono migliorati rispetto al proprio status sociometrico mentre i bambini del gruppo di controllo hanno mantenuto piuttosto invariato il proprio status sociometrico, tranne qualche eccezione (cfr. tabella 9).

Tabella 9 - *Distribuzione dei bambini per status sociometrico, nazionalità di genere e gruppo prima e dopo l'intervento*

Gruppo		N°	POPOLARE		RIFIUTATO		IGNORATO		CONTROVERSO		MEDIO	
			PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
SPERIMENTALE	<i>Classi in prevalenza di immigrati</i>	17	2	3	3	2	2	1	0	0	10	11
	Immigrati		12%	17%	17%	12%	12%	6%	0%	0%	59%	65%
	Italiani	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
			0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%
	Immigrati+Italiani	19	2	3	4	2	3	2	0	0	10	12
			10%	16%	21%	10%	16%	10%	0%	0%	53%	64%
SPERIMENTALE	<i>Classi in prevalenza di italiani</i>	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
	Immigrati		17%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	83%	83%
	Italiani	9	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	0	4	5
			11%	11%	22%	22%	11%	11%	11%	0%	45%	56%
	Immigrati+Italiani	15	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	9	10
			13%	13%	13%	13%	7%	7%	7%	0%	60%	67%
CONTROLLO	<i>Classi in prevalenza di immigrati</i>	14	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	9	9
	Immigrati		14%	14%	14%	14%	7%	7%	0%	0%	65%	65%
	Italiani	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
			33%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	33%	33%	33%
	Immigrati+Italiani	17	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	10	10
			18%	18%	12%	12%	6%	6%	6%	0%	58%	58%
CONTROLLO	<i>Classi in prevalenza di italiani</i>	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	4
	Immigrati		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	50%	80%
	Italiani	8	2	2	2	2	3	3	0	0	1	1
			25%	25%	25%	25%	37%	37%	0%	0%	13%	13%
	Immigrati+Italiani	13	2	2	2	2	3	4	0	0	6	5
			15%	15%	15%	15%	23%	31%	0%	0%	47%	39%

## Secondo studio

Sono state confrontate le risposte fornite dai docenti in servizio presso classi caratterizzate da meno del 30% di immigrati e quelli in servizio in classi composte da una percentuale di immigrati superiore al 50%. In merito all'esperienza in ambito interculturale i docenti, in servizio nelle classi caratterizzate dalla prevalenza di italiani, dichiarano di essersi interessati alle tematiche interculturali, per il 40% leggendo libri e articoli e per il 34% frequentando appositi corsi di formazione e aggiornamento. Tra i docenti, in servizio nelle

classi composte in prevalenza da immigrati, il 64% dichiara di essersi accostato a temi interculturali seguendo una programmazione didattica mirata. Rispetto all'impegno interculturale il 72% degli insegnanti, in servizio nelle classi a prevalenza di alunni immigrati ,dichiara di far partecipare i propri alunni a progetti di ricerca universitari e il 24% si riconosce come referente di progetti e laboratori specifici. I docenti in servizio nella classi a prevalenza di alunni italiani mostrano il loro impegno educativo partecipando per il 69% a corsi formativi, e per il 20% partecipando con il proprio gruppo-classe a ricerche universitarie. Nelle classi composte in prevalenza da allievi immigrati il 76% dei docenti specifica che i percorsi educativi attuati mirano all'accoglienza e alla conoscenza delle diverse culture, mentre il 60% dei docenti, in servizio nelle classi composte in prevalenza da allievi italiani, riconoscono come obiettivo prioritario dei propri itinerari educativi la prevenzione dei pregiudizi e stereotipi.

In merito alla programmazione didattica il 68% dei docenti delle classi caratterizzate dalla maggioranza di alunni immigrati evidenzia l'importanza di valorizzare la lingua e la cultura del paese d'origine, mentre in classi caratterizzate dalla maggioranza di alunni italiani il 63% dei docenti sottolinea l'importanza di un adeguato sostegno linguistico per la riuscita dell'integrazione.

## **Conclusioni**

Complessivamente l'apprendimento cooperativo ha favorito un incremento dell'adattamento sociale, un miglioramento dell'autostima, dell'accettazione sociale nel gruppo dei pari e della qualità dei legami amicali. Inoltre non sono emerse differenze significative tra immigrati e italiani: tutti i bambini che hanno partecipato al progetto hanno raggiunto consistenti miglioramenti. Il gruppo di controllo ha mantenuto sostanzialmente stabili tutte le variabili studiate, mentre il gruppo sperimentale ha riportato dei miglioramenti significativi. Relativamente all'adattamento sociale, si è evidenziato, solo per il gruppo sperimentale, un consistente miglioramento della prosocialità e una riduzione significativa, sia dell'aggressività fisico/verbale, sia dell'instabilità emotiva. Inoltre per il gruppo sperimentale si è registrato un significativo miglioramento dell'autostima globale, scolastica e interpersonale, della qualità delle relazioni interpersonali con i maschi e con le femmine e del grado di accettazione sociale da parte dei pari. In merito alle nomine amicali ricevute e effettuate si è verificato per il

gruppo sperimentale un aumento delle nomine di Miglior Amico e una diminuzione delle nomine di Conoscente; infatti i bambini del gruppo sperimentale che, nella fase di pre-test avevano mostrato (per il 41%) una maggiore tendenza all'auto-segregazione amicale, nella fase di post-intervento nominano maggiormente come migliori amici sia compagni immigrati che italiani (56%). Tutti i bambini che hanno partecipato al progetto hanno conseguito indistintamente significativi miglioramenti.

**Article title:** Educational inclusion, study of educational exclusion, equitable education and social acceptance of children of Roma origin in a globalized world, throughout the intervention of the Project: “Education of Roma Children” – Qualitative and quantitative data.

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### **Introduction**

This paper focuses on the phenomena of school integration, educational exclusion, school failure and school drop out of Roma Children throughout the actions of the Program: “Education of Roma Children”. The goal of this paper is to highlight to what extent the support measures within the Program have reached improvement at the educational level and particularly at the school environment. The administering and evaluation process has been extended geographically to a large part of the Greek territory, with the intent to address school based issues in preschool, primary and secondary education, and covering the entire period of implementation, focusing on areas of educational priority, where high percentages of school failure and dropouts were identified. The regions of the Program are: Attica, Central Greece, Southern Aegean, Peloponnese, Crete, Northern Aegean, Ionian Islands, Thessaly, Epirus, and Western Greece.

The project “Education of Roma Children” started in 2010 through various interventions in schools aiming at benefiting Roma children as well as indigenous students. The development and implementation of the above Program has been administered by the University of Athens, and the Ministry of Education.

## **Intercultural educational interventions in Greece**

The need to implement intercultural programs in Greek schools has been the outcome of a new social and educational reality that has been shaped in the aftermath of immigrant students' influx. It is the result of the effort made by the state to ensure equal opportunities of education for all students, indigenous and foreign nationals. The intercultural approach is perceived as a rationale to transform the entire school curriculum so that all students can benefit; it also serves as an objective for action in order to seek out democratic education, equality, social justice and solidarity.

Furthermore, intercultural Education: a) covers social institutions, diverse cultural groups and society as a whole, and b) goes beyond equality of cultures, equality of the educational capital of aforementioned students and provision of equal opportunities of learning and living (Damanakis, 1997). To this end intercultural Education practically constitutes an encounter with other civilizations aiming at cultural enrichment, respect for cultural diversity, "cultural disentanglement" of diverse individuals, intercultural communication, participation thereof in the institutions and cross-cultural exchanges, removing potential obstacles.

The above notions contributed in formulating an intercultural approach which is based on four basic principles, according to Helmut Essinger (Markou, 1996: 26-27). More specifically, this intercultural approach is governed by the specific principles of: a) empathy, i.e the understanding of problems and difficulties faced by the Other; b) solidarity, transcending the boundaries of race, groups, states, putting aside social inequality; c) respect to cultural diversity, resulting in cultural enrichment and social participation; and d) elimination of the nationalistic way of thinking, contributing to the elimination of prejudices and stereotypes.

The aforementioned principles and the recent global needs have contributed to the emergence of a new Democratic Intercultural Educational approach. This new approach and discourse on interculturalism is not restricted to issues of cultural differences, but it expands into the need to shape a democratic citizen in a modern multicultural society. Schools with a democratic intercultural curriculum help in restoring social cohesion and solidarity by reviving the democratic values of justice, civil and social equality,

developing thus knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to survive and function effectively in society (Banks, J.A., 1999, p.41). Moreover, it is supported that students need to develop global and cosmopolitan rather than parochial orientations as well as affinities and empathy toward their fellow global citizens (Diaz C.F., Massialas, B.G. and Xanthopoulos, J.A., 1999, p. 59, Flouris & Spiridakis, pp.269-271).

Furthermore, both Markou (2001: 74) and Gundara (2000) delineate on the pursuit of cultural identity and self-accomplishment, stressing that intercultural education does not simply require the improvement of educational practices to supply students with knowledge, values and skills, thus allowing them to equally compete with local children; rather it aims at substantial reformation of the school curriculum and timetable, of its established practices, of its procedures and structures. Otherwise, without these changes, it will be difficult for the educational system to respond to today's multicultural and global reality and the needs of all students.

The demands from schools which require assistance and guidance in meeting the educational needs of children from different backgrounds have created initially a response from the Ministry of Education in Greece which however could not cover the full spectrum of the needs of Roma children and could not envisage the long term needs of a changing multicultural, multilingual society, as well. Teachers in the twenty – first century also will need the ability to present curriculum from a global perspective (Diaz, C. F., Pelletier, C., & Provenzo, E., 2006. P. 445). And, it's exactly this gap of structured support that the Program "Education for Roma Children" has come to fill, by incorporating innovative strategies and actions to bring about the desired improvements and changes.

However, the above notions of intercultural dimension impede their introduction into the Greek educational system due to beaurocratic and other structural reasons and require a constant and systematic approach, if it is to act additionally as a vehicle for the necessary modernization and upgrading of the Greek education system.

To overcome the aforementioned obstacles the Program includes a broad set of actions addressed to all stakeholders in the educational process (students, parents, teachers, schools headmasters, school advisors, and administration staff) and involves educational practices at three distinct categories: Pre-school, Primary and Secondary

Education. It has been ascertained from the Program's implementation so far that political interventions in favor of living standards improvement and integration of Roma origin individuals to Greek society partly succumb to simplified interpretations of the complex and multifaceted dimension of social reality of Greek Roma who are characterized by fragmentation because they are not part of a comprehensive and multilevel national strategy (Parthenis, C. & Tseliou, E. 2012: Further details and progress of the Program 2010-2012:13). Furthermore, the roles of smaller or weaker racial, cultural or ethnic groups often regarded as secondary, even antithetical, to the national interest, the national interest which has been always viewed as good (Diaz C.F., Massialas, B.G. and Xanthopoulos, J.A., 1999, p. 6).

### **The Methodology, the Operation of the Program and its nine actions.**

The adapted methodology of the Program rests on the combination of theory, practice, research and policy formation, as a process of accommodating the immediate educational needs of Roma students at school and supporting at a systems' level several measures which aim at fulfilling the emerged needs of dramatic demographic changes that took place in the Greek society. This purpose has been fulfilled via intercultural education. The Program has basically focused on the support of multicultural schools by providing models of effective and diverse teaching and learning practices, by using specialized teaching media, by offering training and professional development opportunities to teachers and by creating new teaching and learning materials.

The design and implementation of the Program "Education of Roma Children" was based on data collected both by research and in-school practices. Thus, it was attempted to involve as many teachers in the research activity, as well as researcher-collaborators in school activities that developed the necessary tools, so that teachers and other agents could themselves monitor and evaluate the students' activities and progress. The selected methodology was based on the assumption that all of the Program's activities must be interventional and practice oriented; thus, emphasis was placed on measures like flexibility, continuation and sustainability.



The following general targets of the Program's actions were chosen since it was felt that they substantially contribute to the main purpose attainment. These are:

- The increase in the number of Roma students enrolling in school (mainly in the pre-primary and primary school).
- The increase of the expected school attendance time (reduction of school dropout primarily during the first years of schooling; i.e. in primary school).
- The increase in the number of Roma origin students completing basic education.
- The increase in the number of Roma students moving on from Primary Education to Secondary Education.
- Information and awareness rising of Roma parents in order to be convinced to facilitate and support enrolment and continuation of school attendance of their children.
- The improvement of acceptance level of Roma origin children by the educational administration, local government and local communities.

With regard to the interventions at school units, planning involves actions related to improvement of Roma children school enrollment and continuation. This is a pursuit we tried to implement by encouraging children of Roma origin and their families to be enrolled to school and continue attendance, advocating school enrollment and regular attendance in order to avoid drop-out rate, ensuring acceptance of children by the members of the educational community and elimination of their social exclusion. We should not overlook though that the education of the specific social group is very much determined by strong predicaments in other basic sectors: housing, health and hygiene and linguistic diversity. The main goal of the program's associates regarding the Project's Actions continues to be the integration of Roma origin children to the mainstream school and not to establish a separate 'preparatory structure', particularly designed for Roma origin children.

The Program's Actions are nine and are outlined below:

**ACTION 1: *Strengthening access and attendance to preschool education***<sup>1</sup>. This action concerns the encouragement of Roma children's access and attendance to preschool education, the planning of related actions encouraging Roma parents into the participation of their children in pre-primary school (nursery school), enrollment of toddlers and management of related issues, such as vaccination of young Roma students.

**ACTION 2: *Intra-school actions on school integration and support of regular schooling***<sup>2</sup>. These actions focus on immediate and easy access to school through motivation and sensitization programs with parallel linguistic and learning support practices for Roma students within and beyond school curriculum. Individual sub-actions are implemented including the following:

- Operation of School Host Classes, After-School Tutorial Classes, where students are offered customized teaching support services to cover their cognitive and cultural gaps.
- Organization and administering of summer classes in order that children experience an easier transition from Primary School to Secondary School.
- Implementation of Cooperative Teaching Programs.
- Creative employment workshops for schools.
- Facilitation of students' transfer to schools.
- Distribution of supplies (school bags, pencil cases, etc.).
- Organization and enrichment of school libraries.

**ACTION 3: *Reinforcing access to Adult Education Centers and Second Chance Schools***<sup>3</sup>. This action refers to the contribution of social workers and mediators who are called upon to investigate and identify the educational needs of Roma students, their family members and encourage their participation in Literacy Programs. Amongst the measures taken by the Program, the efforts of finding a job for Roma adults were

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<sup>1</sup> Quantitative Data: Table 1.1., page: 14, in the Annex.

<sup>2</sup> Quantitative Data: Tables 2.1., 2.2., 2.3., pages: 15, 16, and 17 in the Annex.

<sup>3</sup> Quantitative Data: Tables 3.1., 3.2., 3.3., pages: 18, 19, and 20 in the Annex.

included. These efforts concern the following: reinforcement of adult access and schooling in Institute of Adult Ongoing Education.

**ACTION 4: In-Service training for teachers<sup>4</sup>** which aims at supporting and providing in service systematic training for teachers and contributes to direct support to the entire educational community, in various pedagogical issues including interculturalism. The individual sub-actions concern:

- i. Intra-school teacher training practices which are distinguished in introductory and regular training practices.
- ii. General training practices for Education Staff (Education Managers and Directors, School Masters and School Advisors, etc.) who have been involved with the Program's actions which are also distinguished into introductory and general ones.
- iii. Distance learning, supported both technically and operationally which relates to the electronic distribution of materials and the organization of e-classes.

**ACTION 5: *Psychosocial Support*<sup>5</sup>** which is provided by psychologists, social workers and school community members who offer learning and psychosocial support to students and Roma parents and support school teachers' training aimed at improving functionality of communication and cross-cultural understanding.

**ACTION 6: *Connection among school, family and local community*<sup>6</sup>**. This action refers to the efforts of ensuring communication and cooperation between school units, where Roma students attend, their families and their local community. The distinct Program sub-actions accomplished the following:

- i. Population census was conducted in order to tap the accurate number of children of school age, who do not attend school.
- ii. Recorded the Roma population and their families by the *Program's* associates.

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<sup>4</sup> Quantitative Data: Tables 4.1., 4.2., pages: 21, 22, in the Annex.

<sup>5</sup> Quantitative Data: Table 5.1., page: 23, in the Annex.

<sup>6</sup> Quantitative Data: Tables 6.1., 6.2., pages: 24, 25, in the Annex.

ACTION 7: *Networking of schools*<sup>7</sup> is about using Information and Communication Technologies in Education for the planning and elaboration of a website to present the Program's application data, create an interactive map to present Roma settlements-encampments under the project interventions, to plan and set the parameters of social networking (Facebook site, Twitter, YouTube channel).

ACTION 8: Action 8 concerns *Project Publicity* which aims at disseminating "project" actions results in the broader society seeking at informing and sensitizing society and the public opinion as thoroughly as possible; additionally, this dissemination addresses both at central and regional levels, concerning the purposes, guidelines, priorities and actions of the Program, through a selected range of communication and promotion actions.

ACTION 9: *Evaluation of the Program's Operation*: This action has been designed to collect data from the internal evaluation which has been conducted as detailed and clearly as possible in order to fully access current and future educational needs for students and teachers; concurrently, via internal evaluation proper intervention methods for Roma families are identified in order to attract as many Roma children as possible to attend school in all grades of education. A central purpose of this action is to implement evaluation schemes through interim and final stages in order that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Religious Affairs provide all structural measures deemed necessary which will bring about improvements and changes (Parthenis, C. & Tseliou, E. 2012: *Further details and progress of the Program 2010-2012*:14-17).

## Conclusion

The Program's nine actions did not only target Roma students but Greek students as well. Particular emphasis was placed on both schools with entirely Roma students and schools with high numbers of Roma students. The intervention measures were also

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<sup>7</sup> Youtube, twitter, facebook, page 26, in the Annex.

implemented in schools with low percentages of Roma students, as a means of averting potential issues and problems particularly as students' numbers were on an increase.

The Program's main purpose has been to integrate Roma children to school and cope with school failure and school dropout of such children starting from pre-primary, primary and secondary school in order to safeguard that this population group will enjoy equal access to education as the indigenous population; education is considered necessary for their further inclusion in the broader social environment (Parthenis, C. & Tseliou, E. 2012: *Further details and progress of the Program 2010-2012*:13).

The intervention measures of the Program have been designed to adapt to children's specific needs and to the particular conditions of school and social environment in which they live. These measures include the foregoing nine actions addressed primarily to school units with the purpose of upgrading their practices. These actions involve special support measures to cater to the needs of Roma students and to assist teachers to apply new teaching methods in mixed to classes establishing thus, the conditions for intercultural education and a positive learning environment at schools.

Despite certain expected and unanticipated difficulties that surfaced from the above educational endeavor, one may conclude that the Program "Education for Roma Children" has been successful in promoting the issues of inclusion in school education, respect of linguistic and cultural differences, and recognition of the rights of all students in granting them equal opportunities for education and social inclusion.

Furthermore, it has been ascertained that training a large number of school advisors and teachers throughout Greece in issues of intercultural education, both at a theoretical and practical level, has contributed to eliminating racist practices and stereotypes and promptly coped with insuring problems which arose in the school units of all education levels in Greece due to the presence of Roma students.

The Program's successful operation and coordination aims at becoming a source of information and inspiration for other countries with a high Roma population facing similar challenges in their school communities.

**ANNEX**

**PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION DATA 2010-2012**

Quantitative data presenting the number of intervention schools and Roma student population by Region (Parthenis, C. & Tseliou, E.: *Schools Intervention - Student Population: 12-13*).

**TABLE 1 – SCHOOL UNITS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM FROM SEPTEMBER 2010 TO MARCH 2012**

INTERVENTION SCHOOLS					
REGION CODE	REGION	PRESCHOOL EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	SECONDARY EDUCATION	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	37	51	15	105
1	CENTRAL GREECE	14	30	6	50
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	2	26	0	28
3	PELOPONNESE	3	27	0	30
4	CRETE	7	8	0	15
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	2	14	0	16
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	2	9	1	12
7	THESSALY	11	13	9	33
8	EPIRUS	1	8	3	12
9	WESTERN GREECE	9	37	1	47
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>346</b>

**TABLE 2 –ROMA STUDENTS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM FROM SEPTEMBER 2010 TO MARCH 2012**

ROMA STUDENT POPULATION					
REGION CODE	REGION	PRESCHOOL EDUCATION STUDENTS	PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION STUDENTS	SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENTS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	244	2,572	445	3,261
1	CENTRAL GREECE	72	565	36	673
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	5	185	0	190
3	PELOPONNESE	15	491	0	506
4	CRETE	11	180	0	191
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	2	71	0	73
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	9	78	26	113
7	THESSALY	354	1,746	236	2,336
8	EPIRUS	5	70	13	88
9	WESTERN GREECE	89	1,057	1	1,147
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>806</b>	<b>7,015</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>8,578</b>

**TABLE 3 – SCHOOL UNITS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 UNTIL TODAY**

INTERVENTION SCHOOLS					
REGION CODE	REGION	PRESCHOOL EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	SECONDARY EDUCATION	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	53	63	17	133
1	CENTRAL GREECE	33	36	15	84
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	4	20	1	25
3	PELOPONNESE	8	44	0	52
4	CRETE	7	8	0	15
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	2	3	1	6
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	3	7	1	11
7	THESSALY	13	16	9	38
8	EPIRUS	3	8	4	15
9	WESTERN GREECE	27	113	2	142
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>153</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>521</b>

**TABLE 4 –ROMA STUDENTS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 UNTIL TODAY**

ROMA STUDENT POPULATION					
REGION CODE	REGION	PRESCHOOL EDUCATION STUDENTS	PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION STUDENTS	SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENTS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	274	2623	508	3405
1	CENTRAL GREECE	91	583	96	770
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	16	146	2	164
3	PELOPONNESE	44	808	0	852
4	CRETE	23	225	0	248
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	10	19	4	33
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	8	75	0	83
7	THESSALY	245	1941	199	2385
8	EPIRUS	6	77	13	96
9	WESTERN GREECE	199	1944	33	2176
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>916</b>	<b>8441</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>10212</b>

**ACTION 1: Strengthening access and attendance to preschool education**

**TABLE 1.1. – DEPARTMENTS AND NUMBER OF TEACHERS OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION INTERVENTION**

DEPARTMENTS OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION INTERVENTION			
REGION CODE	REGION	DEPARTMENTS OF INTERVENTION	TEACHERS
0	ATTICA	32	9
1	CENTRAL GREECE	15	4
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	1	2
3	PELOPONNESE	1	2
4	CRETE	4	4
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	1	2
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	0	0
7	THESSALY	10	8
8	EPIRUS	0	0
9	WESTERN GREECE	15	11
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>79</b>	<b>42</b>

**ACTION 2: Intra-school actions on school integration and support of regular schooling.**

**TABLE 2.1. – TUTORIAL CLASSES - HOST CLASSES OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

TUTORIAL CLASSES - HOST CLASSES OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION				
REGION CODE	REGION	TUTORIAL CLASSES	HOST CLASSES	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	55	11	66
1	CENTRAL GREECE	20	5	25
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	14	1	15
3	PELOPONNESE	1	0	1
4	CRETE	8	11	19
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	4	0	4
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	2	0	2
7	THESSALY	38	0	38
8	EPIRUS	7	0	7
9	WESTERN GREECE	11	0	11
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>160</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>188</b>



**TABLE 2.2. – NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND SECONDARY EDUCATION				
REGION CODE	REGION	TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS	TEACHERS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	56	12	68
1	CENTRAL GREECE	34	1	35
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	15	0	15
3	PELOPONNESE	1	0	1
4	CRETE	19	0	19
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	4	0	4
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	4	0	4
7	THESSALY	35	5	40
8	EPIRUS	6	0	6
9	WESTERN GREECE	13	1	14
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>187</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>206</b>

**TABLE 2.3. – CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS**

CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS		
REGION CODE	REGION	CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS
0	ATTICA	12
1	CENTRAL GREECE	5
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	1
3	PELOPONNESE	0
4	CRETE	3
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	0
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	1
7	THESSALY	4
8	EPIRUS	2
9	WESTERN GREECE	15
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>43</b>

**ACTION 3: Reinforcing access to Adult Education Centers and Second Chance Schools**

**TABLE 3.1. – ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES**

<b>ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES</b>			
<b>REGION CODE</b>	<b>REGION</b>	<b>ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
0	ATTICA	4	4
1	CENTRAL GREECE	0	0
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	0	0
3	PELOPONNESE	0	0
4	CRETE	0	0
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	0	0
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	0	0
7	THESSALY	16	16
8	EPIRUS	0	0
9	WESTERN GREECE	2	2
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

Number of Adults Roma participating in Adult Education Centers: 275 people

**TABLE 3.2. – SECOND CHANCE SCHOOLS**

<b>SECOND CHANCE SCHOOLS</b>			
<b>REGION CODE</b>	<b>REGION</b>	<b>SECOND CHANCE SCHOOLS</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
0	ATTICA	3	3
1	CENTRAL GREECE	0	0
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	0	0
3	PELOPONNESE	1	1
4	CRETE	0	0
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	0	0
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	1	1
7	THESSALY	10	10
8	EPIRUS	0	0
9	WESTERN GREECE	4	4
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>

Number of Adults Roma participating in Second Chance Schools: 106 people

**TABLE 3.3. – SCHOOL PARENTS**

SCHOOL PARENTS			
REGION CODE	REGION	SCHOOL PARENTS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	8	8
1	CENTRAL GREECE	2	2
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	2	2
3	PELOPONNESE	0	0
4	CRETE	2	2
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	1	1
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	0	0
7	THESSALY	13	13
8	EPIRUS	0	0
9	WESTERN GREECE	18	18
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>

Number of Adults Roma participating in School Parents: 772 people

**ACTION 4: In-Service training for teachers**

**TABLE 4.1. – TRAININGS**

TRAININGS					
REGION CODE	REGION	INTRODUCTORY TRAININGS	GENERAL TRAININGS	REGULAR TRAININGS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	64	48	45	157
1	CENTRAL GREECE	25	0	23	48
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	2	9	13	24
3	PELOPONNESE	3	0	0,5	3,5
4	CRETE	8	8	10	26
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	0	0	1	1
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	4	0	1	5
7	THESSALY	14	14	11	39
8	EPIRUS	6	0	2	8
9	WESTERN GREECE	7	8	4,5	19,5
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>133</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>331</b>

**TABLE 4.2. – NUMBER OF TRAINEES**

NUMBER OF TRAINEES					
REGION CODE	REGION	INTRODUCTORY TRAININGS	GENERAL TRAININGS	REGULAR TRAININGS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	1134	605	2952	<b>4691</b>
1	CENTRAL GREECE	304	0	1188	<b>1492</b>
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	21	120	252	<b>393</b>
3	PELOPONNESE	28	0	13	<b>41</b>
4	CRETE	211	144	847	<b>1202</b>
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	0	0	38	<b>38</b>
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	62	0	37	<b>99</b>
7	THESSALY	174	127	620	<b>921</b>
8	EPIRUS	81	0	92	<b>173</b>
9	WESTERN GREECE	69	91	123	<b>283</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>2084</b>	<b>1087</b>	<b>6162</b>	<b>9333</b>

**ACTION 5: Psychosocial Support**

**TABLE 5.1. – PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS**

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (NUMBER OF SCHOOLS)					
REGION CODE	REGION	PRESCHOOL EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	SECONDARY EDUCATION	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	12	38	8	<b>58</b>
1	CENTRAL GREECE	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	2	18	0	<b>20</b>
3	PELOPONNESE	0	5	0	<b>0</b>
4	CRETE	2	4	0	<b>6</b>
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	0	3	0	<b>3</b>
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
7	THESSALY	5	10	5	<b>20</b>
8	EPIRUS	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
9	WESTERN GREECE	6	16	0	<b>22</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>134</b>

ACTION 6: Connection among school, family and local community

**TABLE 6.1. – SETTLEMENTS – ROMA CAMPS**

<b>SETTLEMENTS – ROMA CAMPS</b>				
REGION CODE	REGION	SETTLEMENTS	ROMA CAMPS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	16	18	<b>34</b>
1	CENTRAL GREECE	22	11	<b>33</b>
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	6	6	<b>12</b>
3	PELOPONNESE	14	14	<b>28</b>
4	CRETE	6	2	<b>8</b>
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	1	4	<b>5</b>
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	4	1	<b>5</b>
7	THESSALY	7	8	<b>15</b>
8	EPIRUS	2	4	<b>6</b>
9	WESTERN GREECE	28	20	<b>48</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>106</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>194</b>

**TABLE 6.2. – MODERATORS - MEDIATORS**

<b>MODERATORS - MEDIATORS</b>				
REGION CODE	REGION	MODERATORS	MEDIATORS	TOTALS
0	ATTICA	9	26	<b>35</b>
1	CENTRAL GREECE	5	3	<b>8</b>
2	SOUTHERN AEGEAN	3	3	<b>6</b>
3	PELOPONNESE	1	1	<b>2</b>
4	CRETE	2	2	<b>4</b>
5	NORTHERN AEGEAN	2	1	<b>3</b>
6	IONIAN ISLANDS	2	0	<b>2</b>
7	THESSALY	4	9	<b>13</b>
8	EPIRUS	3	0	<b>3</b>
9	WESTERN GREECE	3	0	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>79</b>

**ACTION 7: Networking of schools**

For further information, please contact the following email addresses:

- <http://www.keda.uoa.gr/roma>
- Facebook: keda-roma
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/kedaroma>
- Youtube : <http://www.youtube.com/kedaroma>

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## *Unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy. Reception and integration strategies*

Fabrizio Pizzi (Università di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale)

### **1. An emerging issue: the unaccompanied minors**

Discussions on “migrant minors” or “foreign minors”, are often carried out in an indistinct manner, and consequently present an image of homogeneity which doesn’t correspond completely to reality. Well-established studies and research in Italian and foreign literature stress the need to differentiate the analyses according to the migratory path, legal status, the parents’ country of origin, place of birth, the family situation and the method of arrival in the country of reception<sup>1</sup>.

In Italy there are primarily migrant minors who arrive with their family, minors born in our country of foreign parents and minors born abroad, who are then reunited here with their parents: consequently, more attention is given to them by researchers and social policies<sup>2</sup>. More recently, however, other categories of minors have concerned our country and other topics are beginning to be investigated, due to the transformations of the phenomenon: one of them is *unaccompanied foreign minors* and it is precisely the subject of our analysis. It’s an emerging issue, which is found within the more general field of immigration, that is still barely visible in public debates, but increasingly present in social literature, calling also the attention of pedagogical research.

At present there is no univocal definition of “unaccompanied foreign minor” (MSNA<sup>3</sup>) at an international level, just as there doesn’t seem to be a common strategy which can represent a guide for the treatment and protection of such minors. Each country takes its own measures with regards to immigration and minors, in accordance, at least in theory, with the United Nations Conventions and Declarations which it has ratified<sup>4</sup>.

The term “unaccompanied minors” first appeared on the international legislative scenario in 1997, in a resolution of the Council of the European Union, which, at Article.1, par. 1, thus reads: “This Resolution concerns third-country nationals below the age of eighteen, who arrive on the territory of the Member States accompanied by an adult responsible for them whether by law or custom, and for as long as they are not effectively in the care of such a person. This Resolution can

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<sup>1</sup> R. Bertozzi, *Le politiche sociali per i minori stranieri non accompagnati. Pratiche e modelli locali in Italia*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2005, p.15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. F. D’Aniello (ed.), *Minori stranieri. Questioni e prospettive d’accoglienza ed integrazione*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> This is the abbreviation, in Italian, for the terms “unaccompanied foreign minors” and “unaccompanied foreign minor”.

<sup>4</sup> I. Azzarri, O. Salimbeni, «Il minore straniero non accompagnato. Definizioni e legislazione internazionale», in G. Campani, O. Salimbeni (ed.), *La fortezza e i ragazzini: la situazione dei minori stranieri in Europa*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2006, p.19.

also be applied to minors who are nationals of third countries and who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States”<sup>5</sup>.

The Organization in Italy in charge of taking a census of the phenomenon is the Committee for Foreign Minors<sup>6</sup>, which uses the formula “unaccompanied foreign minor present on the State territory”, as the minor without Italian citizenship or the citizenship of other EU countries who, not having applied for asylum, is present in the territory of the State for different reasons, lacking protection and legal tutorship by his/her parents or by any other adult who is legally responsible for him/her according to the law in force in the Italian legal system<sup>7</sup>.

Another possible definition comes from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which suggests the use of the term “separated children”<sup>8</sup>. Some children are totally alone while others live with extended family members or with other adults and this is a rather widespread condition. Therefore, these children may appear “accompanied”, but their “accompanying adult” may be either unable or unsuitable to assume responsibility for their care; in fact, it is unfortunately often that the minor is exposed to risk precisely due to this influence<sup>9</sup>.

## 2. Who are unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy

The migration of youth, under the age of eighteen, who take the trip alone, although this is not a completely new phenomenon in Italy, acquired social visibility at the end of the eighties and evolved unexpectedly during the second half of the following decade, in concomitance with the intensification of global migratory movements and in relation to the decline of the social, economic and political situation in Eastern Europe and in particular in the Balkans.

According to the Committee for Foreign Minors, the typologies of unaccompanied foreign minors present in Italy are:

- 1) Unaccompanied minors seeking asylum<sup>10</sup>, or for whom temporary protection measures are applicable for humanitarian reasons. Currently, asylum is regulated by Law no. 39 of

<sup>5</sup> Council Resolution of 26 June 1997 on unaccompanied minors who are nationals of third countries (97/C 221/03).

<sup>6</sup> In Italian: Comitato Minori Stranieri.

<sup>7</sup> Comitato per i minori stranieri, *Linee guida sui Minori stranieri non accompagnati*, Roma, Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali, 2001. It should be emphasized that this definition, as well as those adopted at the European level, expressly excludes from its scope of reference all foreign minors who, in addition to being unaccompanied, are citizens of a EU country. But in order to complete the analytical framework at the national level, it has been deemed appropriate to make specific references to the case of EU unaccompanied minors, in particular those coming from Romania, who prior to 31 December 2006 (that is, before Romania’s entry into the EU) were by far the most numerous group in Italy.

<sup>8</sup> Save The Children/UNHCR, *Separated Children in Europe Programme*, 1999, Art.2.1. ([www.separated-children-europeprogramme.org](http://www.separated-children-europeprogramme.org); see also S. Elliot, *Separated Children in Europe Programme. A Process of Evaluation and Reviewed Report*, Save The Children/UNHCR, 2002; T. Smith, *Separated children in Europe. Policies and practices in European Union member states: A comparative analysis*, Save the children/Unhcr, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> R. Bichi, «Introduzione: separated children, un fenomeno europeo», in R. Bichi (ed.), *Separated children. I minori stranieri non accompagnati*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2008, p.13.

<sup>10</sup> Unlike Italy and Mediterranean countries, in Europe most unaccompanied foreign minors are automatically and formally classified as “asylum seekers” [cf. R. Bichi, «Introduzione: separated children, un fenomeno europeo», in R. Bichi (ed.), *Separated children. I minori stranieri non accompagnati*, p.15; cf. also R. K. S. Kohli, F. Mitchell (ed.),



28 February 1990, and Presidential Decree no. 303 of 16 September 2004. In Italy, this typology of minors is limited, as results from the analysis of data from recent years, even though the recent political and social crisis in North African countries has caused an increase in MSNA asylum seekers coming from those countries<sup>11</sup>.

- 2) Unaccompanied minors who come to Italy in order to reunite with their parents, who, however, do not always possess the necessary requirements to start the standard family reunification procedures. In this case, it is a partial “non-accompaniment”. These minors also appear to account for an insignificant number.
- 3) Unaccompanied minors exploited by criminal organizations. This is a rather widespread situation, especially for certain nationalities. There are criminal organizations which use foreign minors for their illegal activities<sup>12</sup> (prostitution, begging, child labour, drug-trafficking) often after kidnapping them but also with the family of origin’s consent.
- 4) Lastly the fourth typology, which represents the most relevant flow of unaccompanied minors who come to Italy often using trafficking run by organized crime. They arrive in Italy as “economic” migrants, with a migratory project which is often similar to that of adults belonging to the same nationality. Some of them are “sent” abroad by their families<sup>13</sup>, for the purpose of survival and socio-economic improvement, while others come to Italy on their own initiative, without their parent’s consent, at times by taking advantage of collective flights (for example, those which have concerned Albania since 1991).

The ANCI (Italian Municipalities Association) registered a strong increase in the presence of unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy: in fact, from 5,879 assisted in 2009 to 4,588 in 2010, up to approximately 7,500 minors censused in December 2011 by the Committee for Foreign Minors<sup>14</sup>. According to assertions in the IV ANCI Report 2011 on unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy, in the comparison with the data from previous years, it emerges, among other things, how the majority are males (91.4%), just under the age of majority (55% are 17 years old), and from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Albania, North Africa (Morocco, Egypt) and Kosovo, who are received more

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*Working with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children: Issues for Policy and Practice*, Houndmills-Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2007].

<sup>11</sup> O. Forti, S. Tornesi, «Emergenza Nord Africa: verso un nuovo sistema d’accoglienza?», in Caritas/Migrantes, *Immigrazione. Dossier Statistico 2012*, Roma, Idos, 2012, p.140.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. F. Carchedi, *Piccoli schiavi senza frontiere. Il traffico dei minori stranieri in Italia*, Roma, Ediesse, 2004; IOM (International Organization for Migration), *Unaccompanied minors, potential victims of trafficking*, Bruxelles, 2002.

<sup>13</sup> M. Saglietti, C. Zucchermaglio, «Minori stranieri non accompagnati, famiglie d’origine e mandato economico: quale rapporto?», in *Rivista di studi familiari*, 1, 2010, pp.40-58.

<sup>14</sup> These figures are far from being thorough and are probably the result of an underestimate, since many minors never come in contact with social service and local authorities.

frequently in big cities. The Italian phenomenon represents an emblematic case due to numerical quantity and polymorphism<sup>15</sup>.

### 3. Reception and integration procedures

According to M. Giovannetti, the presence of unaccompanied foreign minors has given rise to operational and social challenges which the political and welfare system may find difficult to predict. Local governments, in Italy as in Europe, especially as subjects delegated to the reception of minors and to launching the network of social services, have suddenly found themselves managing a reality situated at the crossroads of two important issues: the protection and support of minors aged under 18 – as sanctioned by international and national legislation on the protection of minors – and the control of migratory flows<sup>16</sup>.

As provided for in Art. 3, the “Convention on the Rights of the Child” of New York 20 November 1989, in fact, establishes that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration, which include social and educational measures which may accompany their human growth and development<sup>17</sup>.

The definition of “unaccompanied foreign minor”, according to G. Mosconi, reflects three negative, or at least problematic, characteristics in the imagination of Western culture: the fact of being a minor (thus not self-sufficient and in need of assistance and an adult guide); the fact of being foreign (thus not socialized to the normativity of living in the country of reception); the fact of being alone (thus not supported by an adult who may take responsibility for him)<sup>18</sup>.

In addition to the difficulties connected with the intercultural and *otherness* component of these minors, according to some researchers, more than being minors in the strict meaning, many of them seem to be rather “young adults”<sup>19</sup>. Working with unaccompanied foreign minors, in fact, requires looking back at certain psychological constructs, such as early adultization, the relationship between chronological age and cultural age, mobility, family relationships and well-being. These constructs, redefined starting from the diverse cultural component, find a new, certainly critical

<sup>15</sup> Cf. ANCI-Cittalia, *I minori stranieri non accompagnati in Italia. Quarto rapporto ANCI-Cittalia*, 2011; V. Valastro, «I minori stranieri non accompagnati», in Caritas/Migrantes, *Immigrazione. Dossier Statistico 2012*, Roma, Idos, 2012.

<sup>16</sup> M. Giovannetti, *L' accoglienza incompiuta. Le politiche dei comuni italiani verso un sistema di protezione nazionale per i minori stranieri non accompagnati*, pp.34-35.

<sup>17</sup> L. Miazzi, «Il minore è straniero, ma il suo interesse non cambia», in *Minori giustizia*, 3, 2011, pp. 104-112.

<sup>18</sup> G. Mosconi, «Prefazione», in A. Sbraccia, C. Scivoletto (ed.) *Minori migranti: diritti e devianza. Ricerche socio-giuridiche sui minori non accompagnati*, Torino, L'Harmattan Italia, 2004, p.5. See also L. Miazzi, «Minori o stranieri: leggi e istituzioni a confronto con una presenza scomoda», in *Minori giustizia*, 2, 2010, pp.7-27.

<sup>19</sup> F. Orlandi, M. Saglietti, G. Testore, «I minori stranieri non accompagnati nel territorio italiano: 2000-2010», in R. Bracalenti, M. Saglietti (ed.), *Lavorare con i minori stranieri non accompagnati. Voci e strumenti dal campo dell'accoglienza*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2011, p.18.

setting in the analysis of the psychological needs of these youth and, most of all, the need for listening and comprehension that they require of us<sup>20</sup>.

The reception of MSNAs includes two phases: the first reception and the second reception<sup>21</sup>. The first reception is temporary and cannot last more than ninety days. Its purpose consists in offering unaccompanied minors immediate and temporary shelter, as well as proposing a plan of action, after the presence of a minor has been reported to the Committee for Foreign Minors, the Police, the Juvenile Court and the Tutelary Judge. In this phase of first reception, private and contracted facilities are most commonly used. It is the task of social services to start the integration procedures for the minor, while the Committee for Foreign Minors starts an investigation on the minor's family members, through the International Social Service, for purposes of repatriation. Sometimes this process can be quite slow, due to the long procedures entailed in the identification of the minor and the verification of his age.

After being reported to the Committee for Foreign Minors, the minor is granted a minor age residence permit which - even if in the past it was not always converted into a residence permit for employment or study reasons when the minor came of age - makes him a regular immigrant. If his parents in the country of origin are tracked down, there are two options: assisted repatriation in order to send the minor back to his family's care, or non-repatriation, when it is deemed more appropriate, and in the best interest of the minor, to guarantee his stay in Italy. In the latter case the minor is fostered to the social services, or to any existing relatives within the fourth degree, or to a family<sup>22</sup> or to a community, in order to start a project of assistance for his socio-educational integration.

As for the second reception, its aim is to integrate MSNAs through long term education projects and it lasts until the minor comes of age. This phase involves a long-term project of insertion within residential communities, a specific program for the minor (literacy, school or work insertion, training, socio-educational activities, etc.) and the request for a residence permit<sup>23</sup>. According to Law no. 89 (Art. 32, par.1-bis) of 23 June 2011, when foreign minors come of age,

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<sup>20</sup> R. Bracalenti, M. Saglietti, A. Spagnolo, «Introduzione», in R. Bracalenti, M. Saglietti (ed.), *Lavorare con i minori stranieri non accompagnati. Voci e strumenti dal campo dell'accoglienza*, p.13. Cf. also M. German, «Enabling reconnection: educational psychologists supporting unaccompanied, separated, asylum-seeker/refugee children», in *Educational and child psychology*, 21, 3, 2004, pp. 6-29.

<sup>21</sup> F. Pittau, A. Ricci, L. I. Timsa (ed.), *Unaccompanied Minors: Quantitative Aspects and Reception, Return and Integration Policies. Analysis of the Italian Case for a Comparative Study at the EU Level*, EMN-Idos, Roma, 2009, p.23.

<sup>22</sup> It could be an Italian or foreign family, living in Italy, also of the same nationality/culture as the minor (in this case we have a "homocultural foster care"). Cf. C. Arnosti, F. Milano, *Affido senza frontiere. L'affido familiare dell'adolescente straniero non accompagnato*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2006; M. Fornari, C. Scivoletto, «L'affidamento omoculturale nell'accoglienza dei minori stranieri non accompagnati», in *Minori Giustizia*, 3, 2007, pp.97-108.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. F. Pittau, A. Ricci, L. I. Timsa (ed.), *Unaccompanied Minors: Quantitative Aspects and Reception, Return and Integration Policies. Analysis of the Italian Case for a Comparative Study at the EU Level*, p.25.

they can have a residence permit “for reasons of study, access to work, or salaried or self-employment”, only if one of the following conditions are fulfilled: a previous provision of guardianship or foster care or the participation in social and civic integration projects for at least two years<sup>24</sup>.

As regards MSNAs who are victims of trafficking or exploitation, they are granted protection by the issuing of a residence permit for social protection reasons in accordance with Art. 18 of Immigration Law no. 40/1998. It must be noted that this measure is not always enforced, unless the minor denounces the exploiter. This kind of residence permit is issued even when the minor has committed a crime and, after serving his sentence, has participated in an assistance and social integration program<sup>25</sup>.

#### **4. The need for an educational and intercultural approach**

The presence of unaccompanied foreign minors, although a limited phenomenon from a quantitative point of view, represents a challenge for Italy and Europe, politically, socially and culturally. Their migratory path is extremely uncertain: not only as far as destination, duration and success is concerned, but also as regards the outcomes of their development. Moreover, it involves a journey which acquires an additional meaning, that of the navigation towards their coming of age, so that it can be interpreted as a real and metaphorical movement between geographically and culturally different places, as well as the reaching of adulthood<sup>26</sup>.

In consideration of a minor who migrates alone, the educational services have had to rethink their usual working models, structured on the reception of minors outside of the family and/or the criminal circuit. With regard to facilities for childhood and adolescence in difficulty, in most cases they arose when the phenomenon of unaccompanied foreign minors hadn't emerged yet and their “users” were primarily made up of autochthonous minors. Over the years, these centres have received a growing number of foreign minors. However, according to G. Campani and O. Salimbeni, there isn't the “intercultural” competence required for this new target. In the case studies presented in their book (*La fortezza e I ragazzini: la situazione dei minori stranieri in Europa*)<sup>27</sup>, the workers interviewed stressed the need to treat these minors with an educational and formative intercultural approach, which seems to be the most appropriate in trying to unite their past formative

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. P. Morozzo della Rocca, «Il Parlamento “grazia” l'interesse dei minori stranieri non accompagnati a soggiornare in Italia dopo la maggiore età», in *Minori giustizia*, 3, 2011, pp.113-115.

<sup>25</sup> In relation to the themes of reception and protection, see also G. Candia, F. Carchedi, F. Giannotta, G. Tarzia (ed.), *Minori erranti. L'accoglienza ed i percorsi di protezione*, Roma, Ediesse, 2009.

<sup>26</sup> R. Bracalenti, M. Saglietti, A. Spagnolo, «Introduzione», in R. Bracalenti, M. Saglietti (ed.), *Lavorare con i minori stranieri non accompagnati. Voci e strumenti dal campo dell'accoglienza*, p.12. See also F. Gasparini, L. Roncari, «Adolescenti venuti da altrove: la sfida della doppia transizione per i minori non accompagnati», in *Psichiatria dell'infanzia e dell'adolescenza*, 2, aprile-giugno 2007, pp.423-436.

<sup>27</sup> The work reports the results of the investigation carried out in five European countries: France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Greece, as well as Italy.

experiences, acquired in their native country, with those they are acquiring and living in their country of immigration, by leading them towards the construction of a new identity which is more complex, since it is capable of keeping in mind the various groups these minors feel they belong to<sup>28</sup>.

A social policy committed to achieving the conditions necessary for the insertion of minors cannot neglect the educational and formative dimension. Especially in the case of unaccompanied foreign minors, it doesn't seem possible to separate practical measures from psychological and formative measures. Their needs are not only material, and their particular life experience truly seems to demand a global and interdisciplinary orientation which may help them to establish a new equilibrium, which is surely difficult to reach completely, but absolutely necessary for their future and for the life of society as a whole<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> G. Campani, O. Salimbeni, «La fortezza e i ragazzini. Quale futuro? Considerazioni conclusive», in G. Campani, O. Salimbeni (ed.), *La fortezza e i ragazzini : la situazione dei minori stranieri in Europa*, pp.158-159. See also: A. De Liberto, «I minori stranieri non accompagnati. L'esperienza sociale ed educativa di un pronto intervento milanese», in *Minori giustizia*, 4, 2010, pp.78-87; A. Sbraccia, *Strutture di minoranza. Minori stranieri in comunità: uno studio di caso*, Napoli, Think Thanks, 2011.

<sup>29</sup> O. Salimbeni, *Storie minori. Realtà ed accoglienza per i minori stranieri in Italia*, Pisa, ETS, 2011, p.198.

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## Free2Choose\_Create. (Re)thinking about practical dilemmas in Human Rights –WORKSHOP\*

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### Abstract

Much has already been written about Intercultural Education, Citizenship and Human Rights Education. In most cases discussions are abstract in nature and argue for specific approaches. Though theoretical and philosophical discussions are important, during the present crisis in Western thought, this paper/workshop intends to introduce a more practical approach to discussing/debating Human Rights dilemmas with youngsters. The intention is not to propose permanent and individualistic solutions, but to simply offer a way to engage youth, in our world and in our time, in discussions about Human Rights dilemmas that arise in everyday situations. The departure point is the concepts or universalist assumptions that derive from the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The instrument that will be presented is a DVD entitled Free2Choose, originally produced by the Anne Frank House (Amsterdam -Netherlands), which contains short video clips that present dilemmas involving a collision of Human Rights in very specific situations. For example: the situation at hand is a demonstration of a group of neo-Nazis in front of a synagogue in Germany! The question that is posed to young people is whether this is a free speech issue and therefore protected by law or whether this is a violation of the Jewish community's right to be protected against discrimination. In such instances, there are valid arguments for both. Young people are encouraged through engaging and interactive working methods to reflect on this dilemma.

While initially these short film clips were created by adult professionals, in the last few years it has been the youth themselves who have been trained to create their own short film clips. The topics they choose tend to be much more connected to the lived reality of youth today.

The interactive methodologies used in for discussion/debate are meant to promote key competences such as critical thinking, active listening and respectful discussion. The ultimate purpose is to empower young people to become active citizens committed to building a better world.

This is a theoretical and practical work on-going over the past years conducted by a number of researchers connected to the Anne Frank House; this workshop is addressed to all those interested in working with young people on the theme of Human Rights.

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\*This paper intends exclusively to present some concepts and practical recommendations when preparing the implementation of the DVD Free2Choose in formal and non-formal education. Doesn't mean to be an exhaustive quotation of theoretical and practical studies which we can use to build an academic foundation of the program nor a practical case study.

<sup>1</sup> Anne Frank House –Amsterdam, Netherlands [www.annefrank.org](http://www.annefrank.org); (PFSE) Paula Frassinetti School of Education –Porto, Portugal [www.esepf.pt](http://www.esepf.pt); (A2IPR) International Association Intercultural Projects and Research –Porto, Portugal [www.intercultural.pt](http://www.intercultural.pt); (CIIE) Centro de Investigação e Intervenção Educativas –FPCE –Universidade do Porto, Portugal <http://www.fpce.up.pt/ciie/>.

## 1. Introduction

### Who is the workshop for?

This Free2Choose workshop has been created by the educational staff at the Anne Frank House. It is intended for all of those individuals and organizations that will be organizing debate and discussion activities related to Free2Choose. In most cases, the Free2choose activities will be school-based and the people debating or discussing the issues contained in the films will be students in schools. In some other cases, the discussions/debates might take place in the community and will involve young people from schools, youth groups or youth brought together especially for this occasion. In general, the video clips and instructions that are part of Free2Choose are primarily meant for 14-18 year olds, though slightly younger students and adults will find the video clips very useful. We have tried to keep the workshop as short as possible so that the participant will not be inundated with information.

### What can I learn from the workshop?

The workshop attempts, in a clear and concise way, to give organizers of Free2Choose activities background information on the project, as well as guidelines how to effectively use the video clips that form the core of the project. Free2Choose focuses on engaging young people in debates about social issues that affect society today.

### The Anne Frank House and its Mission

The Anne Frank House is an independent organization entrusted with the care of the Secret Annex, the place where Anne Frank went into hiding during World War II and where she wrote her diary. It brings her life story to the attention of people all over the world to encourage them to reflect on the dangers of anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination and the importance of freedom, equal rights and democracy. ([www.annefrank.org](http://www.annefrank.org))

By developing teaching materials for schools, the Anne Frank House attempts to reach pupils worldwide. Annually we organize seminars for young people, such as Free2choose-Create. By engaging youngsters in an interactive manner, we hope to achieve several aims: to provide a meaningful experience that will increase their level of knowledge and skills; to help develop critical thinking skills; and to help create active citizens who are aware of the importance of human rights and the various freedoms associated with them.

## 2. Free2Choose and Free2Choose-Create

### Defining Free2Choose and Free2Choose-Create

#### FREE TO CHOOSE

Free2Choose is an educational debate program, developed by the Anne Frank House, on conflicting human rights. The program was designed to encourage young people to think about the importance of our fundamental rights. In Free2Choose, young people discover their own human rights, such as freedom of expression, freedom of religion and the right to privacy. Key questions are: why are these rights so important? Are there limits to our human rights? And what happens when these rights come into conflict with each other? The short films that constitute the core of the Free2Choose program always focus on a human rights dilemma. The films ends by asking viewers to take a stand on a question posed about a particular right highlighted in the film. There are no right or wrong answers, or even less correct or more correct answers. The films have been selected in such a way that “well informed” people can disagree in their answers.

Some examples of dilemmas formulated as questions include:



“Should a police officer be allowed to wear a turban in the line of duty?”; “should a bank be allowed to fire a person because of his or her neo-Nazi sympathies?”; “should a religious leader be allowed to publicly describe homosexuality as an illness?”; “should neo-Nazis be allowed to hold a demonstration in front of a synagogue?”; “should newspapers be allowed to publish confidential information that has been leaked to them?” These are some of the controversial questions that are dealt with in the Free2Choose program. Discussions are always based around concrete dilemmas.

#### FREE TO CHOOSE-CREATE

Free2Choose-Create is an educational program that works in parallel with Free2Choose. In Free2Choose-Create, young people make their own films about dilemmas that arise within their own communities and lives. The films often take the form of short mini-documentaries, and serve as a point of departure for a debate on human rights. Though the criteria are the same for Free2Choose-Create films as for Free2Choose films, the process of identifying topics that interest youth today and involving youth in the making of the films is equally important.

#### **Aims of Free2choose and Free2Choose-Create**

Free2Choose is an excellent tool that encourages students and others to reflect on and discuss certain topics that would otherwise be ignored or evaded. It stimulates critical thinking about the values that form the foundations of modern democratic societies. Young people learn that our fundamental rights and freedoms are essential for our societies but that there are also limits to these rights and freedoms. The discussion methods that form the core of Free2Choose debates are based on active listening, mutual respect and respect for diverse opinions. These competences are closely connected to active citizenship.

Free2Choose-Create builds on Free2Choose but goes a step further. Here, an attempt is made to involve youth more directly and actively in all aspects of Free2Choose films. The intention is to increase their knowledge, but also to help them develop competences that they will need in their future studies and work.

During the Free2Choose-Create seminars, young people create their own short film clip. By being able to do so, the participants need to have a basic knowledge about human rights. To understand the meaning of human rights, one has to know where they come from. Therefore, knowledge about the Second World War and the Holocaust is essential in this seminar.

In addition to the newly-gained knowledge, the participants learn to conduct research, write a script, cooperate with others, learn debate and interview techniques, and gain film editing and producing skills. In some cases the participants in Free2Choose-Create will be called upon to present their films in public settings and lead discussions/debates in classrooms.

#### **Linking to Anne Frank, the Holocaust and Human Rights**

In the Anne Frank House Mission Statement, it is stressed that one of the most important aims of talking about the life story of Anne Frank is to make people aware of the dangers of Anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination and the importance of freedom, equal rights and democracy. Otto Frank once stated that: “to build a future, you have to know the past”. Therefore, educating young people about human rights is considered part of the mission of the Anne Frank House. To understand the full meaning of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is necessary to have knowledge about the Holocaust and Second World War. This document was signed on the ruins of Europe after the war.

Probably the best way to learn something is to experience something. That is why the Anne Frank House develops interactive seminars where young people work on the themes mentioned above. During our seminars, we make the link between past and present as clear as possible. Though the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many other human rights documents were signed into being after the Second World War, human rights concerns have been around for thousands of years and it is clear that during the Second World War the rights of many individuals and communities were flagrantly violated. Especially the Jews of Europe –

Anne Frank was one of them— were targeted and in the end they were even denied their right to lives. With such violations fresh in the world community’s mind, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created.

The Anne Frank House believes that personal stories speak louder than statistics and Anne Frank provides us with information in her diary regarding the effects that rights violations have on an individual. If we step back and look at Anne Frank’s life through a modern lens we see that Anne and other Jews were denied all of the rights guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The quotation below refers to just a few of those rights violations:

“June 20th 1942 / After May 1940, the good times were few and far between: first there was the war, then the capitulation and then the arrival of the Germans, which is when the trouble started for the Jews. Our freedom was severely restricted by a series of anti-Jewish decrees: Jews were required to wear a yellow star; Jews were required to turn in their bicycles; Jews were forbidden to use streetcars; Jews were forbidden to ride in cars, even their own; Jews were required to do their shopping between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M.; Jews were required to frequent only Jewish-owned barbershops and beauty parlours; Jews were forbidden to be out on the streets between 8:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.; Jews were forbidden to attend theatres, movies or any other forms of entertainment; Jews were forbidden to use swimming pools, tennis courts, hockey fields or any other athletic fields; Jews were forbidden to go rowing; Jews were forbidden to take part in any athletic activity in public; Jews were forbidden to sit in their gardens or those of their friends after 8:00 P.M.; Jews were forbidden to visit Christians in their homes; Jews were required to attend Jewish schools, etc. You couldn't do this and you couldn't do that, but life went on.” (Anne Frank’s Diary)

### **What rights are we talking about?**

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

The basic rights and freedoms under the law that we are familiar with today were established in post Second World War international treaties that sought to guarantee human rights for people the world round. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, established by the United Nations in 1948, is probably the best known of these. However, this declaration is a non-binding agreement, more of an affirmation of principles. On the basis of this Universal Declaration, the United Nations adopted two binding declarations on human rights in later years. A covenant concerning civil and political rights –as well as one concerning economic, social and cultural rights– came into being in 1966 and took effect in 1976. Both of these human rights covenants have now been signed by almost all the member states of the United Nations. However, many countries have expressed their reservations about some of the articles in these treaties.

The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) from 1950 is also based on the Universal Declaration. All the European countries associated with the Council of Europe have signed this treaty. The ECHR is comprised of eighteen articles and several protocols –additions adopted at a later time. One of these protocols, added in 1983, prohibits the death penalty except in times of war. In contrast to the Universal Declaration, the ECHR is a binding treaty. Compliance is monitored by the European Court of Human Rights, which has its seat in Strasbourg. If citizens of a country feel their government is violating their rights, they can call upon the ECHR and bring an appeal before this court.

Free2Choose focuses on where some of these rights and freedoms conflict or where some argue that they need to be restricted under certain circumstances.

#### 1. Free speech

Freedom of speech refers to the freedom of individuals to openly express their views without being censured in advance or to be punished for what they say. Free speech is an important element of every modern western democracy. All kinds of ideas, opinions and points of view

should be able to be expressed in public. Freedom of speech has also been laid down in Article 10 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). However, freedom of speech is rarely absolute: people cannot write or say anything they want to in public. Article 10 of the ECHR clearly indicates this: for instance libel, perjury and inciting violence or murder are punishable offences. But testing whether an utterance is illegal can only be determined in retrospect by a judge.

## 2. Religious freedom

Freedom of religion is the right of people to freely profess their religious faith or convictions. It is an individual right: everybody should be able to believe what he or she chooses. It is also a collective right: people should have the freedom to publicly profess their faith along with fellow believers. Religious freedom is guaranteed by Article 9 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) and in the constitutions of most European countries. History alone illustrates that interpretations of religious freedom are divergent and depend on the country. For instance: in the United States, the government may not interfere in matters of organized religions, while the interpretation of religious freedom in various European countries leans more toward the government not interfering with the (religious) beliefs of its citizens.

## 3. Right to privacy

The right to privacy was defined in the nineteenth century as the right of an individual “to be left alone”. It is also the right to keep personal information about oneself private. The right to privacy has been laid down in all the important human rights treaties, for example in Article 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). Privacy is a broad concept; it is related to the (safeguarding of the) daily activities of an individual's private life. In actual practice, this involves for instance the right to communicate confidentially: nobody should be listened in on or have their mail opened without permission. And privacy also involves the integrity of one's body and the protection of one's property.

## 4. Right to demonstrate

The right to demonstrate is, in fact, derived from the right to association and assembly and the right to freedom of speech. The right to demonstrate, as well as the right to march, is a fundamental democratic right. It is a means for individuals to indicate, for instance, to their leaders and lawmakers what the government is doing wrong. In most European countries, the freedom to demonstrate is at times restricted if a government fears a demonstration will be accompanied by violence and if the safety of others are at stake. Justifiable or not, in actual practice, the right to demonstrate is sometimes considered a threat to public safety.

## 5. Freedom of the press

Freedom of the press, also known as a free press, is the right to publicly express and disseminate views, feelings and thoughts through the use of publications. Freedom of speech and freedom of the press go hand in hand. Freedom of the press means that no advance authorization is required for whatever somebody wishes to publish. But as is the case with respect to free speech, authors can be accused of, for instance, slander, libel, inciting discrimination or sowing hatred. Therefore, freedom of the press does not dismiss responsibility for what is published. Freedom of the press is a fundamental right not only related to being able to publish freely but also being able to gather information freely. Not only newspapers and magazines, but also other media such as radio, television, and the Internet are included here under “press”.

### 3.Key Methodologies

#### What is Peer Education and why use it?

*“Peer power as an extrinsic force is a lot like radiation: a little goes a long way”  
Charles D. Hayes, The Rapture of Maturity*

The questions “what is peer education” and “why use it” brings us to the questions “what is education” and “why educate others?”. In general, peer influence has often been defined in negative terms, something synonymous with peer pressure; something that pushes (especially young) people into negative behavior. But the fact is that social interactions with peers, peer communication and peer expectations have an impact. This can be both positive and negative. Peer education builds on the positive potential that can come from peers taking on the role of educating others like them, for the purposes of this workshop, of young people educating other young people. The experience of becoming a peer educator, in itself, can be very empowering and helps to develop leadership skills needed throughout one’s life.

If we think back to our previous learning we can usually identify moments when we really learned something new, something that we benefited from. Sometimes this was by reading a good book, or listening to an inspired teacher, a thoughtful and engaging parent, by watching a captivating film or researching information for an essay. Most of us will be able to remember moments when our friends and peers impacted the way we look at the world, our values, how we feel about certain rather controversial issues, what we consider to be “acceptable” and “not acceptable” ideas and behavior. Our interactions with friends and peers help us form an identity and provided us with a sense of belonging.

Peer education is based on the fact that peers play an important role in our learning about the world around us and about who we are. Though there are many ways to learn, peer education is a special kind of learning that takes advantage of the fact that we tend to compare ourselves to our peers and often see them as role models. With respect to social issues such as AIDS education, anti-racism campaigns and human rights work, peer trainers can become a moral and behavioral example for others. Communication between peers is also different from communication between for instance young people and adults. The language that for instance adults and youth use can be quite different. The framework of reference is often not shared (e.g. youth and adults watch different programs, read different books, visit different websites, speak a different “jargon”). Status differences tend to be much less and communication is much easier among peers. Also, it is less likely that a person with high status, like a teacher or parent, will dominate the discussion or intimidate the person being educated. Too often, adults are viewed as “not in touch” and preaching.

Obviously, teachers and experts have more knowledge and insight than peer educators, who are just learning the ropes of educating others. It cannot be denied that peer educators are more likely to make factual errors when it comes to the dissemination of information. This is part of any learning process. However, since communication is at the core of any educational process, it is critical to look at the learning that takes place in peer education programs, both for the peer educators (who also have to be trained) and the ultimate recipients (other young people). The evidence shows that in most instances, peer education leads to more knowledge, more motivation to learn, and more interest in getting involved among the recipients. For the peer educators themselves, it strengthens a host of competences: more knowledge of the subject matter, empowerment, leadership skills, better presentation communication skills and higher status in the peer group are just a few of these.

Peer education programs can thus have a tremendous impact on both the peer educators and also the recipients of their educational efforts, if certain conditions are met. Peer education loses its impact if the peer educators themselves are not seen as credible and sincere in the eyes of the recipients, are poorly trained and prepared, do not have opportunities to discuss any problems they might have, and if there is too little support from people around them.

One misconception about peer education is that adults and experts play no role. In fact, they play an important role in supporting peer educators in a variety of ways. They can help by being an advocate for the peer educators, providing new information and insights, give steering where needed, and being a liaison to other adults like parents. Also, it will be up to adults such as teachers to help implement the work that peer educators have done both inside and outside of classrooms.

## **Debate and Discussion**

### 1. A Word of caution

The main aim of Free2Choose is healthy and respectful discussion/debate about important issues.

Some of the themes discussed in the video clips might be deemed controversial among the group of young people participating in a discussion, and evoke strong emotions. This is not necessarily a negative thing, but if you are under the impression that sensitive, healthy and respectful debate will be difficult, you might want to avoid showing or debating certain issues contained in the clips. It is therefore advisable, as the organizer, to gain as much information in advance about what issues might trigger severe discomfort and tension in the group.

Also, if the trainer feels that a certain clip might polarize a group of youth along ethnic, gender, or religious, etc. lines you might want to focus more on other clips that do not generate conflict among such lines.

Given the controversial issues touched upon in many Free2Choose films and the potential for creating tensions or worsening them, the issue of creating a safe space is essential, especially when issues are to be discussed that might make students uncomfortable. A mistake that is sometimes made is to think that “provoking”, for instance, secondary students to express their opinion about something they feel strongly about will open the doors to honest discussion and respectful listening. Some students can become resentful, feel disrespected, and excluded. During discussions they might even verbally attack others (or remain totally silent). Hence the importance of creating a climate where all students feel that they as individuals are respected, and that their opinions have legitimacy. Safe spaces do not come into existence automatically, they have to be created. For most using the Free2Choose clips for educational purposes it is most important to assess whether such a safe space is already in existence. This will impact the kinds of films that can be used. It also means knowing to a certain extent in advance how the participants might respond (emotionally).

### 2. Debate versus Discussion

The words debate and discussion are tossed around a lot and are often used as synonyms. The concepts tend to be quite different, however. Both have their merits and weaknesses.

In general, both approaches have the advantage that they go far beyond traditional teaching and learning where a teacher tries to instil knowledge in passive learners who try to remember everything that was said, only answering when called upon. Discussing and debating are interactive methodologies. Participants are expected to take charge of their own learning process. If organized well, both approaches are demanding because they encourage all participants to form an opinion and to express that opinion in public. The advantage is that otherwise unspoken issues and viewpoints, that remain invisible in traditional teaching, are brought into the open.

Most of us are familiar with discussions since they take place every day. Sometimes they are informal and sometimes more formal. People use discussions to gain more clarity about a situation, to reach agreement on an issue or to decide what kind of action to take. More formal discussion methods tend to center around trying to gain insight into people’s different views and trying to see where there is agreement and disagreement. Hopefully they lead a clearer understanding of situations, problems and solutions. But discussions, especially if they are unstructured, have certain limitations and one of the problems is that they are often won

by the person with higher status, who speaks the loudest, intervenes the most, believes the most in his/her arguments or is just relentless in presenting his/her arguments.

Debating is a discussion with clear rules. Debate methodologies are traditionally implemented to allow a clash of different views using a playing field that allows everybody to have equal speaking time. In most debate methodologies the process is critical –people are expected to listen and present, to bring forth rational arguments in favor of particular opinion that is at odds with the opinion of others. The disadvantage with many debate techniques is that they are competitive, there are winners and losers, and that consensus and reaching agreement is an afterthought.

Free2Choose can make use of use of both discussion and debate, and the many varieties found in both educational approaches. Whether one uses a discussion technique or a debate technique will depend on:

- The comfort level the trainer has with various techniques;
- What the people who will be discussing/debating are familiar with. If the participants in a debate have no experience debating, then they will be more focused on the rules of the “game” than on the content they will be talking about;
- Time constraints –if a class has 45 minutes at its disposal it can be difficult to do an extensive debate which would involve researching an issue, preparing a speech, giving the speech, holding the debate and debriefing. The same applies to more involved discussion techniques.

### 3. Is consensus or agreement necessary?

The question whether consensus or agreement is necessary depends very much on the context of the debate or discussion to be held. Discussion and debate methods that do not seek agreement, consensus or compromise run the risk of worsening already existing tensions in for instance a classroom where the teacher and students have not successfully negotiated the ethnic and religious diversity in the classroom. However, in classrooms where teachers and students are used to discussing controversial issues, and where discussion and debate are commonplace, an approach that focuses more on confrontation of differing viewpoints can be quite effective. This also applies for topics that are more abstract and more distant to the everyday reality of the participants in the discussion.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b3aa0.html>

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b36c0.html>

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treaties/html/005.htm>

# Academic Culture(s) in Europe and The Social Science Knowledge System:

## First Approximations and Lessons Learnt during Eleven Years of the Eurocampus Study Program in Intercultural Communication.

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### I. First Approximations

The first and most patent reason for the topicality of the discussion about academic cultures in Europe is clearly the increasing mobility of students and teachers, which is part and parcel of the EU's educational policies (Exchange Programs at all levels and Life-long Learning).

Regarding student mobility, the latest available statistical data puts the total number of outgoing Erasmus students in all exchange programs organized by the EU at 2.800.000, of which over 72.000 account for "pure" Erasmus mobility during the academic year 2010 – 2011 (viz. <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/table1.pdf>).

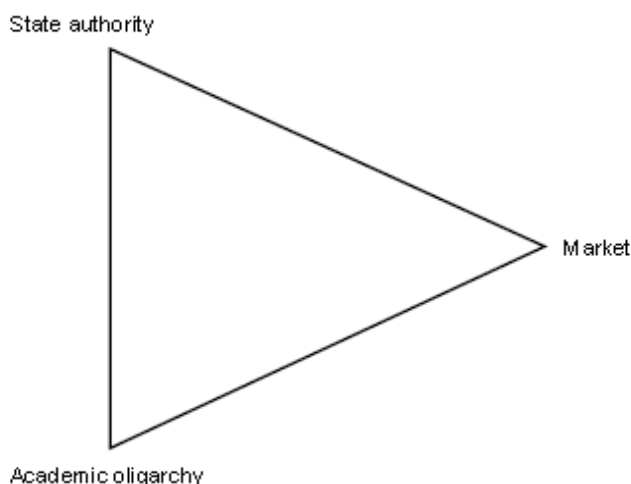
Likewise, Erasmus staff mobility for teaching assignments saw an increase from 7797 in the academic year 1997 - 1978 to 31.620 during the academic year 2010 – 2011 (viz. <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/table3.pdf>), and the Erasmus staff mobility for training amounts to approximately 11.200 during the academic year 2010 – 2011 (viz. <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/mobilitystaff.pdf>).

It is therefore not surprising that the reflection about diverse academic cultures is gaining momentum, and a series of international and intercultural study programs start to problematize this issue. Here just two recent examples: *Interkulturelle Reflexion: Lehr- und Lernstile*, organized by the *Internationale DAAD Akademie* in Bonn, and held at the *Wissenschaftsforum* in Berlin, 25. – 26. February 2013 (viz. [https://www.daad.de/downloads/programme/29\\_Programm\\_vorl.pdf](https://www.daad.de/downloads/programme/29_Programm_vorl.pdf)), and a series of lectures comparing academic cultures (<http://www.intercultural-campus.org/ringvorlesung-akademische-kulturen-im-vergleich->). One further example, illustrating the problematization of academic cultures in an international Master program in intercultural communication – the Eurocampus of EMICC (European Master in Intercultural Communication) (viz. <http://www.relint.usi.ch/eurocampus.htm>) – will be presented in more detail later in this paper.

Yet the interest in academic culture is not at all new. Thus, for example, C. P. Snow's by now classical study, first presented as the 1959 Rede Lecture at Cambridge University (viz. C.P. SNOW C.P., COLLINI S., 2012), draws attention to the growing gap between the "cultures" of "literary intellectuals" at one "pole" and "scientists", in particular "physical scientists", at the other. Here academic culture is defined along terms of academic disciplines or, rather faculties, namely the humanities on the one side, and the exact or natural sciences on the other, and the difficulties of understanding between these two academic cultures are highlighted.

In another by now classical study, first published in 1989, several times reprinted and reedited a second time in 2002, with the provocative as well as evocative title *Academic Tribes and Territories*, Tony Becher and Paul R. Towler take another, more comprehensive stance on academic cultures. They investigate a series of issues, such as questions of epistemology, the nature of academic disciplines, the organization of academic life, including the personal role and perspective of the individual academic, the marketization of research and knowledge, situating the academic enterprise, with its distinctive tribal cultures, in a field of tension between the state, the market and the academic oligarchy, in a post-industrial society.

Figure 1.1 Clark's continua of influence over higher education



Source: Clark 1983: 143

Policies and statutes [in the USA] moved from an ideology that defined the public interest as best served by shielding public entities from involvement in the market, to one that saw the public interest as best served by public organizations' involvement in commercial activities.  
(Slaughter and Rhoades 1993: 287)

(Source: Tony BECHER and Paul R. TOWLER (2002 / 1989), p. 9)

It is informative and at the same time sad to see how this text, first published in 1989, predicted many of the ills which have befallen contemporary academic life and forced those who live such a life to always more frantic and competitive behavior (on the not so beneficial effects of competition on science see the reflections of Michael HAMPE (2012)), in the service not of knowledge, let alone of wisdom, but of ideals a far cry away from anything resembling an adjourned *Humboldtian Bildungsideal*, academic freedom in the service of the greatest possible number of human beings, critical thinking, theoretical and methodological estheticism, moral imagination, global humanitarianism and all the values contemporary modernity would be able to offer and promote (viz. Tony BECHER and Paul R. TOWLER (2002 / 1989))

Perhaps it is also worth mentioning that the power of what Becher and Towler call the "Academic Oligarchy" – and what Simone de Beauvoir almost 60 years ago called "*Les Mandarins*" (Simone DE BEAUVOIR (1954)), and Noam Chomsky, 15 years later, the "New Mandarins" (Noam CHOMSKY (1969)) – has since considerably waned, the Mandarins themselves having seen their status changed from willing executors or legitimizers a/o ideologists to mere clients and servants, if not slaves, of outside forces which determine funding, topics and desired outcomes of research – in the case of Europe, these outside forces are the so-called private sector, civil society organizations (foundations), state agencies at all levels of government, international governmental and nongovernmental organizations, the EU and national research funds. The overbearing and largely unchallenged influence of what Becher and Towler called the market and its particular logic, nay "culture", has increasingly eroded the autonomy of the academic oligarchy, the academic Mandarins, as well as the role of the university as a social institution independent from outside influence, in particular free from outside funding and outside research prescriptions.

In *A Geopolitics of Academic Writing*, A. Suresh Canagarajah is keenly aware of the differences in social context, material and other conditions and possibilities, in position, in short: in power, of scholars in the center and scholars at the periphery of the contemporary (academic) world system (to use Immanuel Wallerstein's conceptualization); these different positions condition, in turn, not only the focus of research, but are also expressed in what he calls (academic) "communicative conventions" (conversational and textual) as well as "social conventions". Here academic life and culture, as well as the overall organization of the global knowledge system is seen as being conditioned by power



configurations at the global, i.e. geopolitical, level, disadvantaging the voices from the periphery (A. Suresh CANAGARAJAH (2002)).

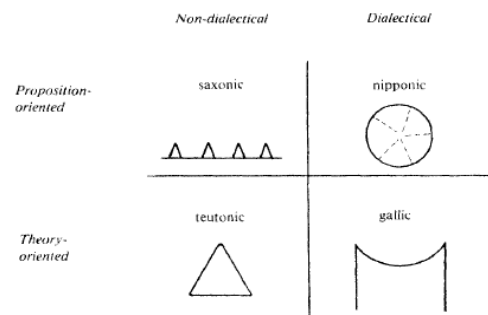
And indeed, not much has changed in the organization of the global knowledge system, where a hegemonic culture dictates the research agenda in both topics and outcome – even though, as the acute observer can readily see, “indigenous”, “traditional” or “non-Western” knowledge and approaches seem to gain more and more attention, mainly because the hegemonic and generally “Western” respectively “center” approaches appear unable to solve persistent problems, in theory as well as in practice. Thus peace and conflict studies have for quite some time looked into other than “Western” or “rational-scientific” ways and methods of conflict transformation (viz., e.g., Wolfgang DIETRICH et al. (2011)), and intercultural philosophy has always questioned the claim that “West is Best” in the field of knowledge and wisdom, to the point of negating the existence of allegedly pure and monocultural paradigms and traditions of knowledge, claiming that all knowledge is profoundly and essentially intercultural (viz., prominently, Elmar HOLENSTEIN (2004)). Even more pronounced is the research for alternative knowledge in medicine –traditional plants and healing methods are being systematically researched, often with the purpose of literally stealing them from the few remaining “witch doctors” or traditional healers, to patent them and to market them: yet another example of exploitation of the periphery, and in a broader perspective, yet another expropriation. Under colonialism and imperialism traditional knowledge and wisdom was suppressed if not eradicated, then disregarded, and now it is being stolen and transferred to the center, where it is privatized and patented, with the hopes that it can be eventually sold back to where it originated (among many accounts of what has become known as biopiracy, see John MUGABE (n.d.), Amos SAUROMBE (n.d.) and Douglas NAKASHIMA and Marie ROUE (2002)). A more beneficial practice of bringing traditional and indigenous knowledge to fruition is pursued in what has become known as entropsychiatry (prominently Piero COPPO (1996), (2003) and (2007)).

Another early study of “intellectual styles” and their dependence on “culture” and “structures” was presented, over thirty years ago, by Johan Galtung, who distinguishes four intellectual styles along cultural-national boundaries, and spells out what he thinks is peculiar to each of them:

- saxonic style: *how do you operationalize it? (US version)*
- teutonic style: *how do you document it? (UK version)*  
*wie können Sie das zurückführen — ableiten?*  
(how can you trace this back — deduce it from basic principles?)
- gallic style: *peut-on dire cela en bon français?*  
(is it possible to say this in French?)
- nipponic style: *donatano monka desuka?*  
(who is your master?)

Another way of summarizing might be by way of Table 2:

TABLE 2  
Four styles, four figures of thought



(Source: Johan GALTUNG (1981), pp. 838-839)

Albeit its over-simplification, which Galtung readily recognizes when writing “The figures should certainly not be taken too seriously” (p. 839), this scheme has the merit of pointing to differences in intellectual, viz. academic, styles and presentations – a focus which can be found also in studies on culturally informed, and hence different, styles or rather ways of cognition and perception (viz., e.g., Richard E. NISBETT (2003))

In addition to the “traditional” general discussions regarding academic culture(s) and knowledge systems, such as the ones briefly presented above, an impressive number of more detailed studies has been undertaken, dealing with such issues as organization and culture of academic discourse, academic writing styles, academic writing and cultural identity, styles of teaching, learning and doing research, the influence of English as academic lingua franca on scientific and academic work, and many more related issues, e.g. integration of foreign students in the host institution, communication difficulties between foreign and “resident” students, between visiting teachers and resident students, etc.

Consider but one example taken from an ongoing research project, first a definition of academic culture, and then a catalogue of research questions:

## A Definition (Dr. Gundula Gwenn Hiller)

**"Hochschulkultur"?**

- Besondere Form sozialer Praxis mit eigenem Sinn- und Bedeutungssystem,
- Manifestiert sich in kontextspezifischen Verhaltensweisen, Kommunikationsstrukturen und Diskursen
- aber auch in ihr eigenen Organisationsformen und materiellen Ausstattungen, Raum- und Zeitsystemen
- AkteurInnen kultivieren einen bestimmten "Habitus", also Handlungs- und Denkschemata
- All diese Faktoren prägen die Interaktion der AkteurInnen innerhalb des Kontexts der sozialen Praxis. (Reckwitz 2007).

(Source: Gundula Gwenn HILLER (2012))

## Fields of Investigation (Dr. Gundula Gwenn Hiller)

**Forschungsüberblick**  
Zu internationalen Studierenden in Deutschland:

Sprach- und Verständigungsschwierigkeiten

Lehr-Lernstile

Kooperation in studentischen AGs

Informeller Kontakt einheimischen Studierenden

Organisation des Studiums

Kommunikation mit HochschullehrerInnen

Behördenkommunikation

Leistungsanforderungen

*Quellen: Leenen/Groß (2007); Isserstedt/Kandula 2010*

(Source: Gundula Gwenn HILLER (2012))

What the above should illustrate, is that the topic of academic culture, and the awareness of structural organizational, and interactional differences in these academic cultures has been discussed for quite some time, from a variety of

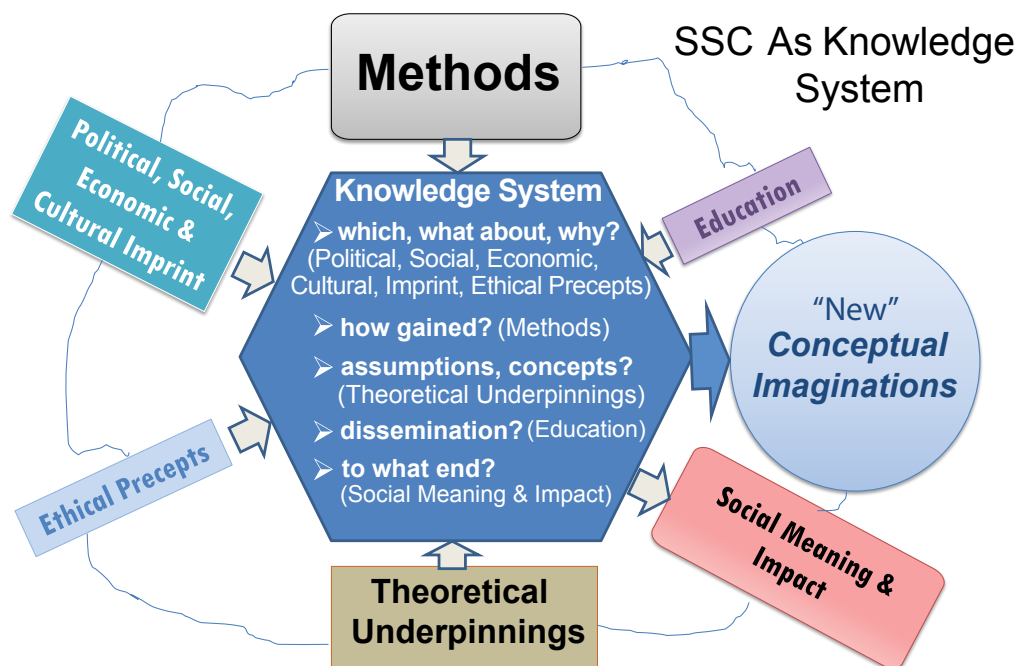
perspectives, and is now gaining more and more refined attention, not least because of the rapidly increasing mobility of university students and teachers, but also for the manifest limits of a number of the hegemonic global academic social science paradigms.

## II. Social Science As Knowledge System in Academic Culture(s)

In what follows, I would like to propose, in the form of a working hypothesis, an admittedly general and impressionistic view of how the “normal” or “mainstream” social science knowledge system is organized within contemporary “normal”, “mainstream” universities, and how it operates and develops or rather is forced to operate and develop.

This working hypothesis is based on the assumption that the social science knowledge system is, to a great extent, institutionalized academic culture, in other words, the universities are usually home to the social sciences – which of course is not to say that *extra Academiam nulla scientia*, but it is probably reasonable to state that the universities still host most of social science activities, in research as well as in teaching and learning, despite the increasing role of private think tanks and pure research institutions. At any rate, universities or para-universities still are central to the impartation of knowledge through teaching and learning, which in turn is organized in academic degree programs in universities.

The following figure tries to spell out this working hypothesis:



(Source: Peter PRAXMARER (2012))

### Explanations:

#### 1. Technical Notes

- SSC means Social Sciences.
- The graph is intended to show the influences on the knowledge system (arrows pointing towards the central shape) and the effects of the knowledge system (arrows emanating from the central shape), with both influences and effects being briefly defined in the central shape.

- The colors in the above graph, while culturally imbued, have been chosen to indicate the importance a/o “appeal” of the camps shown; thus, to whom is writing, blue in its various shades seems to be a warm and positive color, whereas the grey of “Methods” and the brownish of “Theoretical Underpinnings” are not necessarily associated with positive meaning, and the reddish-pink of “Social Meaning & Impact” is equally not entirely positive – all this is of course a subjective interpretation.
- The figures in the graph are conditioned by “SmartArt”: another reminder on how the (technical) form(at) conditions content, in short, how form conditions content (and, by extension, language, thought, technical possibility, practical feasibility, etc.) – worth thinking about when we use visual means and in particular shapes and colors in our knowledge communication.
- The fuzzy lines connecting the sharp shapes are meant to illustrate the margin for creativity in organizing the knowledge system and its influencing forces and effects.

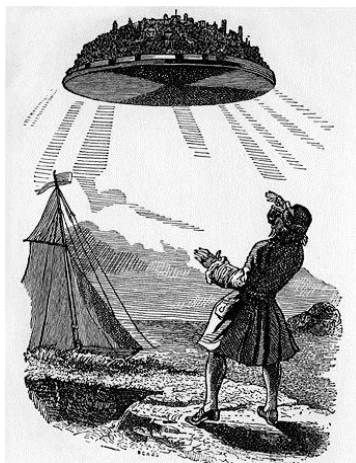
## 2. Knowledge System

This is shown in the middle, as central bloc, being influenced by different other “blocs” or identifiable factors; knowledge is seen as a system, an “organized” system (viz. Edgar MORIN (1999)), subject to all kind of influences, and producing certain outcomes. The characterization of knowledge as a system is also meant to underline that the gaining of knowledge is more and more, if not almost exclusively, a social affair, the result of teamwork, as one important scientist and theorist of science, recently rediscovered, has already stressed in 1938, when writing about *Denkstille* and *Denkkollektiv*, styles of thinking, collective thought and “think traffic”, the “inertia of opinion systems” and the “harmony of fallacies” -- all a far cry away from the cute certainties of empirically “validated” research (viz. Ludwig FLECK (2012/1938)).

## 3. Methods

This bloc, methods or methodology, is overarching, is grey and menacing. The usual distinction in qualitative and quantitative research methodology is to be overcome. More often than not it seems that quantification is the only acceptable form of proof. “*Doo meten too weten.*” (Through measurement to knowledge), a motto coined by Dutch physicist Kamerlingh Onnes, can be read above the entrance to Eindhoven’s University of Technology, even though we would do well to remind that “Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.” – one of many quotes attributed to Albert Einstein (see: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/alberteins162052.html>).

Aside from the admonition to not to try to count what is not countable, one should probably be aware also of another methodological fact which more than any other influences the contemporary social science knowledge system, i.e. the hitherto unheard of technical capacity to gather, distribute, arrange and re-arrange, correlate, etc. quantitative data – which I want to call, following Jonathan Swift, the Laputian Temptation. Swift describes the inhabitants of Laputa, a flying island Gulliver visits during his travels, in the following terms: “Their Ideas are perpetually conversant in Lines and Figures. If they would, for example, praise the Beauty of a Woman, or any other Animal, they describe it by Rhombs, Circles, Parallelograms, Ellipses, and other Geometrical Terms (...) They are very bad Reasoners, and vehemently given to Opposition, unless when they happen to be of the right Opinion, which is seldom their Case. Imagination, Fancy, and Invention, they are wholly Strangers to, nor have any Words in their Language by which those Ideas can be expressed (...)” (Jonathan SWIFT (1726)). What a fitting description of the outlook and the discussion mode of many a contemporary social scientist operating in the flying islands of quantitative academe...



Captain Lemuel Gulliver beholding the Flying Island of Laputa

We should do well, in our social science knowledge system to question the Laputian Temptation, or the Quantitative Certainty Illusion, and to resist easily marshaled “data onslaughts” and “empirical overkill” in our knowledge systems – please note the terms in inverted commas, which are deliberately drawn from the war source metaphor domain.

#### 4. “New” Conceptual Imagination

Overcoming the Laputian Temptation and the Quantitative Certainty Illusion, one needs something else, which can be called Conceptual Imagination, – very much in the vein of what John Paul Lederach has called “the serendipitous appearance of the *moral imagination* in human affairs (my italics).” (John Paul LEDERACH (2005), p. 19). Aside from the research principle of serendipity, conceptual imagination also translates, methodologically, into concepts and methodological principles such as vagueness (e.g. Kees VAN DEEMTER (2010), Sebastiano MORUZZI (2012)) complexity (e.g. Robin FORTIN (2005, 2<sup>e</sup> éd)), ambiguity, polyvalence and polysemy of meaning, etc. – all this not at all new in the long history of human thinking.

#### 5. Political, Social, Economic and Cultural Imprint, Ethical Precepts

Why a theme becomes a topic in the social sciences – or a social science “meme” in a certain place and time – has probably increasingly less to do with “really felt” social problems of the majority, than with political, economic and social pressure. Culture and ethics may play a role, too, but usually marginally. The history of scientific innovation is rich in examples to prove the various impacts of pressure groups who hold the power of the purse, and/or political power, and do not overly care about ethical or deontological principles. Furthermore, nowadays, it seems that the economy encroaches more and more on all aspects of scientific research, and the main question is one of profitability. It is probably not a gross exaggeration to speak of a – Big and Hegemonic – “Globalized Marketeering Science”, in which knowledge is mercenarily funded (“*Wes Brot ich ess, des Lied ich sing*” as the Mercenaries of all ages have it), competitively produced, privately appropriated and owned (viz. the always more sanguine discussion about intellectual copyright), and mercantilistically marketed. All this with a volatile cognitive interest following a strict (in monetary terms quantified) cost-benefit calculus or political expedience of various kinds.

#### 6. Theoretical Underpinnings

Theoretical underpinnings are related to methods/methodology and to ethical precepts. In the current social science knowledge system, they are often quite simple “working hypotheses”, in the tradition of a rather reductive rational choice (means-ends, costs-benefits) theorem, faithfully reflecting the hegemonic, standard, mainstream tradition – for which they are also criticized as bringing forth “colonial” definitions and concepts. The theoretical underpinnings of impressive quantitative data research are often extremely simple, even amounting to self-fulfilling prophecies, formulated to vindicate quantitative methods; they almost always lack a clearly stated cognitive interest, and value statements, presupposing a positivistic value-neutrality. Often they make ample and unreflected use of essentially contested concepts (viz. Walter Bryce GALLIE (1956) and are based on a-priori taxonomies and categorizations which often reflect the dominant *zeitgeist* and not critical reflective inquiry.

#### 7. Education

One of the most important roles of the social science knowledge system, institutionalized in universities, is the dissemination of knowledge through teaching and studying, between professors and students, among professors and researchers and also among students themselves (viz. the concept of “learning community”). All this takes place not only in face-to-face teaching or communication (lectures, seminars, symposia, conferences, etc.), but also, and increasingly so, in electronic form (“e-learning” and “e-teaching”). Unfortunately, it seems that one of these functions of the university, teaching, is more and more disregarded, for more than one reason: one is certainly the permanent stress put on professors to competitively research and to publish – a strategy of production and appreciation of knowledge tellingly epitomized by the term of “bibliometrics”, which in its very diction privileges quantity over quality, and hailed in peer reviews which often amount to censorship. This leaves the average knowledge producer, caught up in this “publish-or-perish-world”, usually little time for preparing to teach, unless of course teaching is seen as but an extrapolation of specialized research and publishing. Another point is the question: education what for? To earn more money, to elevate

the general level of knowledge of society, a moral education in the sense of erudition, or what for? (viz. Alfred North WHITEHEAD (1959/1929) )

### 8. Social Meaning and Impact (Efficiency & Effectiveness)

In the mainstream social science knowledge system, the question of social meaning or impact is usually either not asked, or often restricted to special interest areas, defined by the funding agencies, entities or corporations. Rarely is the social impact considered in terms of the maximum good for the maximum number, in a sustainable way. And always more rarely do prominent academics see informed criticism of social reality as one of their main roles as public intellectuals, working, as they are, under the pressure to produce viable and operational results: should the receiver of a multimillion research grant and his/her team come to the conclusion that the proposed working hypothesis does not work, or that the results do not fulfill the expectations of who gave the mandate, further funding is usually in danger. The high competition pressure, also with regards to having to come up with results, does the rest: non-operational results are no results, and this may lead to “doctored” results in the name of efficiency, if not to utter fraud (see, e.g. Michael HAMPE (2012)).

The above points do not claim to treat this subject matter in anything more than an impressionistic manner; but they do want to encourage further debate on our contemporary social science knowledge, and on our academic culture(s).

## III. Academic Culture(s) in EMICC (European Master in Intercultural Communication) and Eurocampus

### 1. General Information

The yearly EURO CAMPUS forms part of the European Masters in Intercultural Communication (EMICC).

EMICC is a teaching and research network of nine European universities specializing in intercultural communication and proposing an interdisciplinary study programme designed to enhance academic and professional competence of participants preparing for careers with significant intercultural contact. As of 2012, the following universities are part of EMICC:

<b>Bayreuth, Germany:</b>	Universität Bayreuth
<b>Cambridge, Great Britain:</b>	Anglia Ruskin University
<b>Jyväskylä, Finland:</b>	University of Jyväskylä
<b>Lisbon &amp; Coimbra, Portugal:</b>	Universidade Aberta
<b>Lugano, Switzerland:</b>	Università della Svizzera italiana
<b>Paris, France:</b>	Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales
<b>Poznan, Poland:</b>	Adam-Mickiewicz-University
<b>Tartu, Estonia:</b>	University of Tartu
<b>Utrecht, The Netherlands:</b>	University of Utrecht

The core of EMICC is the yearly EURO CAMPUS, a four month intensive programme taught by professors from the network universities, in which up to five students from each partner university can take part.

The 2013 EURO CAMPUS will take place at University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Previously, EURO CAMPUS was held in Jyväskylä (2002), Bayreuth (2003), Brussels (2004), Cambridge (2005), Lisbon (2006), Lugano (2007), Tartu (2008), Lugano (2009), Utrecht (2010), and Castellón, Spain (2011), Universidade Alberta in Coimbra, Portugal (2012).

The EURO CAMPUS semester is organized in 7 modules totalling 13 courses and comprises additional learning and training activities. Each course will be assessed following ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) criteria, and carries a total of 30 ECTS credits.

Of the courses offered, all must be attended and 10 courses must be successfully completed (i.e. with exam, written or other assignment) to pass the EURO CAMPUS. Upon successful completion, the host university will award participants a Study Diploma in Intercultural Communication. Partner universities may decide to award more credits to students who have successfully completed more than the 10 courses necessary to receive the EURO CAMPUS diploma.

The workload for each course completed (including exam or other assignment) is estimated to be 75 - 90 hours. All courses are held in English.

## 2. Specific Information

### AIMS OF EUROCAMPUS

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#### Academic Knowledge

- to gain knowledge about intercultural communication theories;
- to be able to understand the contribution of different academic disciplines to the study of intercultural communication.

#### Research Know-How

- to be able to identify relevant research problems, formulate research questions and critically evaluate research results;
- to know how to apply research methods in order to collect and analyse multiple source data, and to account for this in an ethical way.

#### Intercultural Communication Competence and Skills

- to develop intercultural communicative competence and be able to apply intercultural communication skills in professional and social settings;
- to develop the ability to communicate face to face and in technologically mediated modes both locally and globally;
- to increase cultural self- and other-awareness and to acquire the tools to reflect upon and analyse intercultural interactions;
- to be aware of, and appreciate, cultural diversity and to engage in intercultural dialogue.

#### European Civic Culture

- to be able to apply knowledge, research know-how as well as competencies and skills to participate actively in the building of a peaceful and prosperous Europe, to be a hospitable home to all her inhabitants and citizens.

### DEONTOLOGY FOR PARTICIPANTS

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Teaching and learning during Eurocampus implies critical and constructive discussions of both academic content and didactic methods, as well as grading, evaluation and feedback. All participants, professors as well as students, are expected to abide by the standards of professional ethics and fairness, as laid down in the *Criteria for Staff Participation in Eurocampus*, adopted during the 2011 EMICC Meeting in Castellón, Spain, and introduced in courses 1.6. *Intercultural Integration Workshop* and 1.7 *Academic Cultures*.

### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

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During the first ten days of Eurocampus, students are invited to choose a *Student Representative*. The role of this representative is to bring to the attention of the *Program Coordinators* either in Coimbra or in Lugano any problem of an organisational or other nature which students think should be addressed by them.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

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In order to optimally meet students' learning needs, and to introduce students to the rich variety of contemporary academic communication, a number of teaching and learning methods are practised in Eurocampus, comprising

- independent study
- lectures
- seminar activities
- group work
- simulation exercises
- role plays
- project presentation
- e-learning.

### MODULE AND COURSE STRUCTURE

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## MODULES AND COURSES

<p><b>M1 Preparation and Introduction</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make sure that all participants are familiar with the main topics of intercultural communication studies;</li> <li>- assess individual intercultural competence at the beginning of Eurocampus using a validated IDI test;</li> <li>- assess students' knowledge of the Independent Study Preparatory Module as well as check their command of oral and written academic English, and recommend an additional language course if necessary;</li> <li>- raise students' awareness about the importance of intercultural communication when interacting in multicultural and multinational groups and in potentially unfamiliar settings;</li> <li>- give students useful knowledge about the host country (language(s), history, political system, socioeconomic realities, cultural traditions, etc.), to prepare them for an optimal study stay;</li> <li>- make students aware of the diversity in (European) academic cultures and enable them to understand different learning, teaching, writing, as well as evaluation (feedback) and assessment styles;</li> <li>- introduce professional and ethical standards for discussion, feedback, evaluation and assessment;</li> <li>- set the stage for making Eurocampus an intercultural experience <i>sui generis</i> for all participating students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Courses &amp; Activities</b>	<b>Responsible University</b>
1.1 Independent Study Preparatory Module	Sending University
1.2 Admission Procedures	Sending University
1.3 Welcome	Universidade Aberta (UAb), Coimbra
1.4 IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) Test	Universidade Aberta (UAb), Coimbra and University of Jyväskylä
1.5 Introduction to Host Country	Universidade Aberta (UAb), Coimbra
1.6 Intercultural Integration Workshop	Utrecht University
1.7 Academic Cultures	Adam-Mickiewicz-University, Poznan
<p><b>M2 Intercultural Communication Theories, Research Methods and Intercultural Communication Competence</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduce students to the main theoretical approaches, topics and methods in contemporary intercultural communication studies;</li> <li>- show some of the ways how to apply these theoretical insights to concrete intercultural communication situations;</li> <li>- discuss and explain the importance of intercultural communication competencies, from a theoretical as well as from an applied perspective.</li> </ul>	
2.1 Intercultural Communication: Theories, Models and Applications	University of Jyväskylä
2.2 Intercultural Communication Competence	University of Jyväskylä
<p><b>M3 Multilingualism and Cultural Diversity</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduce basic linguistic and semiotic concepts for the analysis of interaction in intercultural situations;</li> <li>- introduce relevant theories relating to lingua franca interaction, linguistic awareness of cultures, receptive multilingualism, conversation and discourse analysis;</li> <li>- practice the application of theoretical concepts to authentic data (e.g. by collecting, recording, transcribing, comparing and analysing stretches of conversation and written material);</li> <li>- enable students to assess the scope and relevance of these methodologies for investigating different intercultural research questions;</li> <li>- help students to select and apply an appropriate methodology for a specific research question.</li> </ul>	
3.1 Linguistic Awareness of Cultures	University of Bayreuth
3.2 Linguistic Diversity in Organisations: Receptive Multilingualism	Utrecht University
3.3 Lingua Franca Interaction	Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge
3.4 Power in Intercultural Communication	University of Tartu
<p><b>M4 Concepts and Practices of Belonging</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- address questions of nation, supra-nationality, citizenship, culture, diversity and identity by shedding light on theoretical developments in</li> </ul>	



<p>anthropology, sociology and cultural theories;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consider theoretical frameworks in anthropology, from the 1930s to the contemporary discussion on globalization, and show their relevance for intercultural communication studies;</li> <li>- enable students to understand newly developing migration patterns by applying the broad framework of concepts, policies and trends mentioned above;</li> <li>- enhance students' differentiated and critical understanding of integration processes at different levels (e.g. national, regional, European, global);</li> <li>- understand the policies proposed by European institutions regarding, among others, European values, unity, diversity, integration, intercultural dialogue, and in particular "Unity in Diversity";</li> <li>- apply the theoretical insights gained to critically evaluate current policies in the European Union.</li> </ul>	
4.1 Anthropology of the Nation State	University of Bayreuth
4.2 Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue in Europe: Approaches and Actions	Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (INALCO), Paris
4.3 Migration and Integration in European Discourse and Policies	Universidade Aberta (UAb), Coimbra
<p><b>M5 Intercultural Effectiveness in International Contexts</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- gain an understanding of the nature of the theories and frameworks in comparative practices and behaviours in organizations, businesses and other specific contexts;</li> <li>- apply acquired intercultural communication skills to communication situations in diverse organizational settings and professional contexts;</li> <li>- enable students to apply these theories and concepts to a range of specific situations (e.g. conflict transformation after violent conflict, working in, managing and leading culturally diverse groups and teams);</li> <li>- make students aware of the role of culture in legal systems, in particular regarding human rights and to enable students to apply their knowledge to the analysis of concrete legal cases.</li> </ul>	
5.1 Intercultural Management	Brussels Management School (ICHEC)
5.2 Intercultural Communication for Conflict Transformation	University of Lugano (USI)
5.3 Intercultural Aspects of Human Rights	University of Lugano (USI)
<p><b>M6 Impact of New Communication Technologies on Intercultural Communication</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- explain the increasing importance of new technologies for (intercultural) communication, (e.g. mapping online communication, learning and operating in the digital world);</li> <li>- show the importance of cultures and cultural heritage and traditions for online communication in its many forms and facets, including social media and distributed online groups and communities;</li> <li>- practice the applicability of these insights to concrete cases and projects.</li> </ul>	
6.1 Culture and Online Communication	University of Lugano (USI) & University of Jyväskylä
<p><b>M7 Programme Completion</b></p> <p>This module aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- assess individual and group intercultural competence development throughout the Eurocampus semester with the IDI test;</li> <li>- enable students to constructively and critically reflect upon the academic and social experiences made during the Eurocampus semester;</li> <li>- apply professional and ethically sound practices of feedback, criticism and evaluation;</li> <li>- help students to gainfully integrate the knowledge acquired during Eurocampus for the completion of their Master at their home university.</li> </ul>	
7.1 IDI Testing, Final Part	Universidade Aberta (UAb), Coimbra and University of Jyväskylä
7.2 Debriefing and Overall Eurocampus Feedback	Universidade Aberta (UAb), Coimbra and University of Lugano (USI)
7.3 Assignment Completion	Independent Work
7.4 Re-entry Workshop	Sending University

(Source: EUROPEAN MASTER IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION (EMICC), 2012 Eurocampus Handbook. Coimbra: Universidade Aberta)

### 3. Dimensions of Academic Culture in Eurocampus

Eurocampus is one of very few academic study programs which has introduced an explicit reflection and workshop, dealing with, and problematizing the diverse academic cultures of all participants, students as well as professors. The course description for this workshop reads as follows:

<b>Week 37 (13-14 Sept)</b>	<b>1.7 Academic Cultures</b>
<b>Lecturer E-mail Address</b>	Stephan Wolting <a href="mailto:mwolting@yahoo.de">mwolting@yahoo.de</a>
<b>Prerequisites</b>	1.1 <i>Independent Study Preparatory Module</i> 1.6 <i>Intercultural Integration Workshop</i>
<b>Objectives</b>	This lecture and workshop aims to point out cultural specifics in academic communication as well as differences in academic institutional frameworks. We will approach the diversity of academic communication both as a subject of research and as personally lived experience. At the end of this course and workshop, students should be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- aware of the diversity of (European) academic cultures and institutional academic frameworks</li> <li>- able to understand and appreciate different academic teaching, learning, writing and research styles and other elements of academic culture</li> <li>- attentive to professional and ethical fairness in discussing evaluations of these differences in academic cultures.</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- academic communication as a field of (quantitative and qualitative) intercultural research</li> <li>- forms, styles and institutions of academic knowledge production and dissemination</li> <li>- interdependence of the institutional frame works and academic communication</li> <li>- diversity of learning, teaching, writing, evaluation (exams and grading) and feedback methods and styles practiced in (European) universities</li> <li>- critical reflections on the humanities' own hermeneutic basic assumptions of "good" teaching and learning</li> </ul>
<b>Workload</b>	6 hours each day over 2 days
<b>Research Methods Introduced</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- phenomenological description and empirical study of different phenomena within academia</li> <li>- "thick description"</li> <li>- learning by doing</li> <li>- experiments</li> <li>- participant observation</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment &amp; Evaluation Basis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- individual preparation</li> <li>- interactive participation</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment &amp; Evaluation Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ability of interactive participation</li> <li>- ability to discuss proposed situations from both theoretical and empirical perspectives</li> </ul>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>Recommended Readings</b> Bourdieu, P. (1998): <i>Homo academicus</i> . Translated by Peter Collier. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Clyne, M. (1987): <i>Cultural differences in the organisation of academic texts</i> . In: <i>Journal of Pragmatics</i> 11, pp. 211-247. Dierkes, M. & Antal, A.B. & Child, J. & Nonaka, I. (2001): <i>Handbook of organizational learning and knowledge</i> . Oxford University Press.
<b>Course to Course Relationship</b>	This course is part of M1 "Preparation and Introduction" and relates to all other modules of the Eurocampus program.
<b>Key Concepts</b>	Academic communication, academic cultures, learning and teaching styles, academic attitudes and habits, didactics.

(Source: EUROPEAN MASTER IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION (EMICC), 2012 Eurocampus Handbook. Coimbra: Universidade Aberta)

Besides this explicit treatment of the topic of academic cultures, also other dimensions of academic culture – as a specific organizational culture – have been introduced into the program:

**European Civic Culture (as integral part of the Aims of Eurocampus), described as:**

“to be able to apply knowledge, research know-how as well as competencies and skills to participate actively in the building of a peaceful and prosperous Europe, to be a hospitable home to all her inhabitants and citizens.”

This specific aim was introduced to explicitly show the civic commitment demanded from all participants in the study program.

**Deontology for Participants, described as:**

“Teaching and learning during Eurocampus implies critical and constructive discussions of both academic content and didactic methods, as well as grading, evaluation and feedback. All participants, professors as well as students, are expected to abide by the standards of professional ethics and fairness, as laid down in the Criteria for Staff Participation in Eurocampus, adopted during the 2011 EMICC Meeting in Castellón, Spain, and introduced in courses *1.6. Intercultural Integration Workshop* and *1.7 Academic Cultures*.”

This was introduced to train students in fair evaluations of, and feedback for, professors, as well as to enhance professors’ fair and professional judgement and assessment of students’ performance.

**Student Representative, described as:**

“During the first ten days of Eurocampus, students are invited to choose a Student Representative. The role of this representative is to bring to the attention of the Program Coordinators either in Coimbra or in Lugano any problem of an organisational or other nature which students think should be addressed by them.”

The scope of having a designated student representative is not only to guarantee fast and reliable flow of information within the program, but also to enhance skills of democratic representation among the participants.

(Source: EUROPEAN MASTER IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION (EMICC), 2012 Eurocampus Handbook. Coimbra: Universidade Aberta; see also above)

## 2012 Eurocampus Student Profiles

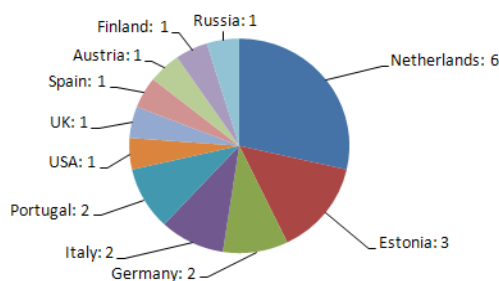
### 2012 Coimbra Eurocampus

### STUDENT PROFILES

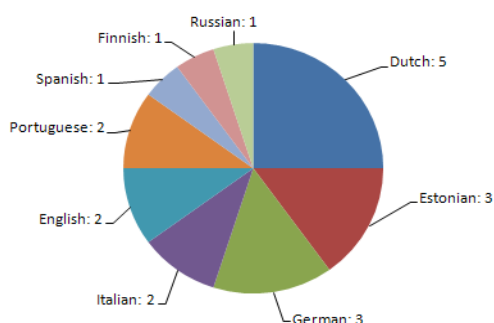
The information in this document was put together by the 2012 Coimbra Eurocampus students themselves and is intended for use by Eurocampus students and faculty only.

<b>Number of Participants</b>	21
<b>Gender</b>	17 female 4 male
<b>Average Age</b>	26

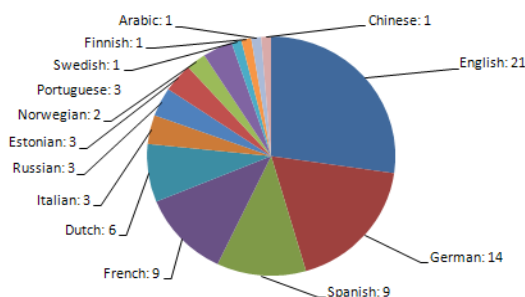
#### Nationalities



#### Mother Tongue



#### Linguistic Repertoire



(Source: 2012 Coimbra Eurocampus – Student Profile. Coimbra: Universidade Aberta)

This summary profile shows the linguistic and other diversity of the student body – it is vital to understand and to work with this diversity, in order to take full advantage of the inherent wealth such an international and intercultural group offers, and to elicit the different types of knowledge which each of the participants brings with them. If this is successful, such a diverse group of students can learn just as much by means of “inter-teaching”, i.e. teaching, and learning from, each other, and through “informal learning”, as from the formal teaching in the study program. All this is part and parcel of the academic culture of Eurocampus.

#### 4. Preliminary Conclusions Regarding the Eurocampus Experience

Eleven years of experience in organizing a yearly semester in which students and professors from nine universities, many more language, national and disciplinary backgrounds meet and interact, provides indeed a fertile ground for insights into academic cultures. These insights range from students’ expectations and motivations (which have been documented for the last three years), to more standard evaluations and feedbacks, to the sometimes turbulent experiences of professors with such a diverse student body. Language issues, in particular academic English as a *lingua franca*, are always an issue, unfortunately not enough studied. More mundane parameters/indicators/dimensions of academic culture, such as grading and evaluation practices, numbers of hours per ECTS credit, class size, professor availability and accessibility, cost and financing of study, centralized or decentralized organization of institutions of higher learning, alumni networks, etc., etc. would certainly also merit attention.

#### IV. Overall Conclusion

On the whole, it is this writer's conviction that the crux of the matter called "academic culture" lies in the (re-)establishment of a spirit of inquiry which is critical, reflective and focused on the human being and all forms of life wherever and however they may manifest and articulate themselves, and not geared, in the first place, towards operational and readily marketable results. I also believe that information and knowledge gained and produced by those who operate in the academically organized knowledge system should issue in what since time immemorial and in all places has been called wisdom – wisdom in the service and to the benefit of global human- and lifekind. This, I sense, is the real challenge and task of all and any academic culture.

## V. Bibliography

(Please refer also to references in the text)

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## *Dirigere contesti scolastici multietnici tra managerialità e leadership autentica*

*Maria Provenzano\**

### *Introduzione*

La globalizzazione (Bauman, 2003), «processo irreversibile», può essere vissuta come segnale di «nuove libertà» e/o come «un destino non voluto e crudele», di «riduzione alla dimensione locale» della propria vita a determinati spazi vitali. La localizzazione derivante non può non interessare la scuola, che deve occuparsi proprio di coloro che sono «inchiodati alla propria “località”, considerati inferiori ed espressione del degrado sociale» (pp. 3-5). In questo processo di “esclusione”, la scuola si trova ad essere coinvolta nel difficile compito, che già investe la politica locale, di «influire, riparare, migliorare, reindirizzare problemi concepiti e partoriti a livello globale» (Bauman, 2009, p. 94).

Uomini, donne e bambini di diversa etnia e cultura si ritrovano a vivere in spazi urbani in cui spesso già esistono condizioni socio-economiche e culturali disagiate, e portano con loro una diversità che sfida educatori e dirigenti scolastici. Questi «accettano la sfida e optano per l’intercultura cercando di trasformare i problemi in risorse» (Fravega, 2003, p. 11) e valorizzare le capacità di tutti gli alunni, ma, soprattutto, dei “bravi da scoprire” (Santelli Beccegato, 2005).

Da questa riflessione nasce la curiosità di capire quale leadership è pensabile e praticabile in contesti scolastici multietnici.

### *School Leadership: managerialità vs approccio democratico e inclusivo*

La cultura cambia e i legami tra scuola e società si consolidano grazie all’assunzione delle società globalizzate e della realtà culturale locale nei curricoli scolastici. Ma, se da una parte la cultura scolastica si focalizza su una formazione aperta all’innovazione e alla diversità, dall’altra, in molte società democratiche occidentali il dibattito dominante sulla diversità è influenzato dal crescente orientamento manageriale e dal mercato della scolarizzazione, escludendo i discorsi sull’equità, sulla disuguaglianza, sulla discriminazione e sull’inclusione nella e attraverso l’istruzione (Blackmore, 2006). Lumby (2006) asserisce che la diversità è un costrutto socio-politico del gruppo dominante, finalizzato a perseguire gli scopi di quest’ultimo e rappresenta un rischio quando è associata allo svantaggio socio-economico degli studenti, occultandone

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l'incommensurabile *valore aggiunto* per il benessere scolastico. Valorizzare la diversità rappresenta una necessità se si vuole centrare l'apprendimento sulla collaborazione piuttosto che sulla competitività individuale. Pertanto, è indispensabile conoscere il contesto politico in cui le scuole sono situate e rendersi conto degli effetti di una *decision-making* centrata sui principi della razionalità economica che ha determinato, addirittura, lo scopo principale dell'educazione, focalizzandosi, così, sulla competitività e sulla *performatività* (Leo e Barton, 2006).

Di fronte alle sfide attuali e in un contesto che Ball (2006) definisce di “*new management panopticism*”, occorre scontrarsi con la realtà posta dalla società attuale. Il mutamento continuo, determinato dalla complessità socio-politica, conduce, indifferibilmente, tutti coloro che vivono la scuola a interrogarsi sulla propria identità professionale, sullo sfaldamento (o cambiamento?) dei valori, sulla molteplicità delle richieste sociali avanzate ad essa (Gardner, 2005).

Nel sistema di istruzione, secondo Ball (2006), il dirigente è la personificazione di un nuovo managerialismo; ma è, altresì, colui/colei che, in prima persona, è chiamato a stimolare la capacità di stare nelle situazioni (Giuffrida, 2005). Ciò, poiché «l'organizzazione è relazione», (Riva, 2005, pp. 36-38), finalizzata ad aprire spazi centrati sulla «critica e [sulla] riflessività sociale intese quali condizioni per praticare ed interpretare una effettiva leadership democratica» (Serpieri, 2008, p. 13) o, addirittura, «nulla» (Ball, 2006).

In questo quadro, il dirigente scolastico, guidato dal principio dell'auto-riflessività (Riva, 2005), quale presa di coscienza del potere influenzale che il Sé ha sulle pratiche di leadership (Branson 2007), dovrebbe coltivare la consapevolezza dell'inevitabilità delle scelte di fronte a sfide sempre più emergenti e complesse. Sfide connesse all'ipercomplessità della società attuale e alle contraddizioni presenti nelle politiche educative, che pongono ai leader educativi molteplici problemi, paradossi e dilemmi associati a scenari educativi instabili; sfide che possono diventare opportunità (Portera, 2006b) all'interno della scuola, avendo superato le opposte, spesso contraddittorie, direzioni da prendere (Dimmock e Walker, 2005). È necessario, a tal fine, ribadire l'esigenza di sviluppare autentiche pratiche di leadership. Una ricerca di autenticità, che parte da se stessi e si estende ad etiche riflessive e ad un alto senso di responsabilità morale (Langlois e Lapointe, 2007), quali necessità per trovare risposte a quei dilemmi etici, ai quali i leader danno voce (Norberg e Johansson, 2007).

Per escludere una mancata risoluzione di queste tensioni l'organizzazione scolastica deve affrontare i rischi, l'inatteso, l'incerto, mediante processi flessibili e creativi (Morin, 2001). Inevitabilmente, la presenza di problemi spinosi che la globalizzazione pone, richiede una riflessione interdisciplinare e interculturale, nei confronti di una società che dovrebbe incoraggiare «il dissenso, promuovere un sano scetticismo e fornire pari opportunità» (Gardner, 2005, p. 169). In



questa prospettiva le istituzioni scolastiche, che sapranno uscire dal loro conservatorismo intrinseco e rispondere creativamente alle sfide della globalizzazione, sapranno «rapportarsi con persone con *background* diversi e sistemi di valori spesso conflittuali» ed assumere come valori guida «l'Assunzione di Responsabilità e il Rispetto per Umanità» e l'apprezzamento «di quanto vi è di speciale negli esseri umani» (pp. 181-182).

Nel perseguire la sua funzione sociale ed educativa la scuola democratica dovrebbe formare una persona creativa, capace di autodeterminazione e autoconsapevolezza (Woods 2005). In tal senso la *leadership democratica* valorizza lo spazio creativo necessario per lo sviluppo umano, non semplicemente come mezzo per raggiungere efficacemente i fini dell'organizzazione, ma, soprattutto, per incoraggiare una pratica multidimensionale, che impegna le potenzialità umane e affronta le sfide della modernità. Dal punto di vista pedagogico, la *leadership democratica* rappresenta una risposta all'approccio manageriale (Barzanò, 2008), contro i valori dominanti della performatività, utilizzando i principi democratici dell'uguaglianza, dell'appartenenza e della libertà sostanziale, per sfidare le ingiustizie sociali e culturali. La *leadership dispersa* assume una posizione etica esplicita a riguardo, riconoscendo dette ingiustizie e rilevando il carattere evolutivo e partecipativo della *vision*, che è proiettata verso una continua riflessione critica che valorizza adeguatamente il dissenso costruttivo (Woods, 2005).

D'altro canto, Woods (2005), calandosi in una prospettiva interculturale, propone di intendere il compito della *leadership* educativa connesso all'autenticità (personale, ideale e sociale), come assunzione di un approccio strategico che ricerca e massimizza il potenziale democratico all'interno della contemporanea tendenza ad una cultura burocratico-manageriale. La risposta strategica a questa cultura potrebbe essere la *moral leadership*, che affronta la questione relativa a ciò che è moralmente significativo fare per una *leadership for inclusion* (Leo e Barton, 2006), coltivando la capacità di distanziarsi da se stessi, di saper connettere valori personali e idee pubbliche, ma, soprattutto, lo sfruttamento di tutte le opportunità per costruire un libero spazio democratico e una partecipazione inclusiva basata sullo status umano.

A riguardo gli studi effettuati da Ryan (2003) aiutano a cogliere i vantaggi e i limiti degli approcci (manageriale/tecnico/umanistico/trasformazionale), prevalentemente, adottati dai leader scolastici in scuole multiculturali, rispetto ad una loro applicazione finalizzata all'inclusione sociale. Per Ryan (2006), in questi approcci alla *leadership* prevalgono l'orientamento verso il prioritario raggiungimento di stretti fini di efficienza e produttività e la sottoscrizione, da parte delle organizzazioni, di ruoli gerarchici. Per cui risultano inadeguati in contesti in cui uomini e donne assumono una varietà di identità mutevoli e fluide – dalle più durature forme di identità etnico/razziali, di classe, di genere, sessuali, religiose a quelle associate alla famiglia, ai ruoli sociali

e lavorativi. Invece, le prospettive emancipative, generalmente, enfatizzano l'inclusione: includere tutti, in particolare coloro che sono normalmente marginalizzati nei contenuti e nei processi di istruzione. La *leadership emancipativa o critica* rappresenta un "anti-leadership", poichè si oppone a molte convenzionali visioni di leadership: tutti i membri delle comunità scolastiche hanno l'opportunità di prendere parte, o di essere rappresentati, in attività di leadership. È una leadership doppiamente inclusiva: include equamente tutti in un processo significativo di inclusione delle persone in pratiche e processi istituzionali, focalizzandosi su iniziative centrate sulla comunità (*community-centered enterprises*) che mobilitano a resistere a pratiche ingiuste e a perseguire obiettivi sociali proficui. Perché ciò accada i gruppi provenienti da comunità di diversa origine etnica devono essere capaci di comunicare l'uno con l'altro e con educatori e leader, lavorando per l'incontro e il dialogo (Cambi, 2006; Genovese, 2003), comprendendo le differenze (A.A.V.V., 2006), e favorendo, piuttosto che negare, le opportunità e le scelte di vita di gruppi tradizionalmente emarginati. Dunque, le attività di leadership devono concentrarsi su sforzi sistematici per criticare lo *status quo* e aiutare a comprendere come la libertà venga negata, riconoscere le ingiustizie e collaborare per eliminarle (Jenlink, 2009).

La critica, mossa da Ryan (2003; 2006) a Rawls (1982), di non preoccuparsi dell'ingiustizia sociale come processo multidimensionale, nel quale varie forme di esclusione si combinano, lo spinge ad asserire che i rapporti strutturali creano, sistematicamente, barriere e disuguaglianze tali da costituire un impedimento allo sviluppo sociale di chi viene considerato "*incapable*". La giustizia sociale sarà ottenuta, allora, solo quando i cambiamenti nel sistema terranno conto del significato dell'inclusione di tutti, in particolare di colore che sono svantaggiati e marginalizzati. Su questo punto, determinante è, secondo Ryan la leadership inclusiva, che rifiuta una visione gerarchica interna alle organizzazioni e opera sulla base di rapporti orizzontali ed equi, che trascendono le divisioni di razza, di genere e di classe.

Di *leadership for inclusion* parla Gunter (2006), affermando che la diversità assume accezioni positive o negative, e ciò è evidente nel modo in cui classe, razza, età, sesso vengono usati per includere o escludere individui e gruppi da particolari pratiche sociali, politiche, culturali ed economiche. La sfida per le organizzazioni educative consiste nel capire come replicare o resistere agli svantaggi sociali, politici ed economici, nelle strutture e culture organizzative che esercitano il controllo sui gruppi "diversi". Ciò significa, inevitabilmente, chiedersi come l'identità può essere fissa o aperta al cambiamento e come valorizzare la libertà individuale di ciascuno di poter scegliere la propria identità. Gunter, attraverso l'approccio alla diversità basato sull'«*organization of human beings*» (p. 258), critica l'approccio di *managing of diversity*. Servendosi della teoria delle capacità elaborato da Sen (2000; 2001; 2007) e Nussbaum (2002), che ruota attorno al principio della dignità

umana, Gunter (2006) è giunto al riconoscimento delle organizzazioni come entità sociali, composte da persone reali, che hanno diritto ad una dignità e ad esercitare un'autentica *agency*. Il focus è, dunque, su come le organizzazioni contribuiscono a valorizzare la partecipazione delle persone, viste non solo come beneficiari passivi del processo di sviluppo (Sen, 2001). Quindi la leadership, come pratica sociale e etica, include. Similmente, per Jenlink (2009) creare scuole eque<sup>1</sup> per tutti appare un'inevitabile conclusione in una società che si autodefinisce democratica, ma che, paradossalmente, presenta un'ingiustizia educativa pervasiva.

È, altresì, indispensabile che la scuola lavori in direzione della creazione di una comunità in cui la leadership è orientata alla protezione del *lifeworld* della scuola e alla coltivazione di principi democratici piuttosto che di *followership*. Occorre una *leadership morale* che enfatizza il rispetto dei diritti soggettivi, la rinuncia ad interessi personali a favore del bene della comunità, e, di conseguenza, la condivisione dei valori e delle responsabilità (Sergiovanni, 2000). Questo deve essere l'obiettivo prioritario della *school leadership*, al fine di evitare il rischio di fallimento della scuola in quello che rappresenta la sua responsabilità da sempre: *offrire un ambiente d'apprendimento sicuro ed un'educazione significativa e stimolante per tutti gli studenti*. Nondimeno nell'orientare i leader educativi verso la scelta dei migliori interessi per il successo formativo degli studenti, risulta fondamentale il focus sui diritti (Diritti Universali, libertà, dignità e uguaglianza), sul rispetto (uguaglianza ed equità, rispetto per se stessi, tolleranza, accettazione delle debolezze, valorizzazione della diversità, impegno a trovare un terreno comune) e sulla responsabilità (equità, obbligo, senso della comunità, razionalità, crescita) (Stefkovich e Begley, 2007).

Nella pratica della *effective leadership* lo scopo morale, secondo Fullan (2001) è un valore con il quale tutti possiamo identificarci, e riguarda, soprattutto, i fini in educazione, fra i quali fondamentale è *fare la differenza* nella vita degli studenti. Inoltre, nelle scuole i leader devono essere eccellenti «*relationship builders*» con diverse persone e gruppi, attivi, *problem solver*, spinti da scopi morali per penetrare nei processi di cambiamento, costruire relazioni e conoscenza e ricercare la coerenza.

Una *leadership autentica*, sensibile all'unicità dei valori, delle credenze, dei bisogni e delle aspirazioni di tutti i membri della comunità scolastica, può rispondere alle problematiche presenti in scuole multietniche. Perciò, il compito specifico, promosso e coltivato da un *ethical educational leader* (Starratt, 2007) dovrebbe comprendere, soprattutto, la costruzione dell'autenticità degli studenti, in quanto cittadini di domani ed esseri umani che partecipano, contribuiscono e si realizzano nelle varie dimensioni della vita pubblica democratica.

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<sup>1</sup> Per Jenlink (2009, p. 17) l'equità educativa, quale principio democratico per scuole eque, si articola in tre dimensioni: «*equity of access, equity of participation, equity of outcomes*».

*Leadership autentica in scuole multietniche. Indagine nelle scuole della Sicilia centro-occidentale*<sup>2</sup>

Dirigere in una cultura del cambiamento significa creare una cultura, non già una struttura, del cambiamento, adottare continue innovazioni, produrre capacità di ricerca critica di nuove idee e pratiche, internamente ed esternamente all'organizzazione scolastica. E il dirigente scolastico che, quotidianamente, affronta problematiche connesse alla multiculturalità nella propria comunità scolastica, dovrebbe intensificare sempre più il suo ruolo di *facilitatore del cambiamento*. Un cambiamento su diversi fronti: la cultura della scuola, la propria visione, l'approccio alla risoluzione dei problemi, l'apertura alla condivisione e alla partecipazione di tutti i membri della comunità scolastica. In questa apertura al cambiamento, è possibile intravedere, anche, l'attribuzione alla *school leadership* della capacità di coltivare l'*interculturalità* (Cambi, 2001), per l'alta priorità attribuita alla valorizzazione delle differenze culturali e all'impegno per la creazione di una cultura scolastica collaborativa in contesti scolastici multietnici.

A tal fine, fondamentale risulta la responsabilità di docenti e dirigenti nell'incoraggiare la democrazia in questi contesti scolastici. Inevitabile è un leader educativo, *facilitatore della comunità scolastica*, che identifica e propone idee chiave nella pianificazione dell'offerta formativa (POF), da considerare quali componenti di una *prospettiva interculturale della scuola*:

- sviluppo di una visione dell'educazione come processo armonioso ed equilibrato, continuo e in fieri;
- convinzione del diritto di tutti gli studenti a un'educazione/istruzione/formazione pertinente e significativa;
- credenza nel riconoscimento dei propri diritti e nel trattamento di tutti i soggetti della comunità scolastica con giustizia, integrità ed equità;
- garanzia che individui e gruppi appartenenti a etnie e culture diverse abbiano opportunità di comunicare apertamente ed esprimersi efficacemente all'interno della comunità scolastica.

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<sup>2</sup> Le riflessioni, riportate in questo paragrafo, scaturiscono dall'analisi dei risultati emersi da una ricerca condotta nelle scuole multietniche e non della Sicilia centro-occidentale, tra il 2008 e il 2009, nell'ambito del Dottorato di ricerca in "Pedagogia e didattica in prospettiva interculturale", istituito presso l'Università degli Studi di Palermo. L'indagine ha messo in evidenza aspetti significativi sui valori e le competenze che, secondo gli insegnanti, dovrebbe caratterizzare la figura del dirigente scolastico, che opera in contesti scolastici multietnici, piuttosto che in scuole caratterizzate dall'assenza di studenti con cittadinanza non italiana.

Nonostante nella ricerca si rileva l'attribuzione di caratteristiche proprie di un profilo manageriale della dirigenza scolastica, non mancano connotazioni di detto ruolo in direzione pedagogica e democratica. Prefigurando una *prospettiva democratica*, della quale il dirigente si dovrebbe far promotore, si attribuisce a questi l'ineludibilità del suo impegno, affinché le proposte non restino solo enunciate, ma diventino linee di intervento di una *mission* che si caratterizza per:

- la promozione, la creazione e il sostegno di una cultura scolastica che integra consuetudini/tradizioni culturali diverse e nella quale i bisogni e le differenze siano rispettati,
- la formulazione e l'articolazione di una visione che sfida le disuguaglianze.

Si tratteggia, così, una figura di dirigente che crede nell'esigenza dell'apertura e della flessibilità della scuola, optando per la condivisione delle idee e delle opinioni all'interno dell'organizzazione scolastica. Questa visione collaborativa dovrebbe, inoltre, nutrirsi dell'apporto degli input provenienti dallo staff, dai genitori e dai docenti, i quali, esortati ad avviare riflessioni critiche circa le pratiche di insegnamento, dovrebbero essere incoraggiati alla cooperazione e all'*empowerment*. Dunque, nuove concezioni e strategie di collaborazione possono essere incoraggiate dal dirigente scolastico, spingendo gli insegnanti ad uscire dall'individualismo, senza sradicare l'individualità, che «genera dissenso creativo e rischio, che sono una fonte di apprendimento dinamico per il gruppo» (Fullan e Hargreaves, 2005, p. 70).

La figura del dirigente scolastico si colloca, dunque, in una società che è in continuo cambiamento, in cui, sia insegnanti che school leader si ritrovano a confrontarsi con la sempre crescente e difficile responsabilità di educare/istruire/formare le generazioni future alla cittadinanza democratica. Il che richiede la sua capacità di creare e promuovere un clima favorevole allo sviluppo del senso della responsabilità e del rispetto reciproco, e una *mission* basata sul riconoscimento di pari diritti e di un equo trattamento per tutti i membri della comunità scolastica.

Dunque, un dirigente che, nella sua veste istituzionale, si occupa del *management* dell'organizzazione scolastica, ma, come persona, i cui valori e obiettivi dovrebbero essere di vasta portata, dovrà farsi promotore della giustizia sociale e fronteggiare ogni forma di opposizione al cambiamento, riconoscendo in esso non una perdita, ma una risorsa. L'imperativo morale che dovrebbe stare alla base del compito del dirigente scolastico, dovrebbe spronarlo a “fare le cose in modo giusto” piuttosto che “fare le cose giuste” (Sergiovanni, 2002).

La ricerca prospetta, altresì, un'autenticità della leadership, particolarmente attenta ai valori e alle credenze degli studenti, degli insegnanti e di tutti coloro che fanno parte della comunità. Una *leadership autentica* che lavora sui modi per comprendere e apprezzare le influenze e le altre prospettive culturali, per attribuire senso a ciò che accade nelle loro scuole. Tutti i leader educativi

sono sfidati ad essere autentici, nell'affrontare l'instabilità creata dal contrapporsi dei valori culturali, delle strutture e delle aspettative interne ed esterne, e in ciò, a *fare la differenza* nelle scuole multietniche. Si tratta di un'autenticità che include pratiche e credenze di insegnanti e studenti, in continua ridefinizione e non operazionalizzabile in forme assolute, ma da costruire e ricostruire all'interno della cultura o delle culture che rappresentano la scuola. Dunque, la ricerca dell'autenticità del leader scolastico è attualmente un processo di apprendimento in e dal contesto, non basato su liste di *best practice* della leadership, ma su *wise practice* (Walker e Shuangye, 2007). L'autenticità della leadership si evince nell'essere creativi, nell'acquisire e nel trasferire conoscenza, nel modificare il proprio comportamento e trasformare se stessi.

Di conseguenza per i *leader interculturali* non c'è un «*right way of doing things*» (p. 194). Essi devono guardare al di là delle loro visioni predeterminate del mondo e della propria cultura, mantenendo una mente aperta, attiva, curiosa, che si interroga sulle questioni, si pone molteplici domande e valuta la possibilità che la realtà non sia sempre come appare al primo sguardo. È la capacità di riformare e/o generare “tensione creativa”, quale terreno fertile per l'apprendimento, lo sviluppo della comprensione autentica e l'esplorazione di modi differenti di agire nella pratica.

### *Conclusioni*

Poiché l'incontro con l'altro, con la diversità, inevitabilmente, costringe al confronto con se stessi e con gli altri, la *school leadership*, in contesti scolastici multiculturali e multietnici, affronta sfide complesse, a livello globale e locale, rispetto alle quali il dirigente scolastico, quale *facilitatore del cambiamento*, deve coltivare la consapevolezza dell'inevitabilità delle proprie scelte, in scenari educativi instabili e incerti. Dette sfide richiedono una *leadership autentica* connotata dalla creatività, dalla messa in discussione delle proprie modalità di lavoro culturalmente fondate e dalla valorizzazione delle altrui visioni del mondo.

Ma possono le pratiche di leadership consolidate con l'esperienza rispondere adeguatamente a questa nuova realtà? Più che *best practice* occorre impegnare se stessi e gli altri nella ricerca e costruzione di una leadership autentica nata dalla consapevolezza che essere, solo ed esclusivamente, leader manager, o preferibilmente, leader autentici dipende dall'importanza che viene data al perseguimento di stretti fini produttivi di efficienza e efficacia o, ineludibilmente, all'obbligo morale di raggiungere l'equità e la giustizia sociale.

Di fatto, si guarda alla qualità e all'eccellenza nel mondo dell'istruzione. In realtà, occorre una *riflessione interdisciplinare e interculturale*, che porti le scuole ad uscire dal proprio

conservatorismo intrinseco e a rispondere creativamente alle sfide. Per tal fine, il dirigente scolastico dovrà impegnarsi a perseguire la formazione di una cittadinanza istruita capace di analisi critiche e decisioni autonome, dentro un'organizzazione in cui si aprono spazi centrati sulla critica e sulla riflessività sociale, quali condizioni necessarie per praticare una *effettiva leadership democratica*. Ma in questa prospettiva i leader scolastici dovrebbero essere “*ecologicamente consapevoli*” (Bottery, 2004), cioè consci delle forze che possono influire sulle loro pratiche, sui valori, sulle attitudini e sulle aspirazioni di tutti coloro che si trovano all'interno della comunità scolastica.

Inevitabilmente, le attività di leadership dovranno promuovere forme inclusive di pratica e di dialogo per favorire i gruppi emarginati, al fine di creare l'equilibrio tra il rispetto della diversità e lo sviluppo degli obiettivi condivisi nell'organizzazione, utilizzando l'approccio di “*managing for diversity*” (Blackmore, 2006), che si basa sui principi della comunità inclusiva, della cittadinanza, della scelta e dello scambio interculturali. Necessità una *inclusive leadership* nutrita dal presupposto del riconoscimento della nostra comune umanità.

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## **Challenging grand narratives in teacher education**

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One important aspect of intercultural education, often overlooked, is the emotional aspect of learning that occurs for example when ethnocentric preconceptions and values are confronted and deconstructed (cf. Gundara 2000; Lahdenperä 2004; Pihl 2002). In these processes interrogating and deconstructing predominant grand narratives and the creation of counter narratives are vital (cf. Ladson-Billings 1998; Zamudio et al 2011). From an intercultural perspective, this paper discusses the issue of national grand narratives and how to challenge hegemonic monocultural and monolingual discourses and develop teacher students' awareness of their own agency.

### **Background**

In 2000 ratified Sweden the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages recognising the Samis, Tornedalers, Swedish Finns, Roma, and Jews as official national minorities and Sami, Finnish, Meänkieli, Romani chib, and Yiddish as official minority languages in the country (KU 2005). Today, the current curriculum for the compulsory school system, the preschool class and the leisure-time centre from 2011 stipulates that the school is responsible for ensuring that each pupil on completing compulsory school "has obtained knowledge about the cultures, languages, religion and history of the national minorities" (Lgr11: 15), and the knowledge about the five national minorities is more emphasized, especially in the syllabi of History, Civics, and Swedish. The monocultural and monolingual image of the country is nevertheless still very much predominant in the national self-awareness.

### **Theoretical perspectives**

The school has been a vital institution for transmitting and maintaining this homogeneous view of Sweden (Lorentz & Bergstedt 2006), and as a consequence there has been a strong deficit perspective in relation to minority and migrant children in school contexts (Municio 2001). Under-communication of ethnic identity (Eriksen 2000), language loss, and high drop-out rates from school are examples that have been a reality for many (cf. von Brömssen & Rodell Olgaç 2010). The postmodern society of today where no longer nationalistic and ethnocentric traditions are valid or necessary, leads to consequences for teaching, learning and pedagogy. Learning, i.e. the complex cognitive, psychodynamic, emotional and social processes (Illeris 1999: 17), is today looked upon as a continuous process where change, co-operation and flexibility are considered important and valuable social assets and competencies. But there is also a fear of challenging Western ethnocentrism in school contexts as this demand for self-reflection and

deconstruction (Lorentz & Bergstedt 2006: 31), challenges that can be defined as intercultural learning processes. These learning processes include reciprocity, mutual respect, equality and social justice as some of the ethical values often cherished as goals of an intercultural approach (Lahdenperä 2002: 297). In addition intercultural learning also consists of emotional processes, when ethnocentric preconceptions and values are confronted and deconstructed (Gundara 2000; Pihl 2002; Lahdenperä 2004). Relevant in intercultural learning processes is also interrogating and deconstructing predominant master narratives and the creation of counter narratives (Ladson-Billings 1998; Zamudio et al 2011). In teacher education this could mean curricular strategies that combine critical texts that the students interrogate through seminars, lectures and workshops together with autoethnographic narratives. As a consequence of these strategies the students have the possibility to become aware of their part in history and “that their identities shape the kind of learning environments and curricular experiences they will create in their primary and secondary public school classes” and their agency to “transform classroom practices and the life opportunities of their students” (Vavrus 2011: 28-29).

### **The study**

This study took place in an obligatory five-week course in the fourth term of a teacher education programme for future pre- and primary school teachers given during three terms in 2008 (spring and autumn) and 2009 (spring). The course focused on theories and research concerning children’s language socialisation in different cultural contexts and the interplay between mother tongue, second language and literacy from an intercultural perspective. The point of departure was the experiences of the five historical national minorities. The students received lectures from members from members of the national minorities giving a general background of basic facts about the historical and contemporary situation of each respective minority together with their personal experiences. The examination of the course comprised writing a reflective paper on the student’s own language socialisation and literacy experiences during childhood. Many of the students were of migrant background speaking among them some of the main migrant languages in Sweden as for example Arabic, Kurdish, Spanish, Suroyo and Turkish. The students in workgroups had to further explore the situation of one of the five minorities, and at the end of the course this exploring work had to be presented to the rest of their fellow students.

At the end of the course, the students were asked to fill in a questionnaire (optional) with questions concerning their previous knowledge about the national minorities and their views at the end of this course. The total number of questionnaires (Q) is 192. Of the 192 students who answered the questionnaire 174 were female and 17 male students. One student did not give this information. The students’ answers from the questionnaires are the main source used for the analysis in this study.

### **The results**

The initial question of the questionnaire concerned what the student teachers did know about the national minorities when they started their course. Although the majority of them had gone to school after year 2000 when the changes concerning knowledge about the national minorities in the curricula already should have been in practice, about two thirds of the students declared in their answers that they had no, little or hardly any knowledge about the minorities. Furthermore, during the three terms the questionnaires were collected there was no tendency of change in the

students' answers to this question. The extracts below illustrate common answers about their knowledge previous to the course.

*"Not even who they are."* (Q 31, spring 2008)

*"Unfortunately not much except for the usual prejudices."* (Q 55, spring 2008)

*"Very little."* (Q 85, spring 2009)

Although the course only ran during five weeks, the answers from the students concerning what they had learnt about the minorities during this short period of time demonstrate discovering things about Sweden that they never had heard about before.

*"I have learnt about their background and how they have lived and live, also to [that I] have been cheated [to think that I have been] growing up in a good country, but when my eyes have been opened, then Sweden has done terrible things that I never had believed."* (Q 4, spring 2008)

*"I have learnt a lot about them. I had a lot of prejudices about the Roma, but I have got a better understanding of their situation."* (Q 11, autumn 2008)

*"Both about their history and the history of Sweden which I didn't know about, for example the racial biology."* (Q 31, spring 2009)

For these students the historical diversity and the atrocities that the national minorities had suffered in the past in Sweden were issues that according to their answers had not been included during their own time at school. Almost all the students were unaware of the influences of pseudo-scientific racism that grew in Sweden towards the end of the nineteenth century, and an institute for racial biology was established at Uppsala University at the beginning of the twentieth century. This came as a chock for many of the students, who became upset that this had never been included in their school curriculum and they started questioning the reasons for this and how this could have been possible.

One of the final questions in the questionnaire concerned if there were any issues that had made any special impact on the students. These are some examples of the answers given to this question, where the situation of the Roma often is in focus:

*"The Roma and the prejudices that I myself have to strive with. I have started to think about my own origin."* (Q 1, spring 2008)

*"I have got a completely different picture [about the Roma] than the poor [empty] one I had before. And this new picture is fighting to win over the prejudices that I after all have/had."* (Q 10, spring 2008)

*"Our way of treating the minorities is a shame. It has been very moving to read about the Tornedalers who were denied [the right] to speak their language and that so many Roma experienced the Holocaust."* (Q 62, spring 2008)

*"I have had the opportunity to know my own country and our population. Very interesting with a lot of history." (Q 80, spring 2009)*

As we can understand from the extracts above, the historical and contemporary situation of the Roma was completely unknown to most of the students. One of the extracts (student 10, spring 2008) above illustrates this in an interesting way, when the student explains how he or she almost literally is having a inner dialogue with him/herself concerning previous preconceptions about the Roma, and the new knowledge struggling for acceptance. Furthermore, many students also mentioned a changed view in their understanding of Swedish history.

One of the final questions to the students concerned their thoughts about what this new knowledge about the minorities meant to them as future teachers. Here the answers point in several directions:

*"I [now] know that there exists cultural diversity traditionally, even in Sweden. I have got a less stereotyped picture of these minorities." (Q 9, spring 2008)*

*"[It] contributes to my development as a reflecting teacher." (Q 27, spring 2008)*

*"I feel enriched by getting this knowledge and that I, in addition, have learnt how we can act as educators. To believe in each pupil and to show a sincere interest in the work we have done and in what we have to say." (Q 22, spring 2008)*

*"Extremely much. Something that I will have use for in future work and further to work colleagues and pupils. Important knowledge!" (Q 26, spring 2009)*

These answers highlights how the understanding of some of the student teachers also expand to other professional areas, including how to act as a teacher in general as well as their relation to their future pupils.

### **Concluding remarks**

The students discovered the sufferings and atrocities of the minorities through history, also in school contexts, and realised how the treatments of the minorities and the oppression of their languages, cultures, traditions and religions until today have had far reaching consequences for their socioeconomic, educational and linguistic situation. This was in many cases completely new knowledge to the students and made a strong emotional impact on them. This emotional impact, as have been highlighted by Gundara (2000), Pihl (2002) and Lahdenperä (2004), is an important part of intercultural learning. The writing of the students' own autobiographies on their own language socialisation and literacy experiences for their first part of the examination in an early stage of the course might also have increased the sentience of the students and established a closer connection with some of the experiences of the minorities and thus contributed to their emotional involvement in the subject. Many of the students originated from families with migrant or refugee background, and could from their own experiences or those of their parents or relatives easily relate to the experiences of the five minorities. Especially these students were rather shaken by discovering the hidden past of Swedish minority history that they had not been aware of before.

Through the exploring work that the students had to do about one of the minorities and that they had to present for their final examination of the course in the last seminar to the other students of their group, they also created counter narratives challenging the master narrative of the country (cf. Ladson-Billings 1998; Zamudio et al 2011). But their discussions concerning the minorities were not only limited to the seminars. They continued them outside the university challenging prejudiced and racist ideas about the minorities that they suddenly in many cases started to discover among family members, relatives and friends. On several occasions in the seminars students reported back from lively discussions that they had been engaged in at home with their family or with their friends concerning common prejudices about the national minorities, especially the Roma. As Vavrus (2011) points out, through the course and these discussions they also discovered their part in history and the agency that they actually possess especially in relation to minority and migrant pupils and further to all pupils in school contexts, i.e. their possibility as future teachers to make a difference. The study indicates that through revisiting the past and studying the present situation of the national minorities, intercultural learning processes developed among the student teachers. The implications of the study are that a course concerning the national minorities can increase the inclusion not only of minorities but also the new migrants groups in school contexts.

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## **Multicultural Challenges at the Door of Polish Schools. What is the Level of Polish Teachers' Intercultural Competence?**

### **Introduction**

We live in a multicultural world. It has been probably so from the very beginning, but now we have that unique possibility to experience it commonly and if we try – deeply and variously. Thanks to advanced technology the world of XXI c. seems to be smaller, easier to reach and to be embraced. It is possible to make contacts with remote places, get information about different subjects, and use services to satisfy ones' wishes. Internet becomes a means of declared democracy. Who uses technology feels free and equal with others. He may say/write/public what he wants, make comments about chosen problem, and express his attitude without bothering himself about consequences. Nearly everyone may do that, regardless of race, gender, age, and culture or political, religious, and philosophical convictions or economical status.

Thus multicultural world has become a part of us (Nikitorowicz, 2010). It has happened to us and awaits our reaction. The choice of proper reactions (whatever it means for different groups of people, decision makers, societies or nations), designation of aims and development of attitudes toward oneself, other people, environment, and economy are the key challenges of our times. The humanistic perspective stresses the meaning of such actions, interactions and first of all intensions which put a human being in the centre of all endeavours. If we want to survive we must undertake the intercultural challenge.

Global society will constitute a true society only if we make an effort to understand each other. Understanding is quite different from the act of communicating (giving information) or a process of communication (exchanging information). Understanding assumes a partnership dialogue where both sides are equal though different, where they have the right to present opponent sidepoints (express their opinions), state various interpretations, but at the same time they feel the civic compulsion to find mutual agreement, solution, or compromise. Such intercultural meeting promises advantages which may not even be realized or perceived at the very beginning. Profits may come later. Then they will be real examples of intercultural competence of a man or a whole society.

Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, while opening European Culture Congress in Wrocław, Poland (2011) quoted Hans Georg Gadamer, who believed that “Europe’s task



consists of passing on to all the art of everyone learning from everyone”. This is our mission and destiny. German philosopher was also convinced that “who has the language, has the world”. In other words who wants to broaden his knowledge about himself and about “Others”, who tries to learn about them as much as he can through differences and similarities to his own culture, who opens himself to the abundance of diversity, broadens his horizon of cognition (experiences “fusion of horizons” through a partnership dialogue). Deeper communication – where interlocutors use words and notions which not only sound familiar but mean what they should mean – enables people to better understanding and to undertake common enterprises.

### **1. Qualitative (hermeneutic) attitude in educational practice**

Basic humanistic research procedure is linked to philosophical hermeneutic presumptions. They make a total opposition to positivistic paradigm and mercantilistic perspective (Gadotti, in Illeris 2009), in other words – behaviouristic, quantitative and statistic methodology. I agree with those human scientists (Gadacz, Gadotti 2009, Prokopiuk 2010, Portera 2008) who declare unsatisfactory level of human cognition when using contemporary varieties of neo-positivistic, pragmatist way of thinking and acting. So if we want to create holistic individuals, optimally educated, with strength and need for further development and self development – not psychologically deformed two-legged creatures, internally weak and lost, concentrated on mere activities, and engaged in fights, rallies and chasing for subjective profits, we should consciously refer to a vast humanistic interpretation of a man and its education.

Contemporary hermeneutic philosophy is an important part of human culture. It reveals and expresses existence of human spiritual experience connected with human senses and values. It is then a kind of meta-principle which should be treated as a pedagogical and philosophical strategy (Prokopiuk 2010). Hermeneutic strategy enables to understand and interpret a text which is transmitted from “you” to a receiver – “me”. So it helps to make, find, and create comparisons with contemporary educational conditions. Hermeneutic methods build bridges between even very remote cultures, traditions, and times (epochs). The most important and famous representatives of hermeneutic philosophy are: Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher (1768–1834) who built scientific foundations of the hermeneutic philosophy and introduced the idea of “hermeneutic wheel”. Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911) who developed hermeneutic philosophy in relation to “philosophy of life”. He spoke about “objective spirit”. It consists of all the facts that are common for all societies: language, art,

customs, traditions, any social institutions. The spirit is an expression of a defined culture living in a defined time. So hermeneutic understanding is contextual and contextual. Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) was convinced that a man becomes familiar with other people and worlds they have created through dialogue and using art as a mean for understanding. Hans Georg Gadamer (1900–2002), an unquestioned creator of hermeneutic philosophy made the experiences of his colleagues more general and introduced studies of “historically influencing moments”. The role of those special moments is to enable the understanding of the world, transmissions of tradition, self-cognition and self-understanding. Language gives the possibility to “talk” with tradition and another man. Language is a unique medium to experience the world. Thanks to it, both horizons (a horizon of interlocutor and a horizon of a fact under interpretation, a horizon of one man and another) melt in one new quality. That is what Gadamer calls a “fusion of horizons”. Thanks to the fusion, a human agreement is able to emerge. Concluding, today there are such key hermeneutic notions like:

- a) understanding – an attempt to find a meaningful sense
- b) interaction – a communication of free individuals or cultural texts
- c) texts – from hermeneutic point of view all human situations are texts which need interpretation
- d) shaping and influencing emotions, feelings, initiating empathy and impelling spiritual sphere of human being
- e) openness and going into the world – constantly initiating “a game in action” giving a chance for creative and constructive character of cognition. It is worth our efforts to go into our thinking (mind), into feelings, into texts, and into information we hear. It is much better then only to think, feel, read, or listen.
- f) language – symbolic and meaningful expression of culture
- g) fusion of horizons – new quality made of different perspectives
- h) senses and meanings – a man always is a subjective, contextual, and historical creature, and in such manner should be read out
- i) “hermeneutic wheel” – constant movement from one element, detail to generalization, and back again
- j) pre-understanding – human understanding which is connected to ones previous experiences. Starting new reading/interpretation of any cultural text a man makes projections of already learnt contents.

As presented above, education which tends to be qualitative should take under consideration hermeneutic attitude towards human development. Intercultural education is undoubtedly one of them. In such perspective, representatives of different cultures, races, religions living on a same territory initiate open, regular and active relations. They behave so because they feel such a need, not fear. The exchange of goods links them with respect. When the double-direction learning takes place it brings mutual profits: contacts base on dialogue and partnership. Both sides learn more about each other and in the consequence – build new qualities. “Me” stands in front of “you”. No one is a stranger. There are only two equal in dignity Others. Such meeting is accompanied by curiosity and acceptance. The most important value of the situation is that each of them enriches the view of himself thanks to comparisons inspired by the whole personality of that Other.

## **2. A man and his intercultural competence or competence to intercultural dialogue**

In face of above mentioned arguments, a question about the range of global society education arises. Thus the key expectations go to competences. What kind of competences does mankind need now? What is its desirable nature? During last decades a word “competence” has experienced a kind of blossom. We find it in many spheres of our life. We use it in education, vocational life, management and politics. Such multiplicity suggests different interpretations and practical use. The abundance of definitions, followed by related expressions like “qualifications” and “skills” should force us to find and accept a chosen and fitting to education interpretation. Generally speaking competences are understood as the ability to controlling and managing in complex situations. Those situations demand the increase of such personal qualification, like flexibility, reliability, responsibility, creativity and independence (Illeris 2009). The expected success as the effect of competence can be practically experienced in the future. We are becoming more and more competent while fulfilling tasks and realizing unforeseen, unpracticed situations. So if we speak about competences we should take under consideration three spheres/phases:

1. Preparation – gaining theoretical knowledge and practical skills in a defined discipline of knowledge or in our common life,
2. A kind of a task – the same competence may have various realizations according to different tasks,
3. Context – the same tasks may expect different variations of a competence or even the use of different competence at all.

In such approach we may agree that:

“The concept of competence refers [...] to a person’s being qualified in a broader sense. It is not merely that a person masters a professional area, but also that the person can apply this professional knowledge – and more than that, apply it in relation to the requirements inherent in a situation which, in addition, may be uncertain and unpredictable. Thus competence also includes the person’s assessments and attitudes, and ability to draw on a considerable part of his/her personal qualifications”. (Jorgensen 1999, in Illeris 2009)

Hitherto reflections characterize competences, as follows:

1. Competences are cognitive structures that should be developed – vertically and horizontally (Illeris 2009, Rogalska-Marasińska 2009),
2. They are dynamic and constantly evolving structures – we need to be engaged in realizing them. If not, we become incompetent (Gadotti in Illers 2009),
3. Competences express individual and group motivations, emotion, and engagement. Its development demands active learning patterns (Illeris 2009),
4. Competences are social and can be proved in acting. To certify that someone is competent we need another individual who can validate the situation (Gadotti in Illers 2009). Such social assessment needs common social trust and humanistic attitude. If not different pragmatic opinion may come to the voice and can bring more harm than profits,
5. Competences are accompanied by aims we want to realize.

Such vast interpretation of competences brings a lot of questions. When is it right to call somebody a competent person or when should he think in that manner about himself? How far are we able to check our competences? Who is competent to do it? Is it possible to verify competences at all or maybe we should only check skills and abilities?

According to those questions and in the optics of global needs, an intercultural competence gains new light. It seems proper to state that people from all parts of the world should develop that competence. They should be socially and morally obliged to search ways for mutual understanding. Intercultural competence may be realized on different steps of education engaging various types of knowledge: scientific, personal, colloquial, ethnic and indigenous tradition. The prior rule should be to cultivate our conviction that no man is unimportant to us. It influences the choice of elements constructive for the intercultural competence. For me it should be: sincerity, truth, openness, respect for interlocutor, preparation to different forms of exchange, respect for our own culture, dialog, common aims,

will and need to solve difficulties, development, attitude of assertiveness, responsibility, emotions, tact, curiosity, happiness, partnership relations, and mutual profits.

Thanks to intercultural competence we may gain additional meanings to facts and situations we thought that were stable and unchangeable. Thus we become more creative, as new situations and new people demand new solutions. We find new senses and interpretations. Those are some advantages which cannot be neglected. We have the chance for multicultural development.

### 3. Level of Polish teachers' intercultural competence – sources and perspectives



Poland in XIV – XVI c.

(<http://polmap.republika.pl/mapy/polska1.htm>)

If we try to find some roots of Polish intercultural competence we should go back to Renaissance time or even to Middle Ages. A border between West and East, Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church went through Poland. At the beginning of Renaissance Period Poland was a huge country inhabited by such nations like: Poles, Lithuanians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Jews, Tatars (Muslims), Armenians, Karaims (readers of Old Testament of the Turkish origin). Such cultural mosaic was also characteristic for XVI c. – the time of the Golden Age of Polish Culture. The last two kings seen on a map above are connected an Italian aristocrat, a member of the powerful Milano House of Sforza – Bona Sforza d’Aragona. In 1518 she came to Poland and became a wife of Polish king Sigismund I the Old. She was a powerful and wise Polish queen from 1518 till 1557. Her reign was a time of reformation. At the end of XVI c. Poland was even bigger then before. The county had 815

thousand km<sup>2</sup>. In the middle of XVII c. our territory embraced nearly 1 million km<sup>2</sup> from Baltic Sea to Black Sea. Only Russia was bigger than we were. Besides above mentioned nations Germans and Latvians lived inside the borders of Poland. We were one of the most tolerant countries in Europe. Polish gentry were free and many of her members became followers of those new, protestant movements. In the XVII c. counterreformation took place. Poland chose Catholicism. But it still was a very tolerant place on the Old Continent. Others called us “Asylum for heretics”. Though sarcastic – our multicultural openness and ability to live together was famous. From one side we were a part of the western world, from the other we turned front to the east. Our Sarmatian culture is the best evidence of it. We could undertake dialogue in many intercultural dimensions.

After wars and political decisions our country has changed in shape. Some groups of people do not live in Poland any more or are represented by minorities. So we don't experience a real multiculturalism now. Our territory is only about 312 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. Comparing with other European countries we have a monocultural state. According to Eurostat data foreigners make only 0,1% of our population but we are aware of changes. People from Ukraine, China, Vietnam, Byelorussia, India, Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Kazakhstan come to live in Poland. Children of those foreigners will soon attend Polish schools.

## **The study procedure**

### *3.1. Principles of the survey*

The main idea of the study was to find out and then estimate the level and the width (range) of Polish teachers knowledge, and mainly declarative ways of acting in the situation of working with foreign pupils.

According to presented theories, possibilities of verifying any competence, so the intercultural competence as well, are difficult or even weak. Competence shows its real existence only *post factum*. We can endeavour to prepare ourselves to become more and more competent, but only in the future, in new, unexpected situations, where we have no time for previous and proper preparation. Participating in processes of developing our knowledge and skills, theory and practice, along with developing our attitudes, emotions, motives of undertaken activities, ability to think, concentrate on details, ability to chose important things, facts, information, to build our social interactions, to develop our auto-reflection, we increase or even multiply our qualifications. Qualifications, but not competences. So my idea of the research was to check the level of already gained qualifications during studies/teachers

training time, and then qualifications developed in vocational time (institutional development and ways of self development). The idea of enclosed implications stated in the survey about intercultural relations was to cause some reactions in responders, and to influence them to think about possible contacts with foreign students. I wanted to inspire them to imagine their reactions in front of class difficulties – social or didactic, and class advantages – valuable experiences for all students and a teacher himself. So in that sense the survey strongly refers to competences.

According to hermeneutic ways of cognition and its methodology I tried to explore responders' pre-understanding sphere and find out the relations between pre-understanding and Polish traditions, Polish cultural heritage. Consciousness of Polish roots is indispensable to create good, interesting and effective intercultural dialogue.

### *3.2. Methodological foundations*

The current study aimed to explore the following four problematic questions:

1. How do Polish students gain intercultural knowledge and develop intercultural skills during their pedagogical studies/courses?
2. How contemporary teacher should cooperate with his immigrant pupil?
3. What are the supplementary forms of increasing teachers' intercultural knowledge and skills?
4. What attitude represents pedagogues considering some problematic examples of multicultural world?

### *3.3. Participants*

The study was conducted in two public schools in Lodz, Poland – gymnasiums (III stage of education) and at the Music Academy of Lodz on April 2013. Responders constituted three distinctive groups. One of them was made of general subjects teachers (like Polish language, mathematics, geography, chemistry, English language), second – teachers of religion. The third group was formed by students of Pedagogical Study from the Academy of Music preparing themselves to become teachers in a short future. Totally 85 responders participated in the survey. I had chosen such three separate groups, anticipating to gain some important differences, but interestingly there was not much of them.

### *3.4. Instrument and data collection*

My aim, according to chosen theory, was to obtain most qualitative data. So, most of 18 questions have open-ended form. Only two of them are multi-choice questions, while three are double-choice ones. The questionnaire is divided into four parts: I. Vocational preparation (initial training), II. Work – practical intercultural relations, III – In-service and professional development training, IV – Challenges of the multicultural world.

For the purpose of the study, students were gathered together and had 1,5 hour to answer the questions. The research purpose of the survey was clearly explained to them. Questionnaires were collected as they were completed. The research process at schools based on another procedure. Questionnaires were sent to chosen (familiar to researcher) teachers who disseminated them among their colleagues. Teachers had one or two days to complete the whole. They usually answered the questions at home. 1/3 of responders were students and none of them was a full time working teacher.

### *3.5. Data analysis*

#### I. Vocational preparation (initial training)

This part of a survey was quite easy to foreseen. Nearly half of the answers showed the lack of intended intercultural training during university time. Some teachers added that they learnt something about other culture at such subjects, like: sociology, history of education, cultural anthropology. Contemporary students connected their knowledge with music and art subjects, like: history of art, music

Other ways of experiencing different cultures during years of studying stressed the significance of direct meetings with representatives of other cultures. They usually are (and were) realized by trips, studying with foreigners, concert tours.

#### II. Work – practical intercultural relations

One may find this part of the survey a bit inadequate, as I also asked students to give answers to that part. But at the beginning of the survey they were asked to imagine such didactic situations. It wasn't so difficult for them because some of them had already finished, other were going through pedagogical school practices.

This part of the survey was inspired by Agostino Portera's reflections on limitations and "traps" which might be found across European schools:



Sometimes teachers tend to emphasize only differences and thus they stereotype and marginalize. For example, in French context, a sort of *pedagogie couscous* emerges with a focus on different food customs, dress, habits, etc. (Portera 2009)

There is a risk of appointing immigrant pupils as ambassadors of their countries of origin, thus forcing them to represent a culture of which they have no detailed knowledge. Some immigrant children attempt – not without difficulty – to free themselves from the culture of their countries of origin and to develop a sense of their own identities, as a synthesis of preferred cultural standards. (Portera 2009)

I also used a thought of Joy de Leo who wrote: The teacher should create a general climate of respect for all differences in the class. (Joy de Leo, 2010)

Questions to that part were as follows:

1. What would you say to your immigrant pupil about our culture, Polish traditions? What facts would you recall as most representative for Poland?
2. How would you prepare yourself to the contact with your new pupil? Where would you look for information? On what kind of information would you pay special attention?
3. What would you like to learn from your immigrant pupil? What would you ask him about?
4. What kind of connections (historical, contemporary) between Poland and that other nation would you try to find out? Is it a good way to diminish the feeling of alienation of your new pupil?
5. How would you create Poles' attitude of openness towards new children?
6. What kind of variations in school customs would you allow to happen? But where are the limits of intercultural openness?
7. Give an example of a film or a book which could be a good introduction to an intercultural discussion.

Answers to all those problems show Polish contemporary teachers and future teachers in a very good, optimistic light. There was not even one answer which would uncover wrong attitude to immigrants. Respondents presented their deep convictions to treat all of their pupils in the same way, to give equal scores for equal work, to see in everyone a human being and a pupil who has the same rights and duties. A foreigner child or teenager should not also become a beloved teacher's pet or mascot (Portera's xenophilia). Some kind of different treatment may be only connected with religious regulations. Their only limits are: dignity and safety of each human being.

### III – In-service and professional development training

2/3 of respondents (teachers and students) confirmed that they try to develop their knowledge about other cultures. Usually they do it by self activities. They pay attention to information or documentary films on TV channels (80%), being abroad try to see real life, not artificial hotel attractions (60%), they listen to ethnic music (30%).

Only a very small group took part in organized forms of professional development training (5%). Those were seminars and workshops.

### IV – Challenges of the multicultural world

In that last part of the survey responders were asked to give answers, and thus show their attitude towards some problematic topics which not only have the educational significance, but are also politically, religiously or economically important.

1. What do you think about ritual killing of animals? Nearly all of the answers were against it. Some 5% showed more tolerant attitude explaining that if it follows some religious regulations and does not cause animal pain it might be accepted. One girl added that unless it is not her dog she can understand such practice.

2. Give some arguments “pro” and “con” of:

a) building wells in Africa – all were for such actions; 3% (students) tried to state some questions external integration in traditional nomad behaviours or source of military conflicts

b) teaching girls to read and write in Afghanistan – only one voice was against explaining that it ruins traditional division of gender roles

c) your attitude toward the movement of Fair Trade and buying mass products done in the Third World (Far East, India, and Latin-Central America) – it was a problematic task for many students and teachers. Only 20% knew and understood the gist of the matter. Others gave totally wrong answers or left it blank.

### **Conclusions**

Multicultural world needs intercultural inhabitants. Education towards such challenges should be consciously planned, organized and realized. Each country might have its own ideas how to resolve that challenge. Some have already worked out good intercultural strategies, other base on history and cultural heritage.

Unfortunately, unpredictable changes of the world deform mankind. The survey has proved that Polish educators need to improve some spheres of their abilities. That hospitality

is still our famous feature, but we have to work on our identity, as it weakens and becomes shallower. We forget our ancestors and their achievements, so intercultural dialogue might be incomplete. We should learn more effectively about other cultures to be prepared for the meeting. We don't yet have much institutional offers to teach multicultural and intercultural topics. It will change. Educators will also be keener on learning new problems, when our schools start experiencing multiculturalism.

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# **From biases to socio-cognitive flexibility: A training program for teaching in intercultural school settings.**

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## **Introduction**

The recent progress of globalization and professional mobility as well as the coexistence of various generations of migrations, have contributed to the formation of a heterogeneous school population in western societies. The promotion of a multicultural education is one of the responses given to this increasing diversity. This perspective is not only aimed at making young people able to work in culturally diverse environments but also at building socially cohesive communities and giving the highest chance of success for all the pupils. However, the implementation of this policy often takes place in contexts marked by tensions around the “immigration” issue which may be obscured by a multicultural frame of reference that values heterogeneity, plurality and diversity. The rhetoric of cultural diversity thus overlooks the issues of inequality and power relationships that characterize majority/minority divisions in contemporary societies. In public opinion, and sometimes also among education professionals, the problems related to contact between the cultures and cultural integration are intertwined with issues such as unruly behavior, low performance or dropping out of school. Within this climate, it becomes necessary to develop new approaches able to provide teachers with useful tools in order to deal with different problematic educational situations.

The present contribution will first present a social psychological approach of the biases and shortcomings that are likely to affect teachers perceptions, interpretations of and responses to the problematic situations they have to deal with in multicultural school settings. We then propose a conceptualization of the socio-cognitive flexibility as the central tool that would allow an overcoming of these biases and as such, as a professional competence that should be acquired through an appropriate training program. Our contribution to the construction of such a program will then be detailed and some results of its relevance for the

professional training will be presented in order to illustrate its beneficial effects in the field of education.

### **Shortcomings in teachers' practice**

Considering the large variability of cross-domain educational situations (CDES), we set up an encompassing training program which would allow the teachers to overcome hasty interpretations and biases in perception when confronted with problematic situations in terms of school behavior, motivation to work or academic performance. Empirical social psychological research shows how teachers may explain them using information such as social cultural background (Darley & Gross, 1983) or immigrant status (Chryssochoou, Picard, & Pronine, 1998). Jones and McGillis (1976) have called this kind of interpretation the "category-based expectancies" that "derive from the perceiver's knowledge of the target person's class, category, or reference group. (...) From this knowledge the perceiver can generate at least crude expectancies about attribute-effect linkages" (p.393).

Now, the problem is that expectations about other persons can induce those persons to adopt behaviors consistent with these expectations (Klein & Snyder, 2003; Snyder, Tanke, & Berscheid, 1977). One type of behavioral confirmation process derives from the activation of social stereotypes associated with the target's category membership (Jussim & Fleming, 1996; Word, Zanna, & Cooper, 1974). A teacher could influence minority group pupils into providing evidence of incompetence, and then use these behaviors as evidence that they deserve their disadvantaged position. This is an instance of the famous self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1964; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1971), a vicious circle that will be all the more at work that the target is placed unambiguously into a specific category and assigned all the traits associated with this social category.

The implementation of multicultural education should thus be addressed in connection with research on stereotype formation and its impact on behavior (Biernat, & Dovidio, 2000). Although it is almost impossible for the individual to analyze the social reality in-depth and permanently and to not categorize at all, it is essential to make future professionals aware of the automatic activation of stereotypes (Bargh, 1997; Devine, 1989), especially in some stressful situations encountered into practice. It must be stressed that the very attempt at not stereotyping can yield the reverse effect due to ironic effects of mental control (Wegner, 1994). More precisely, even if teachers try to not categorize automatically, they risk relapsing with greater intensity not only at the level of stereotype ("rebound effect", Macrae,

Bodenhausen, Milne, & Jetten, 1994), but also at the level of behavior (Follenfant & Ric, 2010). One solution seems to be the development of capacities that allow readjusting the expectations systematically, despite high cognitive load and temporal pressure. In other words, if suppressing categorizations is impossible, the competence of searching information in order to flexibilize the categorization processes seems to be a promising avenue.

Knowledge about pupils involved in educational situations is complex. Indeed, these situations are a priori without correct or known solutions. Spiro, Feltovich, Jacobson, and Coulson (1992) argued that domains in which knowledge is complex and poorly structured (history, medicine, law, literature interpretation, or teachers' training) need to be treated differently than those that are well-structured, mainly because the learners are asked to apply their knowledge in new and often unique situations. Thus, methods for developing awareness of the existence of several explanations (Martin & Rubin, 1995, Dennis & Vander Wal, 2010), that is, of the fact that interpretations of the same situation are multiple and may vary according to several representations, can allow to seize its complexity. They can lead teachers to develop an association network, interconnections between various possible explanations, thus avoiding oversimplification as well as rigid and linear reasoning.

The construction of methods designed at promoting a socio-cognitive flexibility, however, is far from being an easy task. The training program should be built while taking into account major impediments in information processing identified in socio-cognitive research. Tracing back to Piaget (1956) and his analysis of the individual tendency to focalize on one aspect of the reality (perceptive centration) and to form a unique interpretation (representative centration), the idea that many biases and blockages characterize current information processing has been more recently addressed in the lay epistemic theory (Kruglanski & Freund, 1983; Kruglanski, 2012) that specifies how they intervene in the formation of subjective knowledge. Of particular interest for our purpose is the notion that people tend to validate their first hypothesis through the search for consonant evidence, thus producing a freezing of the epistemic sequence, instead of searching for disconfirming evidence that would allow unfreezing and pursuing the cognitive exploration. Also of interest is the contention that categorical information is often privileged in lay thinking over individually based information (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). Given the possible implications of such biases at the behavioral level, as stated above, these shortcomings should be addressed in a training program designed to induce a socio-cognitive flexibility.

### **A cross-field competence**

The concept of flexibility is defined in neurosciences as the capacity of the brain to change a strategy in order to adapt to novel or complex situations, especially when routines or automatic responses are insufficient or inadequate (Shallice, 1982). It is also present in cognitive psychology to refer to the ability of changing one's point of view or approach when it appears to be inadequate for solving a problem (Clément, 2009). Drawing upon these conceptualizations, we propose a definition of flexibility specifically related to social objects (individuals, situations, behaviors, opinions) which we will call social cognitive flexibility (*FSC*). Designed at favoring the pursuit of the cognitive exploration through hypothesis rising, *FSC* refers to the fluidity of passing through diverse possible categorizations, thus preventing the crystallization of a single and highly accessible one. This definition stresses the reversibility of interpretations over time and refers to a cognitive competence which is supposed to be exerted in order to become operational through diverse educational situations.

The training aimed at developing the SCF in its professional version (specific to teaching) tries to lead the professional to develop his/her approach according to two main requirements: doubt (reflecting before accepting) and plurality of viewpoints. Every situation is marked by ambiguity and may be perceived and interpreted differently, according to the elements which attract the perceiver's attention as a function of diverse factors, such as one's own professional/ideological frame of reference, personal concern, emotional load, etc. This particular skill requires to admit the very notion of uncertainty and to overcome its negative connotation in terms of lack of information triggering cognitive unbalance and psychological discomfort (Heider, 1958). In contrast to this meaning, we contend that uncertainty can become a driving force for the pursuit of the reflection (Tiedens & Linton, 2001). Likewise, ambiguity of the information content contributes to prevent hasty reductions and to promote receptivity to new information (Fiske et Neuberg, 1990). Thus, doubt, together with awareness of multiple points of view, represents some of the key operational concepts of the program, since they favor the increasing of a number of perceptive centrations and hence number of representative centrations (Piaget, 1956). In other words, the issue at stake is devoting attention to the details when we perceive or listen and to take them into account when we judge or interpret. These key elements underline the two core dimensions of SCF (Mechi, 2012b): (1) flexible *anticipation* of human attitude and behavior, (2) flexible *explanation* of human attitude and behavior, as well as a related relevant social psychological variable (3) *feeling-of-being-concerned*. Together with a short general definition of these dimensions and their specificity in the teaching domain, we will now present briefly how they



are integrated as competences to be acquired in our training program.

(1) Flexible *anticipation of human attitude and behavior*: The common belief upon predictability of human behavior (Singelis, Hubbard, Her & An, 2003) has to be considered along the theoretical line in social psychology identifying the misleading ways people use in order to anticipate traits of individual targets and their behavior or abilities on the basis of impression formation processes (Asch, 1946; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990), or known individual reputation (stereotype consensualization, Collins, Biernat & Eidelman, 2009). In other words, applied to teaching, this dimension involves the question of flexibility about *prediction* of pupil's attitude and behavior on both epistemic and relational dimensions, that is, on issues related respectively to knowledge and to classroom interactions.

(2) Flexible *explanation of human attitude and behavior*: This dimension refers to the ability of suspending the judgment in terms of personality traits, psychological or intellectual characteristics, qualities and defects, or as a function of membership in a social or ethnic group (Pansu, Dompnier, & Bressoux, 2004). The former, as conceptualized by Ross (1977) in terms of the *fundamental attribution error*, is the individuals' tendency to overestimate internal explanations of behavior), while the latter, according to Pettigrew (1979), is the *ultimate attribution error*, or the tendency to explain individuals' behavior according to group membership (i.e. a person is seen as lazy because of his/her belonging to a "black" minority). This second dimension is thus concerned with *explanation* flexibility of pupil's attitude and behavior on both epistemic and relational dimension, a skill that rests on the capacity of suspending expeditious judgments about the reasons of pupils' school performances and behaviors.

(3) *Feeling-of-being-concerned*: The development of SCF requires some kind of conviction that we can change something in the faced problematic situation (Mechi, 2012a). We need therefore to anticipate at least some degree of probability that our intervention will bring about some positive output. That is why the training aims at leading teachers thinking beyond the two attribution errors through the development of their awareness of malleability of contextual factors thanks to one's own action. Students are encouraged to take steps in order to modify spatial arrangements, present test situations and tasks in a diversity of ways, and try devices aimed at better integrate – or sometimes thwart - pupils' identity concerns (Sanchez-Mazas, 2013). In this way, they can experiment how even small interventions can have an impact on pupils' motivation, performance and behavior. The key variable *feeling-of-being concerned* derives from internal "locus of control" (Rotter, 1954), rooted on a capacity

to seize the relationship between one's action and the subsequent reinforcement and thus to perceive that one's behavior is playing a causal role in the situation. This internal orientation of perceived control may help professionals to depart from the belief that they cannot influence environmental factors, such as students' social or cultural backgrounds. It can be interpreted, as did Wong and Sproule (1984), in terms of *responsibility attribution*, which has proved to favor the use of persuasion techniques and assistance rather than coercive practices (Goostadt and Hjelle, 1973), as well as the search for information (Davis and Phares, 1967; Seeman and Evans, 1962).

### **The training program**

Following a preliminary session designed at equipping teachers with some essential tools and techniques that can be used to secure the classroom setting (i.e. pupils' entering, starting work, teacher's use of space or nonverbal behavior), the program starts with a sensitization device aimed at rising awareness of the shortcomings of individual perception and the existence of a plurality of regards (Nicolini & Pojaghi, 2000). Concretely, students are presented with a brief film sequence and asked to simply write down in their own terms what they have seen and afterwards to exchange their account with their neighbor.

The discussion that follows this exercise regularly brings about many observations revealing new insights among the students, shortly after reinforced by a theoretical presentation of two contrasting approaches of social reality, namely a spontaneous and a critical one. Contrary to the inferences and interpretations that are found in the former, the latter focuses on observable items and implies the use of linguistic markers indicating a more critically distant and neutral view (i.e. adverbs like maybe, perhaps, possibly, use of conditional, indirect language such as "the protagonist says that..."). Supported by many examples from previously collected material on the same example, this lesson is meant to enhance openness to the plurality of viewpoints and to teach the difference between a description and an interpretation. This is a crucial distinction that is then used for the first assignment of the program, which is the description of an educational situation, either personally experienced or witnessed/reported. All descriptions, most often realized by duos, are then collected and must form the basis for what will constitute the students' final assignment, an in-depth analysis of the same situation by making use of the program inputs.

Throughout the program, key notions deriving from a psychosocial theoretical framework are presented and illustrated by visual documents or exercises. They can be classified into two main categories referring first to the knowledge of peoples' socio-cognitive biases and their impact on practice, second to the learning of psychosocial dynamics that characterize pupils' experience within a school setting which is analyzed as a place not only where knowledge is transmitted but also as a scene marked by intergroup divisions, where students are also concerned with expressing, defending or asserting their social or cultural identities. This part of the training conveys for example information about pupils' construal of the meanings assigned to the task, the test situation or to the discipline and addresses the interplay between intercultural/intergroup dynamics and academic achievement or motivation to learn.

At different stages, the effectiveness of the program is appraised by means of a questionnaire that students are asked to complete. Since the implementation of the program is closely related to a research project, the aim of this evaluation is twofold: It addresses both the efficacy of the training at improving students' SCF and the strength of our conceptualizations and hypotheses on the basis of empirical evidence. As for the latter, two types of data are collected, offering qualitative as well as quantitative support for the relevance of this training for teaching in multicultural contexts. Before turning to the presentation of some results that represent indicators of the students' progress, we must stress the fact that research findings and works realized by students from previous academic years are used as pedagogical materials (videos, power point presentations and a concise manual, see Sanchez-Mazas, Mechi & Fernandez, 2012). These prove to bring valuable contributions for a better understanding of teachers' responses, concerns and improvements (through the presentation of data on these dimensions) and of the type and level of competence that should be attained (through the reading and discussion of exemplary sets of description/account of educational situations). In this way, students can appreciate the possibility and potential benefit to apprehend real-life problematic situations in schools through notions learned in class.

### **Empirical evidence**

The first type of data offers a view of the effectiveness of the program through the computation of several indicators referring to professional SCF that reflect, in teaching practice, the use of *category- and trait-based expectations* (awareness of the relative

unpredictability of human behavior, ex. “When the teacher sees pupil’s parents, generally he/she knows what to expect regarding the behavior of this pupil”) and *explanations* (openness to the plurality of viewpoints, ex. “If a pupil has unruly behavior, he/she comes certainly from a disadvantaged background”). This construal, which has been tested for reliability (Cronbach’s alphas  $>.86$ ), appears to correlate positively with relevant “flexibility” variables ( $r >.25$ ) and with *feeling-of-being-concerned* ( $r >.30$ ). The analysis of its evolution from the beginning to the end of the program (repeated measures analysis of variance: ANOVA) reveals that teachers’ social cognitive flexibility seems to increase during the training displayed in 2011 ( $F(1, 46) = 6.82, p < .01, \eta^2=.13$ ) and in 2012 ( $F(1, 103) = 6.44, p < .01, \eta^2=.06$ ), regardless of teachers’ professional level of experience and gender (Mechi, in preparation).

Together with these quantitative results, a series of qualitative data derive from the corpus of teachers’ accounts of cross-domain educational situations (CDES). More precisely, these are concerned with the pairs of descriptions/analyses of CDES realized pre- and post-training: It allows appreciating the evolution of the student based on his/her own report of the processes at work while coping with the situation. One example may be useful to grasp the meaning of this exercise. The description reported the case of a teacher working in two contrasting school environments, one more demanding and prestigious (i.e. High school leading to academics) than the other (Commercial school leading to professional training). In the first account, the two populations were perceived very differently according to the type of school it belonged, especially in terms of pupils’ ability to understand and appreciate literature which was the teacher’s domain: College pupils were seen as motivated and living whereas Commercial pupils were perceived as indifferent, or even hostile towards the texts, so much so that the teacher came to question the very relevance of this domain for these students, asking whether it was not an hypocrisy to try to introduce them to this « bourgeois » culture, so distant from their interests, before their insertion into active life.

While pursuing the training program, the teacher started questioning this first representation, through a widening of her receptivity to certain environmental clues (such as the composition of the High school parents’ that turned out to be, in a parents’ evening meeting, more heterogeneous than expected in terms of social class). Moreover, she realized that she was attributing her teaching difficulties to the restructuring of the school rather than to her own teaching methods. Finally, she discovered that in her proposed study of poetry - implying free associations and generation of images rather than technical tools - Commercial pupils felt more confident, pleased and creative than High school pupils, who lost their

interest in poetry when told that it would not be evaluated...

Clearly in this example, concepts like stereotype, attribution and hypothesis generation learned in the training program, together with more refined notions like the distinction between performance and mastery goals (Dweck, 1986; Mechi & Sanchez-Mazas, 2012), seem to have been crucial tools for reappraising the educational situation and readjusting the professional practice. Moreover, findings provided by the qualitative data by means of survey open-ended questions, show an increase of about 30% in responses reflecting a switch from pupils' responsibility to teachers' responsibility in solving school problems, thus indicating an improvement of FBC.

## Conclusion

The present paper was intended to give an overview of a current training program aimed at better equipping young teachers working in school contexts marked by social and cultural diversity. Unlike other perspectives in the realm of multicultural education, it does not target particular categories of pupils, and thus it attempts to overcome the risk of reintroducing stereotyping modes of thinking (Ogay & Edelmann, in press). By addressing problematic issues rather than problematic pupils, it opens the way to an approach of educational situations through the lenses of general concepts that are able to grasp some underlying psychosocial mechanisms that pervade other singular situations under different manifestations.

This approach strongly calls upon the practitioners' reflexivity, which, according to Schön (1987), is a dialogue between thought and action that enables them to cope with the complex problems associated with their tasks. However, since it is grounded in a strong theoretical framework, it incorporates new insights and results from the development of research, inviting to constantly renew our thinking and proposing applied concepts (Steele, Scarisbrick-Hauser, & Hauser, 1999). Indeed, social psychology seems a very promising background for addressing complex educational situations due to its peculiar level of analysis which contributes to avoid the double trap of a sociological deterministic vision or a psychological reductionism. In this way, the research program that goes along the construction of the training is an instance of a pragmatic turn that social sciences are undertaking in order to better serve future practitioners and endorse an institutional role (Finkelstein, 2005).

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Sándor Szerepi<sup>1</sup>

## Representations of intercultural society in Central-Europe

1. „While the term ‘multiculturalism’ is sometimes used to describe a society in which different cultures live side by side without much interaction, the term ‘interculturalism’ expresses a belief that we all become personally enriched by coming in contact with and experiencing other cultures, and that people of different cultures can and should be able to engage with each other and learn from each other. „(Intercultural education in primary school/ <http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/publications/Intercultural.pdf>) I think that definition is the basic position of thinking about the representation of intercultural societies in Central-Europe. This Irish document of inter- and multicultural education edited for the primary schools to solve their practical problems. The authors tried to give recipes how to integrate the migrant families’ children. The advices are consists of the following questions:

- what should we do when a new child arrives?
- how to make the intercultural (or multicultural) environment in the school?
- how can we solve the conflicts between the students from different cultures?
- how can we integrate the intercultural contents into the curriculum and subjects?

This concept describes the education of migrant children and host children together. But I think there are two more representations of intercultural societies and education too in Central-Europe. We can talk about the following representations:

- Immigrants and their families in the West
- Ethnical minorities in all Europe
- Gypsies in (especially Central- and East) Europe

2. One of the most important socialpolitical question is the integration of immigrants’ families and children in the countries of EU (mainly in France, Germany, United Kingdom and the Netherlands). In decades after the world war two hundreds of thousands immigrant people had arrived into this region from North-Africa, East-Asia and Turkey. Most of these people

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were muslims. Nowadays the immigrant minorities are 5-10% of the whole society of these countries. In the last 30 years many good ideas and practices have come up about working up the intercultural societies and educational practices. There are many good practices for this phenomenon in Western Europe. There is a considerably good example in the following Swedish article. PIRJO LAHDENPERA gave us the goals of research of the immigrant children's schools difficulties:

- „(i) to analyse and systematize the present reasoning regarding school difficulties and problems,
- (ii) to define and systematize different possible attitudes toward students' immigrant backgrounds and ethnic classification;
- (iii) to investigate how teachers interpret and describe problems relating to immigrant students.”( LAHDENPERA, 1998. 297.)

This concept can be applied to explore the first generation immigrant children's school difficulties. The good practice is in the same way too: to make an educational environment that can treat the school difficulties by the different culture. There are some similar situations in Hungary in point of immigrant children. In the big cities (Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged) the refugees have appeared from Africa (Nigeria, Somalia) and Asia (Afghanistan, Iraq, Cambodia...) since the middle of the '90-s. However, the number of these children is very low – temporarily.

In the intercultural respect **one of the challenges** is for Europe: to harmonize the relation between European and the other cultures in the future and the possibility of integration.

3. The educational problems with ethnical minorities are very different. In Central-Europe (Croatia, , Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia) there are lots of ethnical minorities. We can take a look at the following schedule about the minorities in Hungary and Poland (for example):

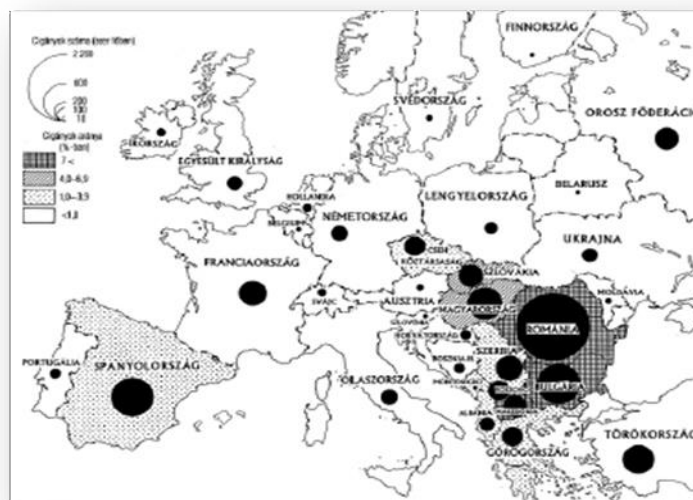
HUNGARY	POLAND
Armenian, Bulgarian, Croatian, <b>German</b>	Belarus, Czech, <b>German</b> , Greek
Greek, Polish, <b>Rusin, Roma</b> , Romanian,	Lithuanian, Macedon, <b>Roma, Rusin</b>
Serbian, <b>Slovakian</b> , Slovenian, <b>Ukranian</b>	Russian, <b>Slovakian, Ukranian</b>

(Dates from: GRZEGORZ, JANUSZ. Nemzetiségi kisebbségek a mai Lengyelországban. In.: Regio – Kisebbség, politika, társadalom 1994. 5. )

As we can see Central-Europe (in fact the territory of former Habsburg Monarchy) has more ethnical minorities than Western-Europe or the Mediterranean region does. The ethnical minorities generally have their own educational systems as a part of the national education system. For example, there are Hungarian schools in Romania, Slovakian and German schools in Hungary, and so on. But it can be observed all this region that the national governments would like to narrow minorities' political and educational possibilities.

So the minorities' main purpose is to save their own identity – especially in the field of education. This is a **second challenge** for Europe (intercultural respect.)

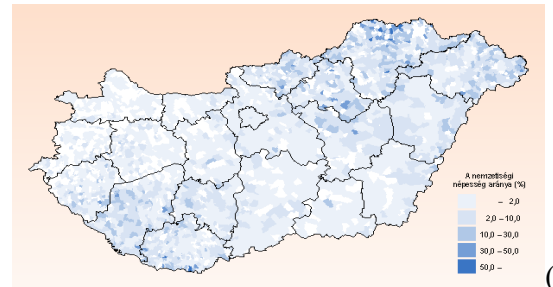
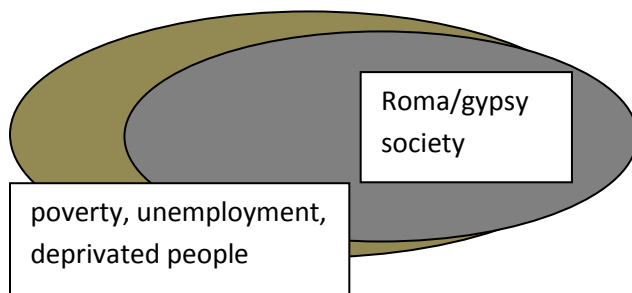
4. The Third representation of intercultural society: Gypsies in (especially Central- and East) Europe. By historical reasons the most of gypsy groups live in this region of Europe. The exact number of roma/gypsy population in these countries is not known, but by guess every Central-European society has 5-10% gypsy minority. The last census was two years ago in Hungary. According to it the number of the gypsies is 273 000. But by guess it is 660 000! (HABLICSEK,41.) It means about 6,6%.



*(The map In.: Cigányok Európában (szerk.: Kocsis Károly, kartográfus: Kaiser Miklósné, 1991. Gypsies in Europe. (1991.) edited by Kocsis Károly)*

The way of life of gypsies in Hungary (and the other countries in Central-Europe) have dozens of very hard problems. We can view these in the following points:

- Basic problem: the special connection between the poverty and the roma/gypsy population:



The Map from: KSH, Hungary, 2001)

- Obstructive Factors of integration of roma/gypsy population:
  - According the position in the labour market:
    - Unschooled and low motivated people
    - Transformed structure of labour market in Hungary (similar to the other post-soviet countries)
    - Bad running of socialization and learning
    - Prejudiced against each other
  - According the lifestyle of roma population:
    - Archaic texture of families: early growing up, more children in a family
    - Different approaches of property, the position of children in families
  - According traditions those can be hardly integrated:
    - Traditionally wedding under 18 years old
    - Birth under 18 years old (full age: 18 years old In Hungary!)
    - Specific „roma/gypsy law” in the local communities
  - Problems between the schools and roma population (stressful contact):
    - Inelasticity of the schools, out of date teacher training system
    - Frustrated, born outed teachers in the schools

- Unconcern roma parents about the life in school
- Hardly differences by cultural and socializational meanings:
  - Stretched approach by the time (schedule, deadlines...)
  - Less rules in a family education – more difficult conformity to the life of school
  - Deprived, neglected environment – the feeling of strange, instability in schools
  - Unemployed parents – children cannot experience regularly working
- Handicaps of roma population:
  - Handicap of language – in two meanings:
    - *Primarily: if the roma children speak own language (romani), but the teachers don't understand it*
    - *Secondary: if the roma children and the teachers speak hungarian, but not the same language. Roma children use the restricted hungarian language, but the educational system use the whole hungarian language,*
  - Cultural handicap: different traditions, cultural modells, low educated parents
  - Social handicap: very low standard of living, restricted possibilities

As POSAVEC & HRVATIC exactly describe this problem: „The disadvantaged status of the Roma is reflected in the educational system in many ways: the incomplete registration of Roma children in primary schools, their extremely high drop-out rate in the compulsory school system, the negligible number of Roma students attending secondary schools and universities, as well as the lack of classes in Romany language and culture.” (POSAVEC & HRVATIC, 2000, 94) So, the **third challenge** is how can we integrate the roma population?

After the collapse of the communism in this region had been begun to search the solving of the roma population's problems. The first step is the education: how can we take roma

children into the school system, and how can we stay there them? Because the main problem, the high drop-out rate hasn't changed significantly in the last years.

This situation is true for Hungary too, but after all there's something has begun towards the better way:

- It had borned a Roma Strategy (socialpolitics) by the Hungarian Goverment few years ago
- Almost every schools and kindergarden applies the system IPR (Special System for the Integration)
- Came off the register of good practices (roma and integrated education)
- It had founded a special kind of institute : Roma Szakkollégium (a group in the universities included roma and other sudents). It's purpose : growing up a new roma intelligentsia who will come back to the origin local community.

Summary we can say that the integration of roma population (especially in Central-Europe) is difficult process, full of problems and defeats, but the good practices can make us a wise optimism.

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### **Abstract**

In the western discussions the category „intercultural society” means mainly living together of the immigrants and the host society. In respect of it there are many differences by origin of immigrants (for example muslims, east-europeans, or east-asian people). But this phenomena is more difficult and multiple in Central-Europe (Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia.)

We can talk about three different problems of the word interculturalism:

1. The immigrants from Asia and Africa (mostly refugee people),
2. To save they own identity of ethnical (autochton) minorities in this region (German, Hungarian, Slovakian...),
3. Integration of the roma / gipsy minority.

Usually the immigrants' children should integrate directly to host education system. It's not typical to make own school, class or group for these children. Generally the ethnical minorities have own educational system as a part of the national education system. For example there are hungarian schools in Romania, slovakian and german schools in Hungary and so on. But can be observed all this region that the national governments would like to narrow minorities' political and educational possibilities. So the minorities' main purpose to save their own identity – especially in the field of education.

Every central European country has Roma minority, but in different rates. There is a special feature by the roma people and the majority intercultural connection. In respect of this two problems appear: the cultural and the social problem!

I think there are these representation of intercultural society (and education) in Central-Europe, and we have think about this problem different. Finally, we need to answer different for different challenges!

I suggest my lecture any teachers and academic professionals. My contribution relates by the inter- and multicultural aspect to the theme of the conference.



Laura Selmo e Jole Orsenigo

**“Quale democrazia nel tempo attuale? Teoria e pratica per la costruzione di una società attiva e multiculturale”**

**Che cosa significa Democrazia?**

L'ideale democratico (Dewey, 1916/1949 pp.110-112) riesce ancora a rispondere alle esigenze di uguaglianza e libertà del tempo attuale, dove vi si manifesta sempre più la necessità di conciliare culture e provenienze diverse? Esso garantisce davvero i diritti ma anche i doveri di tutti e di ognuno nel contesto planetario? Oppure c'è la necessità di ripensare *che cosa sia democrazia* oggi per tutti noi? La nuova democrazia di cui abbiamo bisogno, quale rapporto intrattiene con l'educazione del Terzo millennio?

Partendo dall'attualità senza dimenticare le nostre radici, diventa sempre più urgente impegnarsi per costruire un futuro in cui culture e tradizioni diverse possano coesistere. Il percorso che proponiamo tenta di rispondere a queste domande.

Nonostante l'assetto democratico della *polis* classica accettasse come ovvie la schiavitù e la subordinazione del ruolo femminile, la nostra tradizione occidentale continua a fondare l'ideale democratico a partire dal buon funzionamento della città.

Se Platone sogna una città ben governata da filosofi, Aristotele indica nella felicità, che si ottiene facendo il bene e vivendo bene, la suprema aspirazione della vita sociale. L'*eudaimonia* non risulta essere solo un fatto privato, ma diventa una dimensione comunitaria e direttamente politica. Pertanto il vincolo tra vissuto individuale e identità sociale risulta essere il punto sorgivo di una visione della società come comunità solidale, dove ognuno realizza liberamente se stesso per il vantaggio di tutti.

Nella modernità a sua volta Immanuel Kant, formulando l'imperativo categorico, agisci in modo tale da trattare l'umanità sempre come fine e mai semplicemente come mezzo, ribadisce il carattere universale e solidale dell'agire umano. Questa formula morale, infatti, fa risaltare ciò che lega il singolo all'insieme di tutti gli uomini. Il diritto alla libertà di agire di ognuno si coniuga con il dovere del rispetto e della responsabilità verso se stessi e verso gli altri.

L'aspirazione morale kantiana oggi si trova davanti alla necessità di realizzarsi in pratiche di convivenza tra culture sempre più vicine e interconnesse. Gli ordinamenti moderni se riconoscono al cittadino i diritti fondamentali come quello di sviluppare le proprie potenzialità materiali e morali, fanno leva anche sul dovere di rispettare negli altri uomini i medesimi diritti. In questo modo si sono intesi realizzare tre principi essenziali: libertà, eguaglianza e solidarietà,

riconoscendoli come diritti dell’Uomo oltre ogni confine geografico e culturale. Il valore e la dignità dell’essere umano (che l’Occidente ha affermato) chiedono di essere riconosciuti su scala planetaria. I diritti, che noi chiamiamo universali, appartengono infatti a tutti gli uomini senza distinzione. In questo senso si vuole tutelare ogni persona, come è stato proclamato nella Dichiarazione dei Diritti Fondamentali dell’uomo del 1948. In particolare l’articolo 1 di tale Dichiarazione esplicita chiaramente che: “tutti gli esseri umani nascono liberi ed eguali in dignità e diritti. Essi sono dotati di ragione e di coscienza e devono agire gli uni verso gli altri in spirito di fratellanza”.

La felicità - il nucleo della concezione aristotelica, come si è affermato sopra - risulta essere fondamento del vivere sociale anche in tempi a noi più vicini. Nella Dichiarazione d’Indipendenza degli Stati Uniti (1776) si afferma di nuovo la democrazia quale cardine della libertà e uguaglianza massime cui l’uomo possa aspirare. “Noi riteniamo che sono per se stesse evidenti queste verità: che tutti gli uomini sono creati eguali; che essi sono dal Creatore dotati di certi inalienabili diritti, che tra questi diritti sono la Vita, la Libertà, e il perseguimento della Felicità; che per garantire questi diritti sono istituiti tra gli uomini governi che derivano i loro giusti poteri dal consenso dei governati”. L’uguaglianza deriva dal valore che ognuno è in grado di offrire alla società, il che mette tutti sullo stesso piano senza livellare le diversità. Essa mette ognuno nel posto che gli spetta a partire da ciò che sa fare (*worthiness*) senza discriminazioni e senza privilegi.

Più recentemente l’Unione Europea, nel momento della sua fondazione, proprio per salvaguardare la dignità dell’individuo e la sua realizzazione, ha riconosciuto quale base i diritti fondamentali dell’uomo e i principi universali che regolano la pacifica convivenza fra i popoli. Nel preambolo della Carta dei Diritti Fondamentali dell’Unione Europea troviamo scritto: “I popoli europei nel creare tra loro un’ unione sempre più stretta hanno deciso di condividere un futuro di pace fondato su valori comuni. Consapevole del suo patrimonio spirituale e morale, l’Unione si fonda sui valori indivisibili e universali di dignità umana, di libertà, di uguaglianza e di solidarietà; l’Unione si basa sui principi di democrazia e dello stato di diritto. Essa pone la persona al centro della sua azione istituendo la cittadinanza dell’Unione e creando uno spazio di libertà, sicurezza e giustizia.”

### **L’ideale della democrazia**

John Dewey, nel suo celebre *Democrazia ed Educazione*, sostiene che la democrazia è un ideale etico. Scrive che “una democrazia è qualcosa di più di una forma di governo” (Dewey, 1916/1992 p. 110). Essa equivale, continua, all’abbattimento di quelle *barriere* di classe, di razza e di territorio che impediscono agli uomini di cogliere il pieno significato della propria libera attività. La democrazia assicura, infatti, la *liberazione* di facoltà che rimangono *soffocate* finché gli uomini

hanno interessi solamente *parziali*. È evidente che a una società come questa sarebbe *fatale* la stratificazione in classi. Solo una *società mobile*, che favorisce l'industria, il commercio, i viaggi, le migrazioni e la comunicazione, conclude, apre al cambiamento.

I membri della democrazia per questo non possono che essere “educati all'iniziativa personale e all'adattabilità” (Dewey, 1916/1992 p. 111), ma tale società “deve provvedere che le opportunità intellettuali siano accessibili a tutti e a condizioni eque e facili” (Dewey, 1916/1992 p. 111). A partire da tali aspirazioni, la scuola si fa luogo di realizzazione dell'ideale democratico. La *scuola nuova* riproduce, semplificandola, la società in cui tutti sono uguali. Si può imparare a vivere in democrazia, sulla base di esperienze che allarghino la prospettiva degli studenti e consentano loro sempre nuove esperienze.

In Dewey il richiamo all'esperienza diventa critica nei confronti di una visione intellettualistica dell'istruzione. Egli è radicalmente contrario a una scuola libresca; propone l'introduzione nella vita scolastica di occupazioni significative anche sotto il profilo sociale. Un altro modo di intendere la cultura. Niente di astratto, lontano dalla vita, ma esperienze utili allo sviluppo e al miglioramento della vita stessa degli immaturi. Le forme *fondamentali dell'attività sociale*: la vita di gruppo, il servizio reciproco, il dialogo - diventano gli strumenti per creare *un'attiva vita in comune* a scuola. Valorizzando il ruolo attivo dell'allievo, si apre la strada a metodologie e criteri di razionalità nuovi, che hanno per Dewey soprattutto una valenza politica. Nella prima metà del Novecento con il processo di industrializzazione, infatti, si stava aprendo la strada anche al fenomeno dell'istruzione di massa. Ragazzi provenienti da ambienti fino ad allora tenuti lontano dalla scuola, di classi e origini differenti si affacciavano necessariamente al medesimo contesto culturale. La scuola si trovava così ad affrontare l'esigenza di reimpostare se stessa.

Il pragmatismo di Dewey, grazie all'idea che l'uomo non sia un semplice spettatore del mondo ma che interagisca continuamente con ciò che lo circonda, trasforma la razionalità da facoltà contemplativa a strumento. Il pensiero nasce dall'esperienza (Dewey, 1938), e questa è sempre esperienza sociale. All'esercizio singolare della razionalità - nel bambino come nello scienziato - corrisponde il cammino stesso dell'Umanità verso il suo miglioramento. In questo senso tutti i problemi del capitalismo moderno (come pure quelli derivanti dalle varie forme di illegalità), nascono dall'individualismo, cioè da un'eccessiva concentrazione su di sé. Chi non riesce ad apprezzare gli aspetti collaborativi e progressivi della vita democratica, si isola. Scrive Dewey che “l'esperienza non si compie solo nell'interno della persona” (Dewey, 1938/1949 p. 23), ma ogni esperienza che voglia essere *autentica* non può che essere sociale e socializzata. E ancora: “una delle principali responsabilità dell'educatore è che egli non deve essere attento al principio generale della formazione dell'esperienza mediante le condizioni circostanti, ma che riconosca pure in

concreto quali siano le condizioni che facilitano le esperienze conducenti alla crescita. Soprattutto, egli dovrebbe conoscere in che modo utilizzare la situazione circostante, fisica e sociale, per estrarne tutti gli elementi che debbono contribuire a promuovere esperienze di valore” (Dewey, 1938/1949 p. 24).

Anche Martha Nussbaum ha recentemente ri-affermato una visione progressiva e umanistica della democrazia. In essa, ancora una volta, l’educazione è pensata come quell’elemento centrale che può aiutare far vivere *bene* tutti gli uomini in mondo globalizzato come quello odierno. Nussbaum (2010) spiega che tra gli obiettivi dell’educazione ci dovrebbe essere la possibilità di sviluppare tutte le proprie capacità, anche quelle naturali come la compassione, l’empatia e la comprensione degli altri, coltivando così una coscienza critica. In particolare, le discipline umanistiche sarebbero, secondo lei, quei saperi che maggiormente illustrano, proteggono e favoriscono la condizione umana, contribuendo a coltivare la consapevolezza di sé e delle altre persone (Nussbaum, 2010).

### **Pratiche di apprendimento democratico: service - learning e community engagement**

Con Dewey l’oggetto della conoscenza si sposta dalla mente dell’allievo all’azione stessa, che risulta divenire nell’insieme un accadimento e una rappresentazione dell’accadimento. Secondo questa prospettiva indagare l’apprendimento significa approfondire, recuperare, rendere consapevoli i soggetti delle esperienze, significa riflettere sulle proprie azioni, come oggetto di una specifica analisi, ponendosi con uno sguardo capace di assumere una distanza critica sia in rapporto alle attività compiute, sia in rapporto alle difficoltà e ai conflitti incontrati e alle decisioni assunte per superarli. Da quel momento in poi si comincia a pensare che non si possa avere una visione unitaria riguardo ai processi conoscitivi e l’esperienza e la partecipazione attiva dell’individuo nella costruzione e comprensione della realtà diventano oggetto di studio. È il soggetto che crea le realtà e la realtà non può essere considerata oggettiva e indipendente dal soggetto che la esperisce. La conoscenza diventa quindi un “fare significato” (Bruner, 1990/1992), un’operazione d’interpretazione creativa, che lo stesso soggetto attiva tutte le volte che vuole per comprendere la realtà che lo circonda. La centralità dei processi di apprendimento, generati dal riconoscimento della pratica come fonte per una nuova teoria, la necessità di una riflessione prima, durante e dopo il corso dell’azione, l’attenzione ai contesti sociali nei quali i processi cognitivi sono favoriti, e l’interazione tra teoria-pratica diventano centrali nel processo di apprendimento.

Secondo Dewey l'azione riflessiva si attua quando l'individuo si trova di fronte ad un problema ambiguo o che non ha una soluzione certa. In conseguenza della situazione problematica nasce il bisogno di creare nuovi modelli d'azione, modificando o sostituendo i precedenti.

Il pensiero riflessivo permette all'individuo di mettere in discussione la logica che sta dietro all'interpretazione delle esperienze della vita quotidiana, cioè quelle azioni che vengono svolte abitualmente secondo canoni interpretativi dati dalle precedenti esperienze o dalle convenzioni sociali. Attraverso la riflessione quindi si passa dall'azione alla consapevolezza o presa di coscienza dell'esperienza vissuta e dei valori contenuti in essa. Secondo Dewey infatti “la plasticità è la capacità di conservare e di portare con sé dalle esperienze precedenti dei fattori che modificano le attività successive. Questo significa la capacità di acquistare abitudini o sviluppare disposizioni determinanti” (Dewey, 1938/1949 p. 90).

La riflessione fa sì che l'esperienza non sia mero momento di passaggio, ma oggetto di pensiero e quindi apprendimento e crescita. Partendo da tutte queste considerazioni nel tempo sono andati sviluppandosi negli Stati Uniti diverse metodologie che pongono al centro *la comunità e il servizio*. Sono stati così introdotti all'interno della scuola programmi specifici come il *service-learning* e il *community engagement*<sup>1</sup> dove gli studenti apprendono attraverso il loro mettersi al servizio della comunità. In questo modo essi imparano oltre alle discipline scolastiche anche il senso della partecipazione attraverso l'impegno. Partecipare vuol dire “far parte” e significa vivere un sentimento di appartenenza. Questo chiama in causa un processo identitario che coinvolge l'ambito personale e sociale particolarmente rilevante nei giovani. La giovinezza risulta infatti il momento in cui si costruisce l'identità sociale e politica dell'individuo e con la partecipazione attiva ai bisogni della comunità si concorre a formare e definire l'identità del soggetto e il riconoscimento in un'identità collettiva. L'utilizzo di queste metodologie pertanto favorisce la trasmissione del principio democratico, inteso come partecipazione e come messa a disposizione delle proprie capacità per il bene comune della collettività e vuole generare nei giovani un senso di responsabilità.

Le caratteristiche principali di questi programmi sono:

1. collegare l'apprendimento scolastico ed esperienziale con lo sviluppo di un maggior senso di responsabilità e di attenzione all'altro;
2. utilizzare conoscenze e abilità nel mondo reale;
3. essere inseriti nel curriculum scolastico;
4. avere una fase strutturata di riflessione sull'esperienza svolta.

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<sup>1</sup> Per un approfondimento: Furco A. & Billing S. (2002), *Service-learning: the Essence of the Pedagogy*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing; Speck, B. W. & Hoppe, S. L. (2004), *Service-learning : history, theory, and issues*, Westport, Conn.: Praeger

La ricerca scientifica in campo educativo ha dimostrato attraverso tantissimi studi che il *service-learning* e il *civic engagement*<sup>2</sup> apportano molti benefici a livello sia di apprendimento che di sviluppo del giovane e hanno altresì verificato che coloro che durante la scuola si sono impegnati nel servizio presso la comunità hanno poi continuato anche in età adulta.

### **Riflessioni critiche e sviluppi futuri**

Ne *La dottrina platonica della verità* Martin Heidegger mostra quanto l'educazione sia legata alle nostre pratiche di verità, cioè alla filosofia in quanto metafisica. In altri testi afferma che con il compimento di quest'ultima - evento che distingue la Contemporaneità - anche l'umanesimo si spinge su posizioni estreme. Scrive a proposito della fine della filosofia che essa si mostra nel *trionfo* dell'organizzazione del mondo su basi tecnico-scientifiche e nell'ordinamento sociale adeguato a questo nostro mondo pianificabile (Heidegger, 1969/1988). La fine della filosofia corrisponde all' "inizio della civilizzazione (*Weltzivilisation*) del mondo fondata sul pensiero dell'occidente europeo" (Heidegger, 1969/1988 p. 173). L'Occidente ha in questo modo una grande responsabilità. Se è grazie alle pratiche alfabetiche nate nella classicità<sup>3</sup> che si è aperta la strada all'Umanità razionale, quella che faceva dire a Edmund Husserl (1954/1987) ancora non molti anni fa: "Noi siamo funzionari dell'umanità" (p. 46), non per questo è ovvio che tutto quello che ci è possibile realizzare attraverso la scienza e la tecnica, debba essere compiuto. Alla fine della sua storia l'Occidente non può, per coerenza con la sua stessa tradizione, che sospendere se stesso e auto-ricomprendersi come *una civiltà* - magari proprio quella dei diritti e dei doveri della ragione infinita dell'Umanità - tra *le altre civiltà*.

Non è forse proprio la scrittura alfabetica, e il sistema librario e di istruzione che grazie alla stampa si è sviluppato da essa, il più grande "il più originale e il più potente etnocentrismo sul punto di imporsi oggi al pianeta" (Derrida, 1967/1969 p. 5)? Il logocentrismo, cioè *la metafisica della scrittura fonetica* fino a dove può imporre il suo stile e le sue leggi?

Oggi gli sviluppi scientifici, tecnici, economici *producono* un divenire planetario comune a tutti gli esseri umani (Bocchi & Ceruti 2004 p. VII); la multiculturalità, affermano Bocchi e Ceruti, "è nei fatti prima ancora che nei bei progetti" (Bocchi & Ceruti, 2004 p. XI). Con la globalizzazione si sono installati:

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<sup>2</sup> Per un approfondimento: Scales, P.C. & Roehlkepartain, E.C. (2004) *Community Service and Service-Learning in U.S. Public Schools, 2004: Findings from a National Survey*. St. Paul, MN: National Youth Leadership Council. Scales, P.C. & Roehlkepartain, E.C. (2005) "Can Service-Learning Help Reduce the Achievement Gap?" In J. Kielsmeier & M. Neal (Eds.), *Growing to Greatness 2005: The State of Service-Learning Project*. St. Paul, MN: National Youth Leadership Council.

<sup>3</sup> Per un approfondimento: Sini, C. (1994). *Filosofia e scrittura*. Laterza: Roma-Bari.

- il predominio dell'economico sul politico (tendenza questa insita nella logica e nella storia del capitalismo, tendenza che oggi si è così potenziata da esautorare i poteri statali in favore delle imprese transnazionali, ma soprattutto delle capacità decisionali dei centri finanziari).
- l'omologazione del mercato (i prodotti e le immagini attualmente diventano di massa: cibi, abbigliamento, forme di convivenza e di divertimento, sono diventate l'unica realtà cui aspiriamo tutti; il che provoca un preoccupante *livellamento* verso il basso).
- l'internazionalizzazione - la figura dominante attualmente è il consumatore planetario - (Pasqualotto, 2011)
- la liberalizzazione dei mercati finanziari (scambi e contrattazioni in tempo reale).

Siamo pronti a vivere insieme in questo nuovo mondo? Davanti a uno scenario di tale portata la prospettiva di un'autentica pedagogia interculturale (Portera, 2006a, 2006b) non può che aiutare tutti noi a coniugare i vincoli reali di un mondo che va restringendosi sempre più (avvicinando diversità una volta separate e irraggiungibili, ma anche ri-proponendo nuove forme di disparità), rispetto alle possibilità che l'umanità tutta ha inventato e aperto per sempre.

Essere democratici oggi corrisponde a chiedere cittadinanza, libero movimento e felicità per tutti e per ognuno in quella grande *polis* che sta diventando il mondo.

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## Growing up Global through Cosmopolitanism as Education

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### *1. Globalization, new exclusions and the need for innovative educational practices*

The process of globalization characterizing contemporary scenarios has determined both a globalization of countries and of individuals (Friedman, 2000), activating deep changes in the spatial and temporal contours of individual and collective existence (Harvey, 1989, 1996; Eriksen 2001; Scheuerman 2004; Held *et al.*, 1999).

This has had a wide-ranging impact on the different dimensions of human living, touching on many social issues (such as immigration, transitions, job changes, ageing, diversity management, environmental protection and the sustainable use of resources.....), modifying essential forms of social agency and social activity and determining the emergence of new social needs to which correspond new educational needs.

These needs are identifiable as: social change, social development, social inclusion and human development.

Social change implies a transformation in the social order of a social group or society as well as a modification in social institutions, social behaviors, and social relations which can occur in different ways, times and spaces. Social development can be acknowledged as a natural or planned process occurring as the result of the actions, activities and practices of numbers of individuals through which societies achieve new forms of organization or as a result of deliberate conscious initiatives by organizations and institutions through dedicated actions, programs and policies. These may involve new forms of the organization of resources and social forces in order to cope with the challenges imposed by the new world scenarios, developing new attitudes, competences, knowledge, skills and values at an individual and collective level, and generating new forms of human agency, experience and practice which should be shared between all social groups (Cleveland & Jacobs, 1999).

Therefore, social inclusion becomes a crucial issue in the globalized world scenario, considering that in different social contexts all over the world, it always happens that individuals and even entire communities are “pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of

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basic competencies and life-long learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination” (European Commission, 2004). This is connected to what can be described as a “capability deprivation”, since depriving someone or some group of one or more capabilities means limiting the range of things that people can do or be in life (Sen,1993) .

For these reasons, social groups such as children, the disabled, the elderly, immigrants, prisoners, the unemployed and women may never reach their full potential in certain kinds of society as they will be systematically blocked from essential rights, opportunities and resources and will suffer various kinds of deprivation, which exclude them from full participation in cultural, economic, social, and political life.

In this perspective, social inclusion is essentially based on and driven by an individual and collective capability development through devices and tools which help individuals and communities to express fully their own potential on the basis of an increasing level of awareness of their needs, possibilities and rights from a global perspective.

The above mentioned needs concern not only individuals and communities living within a specific social context, but broad groups of people who are widespread in different countries but have in common particular life conditions. These include the collocation within increasingly deterritorialized, interconnected, and accelerated living contexts requiring a constant adaptation to new life and work conditions through the acquisition and development of new abilities, competences, knowledge, skills and understandings; the increasingly intense experience of diversity (of cultures, habits, perspectives, religions and traditions) and of change (of living context, social status and employment...) requiring the development of a new and different understanding of human life; and the shared awareness of the world as a whole and the acknowledgment of global issues which call for the development of a global participatory agency.

The need to grow, to develop individual and collective capabilities, to learn lifelong and lifewide and to acquire higher levels of awareness and consciousness are shared across cultural, social and territorial borders and require a deep reflection on the conditions and opportunities through which it is possible to support an effective educational agency as a response to the above mentioned needs and demands.

Within the global scenario, education -conceived as a means of knowledge acquisition and construction, but also as a means to sustain different forms of engagement and participation - is indeed the most powerful device to promote not only human development but social change envisaging the inclusive potential of education intended as an empowering social device aimed at developing the range of capabilities available for individuals and communities.

We need, therefore, to consider the conditions that limit the access to educational experiences and opportunities for individuals and groups but also to look at the exclusive as well as inclusive dimensions deeply embedded in educational processes, with reference to both cultural as well as structural educational barriers. For

example, we have to consider that, in the transition to the new schooling context, immigrant children and minority groups often experience educational disadvantages and require particular support to fulfill their potential.

Within this framework, the EU highlights that the school performance of pupils with a migrant background is lower than that of native pupils and stresses the need to revamp educational models and institutions.

This results from educational systems being involved – at different levels – in a deep process of transformation in order to respond to the educational demands emerging in the globalized scenario. This focuses on the development of a global education framework considering that education requires a deep change in educational models, practices and systems, which are required to have a greater sustainability and validity, in order to provide effective educational responses involving, additionally, non formal and informal contexts.

This change should occur through a re-organization of structures, curricula, methodologies and materials which need to be specifically tailored to both global and local educational needs and directed towards individual and collective growth, building community and mutual respect, creating social responsibility, instilling an appreciation for diversity, promoting emotional literacy and managing and resolving conflicts (Noddings, 2005).

## **2. Cosmopolitanism as education and the PEACE Project**

Cosmopolitanism is increasingly viewed by many scholars (Nussbaum, 2003; Hansen, 2010a; Hansen, 2011; Koczanowicz, 2010; Mignolo, 2010; Strand, 2010a; Strand, 2010b; Todd, 2010) as a possible educational answer to the condition depicted in the previous paragraph. Why cosmopolitanism? And in what sense? And, finally, what does cosmopolitanism as ‘an educational answer’ mean?

We can take our cue from the reflection of Ulrich Beck who argues that the *new cosmopolitan syntax of reality* appeals to a new grammar of thinking. Due to the epoch-making changes occurring at the social, political and technological levels, our reality is itself cosmopolitan, in the sense that our experiential space, the world of life, is crossed by a plurality of cultural models, by the possibility of listening to ‘voices’ coming from beyond the borders of that civilization which we consider as our matrix (whatever it is). But an adequate cultivation of the ability to experience this condition reflectively does not always correspond to this possibility. Indeed, it is a quite disconcerting and disquieting condition, which often provokes merely defensive responses, the first of which is to retreat into one’s own culture. That is especially true at the educational level. There is an ‘educational nationalism’ which can be compared to the methodological one, criticized by Beck (think, just as one of many possible examples, of the recent debate on the *Leitkultur* in Germany). Indeed, in many educational practices (above all in formal education) the *national outlook* is still predominant because of the historical bond with the development of national States. The formal school system has been – in modernity – the great promoter of socialization and of the building of a sense of belonging to a national community. In

David Hansen's (2011, p. 93) words, socialization «is the time-honored process of drawing the young into a way of life and equipping them to sustain it. [...] Through it, the young learn ways of understanding, communicating, and interacting, along with a body of evolving cultural knowledge, that together are constitutive of their way of life». As a consequence, we need to imagine new educational tools, devices and strategies which not only allow schools to get in tune with our cosmopolitan condition but – what is much more important – make schools the pivot of a really cosmopolitan educational project. Otherwise, the risk is the coexistence of a 'banal and distorted' cosmopolitanism, as Beck would put it (that is, a cosmopolitanism not reflectively re-appropriated), on the one hand, and of an uniquely nationally-oriented educational system on the other. To bridge such a gap, it is not enough to add some classes of 'intercultural curricula' (whatever that may mean) to the regular national curricula. As a matter of fact it is possible to multiply the instruction about other cultures without breaking the uniquely-national mould of educational systems, that is to say, without promoting any cosmopolitan outlook.

While a uniquely nationally-oriented education is sustained by an *either-or* logic, the cosmopolitan outlook is animated by that of the 'as well as'. In this sense, cosmopolitanism is inclusive. Designing education from a cosmopolitan point of view does not mean, though, denying the national (according to the excluding logic of the *either...or* – either national or cosmopolitan), but intertwining national and cosmopolitan dimensions. It means recognizing the intrinsic plurivocality of every culture, installing oneself in the polyphony of voices (Bachtin 1988; 1997), which both synchronically and diachronically constitutes it and has given it the (potentially open) configuration it has. By echoing Kant we can state, in the wake of Beck, that cosmopolitanism without 'localism' is empty, and 'localism' without cosmopolitanism is blind. The latter is true to the extent that local culture is petrified, the plurality of contributions (even from remote cultures) which over centuries have given it its current shape is erased, and a lifeless simulacrum is offered as a standard. On the other hand, cosmopolitanism is empty whenever it settles for a general appeal to a world culture, which remains at the stage of a 'stratospheric' principle or of a "utopian idealism" (Hansen, 2011, p. 5). Hansen has defined such a stance as *cosmopolitanism on the ground* which

does not contrast with the local but can only find expression there. Each of its enactments becomes instantaneously particularized and is informed by a sense of rootedness in the world. In this outlook, it is impossible to be cosmopolitan without a sense of the local. At the same time, it is impossible to be "local," as contrasted with being parochial or close-minded, without a cosmopolitan orientation. What characterizes cosmopolitanism from the ground up is a fusion, sometimes tenuous and tension-laden, of receptivity to the new and loyalty to the known. (Hansen, 2010, p. 5).

Educating for this kind of cosmopolitanism does not entail dismissing one's own culture but in-habiting it cosmopolitically. That means creating the conditions to prevent the habits (both cognitive and emotional), which are typically connected to a

specific way of life and are formed through education as socialization, from getting encrusted – to use a Deweyan (1922) notion – that is, from becoming a barrier to the irruption of the new. At the same time, though, those habits are not dismantled but are the very basis for the new to be recognized and valorised. Or, in Hansen’s words,

[r]eflective openness to the new is a considered receptivity toward the unfathomable variability that flows incessantly into human lives: from other persons, from events, and from people’s own imaginations, thoughts, inquiries, undertakings, and experiences. Reflective loyalty toward the local reflects the fact that a cosmopolitan-minded person indeed does “leave home,” but not necessarily in a material or literal sense. Rather, the person leaves home behind in a parochial or walled-in sense of that term. A cosmopolitan orientation features an interest in learning from other traditions, a process that may mean illuminating one’s way in the world by their insights as well as by one’s own. (Ibid., p. 19)

It is within such a *chiasma* – to use the engaging phrase of Merleau-Ponty– of loyalty to the known and receptivity to the new that a community blossoms, mainly in an era in which the coexistence of different cultures and forms of life obtains. *Cosmopolitanism from the ground up* is

a cosmopolitanism rooted in everyday life. It spotlights the familiar fact that human beings can create not just ways to tolerate differences between them but also ways to learn from one another, however modest the resulting changes in their outlooks may be. [...] This cosmopolitanism fuses a way of moving in the world, or a way of being, with one’s everyday commitments, activities, enjoyments, and concerns. It accompanies a person but need not dominate her or his outlook. (Ibid., p. 4)

With a remarkable move Hansen links his proposal of cosmopolitanism as education with the philosophical tradition of the care of the self and the art of living (Foucault, 2001; Hadot, 2001, 2002) and introduces first of all Socrates as its representative (Hansen, 2010; 2011). By taking inspiration from this move we would like to suggest that education for complex thinking according to the model of Matthew Lipman’s community of philosophical inquiry can represent a privileged form of educational cosmopolitanism. For two reasons, in a nutshell: firstly, Lipman too explicitly reconnects his proposal to Socrates’ example:

The paradigm of doing philosophy is the towering, solitary figure of Socrates, for whom philosophy was neither an acquisition nor a profession but a way of life. What Socrates models for us is not philosophy known or philosophy applied but philosophy *practiced*. He challenges us to acknowledge that philosophy as deed, as form of life, is something that any of us can emulate. (Lipman, 1988, p. 12).

In this sense the *Philosophy for Children* (P4C) approach, by its insisting on education for complex thinking, should not be considered just as a merely cognitive program. More is at stake. The aim is to cultivate *judgment*, an idea closely related to

the ancient notion of wisdom (which, in turn, is one of the architraves of philosophy as the art of living):

But what is judgment? Here again, recourse to equivalent expressions suggests that it is the forming of opinions, estimates, or conclusions. It therefore includes such things as solving problems, making decisions, and learning new concepts, but it is more inclusive and more general. Every outcome of inquiry is a judgment. As for wisdom, it is generally explained that those who are wise exercise *good judgment*. [...] The line of inquiry I have been following is one that shows good judgment to be the modern descendant of the ancient notion of wisdom and to be, at the same time, the chief characteristic of critical thinking. (Lipman, 2003, p. 210)

If in Hansen's wake, the endeavour should be that of identifying and devising 'spiritual exercises' which translate the model of philosophy as the art of living into educational practices, Lipman's P4C can be offered as a major instantiation of such an effort.

Secondly, Ann Sharp (2009), who co-authored the P4C curriculum, in one of her last papers argued that "education is lacking in preparing children to live in a global world" and that therefore "many [children] do not understand the ideas, background or beliefs of others from other cultures" and "as a result, they think they can judge what is good for people from another culture". Sharp speaks of the *arrogance of children*, to counter which she invites us to cultivate understanding, dialogue and good judgment. Sharp refers to Hannan Arendt's (1978, 1982) notion of 'going visiting' as the horizon within which we should read the educational potential of the community of philosophical inquiry as a source for children to *grow up globally*. As is well known, Arendt introduces the idea of 'going visiting' in her reflection on the faculty of judgment in reference to Kant. According to the latter, to judge is to take the cosmopolitan stance, by surpassing the narrowness of one's own one-sided position. In this perspective, educating for judgment in a community of philosophical inquiry is not only education for wisdom but also for a reflective cosmopolitanism, which can match the cosmopolitan syntax of reality (Oliverio, 2012).

Against this backdrop, the PEACE (Philosophical Enquiry Advancing Cosmopolitan Engagement) project, involving four countries (Italy, Austria, Israel and Spain) and funded by the EU, is committed to promoting cosmopolitanism understood not in the liberal version but rather in that of Hansen, by creating a new curriculum inspired by the P4C approach. The project takes into consideration not only immigrant people but – more generally – people who are 'out of place'. Indeed, we should differentiate between people who are 'displaced' and, therefore, have no place, because they have lost (their own) place, and people who, like immigrants, have changed place. Such a difference has been highlighted in the project precisely because there can be situations (such as that of Israel) where there is a significant presence of the former 'group' and far fewer representatives of the latter. But both groups can benefit from cosmopolitanism as education and as a way of reducing social exclusion.

The idea of exclusion will take a peculiar ‘spin’ within the framework of the project. The curriculum aims at offering subjects resources and skills in order for them to feel ‘included in a future’. Indeed, one of the major risks is that people ‘out of place’ feel as if there were no real future for them. One of the goals of cosmopolitan education should be, therefore, first of all to provide people with the tools to imagine a future and, for the reasons spelled out above, such a future can not be but a ‘global’ future. In order that this global future does not turn out to be just a ‘distorted and inchoate’ cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006), however, we need to promote a reflective cosmopolitan attitude.

Accordingly, the curriculum (and the stories which will be invented and have to trigger the philosophical inquiry within the classrooms transformed into communities of inquiry) is not intended primarily as a survey of topics connected with the issue of immigration or of globalization but rather as a way of creating the underpinnings which make possible a global thinking. By underpinnings we mean those skills (both cognitive and affective: cfr. Garcia Moryión, 2002)) and virtues which are con-substantial with the cosmopolitan outlook and which enable the new generations to inhabit the world, and to make it their own home by engaging in life with all its diversity, plurality and challenges.

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**Storia e intercultura come incontri di sguardi**  
**Esempi di pratiche laboratoriali collaborative**

di

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**Parole chiave:** didattica della storia; transmodernità, competenze interculturali

**1. Introduzione: Mappe transmoderne e sviluppi recenti nell'insegnamento delle geo-storia**

Vengono qui presentate alcune riflessioni sulle pratiche laboratoriali interculturali nelle scuole superiori a partire da esperienze promosse a Reggio Emilia dal Centro Mondinsieme. Tali pratiche, che hanno esaminato periodi storici in che mettono a confronto prospettive europee con prospettive latinoamericane e indiane, vengono discusse facendo riferimento al lavoro volto a mettere in discussione la presunta superiorità del “nostro” mondo (Mantovani, 2012), e le sollecitazioni a immaginare futuri desiderabili di autori come Appadurai (2004) e a favore di una svolta epistemologica “decoloniale” e transmoderna (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2011), svolta necessariamente “disobbediente” perché attenta ad incorporare lo sguardo di chi muove da posizioni lontane dalle narrazioni dominanti ed egemoniche, dai canoni prevalenti.

In particolare, il peruviano Anibal Quijano sollecita un riflessione sugli aspetti gerarchici dei sistemi di potere a partire dagli scritti di Jose Carlos Mariategui. I suoi studi hanno contribuito a mettere in luce le caratteristiche di “dipendenza” che un certo modello sviluppatista ha promosso nel mondo, rilevandone gli aspetti imperialisti e l'impatto sulla cultura e le identità latinoamericane<sup>1</sup>. La sua è un'autentica “epistemologia meridionale”, formatasi osservando le trasformazioni agrarie, le dinamiche dei movimenti contadini, i processi di urbanizzazione in America latina con ricerche che l'hanno condotto ad insegnare presso la Columbia University, l'UCLA di Berkeley, l'Università di Hannover e quella Autonoma di Città del Messico. Oggi ci invita a fare i conti con la categoria della

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<sup>1</sup> per esempio in testi come *Dominacion y cultura. Lo cholo y el conflicto cultural en el Peru* (Mosca Azul Editores, Lima) e *Modernidad, identidad y utopia en America Latina* (Editorial El Conejo, Quito).

"colonialità del potere", argomento rimosso dagli studi interculturali di matrice occidentale e, invece, frequentemente discusso in America Latina. In un suo testo recente (2000) ci mostra come "i recenti movimenti politico-culturali degli 'indigeni' e degli 'afro-latinoamericani' hanno messo definitivamente in discussione la versione europea della modernità/razionalità, proponendo una propria razionalità alternativa. Negano la legittimità teorica e sociale della classificazione 'razziale' e 'etnica', proponendo di nuovo l'idea di eguaglianza sociale. Negano la pertinenza e la legittimità dello stato-nazione fondato sulla colonialità del potere". In particolare, Quijano suggerisce da anni la corporeità come l'ambito decisivo che vale la pena di esplorare per cercare di capire le relazioni di potere e per cercare di superare i vari dualismi eurocentrici (anima-corpo, psiche-corpo, europa-non europa), ma soprattutto le classificazioni sociali tipiche del mondo occidentale che è venuto sviluppando l'idea di classi sociali fra la fine del diciottesimo e l'inizio del diciannovesimo secolo, proprio quando si cristallizzava in Europa un'idea duale del mondo, un mondo centrato su uno sviluppo lineare che vedeva l'Europa stessa quale punto di arrivo.

In riferimento agli sviluppi recenti nell'insegnamento delle geo-storia appare adeguato prendere in considerazione progetti educativi di ampio respiro quale *Through Other Eyes* (TOE, *Con gli occhi degli altri*) che ha recentemente "tradotto" in un curriculum internazionale geo-storico il lavoro interculturale della filosofa indiana Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999). Questo approccio didattico fa ricorso per ogni argomento curriculare ad una varietà di punti di vista da contesti diversi e si articola in sei metafore chiave: scrivere le identità, costruire diversità, posizionamenti, filtri e relazioni di potere, scale di valori, e parzialità delle prospettive.

La prima metafora, scrivere le identità, invita ad andare oltre al "culturalismo" nella costruzione di identità. Si tratta, in primo luogo, di evitare gli essenzialismi e di mettere in luce i processi di ibridazione. L'identità viene, quindi, pensata come risultante delle proprie percezioni e rapporti nei confronti di sé, degli altri e del mondo. Come afferma il filosofo Homi Bhabha, le identità vengono costantemente costruite e ricostruite attraverso le interazioni all'interno dei diversi gruppi sociali in cui ci si trova ad agire: le identità vengono "scritte" nei contesti sociali. Affrontare un percorso storico è un'opportunità per riflettere sulle "mani" che ci scrivono" e per sviluppare modi di pensare maggiormente indipendenti da tali matrici ed eventualmente modificare il nostro modo di "scrivere".

La seconda metafora affronta la costruzione delle diversità e mette in discussione l'idea (coloniale) che l'individualità debba essere basata su una dimensione di singola auto-sufficienza. Tale idea si accompagna alla premessa che all'interno di una stessa società molte persone abbiano ruoli simili e siano perciò interscambiabili. TOE contrappone a queste premesse l'idea di "mano": come le sue dita, gli individui sono diversi, ma interdipendenti, ognuno indispensabile all'interno della propria comunità cui ognuno offre un contributo unico, insostituibile. In tal senso la diversità diviene fonte di apprendimento ed incoraggiamento ad apprezzare i tratti specifici degli altri.

La terza metafora riguarda il posizionarsi: non possiamo metterci nei panni di altri, mentre continuiamo ad indossare i nostri soliti panni, finché siamo condizionati dalla nostra esperienza, lingua, categorie mentali. Provare a mettersi nei panni degli altri implica una migliore comprensione del nostro contesto di origine e delle nostre aspirazioni.

Filtri e relazioni di potere sono al centro della quarta metafora. Attraverso quali "lenti" guardiamo agli altri? Spivak (1999) suggerisce che tale sguardo, condizionato dal nostro retaggio culturale coloniale, si rifaccia a quattro figure tipiche: il missionario (attento alla "salvezza" e alla saggezza), l'insegnante (attento ai saperi), il turista (legato ai consumi e al divertimento), l'antropologo (attento a "preservare"). Tali "lenti" rappresentano un ostacolo a rapporti paritari con chi viene considerato "diverso".

La quinta metafora pone l'attenzione sulle scale di valori. Prende atto che sia nel passato, sia nel presente siamo di fronte a rapporti di potere diseguali – nell'accesso alle risorse, così come nella definizione di ciò che vale di più in termini di saperi, culture, individui. Dal punto di vista degli apprendimenti è, quindi, importante considerare le violenze epistemiche ereditate dal colonialismo e le loro implicazioni oggi all'interno di società che si vogliono moderne e competitive. Cosa e come possiamo imparare dalle diverse forme di conoscenza?

La sesta metafora riguarda la parzialità delle prospettive e le dà forma invitando chi si avvicina ad un "altro villaggio" a uscire dal proprio contesto per assumere almeno tre sguardi quello (dall'alto) del condor, quello (dal basso) del serpente, e quello del giaguaro: ogni prospettiva presenta vantaggi e limiti e richiede uno sforzo di immaginazione per capire come arrivare ad un dialogo che le coinvolga tutte e tre.

A partire da questa cornice TOE propone quattro aspetti come particolarmente rilevanti per una riflessione sulle metodologie utilizzate nei percorsi di educazione interculturale

- l'attenzione per gli approcci educative che permettono di prendere consapevolezza su come il linguaggio, i sistemi di pensiero, di valore e le rappresentazioni sociali influenzino il modo in cui leggiamo il mondo;
- l'introduzione sistematica di una varietà di sguardi su argomenti di studio in modo da poter favorire la consapevolezza dei diversi modi in cui diversi gruppi intendono le dinamiche socio-economiche;
- lo sviluppo di un pensiero critico che sappia tenere conto sia di prospettive dominanti, sia di prospettive locali e minoritarie, sapendone comprendere le premesse e prendere in considerazione le possibili implicazioni presenti e future;
- l'attenzione per gli aspetti etici che favoriscono il dialogo, l'impegno e l'apprendimento mutuo.

### **2.1 Un laboratorio di geo-storia a carattere interculturale**

L'aspetto che ci proponiamo di indagare è come sia possibile tradurre in pratica le precedenti indicazioni teoriche all'interno di attività di educazione interculturale nelle scuole superiori italiane. Come si può costruire in classe il "fare storia dell'altro, e di noi stessi"? Viene qui presa in esame l'esperienza di Mondinsieme, che considera come fulcro della didattica lo studente (soggetto) che, spinto dai propri interessi e situato in uno specifico contesto educativo, apprende attraverso un processo di elaborazione e integrazione di molteplici esperienze collaborative con gli altri studenti, in un quadro di riferimento pedagogico che lo vede protagonista della costruzione della propria conoscenza.

In particolare, viene qui presentato un percorso laboratoriale che prende spunto dal ruolo della narrazione (Mantovani 2012; Benhabib 2008) e del cooperative learning in funzione di produzioni mediali ad opera di studenti di scuole secondarie di secondo grado. E' sembrato opportuno invitare gli studenti a soffermarsi su pagine problematiche della storia dei rapporti dell'Europa con altre parti del mondo (in questi casi dell'America Latina e dell'India). Come suggerisce Mantovani (2012), "la conoscenza dei lati positivi delle tradizioni degli altri contrasta l'etnocentrismo che l'educazione ha inoculato in ciascuno di noi".

Il laboratorio ha preso le mosse da *focus group* condotti con insegnanti di scuole superiori di Reggio Emilia. Gli obiettivi preliminari condivisi con i professori che hanno partecipato ai *focus group* sono stati:

1. sollecitare un coinvolgimento emotivo degli studenti nello studio della storia (liceo classico)
2. stimolare a percorsi di approfondimento e a sviluppare una posizione critica rispetto ai fatti storici (istituto professionale)
3. andare “oltre il testo di storia” e rimettere al centro la capacità di rielaborare i conflitti

## **2.2 Modalità di realizzazione dei due percorsi laboratoriali**

I laboratori si sono svolti con studenti di circa 16 anni (prima liceo) frequentanti un liceo classico e studenti di circa 18 anni frequentanti una classe quinta di un istituto tecnico. I laboratori hanno preso le mosse dalla lettura e dalla rielaborazione del testo “Spezzando ogni cuore. Dal Messico di Cortez alla Roma dell’Inquisizione” (Mantovani, 2012). A partire dall’approccio *jigsaw*, gli studenti sono stati invitati a lavorare in gruppi di approfondimento delle diverse parti di un capitolo del libro: inizialmente, ogni gruppo approfondisce solo un paragrafo (diverso per ogni gruppo); in un secondo momento ogni membro di un gruppo di lavoro da vita ad un nuovo gruppo assieme a partecipanti provenienti dagli altri gruppi in modo da poter condividere tutti i paragrafi. Questa prima parte, che consta di due incontri (4 ore), è stata seguita da un confronto diretto tra gli studenti, l’autore del testo e un esperto (terzo incontro, 2 ore). Infine si sono dedicati gli ultimi due incontri all’ideazione, la progettazione e la realizzazione di un elaborato finale. Per la classe prima del liceo classico, i passaggi che hanno inciso sulla progettazione dell’elaborato finale sono stati la scelta iniziale di una tra le riflessioni/”frizioni” emerse dalla rielaborazione del testo e la successiva costruzione di una nuova narrazione, fatta dagli studenti stessi, di alcuni periodi storici. In questo caso il materiale utilizzato è stato: il testo “Spezzando ogni cuore”, risorse ricavate da internet (quali interviste, immagini e saggi storici, articoli e testimonianze) ed un’intervista audio realizzata dagli studenti stessi. L’elaborato della classe quinta dell’istituto tecnico è stato costruito a partire dalla scelta di un argomento di confronto emerso durante la discussione in classe con gli esperti, a cui ha fatto seguito la costruzione di una ri-narrazione del percorso fatto, con

approfondimento del tema scelto. Il materiale utilizzato è stato: il testo “Spezzando ogni cuore”, interviste e riprese video originali realizzate dagli studenti.

Oltre agli incontri in classe, si è deciso di utilizzare, in parallelo, un gruppo Facebook amministrato dall’educatrice e formato dagli studenti delle 2 classi, da una professoressa referente e dall’esperto, attraverso il quale stimolare e mantenere vivo lo scambio di informazioni, riflessioni, spunti e risorse tematiche. Lo spazio è stato frequentato dalla quasi totalità degli studenti del liceo classico (eccetto due studenti che non usano abitualmente Facebook). Un terzo di questi ha partecipato assiduamente scrivendo commenti e riflessioni. Gli stimoli lanciati in questo spazio virtuale dalla professoressa hanno avuto un ruolo importante nell’arricchire il confronto. Attraverso Internet hanno anche cercato e trovato testimoni che vivessero in prima persona in contesti di intervento militare (Mali), mettendosi in contatto con loro e sollecitando scambi di testimonianze e opinioni. Al contrario, gli studenti dell’istituto tecnico non hanno utilizzato lo spazio: solo 4 ragazzi su 16 hanno regolarmente visualizzato i post, ma nessuno è intervenuto.

## **2.3 Risultati e discussione**

Il percorso ha avuto sviluppi e raggiunto esiti diversi nelle due classi che hanno lavorato su due distinti capitoli del testo di riferimento: quello dedicato al Messico (1519-1521) nel caso della classe prima del liceo classico e quello che introduce il gran moghul Akbar e i rapporti fra i missionari europei e l’India fra il 1579 e il 1581 nel caso della classe quinta dell’istituto tecnico.

Di seguito si offre una sintesi classe per classe.

### **2.3.1 Classe prima del liceo classico**

La classe è composta da 17 persone, di cui due maschi. Fra le ragazze una è di origine ucraina. L’osservazione del lavoro svolto mostra un percorso che risponde agli obiettivi condivisi con la professoressa referente durante il *focus group* iniziale - relativi al coinvolgimento emotivo degli studenti e alla partecipazione attiva degli stessi alla co-costruzione dei contenuti . Alcuni indicatori a questo riguardo sono: la qualità e la quantità degli interventi da parte della maggior parte della classe durante le discussioni durante i lavori di gruppo, con l’esperto ed in fase di ideazione dell’elaborato finale.

Di seguito vengono riportate alcune riflessioni elaborate dagli studenti e le cosiddette “frizioni” da loro colte attraverso la rielaborazione del testo.

Un primo ambito di approfondimento ha riguardato l'uso della violenza. Alcuni studenti si sono domandati in modo specifico:

*Perché gli spagnoli hanno agito in modo violento? C'erano altri interessi oltre a quelli dichiarati di carattere religioso (convertire popolazioni inferiori per permettere loro di salvarsi)?*

E, a livello più generale:

*L'istinto degli uomini è sempre e comunque quello di sovrastare ed imporre la propria cultura sulle altre?*

Alcune domande denotano un processo di riflessione critica, che, però, non giunge a mettere in discussione la "legittimità" dell'atteggiamento colonialista, per esempio con domande come:

*Sarebbe stato possibile conquistare un territorio senza l'uso della forza?*

In chiave trans-culturale c'è stata una presa di consapevolezza della mancanza di informazioni sulle popolazioni conquistate e il sorgere di dubbi in merito a possibili atteggiamenti socio-culturali e politici diversi fra le popolazioni. Ne è una spia la domanda: *"Se i maya o gli aztechi fossero giunti in Europa si sarebbero comportati in un modo diverso?"*

Riflette, su un piano diverso, una studentessa: *"Ma le minoranze come dovrebbero auto-determinarsi? Possono farlo senza violenza?"*

Anche in virtù del recente intervento militare a guida del governo francese – e con il sostegno del governo italiano - in Mali, sono stati operati collegamenti con l'attualità:

*"Nei casi attuali di approdo di un "gruppo umano" in un territorio già popolato da un altro 'gruppo umano', cosa accade? Sono cambiate le modalità di incontro/scontro? Quali sono oggi i veri motivi sottesi a questi incontri/scontri?"*

Complessivamente, appare evidente che attraverso il laboratorio è stata sollecitata un'attenzione, ma vi è anche una sottovalutazione rispetto alla gravità degli interventi militari recenti, che in Medio Oriente, nei Balcani, in Africa, in Asia coinvolgono dal 1991 il governo e l'esercito italiano in prima persona. L'impressione generale è che il colonialismo sia un elemento del passato di cui non si coglie la continuità con le scelte di politica internazionale che riguardano da vicino il Paese in cui si vive.

Al dubbio di una studentessa: *"Al giorno d'oggi la globalizzazione e i processi di delocalizzazione e di sfruttamento economico, implicano un progresso nel rispetto dell'altro o è lo stesso discorso che si ripete in forme diverse?"* risponde, per esempio, un compagno: *"Non possiamo paragonare la situazione attuale alle conquiste del '500 perché*



*allora per gli spagnoli era normale agire così, oggi invece abbiamo sviluppato un concetto più evoluto di “umanità”.*

Alcune riflessioni della parte conclusiva del terzo incontro di laboratorio hanno sollecitato la condivisione di pareri sulle questioni sollevate dalla lettura del testo di Mantovani e le dinamiche legate alle migrazioni. Osserva una studentessa: *“Spesso si ha paura di perdere il proprio benessere e la si proietta sugli stranieri”*; commenta una compagna: *“Sì, ma loro sono un po’ stupidi se vengono qui adesso che c’è crisi”*; risposta di una terza studentessa: *“Questi sono i ragionamenti che portano al razzismo”*.

Per l’elaborato finale gli studenti hanno privilegiato due obiettivi: proporre uno sguardo indagatorio della classe su diverse epoche storiche significative per il livello di sopraffazione di un popolo su un altro popolo; proporre testimonianze dirette provenienti dai Paesi che subiscono la sopraffazione.

Hanno motivato tali scelte evidenziando l’importanza di proporre ad un pubblico più ampio argomenti normalmente poco approfonditi dall’opinione pubblica, ma stando attenti, al tempo stesso, in chiave narrativa, a scegliere argomenti correlabili tra loro attraverso un filo logico.

Hanno, quindi, lavorato ad un video “ibrido” costituito attraverso il montaggio di interviste audio e di diapositive, suddiviso in tre capitoli: la colonizzazione dell’America Latina da parte degli spagnoli nel 1500; l’Imperialismo; l’intervento a guida francese in Mali nel gennaio 2013.

### **2.3.2 Quinta Istituto professionale**

La classe è composta da 16 ragazzi, tutti maschi, dei quali 5 italiani, uno di origine albanese, uno di origine moldava, uno di origine indiana, 4 di origine pakistana e 3 di origine marocchina.

Si sono registrate alcune difficoltà iniziali da parte degli studenti ad attivarsi nei lavori di gruppo e ad approcciare e rielaborare il testo. Nel primo caso è stato necessario fornire più volte sollecitazioni e stimoli da parte di educatrice e professore; nel secondo caso le difficoltà hanno riguardato la contestualizzazione degli eventi e la comprensione di alcuni termini specifici. Il lavoro di rielaborazione in gruppo dei singoli paragrafi ha richiesto un

iniziale intervento dell'educatrice e del professore, che hanno fornito indicazioni circa un metodo semplice da seguire.

Superate le difficoltà iniziale, nel complesso, c'è stata da parte degli studenti partecipazione attiva ai lavori, anche se non generalizzata (tre ragazzi hanno mostrato un esplicito e costante distacco durante le attività). Anche per quanto riguarda la rielaborazione, si è raggiunto un buon livello, dimostrato da alcuni indicatori rintracciabili nei contenuti dei cartelloni realizzati in gruppo: scelta dei passaggi ritenuti più significativi dagli studenti, esposizione di dubbi e riflessioni suscitate in loro dal testo, ricerca di una sintesi tra le riflessioni proposte dal testo e la propria opinione di partenza sullo stesso argomento.

I principali argomenti di confronto sono emersi a partire dagli stimoli offerti dal testo che hanno richiamato esperienze dirette dei ragazzi o di loro amici/conoscenti e rimandato a conoscenze pregresse degli studenti legate al loro contesto culturale e religioso. Si riportano di seguito alcuni temi e frammenti del confronto scaturito tra i ragazzi:

#### 2.3.2.1 I matrimoni combinati

Dice uno studente: *“nei casi in cui la famiglia decida per il figlio, lui può rifiutarsi? Le ragazze predestinate possono rifiutarsi?”*. A questa domanda è seguito un confronto a partire dall'esperienza di un ragazzo di origine pakistana, mussulmano, sposato. Chiede uno studente: *“E' giusto o sbagliato che i genitori scelgano per te?”* Risponde un ragazzo di origine marocchina, mussulmano: *“sì perché scelgono per il tuo bene”*. Diversa è la risposta di un altro ragazzo: *“non trovo nulla di positivo in questo”*. Una prospettiva diversa viene offerta da un ragazzo di origine albanese, mussulmano non praticante: *“in Albania anche oggi si organizzano matrimoni combinati per questione di patrimonio: se ad una ragazza viene proposto un ragazzo ricco, lei non può rifiutarsi perché la sua famiglia vuole che si sistemi bene”*.

#### 2.3.2.2 Differenze riguardo ai riti religiosi e all'idea di ciò che è lecito

Colpisce e fa discutere il fatto che vi sia una divisione tra donne e uomini nelle moschee. Alcuni ragazzi non ne capiscono il motivo, essendo loro abituati ad una condivisione degli

spazi sacri tra maschi e femmine. Un compagno, mussulmano, spiega che ciò avviene *“perché non ci si distrazza nella preghiera”*.

Il confronto fra norma e devianza ha portato a evidenziare che, per esempio, le pratiche sufi, spesso, non vengono riconosciute in ambito islamico come sufficientemente ortodosse: un ragazzo di origine pakistana, mussulmano, ha spiegato come le danze sufi non siano accettate dai mussulmani più integralisti perché, secondo il Corano, danzare e ascoltare musica sono peccato (*haram*). Questo intervento ha suscitato riflessioni sia in merito alla musica, sia in merito al confronto fra diversi contesti culturali: un ragazzo di origine hindu ha evidenziato come le usanze sufi si avvicinino maggiormente ad alcune usanze hindu e di come questo sia dovuto al fatto che nel tempo si sono influenzate a vicenda.

A partire dal confronto tra sufi e fondamentalisti mussulmani nel '500 si è discussa la differenza tra ciò che è ritenuto *halal* (lecito, consentito) e ciò che è ritenuto *haram* (peccato e quindi proibito) in ambito mussulmano.

Gli studenti hanno voluto approfondire soprattutto il tema della musica (ascoltarla e danzare). La posizione da alcuni studenti mussulmani è che la musica: *secondo il Corano è haram perché ti allontana dalla preghiera e dalla meditazione*. Rispondono alcuni studenti di cultura cattolica: *ma perché allora voi ascoltate sempre la musica col cellulare? In che senso è proibito?* Uno studente di origine tunisina ha voluto sottolineare a questo punto la differenza fra ciò che viene esplicitamente proibito e ciò che viene considerato un peccato, ma non è immediatamente soggetto ad una sanzione, evidenziando l'importanza dell'idea di religione quale “guida” delle intenzioni dell'individuo.

Anche in questo caso non sono mancati i riferimenti alla propria vita quotidiana. Osserva un ragazzo di origine pakistana, mussulmano: *“I mussulmani che vivono in occidente sono mussulmani ‘meno puri’ rispetto a chi vive in paesi di religione prevalentemente islamica”*. Gli risponde un ragazzo di origine pakistana, mussulmano: *“Qui è più facile distrarsi, ma anche in Pakistan ci sono persone che non praticano, che quindi non sono bravi mussulmani”* e, sulla stessa lunghezza d'onda, integra le considerazioni precedenti un ragazzo di origine marocchina, mussulmano: *“Qui mancano condizioni di vita quotidiane che ti aiutano a praticare, come il richiamo della preghiera, il fatto che tutta la comunità vada in moschea ecc. Ma la pratica quotidiana è comunque una scelta individuale”*.

Per l'elaborato finale gli studenti hanno scelto di produrre un video-racconto sul percorso fatto, così strutturato:

- Introduzione al percorso svolto
- Sviluppo della discussione avuta in classe circa la differenza tra un divieto posto come assoluto nelle scritture e un'indicazione che funge da "guida" delle intenzioni dell'individuo, partendo dal caso specifico sull'ascolto della musica e della danza:
  - Intervista ad un imam di Reggio Emilia
  - Intervista ad un parroco di Reggio Emilia
- Conclusioni dei ragazzi circa il percorso svolto.

### **3 Considerazioni conclusive**

Nella prima liceo la proposta, la costruzione e la realizzazione dell'elaborato finale sono avvenute ad opera degli studenti, che hanno dimostrato un livello di autonomia molto alto, con capacità di autogestione e collaborative molto buone. Per quanto riguarda i contenuti e gli obiettivi scelti dai ragazzi, appare significativa la volontà di ricercare e riprodurre la "voce dell'altro" e di indagare in modo critico l'immagine propagandistica dell'altro veicolata da testi e immagini dominanti in Italia rispetto ai periodi storici presi in esame.

Nel caso dell'istituto tecnico la proposta, la costruzione e la realizzazione dell'elaborato finale sono stati il frutto di una mediazione tra le proposte degli studenti e le indicazioni dell'educatrice finalizzate a garantire la coerenza tra messaggio del video e il percorso realizzato e ad ottimizzare i tempi e gli strumenti a disposizione. Gli studenti hanno avanzato proposte in particolare sulle modalità di presentazione dei contenuti (come girare le scene). Sono stati meno propositivi dinnanzi alla scelta dei contenuti, raggiunta con la mediazione dell'educatrice, che ha proposto di sviluppare uno degli argomenti che hanno suscitato maggior interesse e partecipazione alla discussione durante gli incontri di laboratorio.

Appare evidente come il testo di Mantovani (2012) abbia suscitato un processo di de-costruzione di cornici culturali nel caso del liceo, mentre abbia avuto, soprattutto, un ruolo di individuazione e approfondimento di aspetti chiave della diversità culturale quotidiana nel contesto dell'istituto tecnico. Nel primo caso, la riflessione storica sembra accompagnarsi al tentativo di sviluppare uno sguardo critico sulla capacità di futuro

(Appadurai, 2004) della società in cui si vive; nel secondo caso le norme delle società di riferimento, percepite anche come in rotta di collisione fra loro, impegnano gran parte della riflessione e della conversazione sociale. Nel primo caso l'Europa sembra essere ancora un punto d'arrivo. Nel secondo questo punto d'arrivo non è scontato.

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## Educating teachers for social justice in intercultural context

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L'approccio dell'educazione interculturale è considerato oggi il modello ufficiale da adottare nelle scuole europee per l'integrazione degli alunni migranti. Tale approccio è esplicitamente richiamato in innumerevoli documenti e nella normativa europea, nazionale e locale che delineano una scelta esplicita e netta per un preciso modello di accoglienza, integrazione e gestione delle differenze culturali nella scuola. Un modello definito e precisato nel corso degli anni sulla base di un cospicuo e coerente insieme di direttive, raccomandazioni e normative promosse da molte istituzioni e organizzazioni sovranazionali a livello europeo. A tal punto che oggi, come dimostra un report di Eurydice del 2004, un riferimento preciso all'educazione interculturale come strumento per affrontare la differenza culturale è presente nella normativa scolastica di quasi tutti i paesi membri della UE, con la sola eccezione di Islanda e Bulgaria (Eurydice, 2004: p. 140). Su tutti va forse segnalato il testo del *Libro Bianco sul dialogo interculturale* "Living together as equals in dignity", approvato dalla Consiglio europeo nel 2008 (Consiglio Europeo, 2008) intitolato *Anno europeo del dialogo interculturale*. Quel documento, purtroppo in Italia poco noto fra i professionisti e gli insegnanti, riconosce la centralità del dialogo interculturale come approccio europeo alla differenza culturale, e prevede precise indicazioni politiche per la promozione del dialogo interculturale, assegnando ai sistemi formativi un ruolo chiave.

Arrivata più tardi rispetto ad altri paesi a più lunga tradizione migratoria a fornire risposte sistematiche alla crescente presenza di alunni stranieri nella scuola, l'Italia ha però ha potuto beneficiare dell'esperienza di altri paesi e soprattutto della riflessione e dell'elaborazione pedagogica prodotta in seno al Consiglio d'Europa, un'istituzione da sempre impegnata nella promozione dei principi democratici e dei diritti umani nel continente cui si deve la prima introduzione e un significativo impegno per la diffusione del modello interculturale per l'integrazione dei lavoratori e degli studenti immigrati a partire dagli anni Settanta. D'altra parte, proprio in ragione di questo storico ritardo e dell'esperienza di altri paesi, l'Italia è forse il paese che ha adottato formalmente il modello interculturale come politica educativa nazionale nel modo più compiuto fra le nazioni europee. Questo impegno verso l'educazione interculturale è comprovato dalla promulgazione di una normativa coerente nel corso degli

ultimi venti anni che rappresenta tuttora una cornice significativa per politiche educative e pratiche scolastiche ispirate all'educazione interculturale. Il culmine di questo coerente processo normativo è probabilmente rappresentato dal documento *La via italiana all'intercultura*, redatto dall'Osservatorio nazionale per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e l'educazione interculturale (MPI, 2007) e adottato nel 2007 dal Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione.

Tuttavia la nozione di educazione interculturale resta un concetto complesso e per certi versi ambiguo e sfuggente (Gundara & Jacobs, 2000; Gundara & Portera, 2008). Qui la intendo alla luce di due assunti. Innanzitutto assumerò l'educazione interculturale come una *policy* più che come una pratica educativa, una *policy* da declinare come un orizzonte di riferimento, approccio trasversale e sfondo integratore non solo delle varie discipline scolastiche, ma anche dell'offerta formativa complessiva della scuola. Essa va anche intesa come un indirizzo in grado di connettere le varie azioni che riguardano accoglienza, integrazione e valorizzazione della differenza culturale. Questa opzione implica scelte non neutrali tra le quali soprattutto: considerare l'approccio interculturale come una proposta didattica valida per tutti e non un dispositivo compensativo o assistenziale per l'integrazione di alunni stranieri e non ridurre l'azione formativa a interventi unicamente mirati alla prima accoglienza o soltanto inclusivi come l'insegnamento dell'italiano come L2. Un secondo assunto che sta alla base di questo contributo richiama la necessità di abbinare l'approccio di educazione interculturale a quella di educazione alla giustizia sociale (Tarozzi, 2011). Non si può negare, infatti, anche sulla base di consolidate evidenze empiriche, che la presenza di migranti nelle scuole italiane, oltre a costituire un confronto con la differenza culturale, segnala anche un crescente, anche se troppo spesso sottaciuto, problema di ineguaglianza e di giustizia sociale. Un'educazione interculturale intesa anche come educazione alla giustizia sociale, pone con forza ad esempio la questione del successo scolastico dei migranti e non può essere ridotta soltanto a un vago approccio psicologico all'apertura al dialogo con il diverso. Tuttavia la ricerca mostra che la *policy* dell'educazione interculturale non è stata in grado di promuovere i cambiamenti auspicati. Molti (OECD, 2010a; Sleeter & Grant, 1999) attribuiscono una delle cause principali alla carenza nella formazione insegnanti, i quali, non solo in Italia, esprimono una mancanza significativa di preparazione per insegnare in classi multiculturali (Burns, 2009). A tale mancanza non corrispondono però adeguati interventi sistematici di formazione iniziale e in servizio, malgrado non manchino richiami espliciti e

precise indicazioni per la formazione insegnanti tanto a livello italiano (MPI, 2007) quanto europeo (Consiglio Europeo, 2008:

“i programmi di formazione degli insegnanti dovrebbero prevedere strategie pedagogiche e metodi di lavoro che li preparino a gestire le nuove situazioni determinate dalla diversità, la discriminazione, il razzismo, la xenofobia, il sessismo e l'emarginazione, e a risolvere i conflitti in modo pacifico” (p.33).

Peraltro, anche la ricerca mostra come proprio la formazione insegnanti costituisce il motore della riforma educativa per garantire un sistema di istruzione pubblica equa e giusta per tutti e in particolare per formare insegnanti preparati a gestire la differenza culturale (Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Solomon & Sekayi, 2007).

L'assenza di un serio intervento nella formazione degli insegnanti è una delle principali cause dell'aleatorietà di queste *policies*, anche se non si possono negare molte altre concause che danno conto di un fenomeno complesso che investe globalmente l'istituzione scolastica e le politiche educative che la governano. Ma è certamente un fatto che malgrado le risorse investite, gli sforzi e l'impegno legislativo, l'educazione interculturale non è stata in grado di produrre significative trasformazioni per favorire l'integrazione sociale dei migranti e/o delle minoranze culturali o più in generale la gestione delle differenze culturali nella scuola.

Insomma, malgrado sul piano ideale, il ruolo dei docenti e la loro formazione specifica siano considerati elementi chiave per promuovere un'autentica integrazione interculturale, sono mancati interventi strutturali di formazione degli insegnanti, soprattutto iniziale, alle competenze necessarie a lavorare in maniera efficace in contesti scolastici caratterizzati dalla diversità culturale.

### *Insegnanti come intellettuali pubblici.*

A differenza dell'approccio OECD o di altri organismi sovranazionali che considerano strategica la formazione insegnanti per innalzare il livello di efficienza scolastica e le performance sistematicamente più basse dei migranti rispetto ai coetanei autoctoni, ritengo che il ruolo dell'insegnante nel promuovere un'equa (OECD, 2010b) integrazione interculturale risieda nella propria condizione di *intellettuale pubblico*. Con questo termine forse un po' desueto o provocatoriamente eccessivo, mi riferisco alla tradizione di pensiero di Gramsci e di Freire<sup>1</sup> secondo cui gli insegnanti sono agenti di trasformazione sociale con una

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<sup>1</sup> Come ha osservato Peter Mayo (1999), Gramsci e Freire condividono un'idea molto simile di intellettuale come studioso impegnato verso gli oppressi e i gruppi marginalizzati.



funzione esplicita di sfida al potere egemonico. Infatti l'egemonia culturale<sup>2</sup> si forma e si consolida attraverso la scuola oltre che altre istituzioni. Al netto della temperie ideologica che ha circondato il pensiero di Gramsci, ritengo che la nozione di intellettuale trasformativo, conservi, o abbia riguadagnato, una straordinaria attualità nell'indicare un ruolo, che può solamente essere scelto intenzionalmente e non viene assegnato dalla storia, a condizione di pensare il proprio ruolo come politicamente non neutrale, e guardando alla propria professione non solo in una maniera puramente tecnica ma includendo passione e impegno. La mia tesi è che una formazione efficace per insegnanti attrezzati a operare in contesti multiculturali possa essere efficace solo a condizione di tenere in considerazione questa premessa.

Una formazione degli insegnanti orientata all'educazione per la giustizia sociale (*social justice teacher education*) offre una prospettiva e una cornice teorica a sostegno della figura dell'insegnante come intellettuale pubblico. Concordo con Marilyn Cochran-Smith quando osserva che la nozione di social justice teacher education è concettualmente ambigua e scarsamente fondata dal punto di vista teorico (Cochran-Smith, 2010), ma che tuttavia resta un concetto chiave per la critica da una prospettiva di giustizia sociale del dominante clima politico caratterizzato da un crescente e diffuso neoliberalismo (Cochran-Smith, Barnatt, Lahann, Shakman, & Terrell, 2009; Crowe, 2008; Zeichner, 2006).

Diversante dall'approccio per competenze che sembra predominare anche in ambito interculturale (Santerini, 2010), diffuso globalmente dall'OCSE, ritengo che formare gli insegnanti come intellettuali pubblici e impegnati implichi non solo trasmettere conoscenze, competenze e abilità, ma soprattutto passione umana, impegno pubblico e responsabilità etica. In una parola un *ethos interculturale*, come già ho avuto modo di definire questo approccio che, come dice l'etimo greco è una caratteristica che ricomprende al suo interno tanto una vocazione etica quanto conoscenze e competenze<sup>3</sup>. La formazione insegnanti per la giustizia sociale pertanto non riguarda le strategie didattiche, i programmi, i metodi di insegnamento. Come ha scritto Cochran-Smith (2010): "(but) a coherent and intellectual

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<sup>2</sup> La visione gramsciana di intellettuale pubblico può essere compresa solo all'interno della cornice teorica della nozione di egemonia (oltre che quella di "guerra di posizione"). Egemonia deriva dal greco *eghémōnia*, la cui radice è *égemon* e il verbo *egéomai* (condurre, guidare), e significa conduttore, regolatore. Mentre nella Grecia classica questo termine era collegato al potere militare, in epoca moderna è utilizzato per indicare il predominio politico di uno stato su di un altro. Gramsci introduce una nuova prospettiva e nei Quaderni dal carcere considera l'egemonia non solo il ruolo di conduzione di una classe sociale su di un'altra attraverso l'esercizio del potere ma il più vasto processo di guida morale e intellettuale attraverso cui le classi dominanti esercitano il proprio predominio, non solo forzando e costringendo con la forza i gruppi subalterni. Come è noto per lui l'egemonia non è riducibile a semplici relazioni di potere, ma a una precisa direzione morale, intellettuale e culturale che impone una direzione culturale. Ecco perché la formazione, e la scuola in particolare, svolgono un ruolo chiave nel fondare e consolidare il potere egemonico della classe dominante. Ma l'educazione è anche essenziale nell'opporvi a tale potere creando una guida controegemonica di tipo culturale e morale.

<sup>3</sup> "Formare a un ethos interculturale" è il titolo del convegno, svoltosi a Rovereto il 12-13 ottobre 2012, che ha concluso il percorso di formazione e intervento di dirigenti e insegnanti del Trentino di cui parlerò in seguito.

approach to the preparation of teachers that acknowledges the social and political contexts in which teaching, learning, schooling, and ideas about justice have been located historically as well as acknowledging the tensions among competing goals.” (p.447).

Su questo ambito si è spesso lamentata la mancanza sia di esperienze di formazione insegnanti orientate a questo fine, sia soprattutto di ricerche empiriche che possano indicare strategie efficaci di formazione (OECD 2010, OECD, 2008). Per questo intendo presentare qui un paio di esempi concreti di ricerca e di intervento formativo basato sulla ricerca. Esempi di una formazione che non intende offrire semplici ricette, né tecniche didattiche per la formazione di insegnanti, ma percorsi emancipativi per lavorare con insegnanti pensati come intellettuali trasformativi all’interno di un paradigma orientato alla giustizia sociale.

Negli ultimi tre anni e mezzo ho condotto svariate ricerche e progetti di formazione insegnanti sia negli stati uniti sia in Italia, in particolare:

1. Una ricerca sul campo, utilizzando l’approccio dell’etnografia critica studiando empiricamente alcuni programmi di formazione iniziale degli insegnanti nella California del Sud;
2. Un vasto programma di formazione di insegnanti e dirigenti scolastici sull’Intercultura nella Provincia di Trento;
3. Una ricerca azione di tre anni in un istituto comprensivo sulla sperimentazione di percorsi di integrazione degli alunni migranti orientati alla social justice education.

In questa sede mi riferirò ai primi due progetti fra loro strettamente correlati.

### *Dalla ricerca alla formazione*

Nel 2009, grazie a una borsa di studio Fulbright, ho condotto uno studio secondo l’approccio dell’etnografia critica su alcuni programmi di teacher education nella California meridionale finalizzati a esplorare i modi in cui la formazione iniziale degli insegnanti possa influenzare la costruzione di competenze necessarie a lavorare in scuole multiculturali o meglio in *urban school*, dove la differenza culturale si intreccia con diseguglianze sociali ed economiche. Questo studio, per i cui dettagli rimando altrove (Tarozzi, 2011; 2012) ha mostrato che l’efficacia di una strategia pedagogica per formare insegnanti competenti e pienamente attrezzati a lavorare in aree urbane multiproblematiche dipende dalla possibilità di costruire e condividere un ethos politico e pubblico all’interno della comunità di apprendimento (normalmente un contesto universitario). Un ethos, come ho detto più sopra, è una competenza etica che, come già Aristotele indicava nel primo libro della *Retorica*,

ricomprende sia la conoscenza che la competenza operativa. Un ethos è ciò che può dare senso ad abilità, competenze e conoscenze richieste per lavorare in contesti svantaggiati, multiculturali, poveri e ha un rilevabile impatto sui livelli più profondi della soggettività degli insegnanti in formazione. Esso coinvolge credenze, idee, visioni del mondo e sorge dai più intimi e remoti recessi dell'identità, sempre costitutivamente interconnesso con le esperienze vissute e le scelte etiche. Questo è il livello della professionalità che è in gioco nella formazione insegnanti, che ricorda il nucleo centrale del modello "a cipolla" delle competenze delineato da Korthaghen (2004). La ricerca ha poi mostrato che le più efficaci strategie di formazione degli educatori sono proprio quelle che tendono a raggiungere i più intimi e profondi livelli della soggettività allo scopo di co-costruire un ethos, piuttosto che semplicemente modificare le condizioni esterne dell'apprendimento formale o semplicemente *depositando*, come sostiene Freire, attraverso una "formazione bancaria", informazioni superficiali e contenuti precotti (Freire, 1971). La vera sfida per i formatori di insegnanti diventa quella di trovare i modi per fare emergere l'ethos degli insegnanti e non semplicemente fornire istruzioni o competenze cognitive o strategie didattiche.

Dalla nostra esperienza, sia come ricercatori sia come formatori di insegnanti, è emerso che al fine di sviluppare metodi di insegnamento efficaci, il più fondamentale quadro di riferimento per la formazione degli insegnanti investe strategie politiche e emancipative. Metodologie didattiche attive ed esperienziali, ancorché innovative, al di fuori di questo quadro etico-politico non rappresentano alcuna novità, né sono di successo, di per sé significative o efficaci. In altre parole, l'uso di metodi come apprendimento attivo (lezioni partecipate, lavori di gruppo, giochi di ruolo e teatro, giochi di problem solving, apprendimento riflessivo, cooperativo ecc.) sono certamente validi, ma non sono in sé una soluzione, in quanto privi di significato al di fuori di una prospettiva politica finalizzata all'emancipazione e all'empowerment degli attori sociali coinvolti. Quindi insegnanti in formazione iniziale o in servizio e i loro formatori dovrebbero condividere un ethos pubblico all'interno di un contesto politico comune, finalizzato alla responsabilizzazione e l'emancipazione.

In sintesi, guardando alla situazione europea della formazione insegnanti, i programmi tradizionali sono incapaci di raggiungere i propri obiettivi finché continuano a fondarsi su una marginale e superficiale definizione di competenze chiave derivata dall'approccio OECD-DeSeCo (Rychen & Salganik, 2003 o anche, in chiave interculturale Olson & Kroeger, 2001). Un approccio astratto, politicamente neutrale e lontano dalle reali esperienze e dai vissuti di insegnanti e studenti (Santerini, 2010). Formare insegnanti competenti e qualificati, in grado

di lavorare efficacemente in contesti difficili, dove la differenza culturale si intreccia con povertà e diseguaglianze, non dipende dall'apprendimento di contenuti disciplinari né di tecniche didattiche né dall'acquisizione di competenze chiave, che pure resta, nella migliore accezione, un'innovativa e attuale prospettiva di apprendimento professionale, ma da un impegno politico per promuovere una giustizia sociale interculturale che possa oltrepassare un superficiale riconoscimento dell'uguale dignità attribuita a ogni cultura, un vuoto solidarismo, una disponibilità all'accoglienza intesa come pura ed episodica risposta a un'emergenza.

Dopo la mia ricerca in California sono stato incaricato dal Centro per la Formazione degli Insegnanti della provincia di Trento di progettare un piano di formazione in servizio di insegnanti e dirigenti scolastici nell'area dell'educazione interculturale. Ho quindi ideato un piano, in collaborazione con Vinicio Ongini del MPI, finalizzato non tanto a trasmettere conoscenze e competenze interculturali, ma a generare un ethos interculturale, un impegno politico per formare insegnanti come intellettuali pubblici.

Abbiamo lavorato due anni, poiché come mostrano bene i percorsi di ricerca azione, sviluppare passione, coscientizzazione e impegno politico, richiede lungo tempo. Un tempo che di norma programmi di formazione pret-a porter, spesso i più richiesti nel mercato della formazione, non consentono. Il primo anno si è lavorato fianco a fianco con dirigenti scolastici, il secondo con 17 gruppi di insegnanti operanti nelle stesse scuole guidate dai dirigenti precedentemente coinvolti. Non si può ignorare che i dirigenti svolgono un ruolo chiave nel promuovere il cambiamento e una reale innovazione per la giustizia sociale, e non solo. Se non sono coinvolti o intimamente persuasi, l'impegno "dal basso" di insegnanti anche se lodevole e prezioso, è destinato al fallimento. Per questa ragione, oltre che per la volontà intenzionale di lavorare su un segmento normalmente ignorato dalla formazione didattica, per prima cosa abbiamo scelto di coinvolgere proprio un gruppo di una ventina di dirigenti scolastici autoselezionati di scuole primarie, di istituti comprensivi, di scuole secondarie e di centri di formazione professionale. Li abbiamo invitati a uscire dagli uffici, superare il loro approccio burocratico e manageriale (in Italia essi sono inquadrati e formati come dirigenti pubblici statali) e abbiamo predisposto per loro un viaggio esplorativo nelle "peggiori" scuole italiane. Poiché tutti provenivano dal ricco e prospero nord est e in particolare da una provincia autonoma in cui la scuola conserva ancora alcune prerogative e risorse che le scuole pubbliche di altre regioni ormai hanno perduto, ritenevamo importante inviarli nelle scuole

multiproblematiche del sud Italia, nelle periferie degradate di grandi città o in piccole realtà cittadine con altissime presenze di comunità immigrate. Il loro compito in questo viaggio era quello di osservare sistematicamente il contesto e produrre una descrizione etnografica della loro osservazione partecipante. Per questo, prima della partenza, abbiamo preparato una formazione metodologica per fornire loro strumenti di osservazione etnografica.

Il percorso di formazione è stato accompagnato da un processo di ricerca valutativa (Bezzi, 2010) che ci ha portato a raccogliere interviste a tutti i partecipanti in tre momenti successivi: prima del viaggio, durante e al termine. Dall'analisi di queste interviste e dei resoconti etnografici estremamente accurati che sono stati raccolti dai dirigenti, è emerso chiaramente come le idee ingenua e superficiali sull'intercultura e su una integrazione equa che i dirigenti scolastici avevano prima della partenza sono diventate più solide e concrete anche grazie a esperienze, talvolta shockanti che l'esplorazione etnografica ha prodotto nelle loro coscienze.

Dopo aver riflettuto insieme a loro sulle ragioni di questo cambiamento, abbiamo facilitato la costruzione di un percorso di progettazione partecipata in ciascuna scuola finalizzato a produrre una trasformazione radicale del significato dei processi di integrazione interculturale attraverso la progettazione di azioni concrete che rispondevano ai bisogni locali di ogni singolo contesto. Lo strumento della progettazione partecipata, ispirato alla *participatory action research* è stato utilizzato non solo per la sua adeguatezza metodologica, ma in quanto particolarmente efficace in sé per la costruzione di un ethos. Questo approccio, infatti consente di coinvolgere attivamente, responsabilizzare, abilitare gli insegnanti e fare emergere un impegno politico pubblico nei confronti della comunità, della *polis*, attraverso una partecipazione attiva e responsabile di ogni docente coinvolto nel progetto. Al termine del secondo anno di formazione, gli esiti del lavoro dei 17 gruppi di insegnanti e dei loro dirigenti, accuratamente documentati lungo tutto il percorso, sono stati prima presentati in una conferenza internazionale organizzata in collaborazione con il Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione<sup>4</sup> e poi raccolti e sistematizzati in un volume di prossima uscita.

Un insegnante intellettuale deve essere competente in vari ambiti: disciplinare, didattico, di ricerca. Ma è l'ethos interculturale la cornice che tiene insieme i vari elementi che compongono la propria professionalità e dà senso al proprio ruolo. Un ruolo che, in quanto promotore di intercultura, è di fatto un intellettuale trasformativo come lo definiva Freire, che opera nella scuola per la costruzione di percorsi di emancipazione delle nuove marginalità e

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<sup>4</sup> Vedi nota 3

propone una cultura alternativa al potere egemonico che invece sembra oggi più di ieri consolidare esclusione, ineguaglianze, discriminazioni e marginalizzazioni.

Fino a che punto e in che senso oggi un insegnante può essere considerato e può agire nella scuola come intellettuale pubblico? Questa resta necessariamente una domanda aperta. Certo vi sono alcune condizioni imprescindibili. Innanzitutto occorre che gli insegnanti stessi accettino l'assunto che l'educazione è sempre costitutivamente legata alla politica, anzi che è politica in sé (Bertolini, 2003), nel senso di un impegno trasformativo e responsabile della propria comunità e quindi che la propria azione educativa non può mai essere politicamente neutrale. In secondo luogo gli insegnanti, come agenti di cambiamento sociale, dovrebbero maturare la consapevolezza che nel loro ruolo vi è anche una responsabilità a costruire un consenso, fondato su idee, cultura e una visione del mondo, circa la necessità di emancipazione degli oppressi e dei gruppi subalterni, ovvero ciò che Gramsci chiamava "classe" e che oggi rappresenta un concetto decisamente più sfumato e complesso. Un insegnante è poi un intellettuale pubblico quando sceglie di stare vicino alla gente in una relazione empatica con loro. Come scrive Gramsci nel noto brano dei *Quaderni del carcere*, mettendo in guardia da ciò che definisce l'errore dell'intellettuale, quando evita di partecipare della vita della gente: "L'errore dell'intellettuale consiste nel credere che si possa *sapere* senza comprendere e specialmente senza sentire ed essere appassionato, cioè che l'intellettuale possa essere tale se distinto e staccato dal popolo" (Gramsci, 1975, p. 452). Certo la conoscenza cognitiva, non va dimenticato, è sempre emancipativa e lo ricordava anche Gramsci. Conoscere e avere capacità e competenze rappresenta tuttora un possibile ascensore sociale per chi è socialmente escluso, ma l'insegnante come intellettuale non può soltanto trasmettere contenuti cognitivi, comprensione e pensiero razionale, ma anche infondere passione e vivere compartecipazione umana. Ma soprattutto un intellettuale trasformativo non può ignorare la capacità di sognare, di costruire mondi possibili considerando l'utopia come un necessario e irraggiungibile orizzonte per l'azione.

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## **Continuous intercultural education in multiethnic region: definition of goals**

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**Introduction.** The relevance of the developing problems in preparing children and young people for cross-cultural interaction is determined by the modern tendencies of the world educational space progress, including the cultural traditions' pluralism, the necessity of people's understanding development, social and cultural space harmonization and cultural aggression resistance. Russian researchers show the interest in the field of intercultural communication (G. Elizarova, O. Leontovich, S. Ter-Minasova), study cultural linguistics (E. Vereshchagin, V. Kostomarov, V. Maslova), discuss the issues in education and psychology (L. Hasanova, A. Krylov, L. Suprunova, V. Safonova, E. Khakimov, V. Hotinets).

However, analysis of the literature shows that the problem of the continuous intercultural education construction is not developed enough in terms of its goals coordination at various stages: starting with education in childhood and ending with adult intercultural education. Therefore, the focus of the research is to define the goals of intercultural education in a multi-ethnic region for different age groups (case study: the Udmurt Republic, Russia), that provide with efficiency of training people for cross-cultural interaction.

**Methodology.** The direction of the research is to give the theoretical foundation for the goals of intercultural education for different age groups and to prove experimentally their effectiveness in the organization of the intercultural competence continuous development.

The objectives:

1. To identify theoretical approaches to the justification of the intercultural education goals in the context of continuous education.
2. To determine the effectively purposeful framework content of the children and students' intercultural education.
3. To identify a set of criteria and indicators of students' training for intercultural cooperation;
4. To develop a set of didactic tools of students' training for cross-cultural interaction and prove the effectiveness of the intercultural education target goals by the experimental work.

Hypothesis of our research: the introduction of the entire system of intercultural education goals into the educational process will help in preparation the students for cross-

cultural interaction if the effectively purposeful basis in each intercultural education stage is determined.

We use a set of qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve this goal and to solve the objectives: analysis of scientific and teaching literature, the modeling of the students' training process for cross-cultural interaction, methods of survey research (interview, close-ended questions, group discussion), method of observation (participant and non-participant observation), pedagogical experiment, testing (screening the level of phenomenon under analysis formedness), analysis of our own work and the analysis of the data obtained as a result of experiment.

**Study.** A methodological basis for modeling of students' training for cross-cultural interaction and goal definition for each stage of intercultural education is defined by the significant positions occupied by the concept of intercultural dialogue (M. Bakhtin, V. Bibler), a Vygotsky's cultural-historical conception, a S. Rubinstein's theory of subjective human development, as well as general philosophical position on the humanistic education of cultural types (E. Bondarivka, V. Slastenin, I. Yakimanskaya, etc.) at the first stage of our study.

The study reveals some difficulties in the individual perception of other culture (the facts of ethnocentrism and indifference to other cultures, the reluctance acquainted with other cultures, etc.). Analysis of native and foreign educational literature in the dialogue of cultures shows that the success of intercultural interaction affects a number of factors, such as: language knowledge and cultural awareness, the ability to orient in a multicultural society, human and tolerant attitude of personality in relation to "other", an awareness of national traditions and specific ways of behavior as well as such important personal qualities as friendliness, openness and willingness to help others, a sense of solidarity, etc.

Based on L. Vygotsky's cultural-historical concept, K. Platonov, S. Rubinstein, V. Slastenin's scientific works, a definition of students' readiness for intercultural cooperation is given and four components are defined in it: motivational, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. Interconnection of these items allows the mobilization of personal qualities, cultural studies of knowledge and ways of interaction and allows students to build positive relationships with other cultures.

Motivational component means a desire to know another culture, the desire to learn other languages; cognitive component involves the possession of knowledge and cultural studies, and associated operations of comparison, analysis, interpretation and synthesis; emotional - first of all tolerant and empathy attitude, sensitivity to language and culture; the behavioral component includes strategies for constructive interaction in a multicultural world.

The study determines that intercultural education is a long dynamic process of personal development. This process has different stages and levels at different age groups and it is aimed at the development of intercultural competence. The general purpose of intercultural education in a multi-ethnic region is to prepare young people for life in an effective multinational and multicultural environment.

The objectives of intercultural education are to cultivate children - teenagers - young people's sense of belonging to their culture, the development of tolerance towards other cultures, awareness of young people's place in the spectrum of interacting cultures, the formation of constructive intercultural skills. Based on the scientific work of Bennett, the study identified the main stages of intercultural personality development: 1stage - cultural ethnocentrism, 2nd stage - cultural awareness, stage 3 - cultural self-determination, stage 4 - the subject of cultural dialogue. Significant areas of intercultural education are: cognitive, moral, ecological and aesthetic development and education.

The aim of intercultural education in the preschool years is to form a positive image of their own ethnic group, and tolerance for other cultures. The fact that pre-school age is sensitive to the development of sensitivity to linguistic and cultural phenomena, flexibility in perception; assessment of "their" and "other" is indicated in the psychological and educational literature. All this requires a particular content of intercultural education at this stage, in which the focus is on the child's perception of individual cultures values when he meets with national folk tales, songs, games, riddles, proverbs. Didactic forms, methods and techniques are aimed at the children inclusion in cultural activities. The diagnosis of preschool children intercultural competence is held on the following parameters: the degree of child's understanding tales content of different nations (93% has average and above the average level), a positive attitude to the native culture and to another (85%), understanding the rules of the native culture and another one (89%).

The aim of intercultural education of students at school is a cultural self-awareness, development of culturological information and moral education which have their common and specific features in the cross-cultural interaction and the formation of stable interest to study languages and cultures. Basic didactic principles of intercultural education in school are the principle of personality-oriented education, the principle of intercultural dialogue, integration of cultures and languages in the educational process, the principle of reliance on the authentic cultural-oriented material. The core content of educational material comprise the following topics: "My Motherland", "Homeland of my neighbors," "My Family", "National food preferences" and others. Among the forms of academic work identified: forms of group interaction and individual analytic work, research projects, cultural-oriented games and discussion, dramatization.

Diagnosis of intercultural competence of schoolchildren is held on the following parameters: the level of culturological information (86.3% has average and above the average level), the level of tolerance to the behavior of a person who speaks another language (81.5%), the level of moral development of the native culture or another one (83.8%).

The aim of intercultural education of students is to master the structural forms of cross-cultural interaction in a multicultural team, forms of management during the intercultural communication and intercultural ways of solving conflicts. Authentic texts and specially selected methods of education: cooperative learning, technology of critical thinking development, research technology, etc. are the guide of selection and organization of the intercultural education content and cultural studies of youth.

Diagnosis of intercultural competence of students is held on the following parameters: the level of native and foreign language proficiency (95% has average and above the average level), ability to define their cultural identity / ability to define universal and specific in the language → semiconductors and cultures (average or above average 93.3%), the knowledge of the values of one's native and foreign culture (98,3%), the ability to be successful during the interaction with the representatives of the other culture (including the ability to establish the mutual understanding and to achieve the purpose of the interaction) (91,7%) and the tolerance towards the representatives of another culture (96,2%).

The result of the research is the following: the students showed such competences as high level of language skills (95%) has average and above the average level), the ability to identify one's cultural belonging (93,3%), the knowledge of the values of one's native and foreign culture (98,3%), the ability to be successful during the interaction with the representatives of the other culture (including the ability to establish the mutual understanding and to achieve the purpose of the interaction) (91,7%) and the tolerance towards the representatives of the other culture (96,2%).

**Conclusion.** The results obtained during the study confirmed the hypothesis and allowed us to formulate the following conclusions:

1. The necessity of a goal system development of continuous intercultural education for the different stages and levels was justified during the study.

2. A set of didactic tools, including conceptual reasonably content within the category of situational-cultural studies-oriented organization of teaching material, methods, techniques and tools of integrative technology training, which consists of successive stages of structural and content of training activities and its assessment tools.

4. A set of criteria and indicators of students' readiness for cross-cultural interaction are defined. The experiment shows a positive dynamics in the group of criteria, which confirms the effectiveness of the effectively purposeful basis in intercultural education.

In prospect, the development, testing and implementation of technology training for intercultural cooperation in the system of continuing education (a preschool – a secondary school – a high school – a higher education), as well as a creation and introduction of a program of intercultural education for Udmurt Republic.

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**Kind of proposed contribution**

Poster session

**STRAND 5:** Intercultural and Multicultural Education

Intercultural Counselling and education for the global world

## EDUCATIONAL MUSEUM AS A TOOL OF DEVELOPING UNIVERSITY MULTICULTURAL SPACE

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The main emphasis of this article will be on the idea to include museum into the University educational process. The museum could be regarded as a tool developing students' intercultural competences as well as University polycultural space. The main idea posed here is represented in Educational Museum at the Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Social technologies. Educational Museum was founded in 2008 by myself and my colleagues.

The importance of museum education is commonly recognized that a museum reminds us of issues that attracted the attention of society and helps preserve works of art, literature and other objects related to a region and its history. The museum is a place of education and study, even if for most people it is a place of non-formal learning. Being the home for the classical heritage and modern culture, now museum has a large pedagogical potential and may be implemented into the educational process.

Educational museum is obviously aimed at achieving educational goals and based on particular subject areas. Students and teachers are regarded as addressees and users of the museum. Such Russian museums have a 150 year history, we can cite as an example Educational museum of military schools in Saint Petersburg which was founded in 1864; realizing classical didactic principles this museum could be considered as a pedagogical innovation. Development and expansion of the concept "museum" is a recognized modern tendency; an educational museum could become not only collector and consolidator of education history, but it could be as well an information center, an instructor and propagandist, a pantheon for outstanding teachers, museum-and-educational center of the University.

Let us have a good look at the **possible museum images** and evaluate the prospects of educational museum pertaining to the issue of developing polycultural educational space while giving an example of Educational Museum at the Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Social technologies.

1. *First image is Museum as memory.* It is considered to be a depository of exhibits, artifacts and their reflections: ideas, emotions of people from different ethnic backgrounds. Russian philosopher N. F. Fedorov wrote: "Every person carries a museum in himself or herself, because keeping is a fundamental law, which preceded a person, acted before them"[1]. Hence, a memorial direction should be noted: history of the faculty, its professors, senior lecturers and their ideas. Museum includes materials about people of various ethnic backgrounds: Ishmuratov A.V., who is a representative of a Udmurt ethnic group with his collection of totems and generic signs, researcher udmurt's ritual and religious mutual aid. Gorfunkel P.L., who is a representative of a Jewish ethnic group, World War II veteran. We can see his letter from front-line and his awards and medals, as well as his research works on psychology of motivations and will. Shulga B.N. who was the first

Rector of our university, belongs to the Russian ethnic group. He founded technological education in UDSU.

People of various ethnic backgrounds were united by general common work and aims and it could be an example of the intercultural interaction. So to understand their lives and values we must see their objects, papers, photos, personal belongings, books and others. Museum is considered to be the place where you keep old things, only a few people understand that it is a source of cultural knowledge concerning the formation of society, our mind and world-view.

2. ***Museum is a place, where wonders, surprises are collected.*** It holds various rarities, unique things and collections that could arouse certain interest. Museum objects attract our attention and motivate to educational and research activity, encourage self-development.
3. ***Museum as spiritual atmosphere,*** polycultural space for interaction. Museums should be more than just a museum, as museums are created as open space for the community to feed knowledge. Museums should not be limited in physical space, it must be an instrument of social practice, where people can learn, discuss, meditate, reflect and build a new vision, renewing the spirit in the process of education and lifelong learning. Most of students consider the museum “as a temple of people’s memory, it reflects many personalities, their belongings that could reveal their owner’s character, way of life, working days and days off. The museum evokes personal attachment to this or that social community; it is a milieu made up of symbols that contain particular information that is why it is supposed to have a great emotional impact.”[2]

The Museum works with inanimate subject, but so that it brightens each such subject, force its speak and do significant for each visitor. As a book acts through words, museum acts through object, artifact. Any such object consists of an idea or its complex and museum becomes the rich conductor of them, acting by images, but always absolutely concrete and specific [3]. The museum teacher becomes the medium of communication between students and museum’s objects. All this composes the issue to be discussed in museum pedagogy.

4. ***Museum as a social institute*** created social emotions and behavioral patterns helps to design polycultural education. We do not need an esoteric “shrine” that creates a dialogue with a small number of scholars, nor an artificial, synthetic and “stylized” venue, but a dynamic environment that appeals to a great many people of various nations, cultures and languages. Animating social cultural environment the teachers and students compose try to identify museum functions for polycultural education.
5. On the other hand, ***Museum as the educational project*** was thought to respond to the needs of institutions involved, accommodating their own specificity. Museum aimed to encouraging students of different age groups to get familiar with the museum through recurrence in visiting, to discover the museum gradually, having the possibility of learning, being creative and



enjoying in recreation. The Museum educational offer includes basic guided tours, thematic guided tours, thematic projects, contests, workshops, exhibitions, guided tours for ethnic oriented activities. The audience of the project was considerable, summing a total of 620 visits (individuals and groups), 6 thematic projects and stand exhibitions, created by students. They developed and organized many excursions for undergraduate students from other University faculties. The students were invited to become junior museum workers organizing their own gathering collections and making their own exhibitions associated with the theme of the Museum.

In the educational process of our Institute the museum is regarded as an **educational unit** which is to deal with conducting lectures / excursions as well as with student's independent activities. That is on the one hand. On the other hand, the museum is a **social institute** which is to provide student's access to values, implement the concept of polycultural education. Therefore, educational museum is a tool of developing university multicultural environment.

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## **LA MEDICINA PARTECIPATIVA, FRUTTO DELLA SINTESI TRA DUE CULTURE.**

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### *Una medicina che cambia*

Si può affermare che la medicina moderna ha subito una metamorfosi significativa a partire dagli anni '50, perché solo da allora l'intervento dei medici non si è più limitato a osservare, descrivere e riconoscere i fenomeni, ma è diventato capace di cambiare in modo non sporadico la storia naturale delle malattie e quindi la sorte dei malati.

Prima dell'era della chimica e quindi della farmacologia industriale, mancando le "pillole" – almeno quelle efficaci – il medico poteva agire quasi soltanto con la parola; il suo ruolo sociale universalmente riconosciuto era quello del consigliere e del consolatore.

Negli anni '50 sono iniziati i veri progressi della medicina scientifica e la medicina cambiava nel bene, ma – purtroppo - anche nel male:

- alla medicina della persona (quella impersonata dal "caso clinico") si andava affiancando con forza la medicina delle popolazioni (per esempio quella fondata sui risultati dei trials clinici controllati);
- alla medicina delle ipotesi e delle teorie si è andata sostituendo la medicina delle evidenze scientifiche che richiede dimostrazioni sperimentali delle proprie affermazioni;
- alla relazione empatica capace di confortare si è troppo spesso sovrapposto l'assordante silenzio delle tecnologie, o il linguaggio contorto delle burocrazie, ai quali sembra legarsi fatalmente una medicina diventata strumento pubblico, complesso, collettivo e molto costoso, e perciò bisognevole anche di una organizzazione efficiente.

### *La crisi della relazione medico-paziente, conflitto tra due culture*

In particolare, accanto al cambiamento indubbiamente positivo dell'efficacia terapeutica si sono purtroppo palesati di pari passo i regressi nella comunicazione tra curante e curato, che derivano dall'accrescersi dell'asimmetria tra i due soggetti: si tratta di un'asimmetria naturalmente costitutiva del rapporto medico-paziente, ma che negli ultimi decenni è stata accentuata dallo sviluppo tecnologico e biologico-riduzionistico della medicina scientifica; ciò si è manifestato con alcuni fenomeni abbastanza emblematici, anche se in parte presenti già in tempi più lontani: l'atteggiamento paternalistico dei medici nelle relazioni con i loro pazienti; l'uso di un linguaggio tecnico senza grande attenzione per i livelli di comprensione degli interlocutori; l'uso dell'anamnesi quasi soltanto per l'acquisizione delle informazioni sullo stato di organi e apparati, e non anche per la comprensione dei vissuti soggettivi; l'unilateralità nelle decisioni mediche, che confinano il consenso informato ai soli aspetti formali, tanto da trasformarlo molto spesso in una mera incombenza burocratica.

Ancora, la tutela del diritto sacrosanto a essere ben curati viene spesso perseguita usando approcci rivendicativi più che di corresponsabilità gestionale, come sono spesso quelli dei Tribunali dei diritti del malato, luoghi dove opportunamente si denunciano pratiche di malasana, ma talora si vantano anche diritti presunti più che reali; e soprattutto vengono dimenticati i doveri personali che rendono compatibili i fini individuali con quelli collettivi; cioè si dimentica che il concorrere al processo decisionale circa la salute non può riguardare egoisticamente soltanto la *propria* salute, senza tenere in considerazione anche i ri-

flessi sulla salute degli altri: le parole chiave per realizzare un equilibrio in tutto ciò sono per l'appunto inscindibilmente tre: *diritti, doveri e responsabilità*.

Infine, alla criticità della relazione medico-paziente purtroppo contribuisce anche una formazione medica orientata prevalentemente alla performance diagnostico-terapeutica limitata al curare, mentre fatica a farsi strada l'attenzione al prendersi cura.

Questo - sia pure in prima approssimazione - è lo scenario sconcertante nel quale correntemente oggi si gioca la relazione tra medico e paziente, relazione che si dibatte tra conflittualità e complicità nella ricerca improbabile di una effettiva negoziazione tra un medico che consigli *sapientemente* (cioè secondo scienza e coscienza) e un cittadino che sappia effettivamente essere giudice e vero responsabile della qualità della *propria* vita.

Insomma, come conseguenza dei mutamenti ai quali è andata incontro nell'ultimo mezzo secolo la medicina come scienza e come professione, si è sviluppato un conflitto apparentemente insanabile tra curanti e curati, che di fatto può essere letto come un conflitto tra due culture: il medico è il detentore della "cultura" scientifica e professionale, sulla quale fonda le proprie decisioni diagnostiche e terapeutiche; ma anche il paziente ha una sua "cultura", che non è scientifica ma esistenziale, perché nessuno può conoscere meglio di lui il vissuto della sofferenza "sperimentata" di persona. La distanza tra di esse può venire ridotta solo facendole comunicare tra loro con il riconoscimento delle potenzialità intrinseche. Ma come si può cercare di raggiungere questo obiettivo?

### *Come sanare il conflitto?*

Come prima cosa è necessario educare i professionisti della salute non solo al senso critico, alla problematicità, al confronto dialettico delle idee e delle scelte, ma anche e in pari misura ai valori della comprensione, della tolleranza, del rispetto, cioè a valori squisitamente etico-umanistici, cioè all'etica del dubbio e della responsabilità.

Affinché il medico sia fedele a questi valori non basta nutrirlo di competenze scientifiche, fargli conoscere la psicologia, renderlo esperto nelle tecniche della comunicazione, ma si deve anche aiutarlo a conoscere se stesso affinché impari a rendere fertili le proprie emozioni; insomma bisogna renderlo "esperto in umanità".

Per questo, oltre a fornirgli i contenuti e gli strumenti professionali appropriati per agire è necessario aiutarlo a maturare le attitudini e le motivazioni che si riflettono in prima istanza sulle *qualità* della relazione interpersonale: affinché una comunicazione diventi relazione non basta parlarsi; è indispensabile essere disposti a farsi raccontare, imparare ad ascoltare, chiedere per capire, aiutare a capire, partecipare e condividere; questi sono infatti i connotati di quella che si definisce come relazione empatica, e che molto si nutre - come vedremo più avanti - di componenti narrative depurate dai tecnicismi del linguaggio medico-scientifico.

Strumenti necessari ad acquisire queste capacità sono sicuramente le tecniche della comunicazione che oggi si insegnano nelle nostre Scuole di medicina, ma non sono sufficienti; infatti è pur vero che l'empatia probabilmente non si può insegnare né apprendere a scuola, perché non è un'abilità ma un'attitudine, cioè è il frutto di una ricchezza personale: ma allora *per far crescere l'attitudine empatica bisogna far crescere le doti della persona*. A questo potrebbero contribuire le Medical Humanities, pure recentemente introdotte nelle Scuole mediche italiane e tra queste in particolare la così detta "medicina narrativa".

### *La "Medicina narrativa"*

Con questo termine s'intende una tendenza che si va sempre più sviluppando e che considera utili gli aspetti narrativi presenti nelle relazioni di cura.

Il benessere e soprattutto i malesseri sono potenti stimoli alla narrazione delle circostanze e dei tempi in cui essi si realizzano e si costatano, delle loro cause presunte o vere, delle paure e delle speranze che essi suscitano, degli eventi che li peggiorano o li migliorano, dei rimedi che si presumono o si sono constatati come efficaci.

Nella relazione comunicativa tra medico e paziente, che in gran parte si sostanzia nella anamnesi, la narrazione può prendere differenti connotati formali: può arricchirsi di colore e calore, o al contrario cristallizzarsi in una sequenza di “fatti” o di “eventi”, raccolti con la presunzione di una descrizione oggettiva e quindi veritiera, ma anche rappresentati e trascritti con tratti sicuri e definiti, senza incertezze o sfumature.

Sono questi i due connotati opposti della raccolta anamnestica: da una parte il punto di vista del paziente, che possiede come unico strumento comunicativo la possibilità di *raccontare* i propri vissuti e di colorarli e riscaldarli (ma talvolta anche di sbiadirli e raffreddarli) in relazione con le proprie esperienze e le proprie emozioni; le quali – trattando di cose importanti come la salute e la malattia, cioè in fondo la vita o la morte, e comunque la sofferenza – spesso deformano i contorni della realtà rispetto alla sua rappresentazione definita secondo i crismi della razionalità; dall'altra il punto di vista del medico, che vorrebbe conoscere la realtà nei suoi contorni oggettivi e che ritiene per (de)formazione professionale che la verità sia figlia unica dell'obiettività e della razionalità.

D'altra parte il medico è stato formato soprattutto a scrivere una cronaca; il paziente è interessato a raccontare una storia; il punto è che il medico produce una cronaca di fatti che riguardano la vita di un'altra persona, mentre il paziente racconta la storia che sta vivendo, la storia della *sua* vita.

Grazie alla “medicina narrativa” si sta prendendo coscienza che la ricerca ad oltranza della razionalità e della obiettività di per sé auspicabile, nella realtà è un'illusione; che lo sfrondare i fatti dalle opinioni alla fine ne distorce la veridicità perché li impoverisce irrimediabilmente di elementi che – lungi dall'essere solo “depistanti” – ne facilitano l'interpretazione. Il fine essenziale della “medicina narrativa” è proprio quello di restituire al mondo della medicina una visione complessiva e unitaria, cercando di fare sintesi tra le due visioni che separatamente da sempre rappresentano le due metà di un'entità unica: la visione scientifica e quindi razionale del medico e quella esistenziale del paziente, fatta di esperienze e di emozioni.

Si deve nella realtà constatare che l'apertura del medico alla medicina narrativa migliora le sue capacità di cura: tra il paziente che narra e il medico che partecipa attivamente anche ai risvolti della narrazione apparentemente estranei alla medicina, nasce una sorta di complicità, che aiuta entrambi nella gestione della sofferenza e talvolta anche nell'intervento efficace sulla malattia.

### *“Medicina narrativa” versus “Medicina delle evidenze”*

Questa constatazione contrasta la presunta antinomia tra “medicina narrativa”, più appropriatamente denominata medicina basata sulla narrazione (NBM) e “medicina scientifica” oggi uniformemente definita come medicina basata sulle evidenze (EBM), o - più correttamente – come medicina basata sulle prove di efficacia.

L'EBM ha meriti indubitabili: sicuramente i “trials” clinici controllati sono quanto di meglio la ricerca clinica può oggi produrre; tuttavia, essendo di derivazione “riduzionistica” in parte tradiscono la complessità dei fenomeni biologici; inoltre si fondano su criteri epidemiologico-statistici, e quindi non possono tener conto delle condizioni fisiopatologiche dei singoli individui. Tra parentesi, non si può nemmeno dimenticare che gli studi clinici controllati costano e quindi si realizzano solo quelli finanziati (per lo più dall'industria farmaceutica), che poi sono quelli che producono prove utili a chi li finanzia.

Ma i limiti principali della EBM stanno nel fatto che essa si rivolge soprattutto alla terapia delle malattie piuttosto che al trattamento globale della persona.

Tuttavia, bisogna anche dire che la metodologia attuale della ricerca clinica è come la democrazia: ancorché imperfetta, è quanto di meglio oggi disponibile. Inoltre la EBM è un formidabile strumento di formazione, perché insegna a individuare e ad analizzare i problemi, a tradurre l'incertezza in quesiti ai quali rispondere con le conoscenze disponibili, a cercare, individuare e valutare criticamente le evidenze, a verificare la significatività clinica di queste e ad applicarle alla situazione clinica specifica: in altri termini, insegna a porre le domande pertinenti, a trovare le risposte corrette e utili, ad applicarle alle situazioni specifiche e a valutare criticamente i risultati; cioè è uno strumento importante per affrontare la soluzione dei problemi.

Tuttavia i problemi clinici sono concreti e immanenti, e anche problemi apparentemente simili sono tra loro differenti; solo l'esperienza e l'intuito del medico sanno trasformare la teoria in prassi utile: perciò, proprio se temperate dall'esperienza, le evidenze scientifiche possono trasformare l'educazione continua in medicina in sviluppo professionale continuo. Se non si considerano con onestà intellettuale sia i pregi, ma anche i limiti dell'EBM, in una sorta di delirio di onnipotenza si rischia di dimenticare che la medicina – come il sabato evangelico – è fatta per l'uomo e non viceversa.

Allora non si tratta di contrapporre o addirittura di sostituire la “narrative based medicine” alla “evidence based medicine”, in una visione manichea che fa alternativamente vincere la creatività o la razionalità; si tratta piuttosto di cercare tra le due un mix equilibrato, finalizzato comunque al benessere (come diceva Aristotele, alla felicità ?) degli esseri umani, che sono fatti di meccanismi biologici e di pensieri ed emozioni, ammalano per colpa degli uni e delle altre e con la forza di entrambi sperano e desiderano di essere risanati.

Per aiutare queste persone c'è bisogno di Professionisti della salute che abbiano una consapevolezza equilibrata, si potrebbe dire “sapienziale”, di quanto la realtà sia complessa e composita, e che sappiano quindi riflettere per prendere decisioni sagge: allora la “medicina narrativa” troverà la sua ragione fondamentale soprattutto nell'aiutare la formazione di “professionisti riflessivi”, capaci di entrare in relazione empatica con le persone, e per questo utili alla loro salute fisica e psichica.

Così, il significato tradizionale dell'EBM come “Medicina basata sulle evidenze” (abituamente tradotta come “Medicina basata sulle prove di efficacia”, prove raccolte e valutate con gli strumenti rigorosi della ricerca scientifica) potrebbe venire ampliato e arricchito da una diversa lettura dell'acronimo EBM come “Medicina basata sull'esperienza”: non solo l'esperienza del curante che adatta alla situazione specifica i risultati della ricerca, ma anche l'esperienza diretta del paziente che aumenta di per sé le conoscenze scientifiche del ricercatore.

### *La parola e la cura: il counselling*

Tuttavia sarebbe a mio avviso riduttivo rivolgere l'attività educativa solo ai malati e in particolare ai pazienti di malattie croniche; soprattutto in relazione alla *prevenzione* dovrebbero essere soggetti di educazione anche le persone sane, che preferirei chiamare in un contesto democratico “cittadini” piuttosto che “utenti” (parola di sapore burocratico), o peggio “pazienti (perché il sano non patisce, né deve avere pazienza), o peggio ancora “clienti” (vocabolo che porta con sé uno sgradevole sapore mercantile): si tratta di educare i cittadini soprattutto al *cambiamento dei propri stili di vita*, così da diventare cittadini maturi e responsabili anche nei confronti della propria salute.

Come sempre, anche in questo caso *l'educazione porta a trasformazione*, nella quale il professionista della salute gioca pienamente il ruolo di *educatore*. E pure in quest'ottica l'educazione è fatta non solo di *informazione*, ma anche di *formazione*, che si giova di una *comunicazione empatica*, cioè capace di condividere valori e convinzioni tra educatore ed educando nel rispetto della libertà individuale; tale modalità, che si fonda sulla condivisione, deve peraltro svolgersi in maniera trasparente, cioè in modo ben diverso dalla così detta persuasione occulta, tipica ad esempio della comunicazione pubblicitaria. La comu-

nicazione empatica si basa su una relazione interpersonale nella quale gioca un ruolo importante la considerazione e la stima reciproca, elementi che si sviluppano attraverso la *negoziazione* di scelte responsabili e personalizzate, in quanto attente e adattate alle situazioni individuali.

Tutto ciò richiede e si giova fortemente dello strumento del dialogo; in altri termini la *parola* diventa *mezzo* essenziale *di cura* e si dimostra veicolo efficace di ogni tipo di intervento medico, sia esso di natura preventiva, diagnostica, prognostica, terapeutica o riabilitativa. Vale la pena al proposito d'insistere sul fatto che la sola informazione non basta: ne è un esempio eclatante la scarsa efficacia sul miglioramento dello stato di salute dei singoli e della collettività, conseguito dalle trasmissioni televisive e radiofoniche o dai giornali; probabilmente buona parte del loro insuccesso educativo è dovuta al fatto che queste comunicazioni riguardano molto spesso l'informazione sulle malattie e non l'informazione sulla salute, e quindi inducono bisogni sanitari impropri (prescrizione di farmaci o di indagini diagnostiche con indicazioni generali che non tengono conto della peculiarità delle situazioni individuali), anziché facilitare cambiamenti reali e positivi degli stili di vita.

A ciò deve aggiungersi che spesso all'informazione non si accompagna la relazione interpersonale capace di individualizzare l'intervento; così non vengono mobilitate le risorse personali e la capacità di assumere in proprio decisioni completamente consapevoli e perciò mature e responsabili; infine, informazioni veritiere debbono esser trasmesse con il linguaggio più adatto alle capacità di comprensione del singolo soggetto.

L'approccio complessivo appena descritto sostanzia la tecnica del così detto *counselling* ed è finalizzato a conseguire la *condivisione informata delle scelte*, che comporta il riconoscimento della reciproca necessità nel costruire e poi declinare in corsi di azioni uno scenario di cura "su misura"; tale risultato è più valido e significativo del così detto *consenso informato*; infatti l'obbligo deontologico al consenso informato, oramai consueto in ogni decisione medica, è di per sé uno strumento necessario ma non sufficiente, in quanto troppo spesso si è trasformato in una incombenza burocratica, finalizzata più a proteggere i sanitari da persecuzioni giudiziarie che non a rendere effettivamente partecipe il paziente di decisioni importanti per la sua vita e per il suo benessere.

Al contrario l'arte del counselling è fatta di domande più che di risposte, che trasformano il consenso informato da adesione passiva a una prescrizione in condivisione responsabile delle scelte; in altri termini è – attraverso la parola che spesso diventa narrazione – uno strumento di responsabilizzazione, mai un mezzo di plagio comunicativo.

Purtroppo il counselling finalizzato a modificare gli stili di vita è scarsamente praticato in Italia soprattutto perché ad esso non vengono formati i Professionisti della salute.

Appare allora indispensabile soprattutto per questo tipo di "educazione del cittadino sano" una loro educazione specifica.

Sia l'educazione degli operatori sanitari che quella dei cittadini dovrebbe diventare un impegno permanente e continuo, tanto che si potrebbe suggerire una variante dell'acronimo ECM in ECS: Educazione Continua alla Salute accanto e oltre a Educazione Continua in Medicina.

Anche questo - che oserei chiamare un obiettivo "etico" - è sicuramente un obiettivo ambizioso e difficile, perché il suo conseguimento richiede un profondo *cambiamento comportamentale* in molti professionisti della salute.

### *"Medicina partecipativa" e "paziente esperto"*

Ebbene, la familiarità con gli strumenti della medicina narrativa può forse diventare una freccia all'arco, un possibile strumento operativo di coloro che sperano e investono nella medicina partecipativa, in una medicina moderna nella quale Professionisti della salute e pazienti facciano ciascuno la propria parte non da sponde contrapposte, bensì in un'alleanza che ha come fine comune la cura efficace, finalmente nutrita di una vera relazione empatica; quest'ultima infatti si nutre validamente della condivisione reciproca dei racconti

informali ma “veri” dei medici, ma anche di tutti gli altri operatori sanitari, e dei loro pazienti. Questa disponibilità all’ascolto da una parte e alla narrazione dall’altra sono le condizioni necessarie alla partecipazione responsabile del paziente alla “gestione” della propria salute, partecipazione che si fonda sul fatto incontestabile che nessuno più di lui può avere esperienza diretta delle proprie sensazioni, cioè del suo vissuto.

In questo contesto si parla oggi di “paziente esperto”: con tale espressione si sottolinea il ruolo rinnovato del paziente che mette a disposizione la propria esperienza di malattia, che solo lui può conoscere fino in fondo, per aiutare e personalizzare il processo di cura. Ma per diventare effettivamente “esperto” anche il paziente ha bisogno di essere educato: questa attività formativa si concretizza oggi in quella che viene comunemente denominata “educazione terapeutica del paziente”, che si rivolge soprattutto a pazienti cronici. Inoltre, come tutti i processi educativi, anche questo ha uno sviluppo bidirezionale: infatti, se per aderire con responsabilità personale alla cura il paziente dev’essere istruito ed educato, le conoscenze che nascono dalla sua personale esperienza aiutano i curanti nell’esercizio della cura stessa, e fanno crescere anche le conoscenze utili su caratteristiche “nascoste” della malattia; potremmo dire che anche lo sviluppo delle conoscenze scientifiche può essere aiutato dall’esperienza diretta dei pazienti. In questa prospettiva la co-produzione di conoscenza è un elemento essenziale della medicina partecipativa: quanta distanza dal paternalismo tradizionale dei medici ...

Fortunatamente anche i settori più avanzati della ricerca biomedica stanno aprendo prospettive a breve-medio termine per una personalizzazione dei risultati di tali ricerche: mi riferisco alla genetica – soprattutto le farmaco-genomica - come strumento di conoscenza scientifica delle caratteristiche biologiche peculiari al singolo individuo-persona e di conseguenza come elemento decisionale nelle scelte degli approcci diagnostici e terapeutici individuali. Questo approccio sta aprendo orizzonti affascinanti, che fanno ben sperare in una evoluzione dei protocolli terapeutici standardizzati verso una terapia personalizzata basata sulle evidenze, cioè in un futuro non troppo lontano nella *personalizzazione sia della relazione che della cura*.

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## **Il curricolo dalla parte delle radici: partire dagli studenti per costruire cittadinanza (F. Virgilio, S. Stefanel)**

“ [...] strano pregiudizio che valorizza ciecamente la profondità a scapito della superficie, pretendendo che superficiale, significhi non già di vaste dimensioni, bensì di poca profondità, mentre profondo significa di grande profondità e non di superficie ristretta ” (Deleuze)

Il testo illustra e discute due esperienze di lavoro di progettazione curricolare in una scuola secondaria di primo grado che, partendo da problemi concreti di gestione delle classi e valorizzando le competenze informali degli allievi, hanno consentito la promozione di competenze trasversali di cittadinanza e di competenze specifiche legate all'area dei linguaggi e delle tecnologie.

La domanda di ricerca a cui si è cercato di rispondere riguarda la rilevanza delle competenze informali nella costruzione dei curricoli formali.

Gli obiettivi che ci siamo posti riguardano l'individuazione di criteri di riconoscibilità nel lavoro scolastico e nella progettazione curricolare di competenze maturate dagli allievi in ambito informale.

La metodologia utilizzata nell'attività è stata la ricerca azione. Le tecniche di rilevazione impiegate sono state molteplici e vanno dall'osservazione partecipante alle schede di autoanalisi dei comportamenti, dalle check list, all'analisi multimodale del discorso attraverso le produzioni testuali e visuali dei ragazzi.

### **Curricoli e radici .**

Da dove si parte per costruire un curricolo? Dalle radici più profonde della nostra cultura per saldare e crescere le giovani generazioni di studenti nella più salda tradizione occidentale o piuttosto dai saperi significativi per la vita degli studenti stessi?

E chi decide in merito a questa significatività?

Il tema del curricolo è oltre modo attuale in particolare in questo momento in cui la scuola di base, conclusa la fase di sperimentazione e valutazione, si trova nella situazione di avviare in modo ordinario il lavoro sulle Indicazioni Nazionali.

Dentro questo percorso la riflessione sulle competenze di cittadinanza costituisce il nucleo chiave su cui ruota il discorso delle nuove Indicazioni. La scuola oggi si trova davanti alla sfida di formare cittadini in grado di agire e interagire su scenari non solo nazionali, ma europei e globali (MIUR 2012: 6). Le identità e le radici culturali si pluralizzano, così come i saperi necessari per costruirle, alimentarle, trasformarle.

La "nuova cittadinanza" di cui si parla è possibile solo a partire dai contesti in cui la cittadinanza reale si pratica, o non si pratica, tutti i giorni. Il tema delle radici, in questa prospettiva, è un tema eloquente per la riflessione educativa; tocca le aree delle discipline, ma anche del senso che le discipline assumono nello scenario contemporaneo e tocca le aree dell'identità, non solo degli studenti, ma anche dei docenti e della scuola come istituzione (Green 1997).

Ogni disciplina, di per sé, si definisce come una categoria organizzativa in seno alla conoscenza scientifica (Morin 2000), mentre la disciplinarietà è il risultato di un processo di riduzione, selezione, mediazione didattica finalizzato alla trasmissione scolastica del sapere, inevitabilmente compromesso con fattori contestuali legati al tempo, al luogo e alle relazioni sociali di potere (Zoletto 2012: 85-112).

I rischi più evidenti di questa impostazione sono di certo quelli relativi a una visione etnocentrica delle discipline scolastiche in cui il canone nazionale e monoculturale del sapere scolastico tradizionale si traduce in una visione settoriale delle discipline in cui gli aspetti della selezione culturale dei contenuti incrocia il tema delle differenze, di genere, di classe, di razza.

Che cosa significa, ad esempio, insegnare il colonialismo italiano quando in classe ci sono studenti provenienti dalle aree colonizzate? Che ruolo hanno nella costruzione disciplinare gli immaginari trasmessi dai libri di testo e in che relazione stanno questi immaginari con la convivenza degli studenti in classi di fatto sempre più multiethniche e multiculturali (Gabrielli 2011)?



E ancora, che cosa significa oggi insegnare italiano in classi eterogenee? In che senso una disciplina come l'italiano, costruita in termini storico letterari, può contribuire a formare competenze di cittadinanza come "competenza nella madrelingua", "imparare ad imparare", "consapevolezza ed espressione culturale"?

Ed infine: cosa significa oggi "tradizionale" e in che relazione sta il tradizionale, le radici insomma, con il continuo sviluppo di nuovi saperi, di nuove competenze e di nuove forme di fare conoscenza? Laddove il discorso sulle radici si salda con il discorso della memoria e delle tradizioni, intercettando il piano incerto delle costruzioni identitarie, il rischio di produrre risultati paradossali, anche in termini educativi oltreché politici, è molto elevato.

Un semplice esempio. Durante la campagna elettorale, sia regionale che nazionale del 2008, campeggiavano nella piazza antistante la nostra scuola i manifesti della Lega Nord con lo slogan "Loro non hanno potuto fermare l'immigrazione e si sono estinti", accompagnato dall'immagine di un nativo americano. Il manifesto tralasciava di dire che i 'loro' da cui i nativi americani si sarebbero dovuti difendere erano anche i milioni di italiani, per la precisione quattro milioni, che tra la fine dell'Ottocento e gli inizi del Novecento hanno lasciato l'Italia per le Americhe. Di questi un numero non piccolo proveniva dal Friuli Venezia Giulia e dal Veneto (Bertuzzi & Fait 2010), regioni dove oggi la Lega Nord ha una presenza più che consolidata.

Che genere di messaggi educativi veicolano manifesti del genere all'esterno di una scuola ad alta intensità migratoria in cui uno dei pilastri del POF è basato sull'educazione interculturale?

Questo semplice esempio mostra come lo scenario locale ed europeo, di fatto, sia attraversato da contrapposte tensioni tra il discorso pragmatico, e strategico, sulla funzione economica e demografica dei flussi migratori e il discorso populista e localista basato sulla sicurezza, sulla difesa dell'identità e sulla salvaguardia delle radici (Aime 2004).

E il discorso sulle radici, anche quando è declinato sul piano delle discipline, diventa inevitabilmente un discorso politico.

"L'interazione tra storia e memoria è un fatto della vita nel mondo, nel tempo, nella società: è un dato di fatto della cultura ( altrettanto importanti sono il lavoro di dimenticare, e le forze che agiscono contro il ricordare). Soprattutto, ricordare è un atto politico, oltre che culturale" (Portelli 2007:XIII).

Guardare i curricoli a partire dalle radici, allora, potrebbe significare interrogarsi sul rapporto tra la scienza, i saperi, le discipline e coloro che imparano; e ancora interrogarsi sul rapporto tra coloro che imparano e il modo con cui la scuola, in modo organizzato, usa l'azione didattica per costruire apprendimenti che si connettono con i luoghi di vita e acquisiscono senso dall'interazione con questi stessi luoghi.

Una riflessione sulle radici e sui curricoli non può che partire da queste molteplici domande e mettersi in ascolto di risposte che possono venire non solo dai docenti e dalle istituzioni, ma anche dagli allievi e dal territorio in cui la scuola è inserita.

Prendere sul serio l'ascolto e le risposte significa accettare l'inedito che queste risposte portano con sé, il dono di cui Don Milani parlava in Lettera a una Professoressa riferendosi alla cultura popolare. "Ogni popolo ha la sua cultura e nessun popolo ce n' ha meno di un altro. La nostra è un dono che vi portiamo. Un po' di vita nell'arido dei vostri libri scritti da gente che ha letto solo libri" (Scuola di Barbiana 1967: 115).

Tentare questo ascolto significa fare almeno una prova per ampliare la superficie entro cui si ancorano le nostre radici.

### **Una classe *free-style* alla ricerca delle proprie radici**

Il primo giorno di scuola in prima media è sempre carico di aspettativa e di preoccupazione per i ragazzi, ma soprattutto per gli insegnanti.

Si tratta di conoscere nuovi ragazzi, fare in modo che si conoscano tra loro, introdurli alle regole e alle consuetudini della nuova scuola dove sono arrivati, organizzare l'orario ed il lavoro.

Insomma organizzare l'accoglienza.

Guardo l'elenco e penso a tutte le buone regole per la fase di conoscenza e per la costruzione del

gruppo classe.

Il gruppo è composto di 20 allievi, otto femmine e 12 maschi, molti cognomi sono (o sembrano) stranieri, alcuni mi sembrano sinceramente impronunciabili. Tre allievi provengono da altri istituti, dove hanno frequentato senza successo la prima classe.

Bisognerà mettere subito le cose in chiaro, in modo che tutti capiscano che stiamo giocando il gioco serio della scuola e che qui non si sgarra: non c'è tempo da perdere e siamo una scuola seria, in cui il rispetto delle regole ha un valore centrale.

Si tratta insomma di introdurre questi nuovi allievi al nostro "ordine sociale" (Goffman 1998, 2008).

Arrivo per prima in classe, la prima ora del primo giorno di scuola.

Il programma di accoglienza prevede come prima attività la consegna del libretto personale, spiegazioni e regole d'uso dello stesso, lettura commentata del regolamento scolastico e del patto di corresponsabilità.

Si tratta insomma di chiarire bene i confini dei comportamenti consentiti, le relative sanzioni, le modalità di riparazione.

Concludiamo con i compiti per casa. Assegno ad ogni allievo il compito di preparare la propria carta d'identità da presentare ai compagni durante la lezione successiva.

Ritrovo il gruppo dopo due giorni durante i quali alle normali lezioni si sono alternate attività di accoglienza. Riprendiamo il nostro percorso dalla presentazione delle carte d'identità.

La conoscenza reciproca è uno dei punti cardine di ogni progetto di accoglienza. Entrare in un'organizzazione significa, infatti, iniziare un processo di socializzazione, che, come tale, ha delle sue fasi e dei suoi tempi e spesso i tempi delle organizzazioni non coincidono con quelli dei soggetti in fase di accoglienza. "Le organizzazioni hanno fretta, e i soggetti sono prudenti: entrambi vogliono tutelare la propria soggettività"(Marcato, Giolito, Musumeci 1997:24).

Le carte di identità degli allievi, allora sono l'esatto corrispettivo della definizione dell'identità istituzionale attraverso la lettura del Regolamento scolastico e del Patto di corresponsabilità.

Dal punto di vista del soggetto si tratterà di comprendere il contesto di un'organizzazione e farsi conoscere dalla stessa per quel tanto che basta a guadagnarsi la sopravvivenza, mentre dal punto di vista dell'istituzione si tratterà di socializzare al più presto i nuovi arrivati in un sistema di norme e valori in modo da assicurare all'istituzione stessa di continuare a funzionare e ad esistere comunque.

Durante una delle attività, utilizzando argomenti di geografia legati alla demografia e alla rappresentazione statistica dei dati, abbiamo proposto un'attività dal titolo "Likert dal vivo" (Marcato, del Guasta, Bernacchia 1995: 171). La domanda chiave era "Chi tra di voi si sente italiano? Chi straniero? Perché?". Una volta individuata la risposta gli studenti dovevano posizionarsi in file divise per italiani e stranieri, motivando la loro posizione.

Il 90% degli studenti di origine straniera si è collocato nella colonna degli italiani adducendo le seguenti motivazioni:

- sono nato in Italia
- sono andato a scuola sempre in Italia e parlo perfettamente l'italiano
- abito in Italia
- i miei genitori, anche se di origine straniera, sono cittadini italiani.

Alcuni degli studenti con genitori non italiani, posizionati nella colonna stranieri, hanno detto di sentirsi italiani anche se sanno di essere considerati stranieri in relazione al paese di provenienza dei genitori.

Ho lasciato annotati sulla lavagna i ragionamenti e i distinguo emersi dalla discussione e due giorni dopo una collega mi ha avvicinata comunicandomi: "Certo che i ragazzi hanno una gran confusione in testa, si credono italiani perché sono nati in Italia".

Nel frattempo la nostra discussione era continuata e dopo aver esaminato i seguenti casi, proposti dagli studenti sulla base delle loro esperienze:

- il cugino nato in Grecia da padre rumeno e madre spagnola;
- l'amico nato in Italia con padre italiano e madre ucraina;

- l'amica nata in Italia la cui madre rumena vive in Italia mentre il padre rumeno è emigrato in America;
- l'amico nato in Romania la cui madre rumena vive in Italia mentre il padre italiano vive in Romania;

e aver discusso su cosa significa essere italiani, rumeni o albanesi, abbiamo concordemente e unanimemente deciso che la parola fuorviante era *straniero*.

Tutti concordavano sul fatto che bisognava togliere dal binomio ragazzo-straniero l'aggettivo, specificando piuttosto "nato/a a...", oppure "di origine...", oppure "con genitori...".

Sorprendentemente tutti i ragazzi, anche quelli ritenuti da noi meno propensi ad una "convivenza civile", si sono dimostrati informati e consapevoli delle condizioni di accesso alla cittadinanza formale in Italia.

"Se gli studenti, anche quelli ritenuti da noi peggiori, hanno idee così chiare su una questione complicata come la cittadinanza, perché non dovrebbero averne sulla situazione della classe? Perché non dare a loro la parola, e sentire dalla loro viva voce come vanno le cose a scuola?", ci siamo chieste.

Il lavoro di discussione con gli studenti ha portato all'individuazione di aree di condivisione di interessi e competenze tra gli studenti su cui radicare le attività curricolari del gruppo classe. Una di queste aree comuni era certamente la musica.

Siamo quindi partiti dal terreno degli studenti, la musica *rap*, per costruire insieme conoscenze e competenze.

### **Un curriculum *free-style*?**

"All'interno del panorama del *freestyle* la mia particolarità è quella di saper improvvisare discorsi in rima partendo da circa 5 parole fornitemi dal pubblico, variando spesso velocità e il ritmo di esecuzione per uscire dagli schemi del *rapper* canonico, sia per quanto riguarda la musicalità sia per i temi trattati (molto più vicini a una poesia/gioco di parole che a un "volgare" rap e talvolta in lingua friulana). Questa disciplina attualmente mi permette di integrare sia l'attività didattica sia la effettiva comunicazione in aula. La musica in questa fascia d'età rappresenta il canale di comunicazione più fruibile ed immediato, che offre alte possibilità relazionali; facendo leva sull'interesse e sul riscontro che naturalmente trova nei ragazzi è possibile veicolare in essa la fruizione degli strumenti d'ascolto e di creazione linguistico-comunicativa, essenziali in un percorso di formazione e di sviluppo. Fin ora ho avuto modo di sperimentare l'utilizzo della "rappata" in questi contesti educativi: analisi del linguaggio poetico, insegnamento della lingua friulana, prevenzione del bullismo, integrazione e multiculturalità, laboratori con ragazzi diversamente abili. Il laboratorio sfrutta dunque la musica rap al fine di: stimolare e potenziare le capacità creative del singolo e del gruppo; far scoprire la possibilità di giocare con i suoni, il corpo, la voce; conoscere se stessi, scoprire e valorizzare le proprie attitudini; saper collaborare in modo costruttivo; far comprendere le possibili potenzialità delle risorse tecnologiche a scopo creativo e produttivo" (DjTubet 2012).

Le raccomandazioni ministeriali sull'insegnamento di "Cittadinanza e Costituzione" e l'introduzione nel curriculum dello stesso con legge 30.10.2008 n. 169 nonché la *Raccomandazione del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio d'Europa del 18.12.2006*, relativa alle competenze chiave per l'apprendimento permanente ci hanno offerto il necessario supporto per fondare il percorso dal punto di vista istituzionale e curricolare. In particolare, circa le competenze sociali, la Raccomandazione europea afferma che esse implicano anzitutto "competenze personali, interpersonali e interculturali, che riguardano tutte le forme di comportamento che consentono alle persone di partecipare in modo efficace e costruttivo alla vita sociale e lavorativa, in particolare alla vita in società sempre più diversificate, come anche di risolvere i conflitti, ove ciò sia necessario".

Su queste basi si è tentato di ipotizzare un percorso che tenesse conto della situazione di partenza della classe, delle aspettative degli insegnanti, delle preferenze degli studenti e del possibile valore aggiunto da produrre con uno sguardo, per così dire, dalla parte delle radici, sulla situazione della classe. Abbiamo cercato di fare un lavoro di classe, per così dire, *free-style*, improvvisando, in un

certo senso, la progettazione curricolare a partire da competenze informali di allievi apparentemente incompetenti e approdando alla formalizzazione di apprendimenti scolastici sia in termini di abilità che di competenze certificabili.

Il percorso è stato organizzato in cinque fasi, illustrate nell'allegato 1.

Il prodotto finale, il nostro *rap* plurilingue, riassume in modo poetico ciò che i ragazzi hanno costruito insieme, guardando il curriculum (competenze trasversali, competenze linguistiche, competenze culturali, competenze musicali, competenze motorie, competenze digitali) dalla parte delle radici.

*Tal inprin o ierin une vore dividus  
e ridint a lavorà si sin metus  
Insieme vin fat cetante strade  
ma e ieri ancemò qualche persone rabiade  
No si sin dite co si volin ben  
i progres si viodaran intant o spietin  
alc te nestre anme già al nas  
e cheste facende dal sigur nus plas.*

Il conflitto è il tema della nostra lezione  
se ci sale la noia cala l'attenzione  
Ognuno ha la sua da dire e ridire  
occhio però a non farti ammutolire.

Della nostra classe poi non ti puoi fidare  
qualcuno a se stesso non sa badare  
Molti compagni se ne stano in marina  
e non invitano nessuna bambina.

C'è qualche persona che in aula non funziona  
gli arroganti non rispettano gli insegnanti  
il bullo in persona che nessuno perdona  
compagni stressanti che si credono santi.

Risolveremo mai questo conflitto  
non credi che ne abbiamo tutto il diritto?  
Siamo noi che in classe non ci rispettiamo  
e alla fine il bene lo nascondiamo.  
Il Conflitto non sarà mai estinto, finché ci sarà un vincitore e un vinto  
Stando insieme la rabbia calmiamo  
è così che nasce un rapporto umano.

*No bot kome kon  
ni diol si nuk don  
me pos kurgja po ivetmi tiki me kupton  
Pristina este buna dar devine duna  
si inviton osà devi ca tradator.*

Le mie sensazioni si fanno più forti  
perché cercate i vivi tra i morti  
e ogni scusa è buona per farsi cacciare  
quando il conflitto non sai calmare  
sul conflitto facciamo delle rime

ma il nostro carattere è come delle mine.

### **Un Circo di scuola**

“I giovani stranieri, anche quelli nati in Italia, hanno risultati scolastici molto peggiori rispetto ai coetanei italiani; vengono bocciati e lasciano la scuola molto più di frequente rispetto ai figli di italiani; prendono voti più bassi, si iscrivono a scuole più professionalizzanti. Questo è un grosso problema per l’Italia, perché – come è accaduto in altri paesi – se i giovani stranieri non avranno a disposizione risorse per raggiungere una posizione sociale migliore dei loro genitori, svilupperanno opposizione, rancore e antagonismo verso la società ospite e le sue regole” (Dalla Zuanna, Farina, Strozza 2009:8).

Per un gruppo di questi studenti "arrabbiati" da tre anni stiamo sperimentando il laboratorio di Circo Sociale. Il Circo Sociale è l'insegnamento di arti circensi rivolto a persone a rischio sociale con lo scopo di trasmettere loro le abilità connesse agli spettacoli circensi (giocoleria, clownerie, acrobatica,...), sviluppare qualità e virtù positive e trasmettere valori atti a ridurre il rischio di devianza e favorire l'integrazione degli individui. In Italia il Circo sociale è un fenomeno relativamente nuovo, mentre compare vent'anni fa nella storia dei Paesi del Sud America, specialmente Argentina e Brasile, dove da tempo problemi legati alla povertà e al degrado sociale sono stati affrontati anche con strumenti che utilizzano la creatività (Boal 1977; Boal 1993; Viviamo in Positivo-Circosociale 2009).

Le discipline circensi sono accessibili pressoché a tutti e presentano diverse caratteristiche che possono favorire l'instaurarsi di relazioni positive. Instaurare una relazione di fiducia e di rispetto tra operatore ed utente è il primo passo per condurre un lavoro educativo. Apprendere l'uso di un oggetto o di un'abilità, oltre ad avere un valore di per sé, comporta una crescita personale e di gruppo.

Quando sono proprio gli studenti a far saltare le certezze, e gli equilibri consolidati dell’interazione in classe, la pedagogia istituzionale entra in crisi. Entrano, cioè, in crisi le relazioni tra le finalità del rapporto educativo e il contesto educativo in cui tale rapporto si realizza, con tutte le implicazioni di carattere organizzativo ed istituzionale. Certo, far saltare queste certezze significa mettere in discussione l’insegnante come figura guida, che determina le forme della partecipazione all’interazione verbale in classe, che cioè stabilisce l’allocazione dei turni a parlare, la loro durata, la definizione dell’argomento oggetto di discussione, ma anche che giudica e valuta il contributo offerto dall’alunno, sostiene o si astiene, loda o biasima, approva o censura, riformula e definisce cosa è stato detto (Fele, Paoletti 2000). Infrangere le regole a scuola, allora, significa mettere in crisi l’ “ordine sociale” che la regola in quanto istituzione? O semplicemente chiama in discussione i ruoli sociali, tra cui il ruolo docente, e rimette potentemente in gioco una relazione educativa troppo spesso percepita, e agita, come un gioco a ruoli fissi in cui ognuno conosce e mantiene il proprio posto?

In questo senso le geometrie delle posizioni in classe non sono del tutto indifferenti.

C’è chi sta sempre vicino alla cattedra: sott’occhio, o sotto tiro.

C’è chi sta sempre vicino allo stesso compagno, al sicuro da possibili contatti con soggetti non del tutto raccomandabili.

C’è chi sta sempre solo, in primo o ultimo banco, isolato per contenere l’esuberanza altrimenti difficilmente gestibile.

E c’è chi può essere contenuto solo attraverso l’essere portato fuori, fisicamente escluso dall’attività della classe non solo in senso didattico, ma soprattutto in senso sociale. Essere fuori è il modo di mettere al sicuro: la classe, dal disturbo; l’insegnante, dal rischio di non riuscire a gestire la situazione.

Fissare le posizioni consente, apparentemente, di mantenere più facilmente l’ordine e con esso le regole che lo definiscono, in modo da assicurare che le cose si svolgano normalmente.

Lasciare che il disordine, per esempio nei banchi e nelle posizioni reciproche, abbia il sopravvento significa mettere a rischio di essere screditati tutti gli individui coinvolti.

E' proprio per cercare di evitare che la scuola si trasformasse in un circo che abbiamo portato il Circo a scuola.

Il progetto di Circo sociale realizzato nel nostro istituto risponde ai seguenti obiettivi:

- individuare uno spazio educativo alternativo per ragazzi che mal sopportano in alcune circostanze l'ambiente classe;
- individuare strumenti e metodologie alternative alle attività di routine per educare alle regole;
- favorire nei soggetti a grave rischio di abbandono e marginalità sociale l'incremento dell'autostima e dell'auto efficacia;
- favorire percorsi curricolari alternativi di educazione alla gestione positiva delle emozioni e dei conflitti;
- creare un laboratorio-ponte tra l'attività in classe e l'attività fuori dalla classe per gli studenti a rischio di marginalità e dispersione.

Facendo riferimento al testo per le Indicazioni per il curricolo del 2007 (MPI 2007: 17), abbiamo costruito un percorso fortemente personalizzato per gli allievi, sulla base di alcuni criteri guida:

- lo studente è posto al centro dell'azione educativa in tutti i suoi aspetti: cognitivi, affettivi, relazionali, corporei, estetici, etici, spirituali, religiosi;
- le aperture offerte dalla rete di relazioni che la legano la scuola alla famiglia e agli ambiti sociali sono una risorsa per l'integrazione;
- i percorsi personali vanno ricondotti al vissuto della classe in termini di apprendimenti e di valorizzazione della specificità degli allievi attraverso processi di *tutoring* per piccoli gruppi;
- l'eccellenza dei percorsi di integrazione va valorizzata in termini di protagonismo degli studenti nei processi di apprendimento organizzativo.

Coerentemente con le strategie sopra esposte abbiamo costruito un percorso in collaborazione con l'associazione FriulClaun – VIP che ha visto la partecipazione dei volontari dell'associazione non solo nelle attività di realizzazione del Laboratorio, ma anche nelle attività di valutazione del Consiglio di Classe e nei momenti di animazione con gli interi gruppi classe.

L'intero percorso è sintetizzato nell'allegato 2.

La cosa a nostro parere più interessante di questo Laboratorio è il fatto di essere partiti da un punto di debolezza condiviso dai membri del gruppo di laboratorio (scarsa capacità di autocontrollo, scarsa responsabilità, comportamenti conflittuali) e averlo trasformato in un punto di forza utilizzando strumenti e modalità molto vicine alle pratiche quotidiane degli allievi. La motricità acrobatica, per esempio, partendo da esercizi tipici della break-dance e della street-dance ha consentito di costruire figure complesse che per la realizzazione richiedono alta capacità di cooperazione, senso di responsabilità nei confronti di se stessi e dei compagni, capacità di dare e ricevere fiducia, concentrazione, forza di volontà, applicazione.

Come si può facilmente notare sono le stesse capacità richieste per la riuscita nello studio.

## Conclusioni

Occorre che il corpo insegnante si muova verso le postazioni più avanzate del pericolo,  
che sono costituite dall'incertezza permanente del mondo  
(Heidegger)

L'ipotesi di lavoro che si è voluto mettere alla prova è che la valorizzazione degli apprendimenti informali possa rafforzare alcune aree del curricolo formale attraverso due movimenti, da una parte il riconoscimento delle competenze maturate dagli allievi fuori dalla scuola, dall'altra la rimodulazione del curricolo sulla base della significatività dell'apprendimento (MIUR 2012).

Il lavoro sui saperi informali ha consentito da un lato di creare in classe momenti di costruzione di *common ground* tra studenti, italiani e stranieri, e con i docenti, e dall'altro di promuovere strutture di partecipazione in cui gli allievi fossero protagonisti dei processi di apprendimento (Sefton Green 2004; Sefton Green 2006; Baraldi & Iervese 2012). Questo comporta la necessità di individuare modalità nuove per osservare e misurare l'apprendimento, formale e informale. L'approccio di ricerca azione, in questo senso, ha consentito di tenere continuamente insieme, in modo riflessivo,

la dimensione didattica, la dimensione organizzativa e la dimensione educativa mettendo in dialogo i diversi attori della relazione educativa. Abbiamo sperimentato in questa direzione diversi strumenti di valutazione e autovalutazione dei risultati e dei processi, tra cui le check-list, l'autobiografia cognitiva, le interviste, i focus group, i questionari per la costruzione della rendicontazione sociale di alcune attività, cercando di mantenere sempre aperti e mobili i confini, e il dialogo, tra ricerca e didattica.

In qualche modo i docenti si sono mossi, come dice Heidegger, verso le postazioni più avanzate del pericolo, esplorando i processi di apprendimento in cui gli studenti sono coinvolti nella loro vita quotidiana (le lingue, le tecnologie, lo sport e il tempo libero) per imparare che cosa questi stessi processi possono insegnare alle modalità con cui l'apprendimento formale avviene nelle aule scolastiche, sia in termini di processi che di prodotti, ad esempio di inclusione/ esclusione (Willis 1977).

Nello stesso tempo gli studenti hanno imparato a valorizzare le proprie competenze e a tradurle in prestazioni apprezzabili in termini di valutazioni scolastiche. Alcuni, ad esempio, hanno partecipato attivamente ad una Study Visit europea sui temi della prevenzione dell'abbandono scolastico, animando un laboratorio in inglese per docenti italiani e stranieri e dimostrandosi studenti (e cittadini) competenti.

Questi esercizi di traduzione hanno coinvolte le lingue e i linguaggi, attraversato i confini delle discipline e dei ruoli scolastici canonici, insegnando a docenti e studenti a "essere nello stesso tempo radicati e senza radici" (Trinh T. Minh-ha 1990: 335).

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## ALLEGATO 1

<b>FASE 1</b>	<p><b>LA CLASSE COME LUOGO-COMUNE</b></p> <p><b>Obiettivi:</b> offrire agli studenti la possibilità di autovalutare il clima relazionale della classe; far emergere i ruoli che i ragazzi tendono ad adottare nella classe.</p> <p><b>Attività:</b> compilazione e discussione della scheda “Io nel gruppo” (Sunderland 1997:122).</p> <p><b>Competenza:</b> l'allievo interagisce in modo efficace in diverse situazioni comunicative (MIUR 2012: 33).</p> <p><b>Modalità di osservazione:</b> check list</p>
<b>FASE 2</b>	<p><b>LUOGHI PER CONOSCERSI</b></p> <p><b>Obiettivi:</b> migliorare i rapporti personali; favorire la comunicazione positiva nel gruppo; offrire ai partecipanti la possibilità di riflettere sulle qualità individuali migliorando l'autostima; scoprire le persone per le quali si prova interesse, gli argomenti di cui si discute volentieri, cosa si vorrebbe imparare dagli altri, cosa si crede di poter dare agli altri.</p> <p><b>Attività:</b> “Un tesoro personale”, “Lettera a un amico-futuro”, “A proposito di te”, “Un invito speciale” (Marcato, Giolito, Musumeci 1997: 64,86,97)</p> <p><b>Competenza:</b> scrive correttamente testi di tipo diverso (MIUR 2012: 34)</p> <p><b>Modalità di osservazione e valutazione:</b> analisi testuale</p>
<b>FASE 3</b>	<p><b>CONDIVIDERE</b></p> <p><b>Obiettivi:</b> condividere competenze; affidarsi all'altro in un percorso di apprendimento reciproco.</p> <p><b>Attività:</b> “Le pagine gialle”</p> <p><b>Competenza:</b> usa la comunicazione orale per comunicare con gli altri nell'elaborazione di progetti e nella formulazione di giudizi su problemi riguardanti vari ambiti culturali e sociali (MIUR, 2012:33).</p> <p><b>Modalità di osservazione e valutazione:</b> analisi testuale, check list</p>
<b>FASE 4</b>	<p><b>DEBRIEFING</b></p> <p>Attività di gruppo relative all'analisi dell'esperienza vissuta durante le attività, alla valutazione dell'attività stessa, all'individuazione degli apprendimenti raggiunti attraverso le esperienze vissute (Marcato, del Guasta, Bernacchia 1995: 21)</p> <p><b>Competenza:</b> usa la comunicazione orale per comunicare con gli altri nell'elaborazione di progetti e nella formulazione di giudizi su problemi riguardanti vari ambiti culturali e sociali (MIUR 2012:33).</p> <p><b>Modalità di osservazione e valutazione:</b> check-list</p>
<b>FASE 5</b>	<p><b>“Free-style con DjTubet”</b></p> <p><b>Obiettivi:</b> sperimentare la cooperazione e il fare insieme a partire da uno dei luoghi condivisi emersi nel percorso; produrre insieme una canzone e un video-clip come elemento di identificazione positiva del gruppo; discutere sulle culture, i linguaggi e gli stili di vita giovanili.</p>



	<p><b>Attività:</b> Laboratorio di rap-freestyle condotto da DjTubet (<a href="http://www.myspace.com/djtubet">http://www.myspace.com/djtubet</a>).</p> <p><b>Competenza:</b> l'allievo produce testi multimediali, utilizzando in modo efficace l'accostamento dei linguaggi verbali con quelli iconici e sonori (MIUR 2012: 34)</p> <p><b>Modalità di osservazione e valutazione:</b> check-list, analisi di materiali video, analisi testuale, focus group con genitori e docenti.</p>
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## ALLEGATO 2

### FASE 1 INDIVIDUAZIONE STUDENTI E CLASSI

- segnalazione degli studenti attraverso la procedura individuata dal Dirigente
- individuazione degli studenti e delle classi di appartenenza dei partecipanti al Laboratorio
- colloquio degli operatori e del referente con gli studenti individuati

**Modalità di osservazione:** check list, schede piani educativi personalizzati Consigli di Classe. **FASE 2 PARTECIPAZIONE AL LABORATORIO** **Obiettivi:** migliorare l'autocontrollo e l'autostima attraverso l'apprendimento di esercizi di Circo sociale.

**-Attività:** presentazione del Laboratorio alla classe e visione del film "PA-RA-DA"; attività di Laboratorio per i ragazzi individuati; osservazione del comportamento in classe e in laboratorio attraverso le check-list; restituzione alla classe del lavoro svolto sotto forma di mini spettacolo

**-Competenza:** nelle diverse fasi gli allievi acquisiscono ed esercitano le seguenti competenze di cittadinanza: collaborare e partecipare, comunicare, agire in modo autonomo e responsabile, progettare

**-Modalità di osservazione e valutazione:** check-list, schede autovalutazione, **FASE 3 VALUTAZIONE**

**-Obiettivi:** restituire gli apprendimenti acquisiti nel Laboratorio valorizzandoli in termini di valutazione, riconoscimneto nel curriculum, e contributo al successo scolastico.

**-Attività:** autovalutazione del gruppo di Laboratorio e dei singoli partecipanti, valutazione educativa congiunta insegnanti operatori sui ragazzi partecipanti, valutazione con tutta la classe del percorso, documentazione del percorso.

**-Competenza:** nelle diverse fasi gli allievi acquisiscono ed esercitano le seguenti competenze di cittadinanza: agire in modo autonomo e responsabile, imparare ad imparare. Gli studenti hanno inoltre documentato con prodotti multimediali le attività del laboratorio (Competenza: l'allievo produce testi multimediali, utilizzando in modo efficace l'accostamento dei linguaggi verbali con quelli iconici e sonori (MIUR, 2012: 34).

**Modalità di osservazione e valutazione:** schede valutazione docenti-operatori.

## **LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER – DEALING WITH DIVERSITY – GAINING INTECULTURAL COMPETENCE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Diversity is a key word in our global society. Managing diversity is very important in order to deal with differences in a peaceful and constructive way and also to in order to use its potential. At work and at school we are in contact with people from very different backgrounds. Classroom diversity means differences in nationality, gender, religion, social status, income of the parents, capabilities etc. For teachers and other educational staff it is very important to recognize the heterogeneity, to respect and deal with each child as an individual. A difference in culture is only one attribute of diversity and is often overemphasized, especially when it is accompanied by language difficulties. Children are faced disadvantages at school either because their achievements are not good enough or because they are considered to be weak or difficult pupils by the teachers. Supporting migrant and other disadvantaged children in our educational system is an important task towards enhancing their chances towards graduation. Mentoring programs (Mentoring.org, Heinzl, et al, 2007) are one way of supporting and encouraging disadvantaged pupils. Simultaneously the mentors involved benefit greatly also. It is a great opportunity for students, who wish to work in a pedagogical (educational) field to be confronted through the mentoring system with the reality of migrants and families of various social classes they are not familiar with. It can be an eye opener to learn about their needs, their economic and social situation, their beliefs and desires. The following article will present the project SALAM and its impact on the students, children and families involved. Data via interviews, student reports, student questionnaires and small questionnaires for parents and children have been collected over the past 4 years and have been evaluated. Selected results are presented in this article which focuses on the intercultural experiences of the students. Other professional skills and the impacts on the children will be treated shortly.

### **2. THE PROJECT SALAM**

At the University of Education in Freiburg, Germany, we established the project: “Mentor Migration SALAM- Spielen-Austauschen-Lernen-Achtsam-Miteinander” (Playing-Sharing-Learning-Attentively – Together). Students studying to become teachers or studying for a degree in Social Education mentor a child for a period of 8 months .They spend 2-3 hours of leisure time a week together. The aim is to support children from migrant and other underprivileged families and to give the students the opportunity to use their pedagogical skills and to reflect on the experiences they make. Two aspects are characteristic for the project: Firstly as the students are assigned to only one child they can develop a good relationship to that child and its family. Secondly the project helps to expand the child’s horizons, helping it to gain a wider knowledge of its surroundings, the city quarter it lives in, the city itself. The object is not to do homework, in the classical sense, with the children, nor to do special language training. The act of students and pupils coming together and interacting offers in itself lots of learning opportunities. (Pietsch, Susanne, 2010; Garlich, 2004 ) The children are forced to communicate, they negotiate the choice of activities with the students; they explore new places and spaces; they learn something about student life. The students on the other hand gain an awareness of how to act in intercultural encounters; they gain insights into milieus they would usually not know or have the opportunity to enter. They can assist the families with any questions regarding the German educational system. The participating children come from very diverse situations: several live in accommodation reserved for refugees; others are children whose parents

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are divorced; some children are from well to do families, but their German needs to be improved. When there are more pupils than mentors the teachers use different criteria to select the pupils. For example children with special needs (Language, behavior, knowledge) or children with a number of siblings or children for whom it is assumed that special help will increase their chances of furthering their education and reaching graduation.

The basic idea comes from the Swedish town of Malmö, where the program was named “Nightingale” after the town’s mascot. We have extended the concept and now it runs under the new name SALAM. 50-80 students a year have been involved since 2009. The Freiburg University of Education, The city of Freiburg and four primary schools all cooperate in the project. The university recruits and selects the students and supports them with supervision throughout. The project is integrated into the curriculum, so that the students can also get credit points for taking part. The whole project is regularly evaluated and scientifically accompanied. (Wenzler-Cremer, 2010)

### **3. GAINING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND MORE**

Managing diversity requires intercultural competence. Being able to interact successfully with people from different backgrounds, different cultures, different classes, religions, sexual orientations etc. should be a basic requirement for teachers. Learning to avoid misunderstandings, to be able to recognize a child’s potential, and to reach a good understanding with their parents and families, being able to manage conflicts etc are all essential qualifications for teachers which enable children to have a successful school career and teachers to have a satisfying job. The Intercultural Competence Model of Deardoff (2006, 2009) distinguishes between 5 elements: (a) Attitudes especially respect, openness, curiosity and discovery which includes tolerating ambiguity. These are a basic necessity for increasing intercultural competence. (b) Knowledge: that means: cultural self-awareness, cultural specific knowledge, understanding other world views and sociolinguistic awareness (c) Skills necessary to reach internal and external outcomes (component d and e) which are the aim of intercultural competence are: observation, listening, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, relating. (d) Internal Outcomes: flexibility, adaptability, ethnocultural perspective and empathy. (e) External Outcomes: “the effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations.”(Deardorff, 2006 p. 16). When you analyze these five elements it is obvious that intercultural competence is a special form of social competence.

### **4. IMPACTS ON THE STUDENTS: IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

Gaining intercultural competence is only one possible outcome of this project. Therefore the questions we deal with in the evaluation are much broader: How can the children be supported by the students? Which images of migrants do the students have? What challenges will the students be confronted with when dealing with the children and the families? How can they develop professional competence in this project? How can they learn to reflect and question their own thoughts and action?

The impacts which are presented here are attained by coding and analyzing the evaluation data. Following the Model of Deardoff the above mentioned attitudes are on the one hand a condition for intercultural competence, on the other hand they can also be developed when participating in the project. For most of the student this is their very first contact with a migrant family. They report that at the beginning they are curious, open minded and prepared to experience something new. But then they realize that skills like listening, observing, analyzing, evaluating and relating to others, i.e. basic pedagogical skills are needed in order to cope with situations and challenges they face during

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the project. During the tutorials their experiences are discussed and reflected so that new skills, knowledge and competences can be developed. In the following those categories of the evaluation which are close to the model of Deardoff (2006, 2009) concerning intercultural competence are in the centre of attention.

#### **4.1 Intercourse with cultural and other differences – Dealing with otherness**

Differences are very often accompanied by strong emotions: they may make us happy, curious, interested, angry, anxious, disappointed etc. The needs to belong and to feel secure are very basic needs and students in this project can experience first-hand what many migrants feel: that they do not belong, they do not know the language, the rules; they feel excluded, restricted and often discriminated against.

##### **4.1.1 Perception of the situation, their own expectations and beliefs**

Most of the students have a middle class background, so that not only cultural but also socioeconomic differences become salient. They enter into a new world and are faced with otherness. After the first meeting with the child and its family they often comment on how small and crowded the homes are and what poor quality the furniture is: no toys, little money, large television screens, mobile phones, Play Stations; that the migrant families of one ethnic group live in the same block of flats with other families from that ethnic group and are only interested in having contact with their own ethnic group. They also emphasize the cleanliness of the flat and the friendliness of the parents towards the students and that the fathers are caring towards their children. These observations also give an insight into the expectations of the students and their view of migrants. When asked what they expected they usually deny having any specific expectations probably in order not seem to have a stereotype opinion. Some do, however, express their beliefs about migrants and their families openly. These may be summarized in the following picture: migrants are dark skinned, poor, unable to speak German, avoid contact with Germans and are only interested in their own ethnic group. During the course of the project the students start to differentiate and they realize that many things are not as they expected and that they used attributes without questioning them. The students recognize that the way the children are brought up and how the mass media are used; the eating habits and the handling of everyday objects is different to their own background. Sometimes they do not dare to suggest certain activities and avoid talking about certain topics, because they expect the child or its parents would be against them: for example, talking about Christmas with a Muslim child, visiting the Freiburger Cathedral with a non-Christian child; going swimming with a Muslim girl. They are surprised when the child or its parents have no problem with the suggestions. In these situations they realize that they must question their preconceived ideas.

##### **4.1.2 Perceiving the heterogeneity of life situations**

At the beginning of the project the students often have a very monolithic view of migrant families, but in time they realize that the category “migrant” is filled very differently. They understand that it makes a difference how long the migrant family has been in Germany, what culture they come from, the religion they belong to, their status in Germany, their right of residence (temporary, or permanent or a rejected asylum seeker), the grade of education the parents have, the family situation. During the exchange with other students in the tutorials they listen to very different stories and become aware, that it is important to perceive the individuality of each child and family. Also when they openly reflect their images of migrants they notice that they have to correct their own ideas about migrants. Being in contact with a single child and its desires, needs, fears and

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pleasures they comprehend that as a teacher they need to see the individual child rather than just viewing it as part of the group.

#### **4.1.3 Feeling out of place and dealing with the emotions of such situations**

Dealing with otherness is a great challenge. Different rules, different expectations, different ways of life make the meeting exciting, but also difficult. The students are shocked, surprised, curious and sometimes amazed to see the poverty, the way the children are brought up, the media consumption, the set roles in the families. When everyone present speaks another language, say Arabic, they feel excluded, because they do not understand a word. They are afraid of being rejected individually or just for being German. They feel out of place and uncomfortable. They fear the others will speak about of them when using their own language. Those students who are from a migrant background themselves fear rejection because they are not from the same ethnic background or because they have a different understanding about what it means to be a good Muslim. The code of conduct which is culturally imprinted may not be valid in this context. The students are wondering when a child for example is worried about her Muslim mother being seen without a headscarf when a man passes the open front door. They are confronted by the strict diets some families keep. Some students observe that the position of women is different in the family they visit to that in our society. One child for example was forbidden to accompany her mentor to the tram. She did so anyway and was subsequently beaten by her elder brother, because he felt it was his duty to ensure that his sister behaved correctly. The students question the sense of some rules and become aware of their own cultural background, because some differences are easier to recognize in contrast.

#### **4.1.4 Identifying stereotypes and prejudices and cultural attributing**

The students face situations where “their” child is target of prejudice. Students report of many such incidents, for example when they ride the tram together. People gaze at them or make comments like: “It is very nice of you to care for such a child”. There are different strategies in coping with such a situation: being indifferent or ignoring it, leaving the situation, protecting the child by answering back. On reflection, however, the students also often realize that they themselves are not free from prejudice. One student told of how “her” child was accused of being a thief at school. She was not surprised, and then realized that she herself held the assumption that because the child came from an immigrant background she was more likely to be predestined to become a thief. Another student told of her feelings before entering refugee accommodation for the first time: she was afraid of being rejected, of being faced with aggressiveness and meeting criminals and then she was overwhelmed by the friendliness she experienced.

We all want to understand the world around us, therefore we seek to understand why something is as it is and we give explanatory attributions. Cultural attributes are one way of explaining behavior. In this process of culturalisation culture is used as a static category. When a student rejects the invitation for a meal and the father is disappointed, she may explain this by his culture of hospitality. When the students observe that the parents have difficulty in dealing with school matters they tend to explain this with cultural difference. Also a different way of rearing children and the distribution of tasks within the family are considered to be for cultural reasons. In general the students are careful in making definite statements and of judging the parents behavior. However as regards bringing up a child they tend to view the differences as being of a cultural nature. For example the fathers are sometimes described as being authoritarian and their Macho-behavior is criticized in subtle ways by being attributed to their culture.

#### **4.1.5 Understanding the other's world view, getting culture-specific information, gaining sociolinguistic awareness and adopting an ethnorelative view.**

It is difficult to distinguish whether students are using incorrect attributions or whether they are really being confronted with culturally bound behavior or rules. Understanding the world views of others requires the ability to listen and to observe. Understanding the role and impact of one's own culture on behavior and communication includes analyzing and evaluating one's culturally bound behavior and thinking. Students who are able to build a good relationship to the child and its family gain cultural awareness through information transmitted through storytelling and through discussing similarities and differences of what they observe or experience together. By watching and talking they learn a lot about different cultural backgrounds. The students gain sociolinguistic awareness for example when they realize that although the parents understand a letter sent to them from their child's school, they do not understand the concept of the role of parents the letter entails. Teachers in Germany expect parents to be involved in the day to day situation and learning of their children in school. Migrant parents usually expect the teachers to be responsible for the performance of the children in school. Most of our students are young women who are greatly surprised by the gender roles they experience in "their" families. It is often difficult for them to accept these differences and this leads to many discussions as to whether this is really culturally bound behavior. In this project knowledge is not only related to culture bound rules and behavior, but also to information about the situation of migrant families and their reality, the legal status of refugees, social security issues etc. .

We often tend to interpret the world and what happens in our life from our own point of view. However, if one accepts that other people have a different view of the world and therefore consider things differently than one has to conclude that one's own perspective is relative. In this project the students have the opportunity to reflect on cultural bound rules and behavior. Whether the students are able to come to a deeper understanding of the new culture they are introduced to depends on the openness of both the student and the family and also how fluently they can converse with one another. Feeling welcome is the primary condition.

Understanding the other's world view does not succeed in every case, especially when the students do not feel accepted by the child or the family or when they do not get enough feedback about their own behavior.

#### **4.1.6 The results of Intercultural Competence: gaining adaptability, flexibility and empathy.**

In some tandems one of the challenges students face is the difference between their standard of punctuality and reliability and that of the family's. Students very often complain that families forget they were coming. With time the students usually succeed in learning to adapt to the situation as it is and in reaching a change, so that their appointments are taken more seriously. Hand in hand with learning to tolerate ambiguity the students need to have a high degree of flexibility: like learning to deal with a situation, for example, when they have arranged to do something together in advance, but when they arrive the child has changed its mind. That is not a situation one would find only in an intercultural context. It could happen with any child, but learning to deal with such cases increases the students' professional competence. Empathy is enhanced when the students learn to question their own frame of reference and to come to a new evaluation of norms and values of both their own and of someone else's culture. One student, for example, who herself had a migrant background, rejected the idea that women and girls should wear headscarves. However after spending her time

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during the project working with a 9 year old Muslim girl she rethought her ideas and in her report came to a more tolerant viewpoint.

#### **4.1.7 Behaving and communicating appropriately and effectively in intercultural situations.**

This goal can never be reached completely, because the acquisition of intercultural competence is a dynamic process, which does not develop in a linear way. There will be times when the students feel they have moved a step backwards and where they will need encouragement. Building a good relationship with children from different backgrounds, supporting them, and coming into contact with migrant families succeeds only when the students already have or gain the skills, attitudes and knowledge mentioned above. The term of reference changes and at the end of the project the students usually report that they are able to behave in a more culturally sensitive way. One way we observe the change is when the farewell party is being prepared and the students request that a second barbeque table is set up in order to separate pork from other meats. Appropriate behavior means that the cultural norms of the different cultures are taken seriously. Difficulties arise when basic attitudes on both sides like respect, openness and curiosity are missing.

#### **4.2 Professional Learning: the students have the opportunity to gain professional competences**

In Germany it is part of the education of student teachers or social workers that they gain practical experience during the course of their studies. In this project students learn special skills. The priority in this article lies on stressing the intercultural competence they gain. However other professional skills attained should also be mentioned. When the students are asked what they have learned during the project apart from intercultural competence they usually name the following: building up a relationship to a child, learning to break the ice, communicating and interacting adequately even when the child is shy, anxious, aggressive, impertinent etc. The students have to learn to set boundaries. The child has to be motivated. They have to learn to negotiate what activities they should do together. They have to develop interests and consider what might interest the child. They learn to understand better how a child thinks and feels. They learn to understand the impact of a child's background and that each child is an individual.

### **5. IMPACTS ON THE CHILDREN: WHAT THEY LEARN**

In this article the benefits to the students has had priority. Here I would like to mention briefly some of the impacts this project has on the children. We too have experienced what is described in the pedagogic literature (Pietsch, 2010; Heinzel et al. 2007). Although we do not have enough data directly from the children, the evaluation of the students and teachers show that the children are of course impacted by the project as well (Wenzler-Cremer & Baquero Torres, 2012) . In the tandem the children have the opportunity to train attitudes like respect, openness and curiosity. They also learn a lot about their surroundings when they explore places they have never been to before. Many of the children leave their section of town for the first time with the students, either because they have never had the opportunity before or because they have never dared to do so. The students often connect this behavior with the attitude of the parents who do not feel at home in Germany; their status of residency might be insecure, particularly if they are refugees, then they could be frightened of the threat of deportation. The lack of fluency in German could also be a hindrance. The children enter whole new worlds when they accompany the students to their homes or to the university. Their language skills are enhanced through their learning to communicate with a young adult in German. Their vocabulary increases. Teachers report that the children participate more in school, as they now have more to talk about: they have experienced things outside of the school and what they

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watched on TV. They develop new ideas about how to spend their free time. The children's social competence increases as they learn to communicate adequately with someone who becomes a good friend and a mentor. Trust, self-confidence and openness are developed.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The SALAM project offers students the opportunity to gain knowledge and to develop their intercultural competence. Learning by doing: surprises, positive changes, success, feelings of happiness, difficulties and disappointments are all part of the experience.

The project receives very good feedback from the students, the teachers, the parents and the children. In a few exceptions difficulties have occurred when a student has not been reliable or has underestimated the responsibility she has taken on and then a child is disappointed. Students sometimes realize their own limitations and bad time management. These difficulties can however be dealt with in supervision in such a way that all parties can learn from them. Very rarely has a family cancelled its participation in the project because they were disappointed with a mentor or because they were afraid of giving an outside person too much insight into their family. The importance of a good supervision for the students cannot be stressed enough. When that succeeds and the students are able to discuss openly all they are dealing with then the project is indeed of great benefit to all involved. The benefits for the students and the children speak for themselves.

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## An Equity Culture Framework for Inquiry, Agency, and Community

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*In our discussions, something comes up and we say we have to do something about this. We take our education here out to our lives outside, and we take our outside lives and make it a part of school, and take leadership on it.*

— Freedom High School student

Constructing teaching and learning relationships that honor voice, agency, inquiry, and community, as the above quotation represents, is the aim of an equity education culture. Teacher and student decision-making are central to these relationships. To assist teachers in creating conditions for an equity culture, we need descriptive guidelines for very different paradigms than currently exist in classrooms (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004; May & Sleeter, 2010). While scholarly progress has been made in defining pedagogical characteristics, these developments have yet to take hold in practice (Zirkel, 2008), in part, because of the absence of descriptive guidelines. In practice, equity and multicultural education continue to emphasize solving the “problem” of diversity by showcasing difference, reducing biases and stereotypes, and shrinking the achievement gap, a liberal multicultural approach (May & Sleeter, 2010). Although useful in describing inequities, this approach does not help teachers decide what can be done to build a learning community that cultivates voice, agency, inquiry, and makes power relations transparent, which are core elements of a critical multicultural approach.

Global perspectives on intercultural and multicultural education, informed by research and practice, offer insights for change (Grant & Portera, 2011). The international discourse is deepening our understanding of how social justice and democratic aims can be advanced in

educational policy, practice, and outcomes. Cross-national research using a common tool for inquiry and assessment can advance this work, not by homogenizing, but by describing culturally relevant approaches for constructing equity education cultures. A framework that focuses on the kinds of outcomes we care about, including critical thinking, civic participation, and leadership development, can offer a “powerful tool in the development of educational policy and educator training that places multicultural education practice at its center” (Zirkel, 2008, p. 1170).

This paper presents the equity education culture framework (Wilbur, 1998), for teacher decision-making that offers descriptive guides for creating conditions in classrooms that promote voice, agency, inquiry, and community. After summarizing the theoretical context for the framework, I report the findings of a research study on the framework’s effectiveness in describing the relationship between teacher decisions and student learning. I summarize interpretive themes that form descriptive guides for teachers. I conclude with an approach for investigating the framework’s applicability for European education.

### **Theoretical Context**

In an equity education culture, teachers and students co-construct learning experiences that enable all to determine self, communicate and collaborate, think critically and conceptually, and act justly. They become active collaborators in redefining teaching-learning relationships so that process and outcomes embrace critical inquiry, human agency, and social justice (Ladson-Billings, 2004). When conditions are created that respect the voices of many, students and teachers can call into question their own taken-for-granted agreements. For learners to claim their education and for teachers to claim their decisions, they must re-construct agreements about the learning relationship (Freire, 1985). Varied voices, especially those marginalized, must be represented and included in these decisions.

Through deliberations, teachers and students examine and expose the interplay among culture, knowledge, difference, identity, and power to promote greater alignment within education for democratic and social justice aims (Apple & Beane, 2007; Ayers, 2010) where all people have voice and power to improve their individual and collective lived experiences. The concepts as well as the processes of inquiry, agency, and social justice inform learning relationships. Operating as the purpose, process, and outcomes of equity cultures, these concepts are also core elements of critical multicultural pedagogy. By depicting the interconnections among concepts and constructs, the following discussion positions the equity culture framework as a response to Sleeter and Bernal's (2004) call for descriptive teacher guidelines to shift current classroom paradigms.

### **Social Justice**

Critical multiculturalism, building on critical race theory and critical pedagogy, positions social justice aims at the center of the multicultural discourse. Social justice, in the context of critical multiculturalism, is not focused primarily on individual opportunity but emphasizes structural change to counter oppressive conditions and balance power within and among groups who historically have been disenfranchised by the dominant, privileged, and normative group (Ayers, 2010; Kincheloe, 2008).

Social justice and democratic education can translate the often illusive concepts of critical pedagogy into practice. Critical pedagogy is clear on the centrality of agency, discourse, power, and the human condition, and as such, there can be no viable *prescriptions* for teacher decision-making; prescriptions contradict agency and the pedagogy of equity education. Instead, an inquiry framework must shift power so the teacher decides how to guide interactions and learning opportunities toward agency, discourse, critical consciousness, and improving the

human condition. As will be discussed later, using equity criteria as a guide for decisions can illuminate many voices, expose and shift power relations, and prize diversity.

### **Inquiry**

Inquiry is a means as well as an outcome of learning, teaching, and constructing the teaching-learning relationship. Inquiry is questioning and problem posing, considering what is and what could be. It gives voice and power to learners to define questions of significance and, through the discovery process, construct their own knowledge by reading the word and the world (Freire, 1970). Critical inquiry into content knowledge and its production reveals values and biases, exposing the ideology upon which it is constructed (Apple, 1990). This propels teachers and students alike to uncover and examine why things are the way they are, to expose the commonsense status quo (Kumashiro, 2004; Camp & Oesterreich, 2010) that reifies knowledge, culture, and structures. Inquiry becomes a conduit to examine experience and learning, to question tacit agreements, and to confront unequal power and oppressive conditions.

Inquiring into pedagogical practice and teacher decision-making can serve as a model for students. Qualitative methods that situate research questions within this context call for student participation in the inquiry, expanding authentic pedagogy without trivializing the dynamics of the teaching and learning process. By using qualitative inquiry such as participatory action research, life histories, case studies, and critical ethnography, the dynamic complexity of the learning endeavor can be investigated by exploring “deeper reasons behind teachers’ [and students’] voices and practices” (Niyozov, 2008-9, p. 48-9).

### **Agency and Community**

Learning communities that enable agency commit to confronting the marginalization of students and not blaming them for the failure of schools to serve and stimulate them (Nieto,

2000). Challenging existing structures that work against safe, empowering, and just school climates requires educators to be vigilant, develop closer ties with community, and actively resist “the White, middle-class assumptions regarding students, families, and communities that permeate public schools across the country” (Theoharis, 2007, p. 237). Theoharis finds that social justice leadership resists oppressive power relations and works to create warm and welcoming communities that empower disenfranchised youth and families.

Participatory action research fosters agency and community. It is not only a method but also a pedagogy for education and community development. It offers people a way to study social problems affecting their lives and to determine actions to rectify these problems. It is designed to contest and transform systems to produce greater justice through actions that foster the greatest possibility for social change. Research for resistance can be mobilized toward justice by inquiring into complex power relations, the struggle, and the consequences of oppression (McLaren, 2008; Giroux & McLaren, 1992). Through de-naturalizing the structures (that’s just the way things are) and re-visioning realities of our social worlds, multigenerational collectives undertake forms of challenge based on critical inquiries, to see differently, to act anew, and to provoke change (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). Knowledge garnered from such research leads to progressive changes in the human condition. Through collective imagination and the capacity to create a higher quality of life, human agency constructs reality and in so doing shifts power (Ginwright, 2008).

### **Equity Education Culture Framework**

The qualities and characteristics of the equity culture framework translate the concepts of critical multiculturalism into practice through the intersection of equity criteria and learning outcomes. These intersections offer teachers and students both process and outcomes to guide

their learning relationship. When voice is represented and affirmed, then self-determination and communication are promoted. Through inclusion of diversity, then collaboration and critical thinking occur. When inquiry reveals variation, then accuracy is increased as multiple perspectives are critically examined. When resistance promotes agency, then just actions are integrated within community.

The equity education culture framework uses an inquiry approach that stimulates critical reflection and collaborative deliberation. The framework promotes intentionality in decisions that expose tacit knowledge and beliefs about learning, power, difference, culture, and identity. Represented in the matrix below, characteristics of decision-making are guided by seven equity criteria that intersect with four learning outcomes.

Equity Criteria	Learning Outcomes			
	Determining Self	Communicating & Collaborating	Thinking Critically & Conceptually	Acting Justly
Variation				
Inclusion	Teacher focused questions and Student focused outcomes are identified within each cell intersecting an Equity Criterion and a Learning Outcome			
Accuracy				
Affirmation				
Representation				
Integration				
Resistance				

Each cell frames descriptors related to decisions about curriculum, instruction, assessment, and interactions. Each cell also describes student outcomes that embed curriculum content within concepts and processes. (See Appendix A for the complete matrix describing criteria.)

The intersection of outcomes with criteria on the equity culture matrix identifies qualities and characteristics to guide decisions about conditions for learning. For example, when Variation intersects with Communicating & Collaborating, teachers put in place conditions, and plan for student evidence, to show how individual and group interests have defined and been affected by the concept/issue being studied. In planning and assessing, teachers increase their intentionality

by using the qualities as guides. Further, dialogue and collaboration with and among teachers and students extend perspectives and enrich possibilities for equity in teaching-learning relationships.

The matrix offers a construct for guiding decisions and learning outcomes to realize educational equity aims. Matrix effectiveness has been validated through analysis of data collected in middle and senior high schools. Results of the study follow with interpretative themes yielding guides for teacher decision-making. A plan for validating the matrix within a European context is described, including a workshop presentation at the International Conference Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World and data collection at the University of Verona and a Verona school.

### **Research Method and Results**

The research study reported here is part of a larger research project to evaluate the effectiveness of the equity education framework to describe teacher decision-making and student learning in various academic settings: K-12, undergraduate, and graduate education, and in various cultural contexts: urban, rural, U.S. and Italy. The purpose for multiple levels is to determine not only its applicability in K-12 classrooms, but also for teacher education programs, which will model the guidelines for current and future teachers. The various cultural contexts provide cross-national validation of the matrix's applicability to advance the international equity discourse. To determine the framework's currency as descriptive guides for teaching students and future teachers, it must be studied in context, in settings with learners and teachers for whom the guides are designed.

This study analyzes results from US middle school and high school sites on the effectiveness of the equity framework to 1. classify curriculum and instruction, teacher decision-making, and classroom interactions; 2. classify learning outcomes through student work samples

and interactions; and 3. describe the nature of the relationship between equity classroom descriptions and the student learning outcomes.

The participants in this study were teachers and students from two schools, one middle school in a Midwestern, urban, public school district and one independent, public high school in a rural, northeastern community. The schools were selected because they had curriculum priorities that aligned with the learning outcomes of the equity culture but were demographically different. Since the purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the equity framework to describe classrooms, it was important to use it in sites where it was likely that evidence for the outcomes could be observed.

In each of the research sites, three types of data were collected for teacher decision-making and two types of data were collected for learning outcomes. Teacher decision-making data were observations, lesson/unit plans, and interviews. Student learning outcome data for all levels included student work samples and surveys. High school student data included interviews.

These data sources enabled triangulation for analyzing teacher decision-making and student learning, a data analysis technique increasing the validity and corroboration of findings (Eisner, 1996; Maxwell, 1992). For teachers, the data sources captured what they planned to do to create a learning environment when teaching, what they did, and their perceptions of how their intentions matched their realities. For students, the data sources captured what learning outcomes were demonstrated in their work samples, their perceptions of the learning environment, and their reflections on learning outcomes. The data sources were selected to depict the nature of the relationship between teacher decision-making and student learning, that is, what the teacher intended and what the students experienced and produced.



The results indicate that first objective of the study was met because researchers were able to use the matrix to classify curriculum and instruction, teacher decisions, and classroom interactions using equity criteria. The second objective was also met because researchers consistently classified learning outcomes that were evident in student work samples and student interview responses according to matrix qualities and characteristics. Therefore, the equity culture matrix can be used to code data sources and there is consistency in coding across researchers. Researchers were able to code positive and negative examples of the evidence in the matrix cells. Data sources reflect the decisions teachers make and the outcomes students demonstrate.

Results for the third objective, describing the relationships between decision making and learning outcomes, are presented in narratives. Narratives were coded, patterns identified and interpreted through themes. Themes articulate descriptive guidelines for teacher decision making. Due to space limitations of this paper, a sample of a narrative and its patterns are provided.

*Narrative 1.* Greenway, a teacher at the middle school, was working with half the class (10 students) at a U-shape table on the topic of mathematical combinations. She began by asking what students already knew about combinations and gave them time to share several examples before she added her own. She affirmed, “There are a couple of ways to do combinations.” and used a concrete example of 3 shirts and 4 pants and drew a picture. She discouraged them from writing the equation  $3 \times 4$  and required them to “draw something!” Students were involved in drawing their own original picture of the combination and some shared their pictures. Greenway led them to the text by saying “Now, we’ll look for another way.” The text used an example of a

student-led fundraiser selling pencils and erasers using an honor system for payment. She intentionally asked, “What is an honor system?” and facilitated a discussion among students.

Greenway highlighted the benefits of the text’s use of a graph of erasers and pencils to plot cost for various combinations. She instructed them to use a strategy, “same as you used in the previous example” to figure out how much would be needed for 6 erasers and 4 pencils. She prompted them with questions and said “let me see some patterns” and “don’t tell me the amount, but how to get that.” She went on to say “I’m trying to make you think,” “what could we put on the sketch?” “explain what it means?” After she saw that each student was able to explain the patterns of erasers and pencils, she asked them to imagine a comparison between the number of tons of garbage and number of small cars (each weighing a ton). “How do we figure this out?” “Remember what we learned yesterday?” in their community action project on recycling.

***Patterns.*** In the narrative, and further explained in her interview, Greenway intentionally provided ways for students to personalize concepts cognitively and affectively (A1) and to think critically by applying and analyzing the concepts (C1)<sup>1</sup>. (See Appendix A for coding scheme.) Greenway provided various approaches and experiences to explore and explain combinations (A4) by building on what they already knew and creating images to depict the concept’s attributes (B2). “We also used manipulatives to break apart the problems and really see ‘what does it mean?; ‘why am I trying to solve this sort of problem?’” She enabled students to persist in their discovery and analysis (A3) because of her questioning and the chance to examine their peers’ points of view (B3) as they discussed honor systems and each other’s pictures or graphic organizers.

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<sup>1</sup> Coding identifies the matrix cell of intersecting outcome (letter) and criterion (number).

In their work samples, students demonstrated their critical and conceptual thinking. Greenway's students explained their problem solving strategies and how these worked for them (A3, C4). They applied their knowledge and skills to various situations (A4, C1) and described their strategies, e.g. images and graphic organizers (B2, C4). By using and sharing a variety of approaches (A5) and applying them to the complex, relevant issue of garbage and recycling (a student-initiated project), they posed and investigated problems that led to critical thinking about the math concept of combinations (C3).

The patterns described connect the intentional decisions and actions of teachers with the experiences and outcomes of students. These patterns reflect the nature of the relationship between classroom descriptions and student learning outcomes, the third objective of the study. Using the equity culture matrix to code evidence and describe the relationship indicates the interpretative validity of the equity culture matrix.

### **Interpretative Themes and Decision-Making Guides**

Themes are narrative patterns tied to theoretical concepts or structural characteristics and represent the interpretive stage of qualitative inquiry (Eisner 1998, DeLuca, 2011) and critical ethnography (Carspecken, 1996). In this case, themes are tied to defining concepts of critical multiculturalism: representation, voice, agency, and power (Gay, 1995). Themes were framed from the analysis of patterns within and across data sets. Guides use the themes to articulate conditions that honor decision-making and preserve authenticity of various approaches for constructing learning communities. One theme and one guide follow. A complete description of results will be provided in the workshop.

Theme 1: Engaging with Images, Metaphors, and Others or Talk about it, read it, draw it, see it. A prominent theme emerged when students actively engage in showing and describing

their thinking about concept attributes. This leads to thinking critically about concepts and lays the foundation for acting justly. Active engagement included constructing images, visuals, metaphors, graphic organizers and then dialoguing with others about the relationship among the attributes. Different voices are illuminated when non-text representations are encouraged, and since more and different voices join the dialogue, we are able to hear and consider a greater range of perspectives.

Guide #1. When teachers enable students to engage with peers and others to explore a concept and examine it from multiple points of view (e.g. through student-initiated discovery projects, field trips to museums, and interviews with elected officials), students analyze different interpretations of the concept and lived experiences.

The results summarized here indicate that the equity culture matrix has currency in describing teacher decisions and student outcomes. Through narrative patterns and matrix coding, the relationship between teacher decisions and learning outcomes can be described. As such, the equity culture framework has interpretive and contextualized validity. Emergent themes that interpret patterns and relationships among criteria and outcomes have been articulated and show promise as descriptive guides for decisions teachers make.

### **Next Steps: Workshop and Beyond**

Collection and analyses of data sets from other educational settings and academic levels are needed to extend the framework's interpretative validity and to contribute to the international discourse on multicultural and intercultural education. The next step is to engage international educators at the International Conference for Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World in critiquing the framework's relevance in global contexts. Through a pre-conference workshop, participants will analyze actual classroom scenarios from Italy, Estonia,

and the US using the matrix to code evidence of equity criteria and learning outcomes. Cultural and pedagogical factors that influence coding and interpretations will be identified through collaborative discourse. Modifications to the coding matrix will be invited to increase the framework's cultural relevance for inquiry and assessment, and thus its potential as a tool for cross-national research.

Results from the workshop will be tested in the weeks following the conference in Italian classrooms. These results will be integrated into the protocol for collecting, coding, and interpreting data from classrooms at the University of Verona and in Italian schools with 9-14 year old students. My research will test the validity of the equity culture matrix to examine and guide teacher decisions in a global context.

A major research goal, and purpose for universities as sites, is to make a difference in how teachers are prepared and do their work. A pedagogically sound way to prepare teachers is for education professors to model the equity culture characteristics so that future teachers can name, reflect, and act on the criteria and outcomes in relation to their own learning. Within their mentored field experiences, they can apply these criteria, and then with peers and professor, examine how to do things differently in their classrooms. Extending the inquiry to school based applications may provide teachers with leadership guides to “resist the resistance” for changing the structural status quo. Consequently, teachers can construct not only teaching and learning relationships that honor voice, agency, inquiry, and community, but potentially, they may use these guides to challenge power barriers and erode structural inequalities.

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Appendix A-Data Coding  
Equity Culture Matrix  
*What conditions were put in place to...*  
*What is the evidence that students...*

	<b>Determining Self-A</b>	<b>Communicating &amp; Collaborating-B</b>	<b>Thinking Critically &amp; Conceptually-C</b>	<b>Acting Justly-D</b>
<b>Variation-1</b> Recognizes similarities & differences within and among groups of people	<b>A1</b> Seek ways to personalize the issue/topic* cognitively & affectively	<b>B1</b> Show how individual and group interests have defined and been affected by issue/topic	<b>C1</b> Use a variety of ways to apply, analyze, and evaluate the issue/topic	<b>D1</b> Pose benefits and drawbacks the issue/topic can have on lived experiences and overcoming injustices
<b>Inclusive-2</b> Females and males of different backgrounds positively identify with explicit and implicit messages	<b>A2</b> Investigate how the issue/topic can enhance their self-awareness and improve their lives	<b>B2</b> Create metaphors and images to depict the attributes of the issue/topic	<b>C2</b> Apply and analyze the issue/topic within a variety of contexts	<b>D2</b> Consider thoughtfully different perspectives and means of expressing one's ideas
<b>Accurate-3</b> Seeking information that is verifiable and analyzing the values that frame it	<b>A3</b> Initiate and persist in discovery and analysis of the issue/topic	<b>B3</b> Co-investigate with peers to analyze the issue/topic from multiple points of view	<b>C3</b> Pose and investigate problems that lead to critical inquiry about the issue/topic	<b>D3</b> Verify the issue/topic in various contexts and analyze whose interests are served and not served
<b>Affirmative-4</b> Acknowledges & values the worth of individuals and groups	<b>A4</b> Use a variety of sources and experiences to explore and explain the issue/topic	<b>B4</b> Engage with peers and others to explore contributions in developing the issue/topic	<b>C4</b> Analyze the development and interpretation of the issue/topic	<b>D4</b> Depict various influences the issue/topic has on lived experience and social action
<b>Representative-5</b> Seeks and balances multiple perspectives	<b>A5</b> Participate in deciding how the issue/topic will be learned	<b>B5</b> Use and share a variety of approaches for learning the issue/topic	<b>C5</b> Analyze different interpretations of the issue/topic	<b>D5</b> Make informed judgments about the impact of the issue/topic on individuals & society
<b>Integrative-6</b> Weaves together the experiences, needs, and interests of males and females from diverse backgrounds for the purpose of determining self, communicating & collaborating, thinking critically & conceptually, and acting justly	<b>A6</b> Synthesize their experiences, ideas, and interests about the issue/topic	<b>B6</b> Dialogue about the issue/topic and question respectfully the suppositions of others	<b>C6</b> Identify common themes as different interpretations are exposed	<b>D6</b> Draw conclusions and evaluate implications for personal and social action
<b>Resistance-7</b> Challenges hurtful, oppressive, and marginalizing actions and conditions	<b>A7</b> Acknowledge, examine, and work to change their biases and stereotypes	<b>B7</b> Challenge bias, stereotypes, and hurtful actions of others	<b>C7</b> Examine the impact of attitudes and behaviors on individuals and groups	<b>D7</b> Initiate actions to confront oppressive behaviors and conditions

\* Issue/topics are the priorities for improvement, action, and/or investigation. Information, goal, concept, theme, outcome can be substituted for the term *issue/topic*.

\* Concepts are the organizing principles of the field of study targeted in the unit or course. Information, topic, issue, theme, outcome can be substituted for the term *concept*



## Intercultural communication to competence: Adult student inquiry through global travel Gretchen Wilbur, DePaul University

DePaul University students and faculty were curious about *who talks to whom in schools and cafes* and how these interactions may differ among cultures. Our curiosity, or “unbridled inquisitiveness” (Gregersen, Morrison, and Black, 1998), began the journey toward intercultural competence for 13 adult students. Their inquisitiveness inspired learning about others, which is perhaps the keystone in developing intercultural effectiveness (Bennett, 2009).

The travel course, *Who Talks to Whom in Schools and Cafes?*, took an inquiry approach to the study of interactions in different cultures, particularly those in Italy, Estonia, and the United States. Using intercultural communication variables (Hofstede, 2012; Triandis, 2012), students selected criteria for participant observations in each of the travel sites. These criteria provided a framework, or cultural map, for comparing and contrasting interaction patterns. Interpreting the cultural maps with resident scholars in Italy and Estonia challenged students’ assumptions and judgments, and opened their eyes to different perspectives about how things look.

In this paper, I will describe the travel course design and the inquiry approach that led students through stages of developing intercultural competence. Student reflections from the experience will be used to highlight their struggle and growth with the affective dimension of intercultural competence. Bennett’s (2009) intercultural positioning system provides a framework for analysis and will be connected to adult learning theory and principles. The integration of these characteristics will suggest an inquiry approach for adult development of intercultural competence.

### The Intended Purpose and Course Design

A central purpose guiding the learning experiences within the travel course was to evaluate how intercultural communications are affected by place. The course was designed (course outline available in conference session) to enable students to:

- apply theories of intercultural communication
- analyze how different socio-cultural factors interact to shape individuals and interaction patterns
- compare and contrast interaction patterns within and across three different cultures
- develop effective intercultural communication strategies

An inquiry process actively engaged students throughout the learning experiences. Prior to traveling, they used theoretical constructs from readings to select criteria for observations so they could compare patterns across cultures. When visiting Venice, Padua, and Verona in Italy and Tallinn in Estonia, students used the criteria to collect data and, in dialog with local university students and scholars, they interpreted patterns and most importantly, questioned their assumptions. They explored factors that shape individuals and interaction patterns in both countries as well as in the United States. A companion assignment throughout the experience—pre, during, and post travel—was a reflective journal. Students were expected to contextualize all their experiences—readings, observations, interactions—through reflections on their own

identity and how it relates to culture and communication. Therefore, not only did they observe others but also themselves, and used intercultural variables and frameworks to analyze their development of attitudes, skills, and shifting frames of reference (Deardorff, 2006).

### The Traveling Experience—Stories and themes emerging from student reflections

While traveling, the story of our struggle and growth in the affective dimension of intercultural competence is captured in student reflections. Themes emerged that reflect stages of intercultural development moving from observing, to seeing differently, to seeing within and among ourselves. Students' own voices punctuate the themes and make vivid their story of challenge, support, and transformation.

Our diverse group landed in Italy, armed with inquiry variables, ready to observe how people interacted within different spaces-piazas, cafes, schools, and universities. Some of us were curious about nonverbal interactions, power distance, and how technology mediates culture characteristics. We focused on examining others, those in the spaces new to us and in cultures different from our own. A week later, we carried our curiosity to Estonia and compared and contrasted our observations there to those examined in Italy. We began to see our lived experience in the United States in a different light.

#### Observing

In Italy, we observed the closeness of people to one another, for example, sitting side by side instead of across from one another in cafes, and walking arm in arm, hand in hand through piazas. In Estonia, we observed a greater personal distance among individuals, although this was influenced by space. In public spaces, eye contact and interactions were minimal while in schools and bars this was not the case.

Interactions among people had some similarities of course, but a lot of the differences are still fresh in my mind. I paid attention to some of the people sitting in the cafés and piazas; I made a mental note of how they were positioned as well as how they were communicating. I noticed, in Italy, that if there were two people at a table in an open area, they would, sometimes, both sit on the same side of the table. I would argue that people might have wanted to be able to take in their companion as well as share the experience of having the same view of the 'action'.

Haptics is the non-verbal communication of touch. According to professor Krista Vogelberg, "Estonians do not shake hands, and if a someone tried to hug me I would die." From my observations this was generally true of Estonians interacting with other Estonians or strangers. However personal experience discovered that Estonians are well adaptable to their situations. A few of us ventured off to a local bar where we met three local Estonians. Enjoying a drink and knowing that we were Americans, the Estonians expected more physical interaction with us. We found that the young Estonians reciprocated touch very well. This was quite a discovery and challenged generalizing what Professor Vogelberg had stated.

We noted the lack of cell phones and computers in these contexts; people talked with one another, looked directly at another whether friend or stranger, and rarely did we see people hold or interact with a technology device.

I was seriously taken aback by the lack of the use of technology in public. I was fully prepared for things to be different on some level but what I was not expecting is that I would see virtually no cell phones, tablets, laptops or electronic communication devices in either country. I did notice that a few more people had phones in Estonia, but it was nothing close to what I see in Chicago.

I didn't observe the smart-phone obsession so readily seen on any street in most of the United States. I didn't see people, sitting together or alone, in restaurants and cafes, ignoring one another in favor of the electronic device in their hands, texting one another from across the table. I didn't see all the people taking photos of the meals to Instagram up to Facebook. I didn't see coupons or discounts to businesses in the FourSquare geo-locator application. I think there is a fundamental difference between the culture and communication methods of the United States and of our host countries. I think they would rather interact with each other, face to face, than in an interface through a web portal.

#### Seeing things differently

Observing particular things in the places and spaces of different countries heightened our curiosity. Our preliminary interpretations were challenged by the resident scholars and raised questions about the viability of generalizations. We began to examine our own assumptions and the practices that we take for granted.

This whole process has allowed me to take account of myself in a way that most people will never do. I was able to critique my own actions and look at a few life events with different lenses. I have a greater appreciation for something as simple as a cup of coffee after immersing myself in a culture where I see the adoration and the appreciation for a cappuccino.

I no longer have limited vision. I look at the world with a new lens, and my vision is stronger and more colorful. This experience has helped me to become more diverse and open-minded. I appreciate and respect cultural difference; I even embrace it as my own.

#### Seeing within and among ourselves

Our insights about the other began to inform our understanding of ourselves, individually and collectively. The cultural diversity of our own group became obvious, at times, painfully so. The way we interacted with one another became the core curriculum for developing intercultural competence. While our observations in Italy and Estonia sensitized us to interaction variables, our attitudes and skills were challenged and developed through the discord among the travel group. Differences and assumptions based on age, ethnicity, privilege, gender, and sexual orientation came into prominent focus. Because of our close proximity and our shared curiosity about cultural variables, we took the uncomfortable leap to confront, rather than hide behind, our own limiting attitudes.

Honestly, when I picked my topic, I thought the culture shock that the group would experience would be from the diversity of the foreign country. It was my surprise that the shock was more internal and among ourselves.

The experience also was an eye opener to see our own cultural struggles when you get fifteen strangers together and out of their comfort zone. Observations of our own power struggles and everyone trying to determine their place in the group dynamics was fascinating. Observations in the cafés on non-verbal communication was great but even better was to watch other students. This experience opened my eyes to the realities of life and that not everyone lives within the same level of cultural acceptance and maturity.

Feeling out of place in the beginning I was always on the defense. I felt I had to prove something and show my worth to the group. That I had to make it known I was an asset. As we began to really get to know each other I found myself playing offensively. I reflected on everyone else's privileges and forgot that I possessed certain privileges. I was stuck on being an African American woman that I forgot that education, being able bodied, young, and attractive are also privileges that others may not have. After I realized this I saw Italy and Estonia in a different light. As Americans we cannot look at other cultures in a way of what they lack but in a way of what we lack. I took the entitlement of the American label out of my observations and saw that other cultures can also be privileged in ways we are not.

Some in our group may have been defensive and artificially friendly, but that may be because they have been hurt in the past. Others may have been seen as cliquy or unapproachable, but again that may be because they are insecure in their own identities. As the days went by, it was clear to see how walls went down and friendships bloomed within the group. If that much can change in just ten days and with a group of just 15, imagine how much a person can continue to change in weeks, months or years. I loved learning and seeing first-hand how there is no such thing as a fixed reality or a pre-given identification solely based on culture.

Insight and growth are evident in student voices.. The themes that emerged as our story developed can be positioned within frameworks for intercultural competence and adult learning. In so doing, the course design may shed light on how an inquiry approach is a vehicle for effective and appropriate cultural interactions. The following discussion contextualizes this experience within these frameworks.

#### Intercultural Positioning System: Analysis of inquiry approach and travel experience

Janet Bennett (2009) offers a framework for developing intercultural competence that builds upon the metaphor of a global positioning system (GPS). Her Intercultural Positioning System involves four steps for developing competence, defined as “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2009, p. 122 [Bennett??]). The four steps are 1. Fostering attitudes that motivate us, 2. Discovering knowledge that informs us of our own and

others' cultural position, 3. Assessing the challenge and support factors that affect our adaptation, and 4. Developing the skills that enable us to interact effectively and appropriately.

The Intercultural Positioning System stresses the importance of cultural mapping and locating ourselves to identify and bridge intercultural positions. "We are looking at the *interface* between two or more individuals with differing cultural maps and attempting to develop a strategy for integrating their values, beliefs, and behaviors to enhance the effectiveness of their interaction" (Bennett, 2009, p. 126). The culture map is a framework for comparing and contrasting cultures.

Our inquiry approach used cultural maps. Students identified the variables of interest and observed these variables in different cultural contexts. This aided and extended students' identification of their own location, that is, they gradually became aware of their taken-for-granted position with respect to the cultural variables. For example, one student writes, "while walking in a large group and crossing a narrow bridge, one student accidentally bumped another student and that was the trigger to light the emotional fuse. The students involved had a confrontation that proved Hall's (1969) point about increased anxiety when personal space is violated."

Step 1, fostering attitudes that motivate us, was initiated by our curiosity and cultural maps. Suspending assumptions and judgments and becoming more open to multiple perspectives occurred only after our observations were challenged by the Italian scholars with whom we met. This allowed us to see things differently, to use other lenses to interpret the cultural mapping. We became a bit more flexible in our thinking and tolerant of ambiguity thereby nurturing the affective dimension of intercultural competence.

With this budding openness we seemed more able to examine our own group dynamics and interactions. There was a layering of the intercultural positioning. Awareness of others enhanced awareness of self which in turn led to discovering the interface among individuals with different cultures within our own travel group. The emerging knowledge and attitudes that reflect respect and openness were applied to developing skills of "effective and appropriate communication and behavior in intercultural situations" (Deardorff, 2011, p. 67). Application of these skills within our own group became the context for intercultural competence development and moved us through Step 2, discovering knowledge that informs us of our own and others' cultural position.

Assessing the challenge and support factors, Step 3, were shared, daily experiences within our culturally diverse group. Unable to escape or withdraw, since we must travel together, there was a transparency in the challenge and support that was initiated. Indeed there were individual differences, but each of us began to "balance challenge and support to maximize adaptation across cultures" within our own diverse group. Travel courses are often too short and removed to develop interactions with those in the host country. This was true in our case. However, the cultural diversity within our group and the inevitability of continuous interactions, allowed the development of intercultural competence. As one student reflected, "the group dynamic grew so strong throughout the 10 days that we all stood on a cliff together at the edge of Europe to take a picture, even when clearly advised it was a hazard to our life. Our group was an example of Hofstede's cultural dimension of individualism vs. collectivism. In this case, individualism took a back seat to the collectivism of the group."

We are now positioned for Step 4, “the lifelong task of developing skills for adaptation” (Bennett, 2009, p. 132). These skills include empathy, listening, adapting, resolving conflict, and managing social interactions and anxiety. The students are eager to continue their skill development. Unlike other concluding reflections that end with students exclaiming they have been changed, this group of students continue their reflections to include ongoing steps in their intercultural skill development.

This is how we will survive in the new Globalized world. We need to understand that our culture is not the right culture, it’s just one of many. We need to learn to respect different cultures; we need to learn how to adapt to not only the place we are in but to the culture that we are interacting with. To be a successful student, business person, traveler we need to embrace the cultural differences. To do this we need to be aware of the unspoken language that surrounds us every day.

It is now my lifetime goal to keep these intercultural lessons in mind on a daily basis and not be so quick to judge and begrudge. I know I have changed because of the people I met, and I hope that my words and actions may have impacted someone else along the way.

I have, permanently I hope, integrated the skills of observation I learned both in the classroom and abroad, into my communication tool library. We learned words alone do not always effectively communicate meaning. Attention to tone of voice and inflection, posture and body language and other factors like predestination and personal distance, in addition to the spoken word, need to be considered when receiving communication. Going forward, paying close attention to, and grooming, these communication signals will help me be a better communicator.

I have learned that sometimes you must take yourself out of your comfort zone to realize you are capable of doing things you imagined would have been either too difficult or somewhat impossible. I also learned that one should first obtain information and become knowledgeable about other cultures, people and communication styles in order to avoid making incorrect generalizations or assumptions.

Learning about and being among different cultures adds richness to my own identity, culture and beliefs.

The inquiry approach taken in the course design as well as the diverse cultures in our own travel group provided a vehicle for moving along the four development stages of intercultural competence. There is a commitment to lifelong learning heard in the students’ voices. It is also evident that ongoing inquiry will deepen their cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills to enhance their effectiveness in various cultural contexts. Lifelong learning is a hallmark of adult learning. Connections are appropriate among the inquiry approach, intercultural positioning system, and adult learning principles. The following discussion outlines the overlaps that can deepen the learning from intercultural experiences.

Connections with Adult Learning

Adult learning principles integrate the concepts of experience, relevance, reflection, and active engagement. The integrative approach contextualizes learning within experience and prioritizes action. Relevance emphasizes not only what is known but how it is known. Reflection on the process of knowing and its application to experience engages adult learners in affirming, extending, expanding, and transforming meaning. (Knowles, 1980; Brookfield, 2000; Jarvis, 1999).

The development of intercultural competence through Bennett's intercultural positioning system consistently applies the characteristics of adult learning principles. Starting with locating oneself within the context affirms the experience of the learner. Fostering attitudes that motivate us builds upon that which is relevant for the learner and extends the experience by expanding the learner's perspective to consider other points of view. These characteristics are further developed through contextualizing learning by discovering knowledge that informs us of our own and others' cultural position. Adaptation through assessing the challenge and support factors leads to transformation that is grounded in experience and action. Relevance and meaning within action motivates learners to develop and extend skills that enable us to interact effectively and appropriately.

The inquiry approach in the course design actively engaged adult students in examining their own experience and taking action. Findings from their observations applied to their immediate, lived experience. The relevance of their inquiry was constructed by them based on their curiosity. Through affirmation of interests and pursuit of their curiosity, students examined their place within a global context. Their inquiry transformed how they viewed themselves in relation to others. As they extend effective interactions in a variety of cultural contexts, they are making progress on their lifelong quest for intercultural competence.

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## Social and Behavioural Aspects in a MSc Curriculum in Migrant Health, including multicultural, multireligious aspects and their health/ mental health impact

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### 1 Introduction

The number of migrants in the enlarged European Union is increasing rapidly. So the physical and mental status of health gets an increasing relevance, a lot of different factors have an important impact on migrants health, as biological and genetic preconditions, cultural and political requirements of their home- and host country, social conditions, mental health etc.

### 2 Aims

For protecting and healing the health of migrants in their host- countries a multifactorial approach is necessary. Experts with specific migrant-related knowledge have to be trained to be able coping with this complex, multidisciplinary task - where health, human rights and intercultural aspects - are equally represented. Therefore we started 2010 to develop a curriculum for MSc in Migrant Health, Addressing New Challenges in Europe – CHANCE funded by ERASMUS Lifelong Learning Program. The head is the university of Pecs with six European partner universities from England, Hungary, Slovakia, Austria and Germany. During the preparation-phase, six different Modules were conceptualized and this joint-degree program is built around six competencies. These Modules were now implemented in pilot-projects at the different participating Universities (see *Chart 1*) to provide material and to evaluate data for the planned degree program.

*Chart 1: Cooperating Universities and their Modules*

Name of University	Module
University Pécs (Hungary), Coordination	M2: Environmental medicine and occupational health M3: Economics and Migration Health
Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice (Slovakia)	M5: Clinical and Public Health Assessment
University of East Anglia (Great Britain)	M1: Concepts and theories of epidemiology and research methods on the area of migrant health
Donau University Krems (Austria)	M4: Migrant-sensitive health care: organizational and management requirements
Medical University Graz (Austria) University Greifswald (Germany)	M6: Social and behavioral Aspects of Migration including multicultural, multireligious aspects and their health/ mental health impact

### 3 Outcomes and contribution of the Module to the other modules

In chart 2 there are detailed general informations as chair persons, module coordinator, the credit value, assessment methods and prerequisites.

*Chart 2: Module Description*

<b>Module Title: Social and Behavioural Aspects of Migration</b>	
module code:	M6
Chair/Department:	Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Hannich Prof. Dr. Ursula Viktoria Wisiak
Module coordinator:	Dr. Jeannette Riedel
Degree programme:	Master of Science in Migrant Health
Curricular semester:	3rd semester
Semester when the module is delivered:	3rd semester Rotational in Graz and Greifswald
Contact hours per semester:	150
Number of credits allocated:	15 ECTS
Assessment methods:	Pre and Post Evaluation, Presentation, Test of knowledge, self-reflection, Portfolio
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed BA or equal qualification (in health sciences, humanities and social sciences)</li> <li>• Entry test</li> <li>• Students coming from other fields (BA) should pass an additional exam</li> <li>• English language skills</li> </ul>

#### 3.1 Module Outcomes

The learning outcomes have been developed to extend and integrate the knowledge of migration, regarding different groups of migrants and risk factors related to health and mental health issues. The intercultural competences and communication skills will be improved, including an ethic, appreciating, empathetic behaviour in an intercultural context. So the general aims are:

1. To advance in-depth knowledge of the behavioral dynamics, the mental and psychosocial consequences of international migration in modern Europe.
2. To build professional competence professionals for helping international migrants in their coping with stressors of migration, including effective (evidence based) use of contemporary methods of mental health promotion.
3. To be empowered with personal abilities and skills necessary for practical work with different groups of migrants, especially with their most vulnerable subgroups, including communication skills, as well as skills to protect own mental health on a self-help and mutual aid basis.

After gaining the theoretical foundation the students will get the opportunity to make more and more practical experiences .

### 3.2 Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this module, students will have:

#### **In-depth knowledge of:**

- Broad and integrated knowledge of Theories and Models (international migration in Europe, Theories of migration, Health Belief model and Cognitive Structure of Illness, Communication model, Acculturation model)
- Factual and practical knowledge of Stress and Coping (multicultural perspective, discrimination, racism, pre- and postdisplacement and migration factors, salutogenesis, acculturation-stress)
- Basic knowledge of psychopathology (Epidemiology of mental disorders, diagnostic classification, psychotraumatology)
- Advanced knowledge of special groups (victims of trafficking, forced prostitution and smuggling, unaccompanied minors, women, elderly persons, asylum seekers)

#### **Professional competence to:**

- Conduct in-depth interviews to assess the biological, psychological and social factors of Migration regarding the holistic model of health and illness
- Communication skills and intercultural competences
- Basics of counselling for migrants in acute crisis (e.g. victims of violence)
- Make referrals of migrants in special need to different services and work in cooperation with them
- Contribution to effective team working
- Development of networks and partnerships
- Anticipate consequences of action and intervention taking into account ethics, values, cultures, behaviours and social norms
- Design, implement and evaluate (migrant) community based health promotion in order to develop new knowledge in the field
- Mentoring and consultation services provided to local school boards, work organization, public authorities, health and social services and civil organizations in their coping with migration
- Recognize and assess vulnerability to job stress and early “burn-out” among local service providers working with migrants
- Utilization of early prevention on the base of team work with local health professionals to protect own mental health

#### **Personal abilities and skills in the areas of:**

- Emphatic skills in sensing special mental health needs of culturally diverse groups
- Respect and tolerance towards cultural diversities
- Act and Resolve problems with empathy, social responsibility and civic awareness
- Leadership skills specific to multicultural settings
- Development of Critical thinking skills on theories and practice
- Sensibility to creative problem solving
- Willingness to active life-long learning
- Ability to advance democracy, minority rights and social justice in migration health

### 3.3 Contribution to the other Modules of the MSc in Migration Health

The subjects are connected to all other modules, for example to

- Environmental Medicine and Occupational Health (M2): Knowing risk factors of different groups of migrants can help developing prevention concepts and improve health-behaviour.
- Economics and Migration Health (M3): potential risk factors and understanding the situation of migrants may contribute to better prevention and health care may lead to better labour integration.

- Migrant-sensitive Health Care: Organizational and Management Requirements (M4): Knowledge of special needs of migrants in the health care system, contributions to improvement of health care system.
- Clinical and Public Health Assessment (M5): Health belief models, bio-psycho-social model of health as theoretical backgrounds for the assessment.

The module will run over half a semester for 7 weeks.

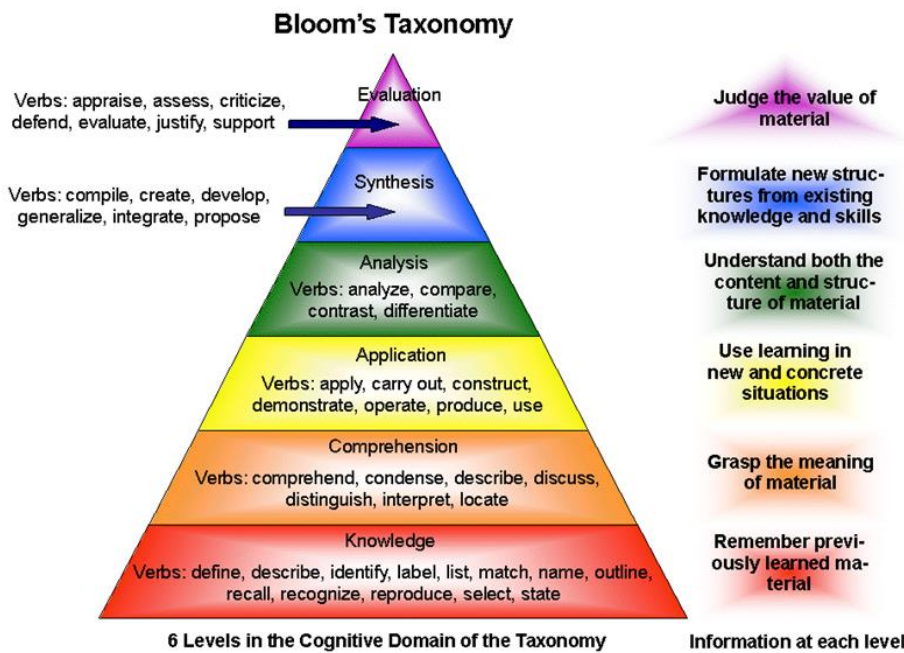
## 4 Syllabus Structure

Table 2: Syllabus Structure of M6

M6: Social and behavioural aspects of migration							
Lecture week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Period	Theoretical foundation			Intercultural communication		Practical field work	
Course(s) name	1. Introduction to migration, special groups of migrants, life situation	2. Health Aspects of migrants: Risk-factors, models, psycho-pathology	3. Practical insight: Health care needs, working with migrants	4. Training of intercultural communication skills, communication models		5. Field work in local Institutions that work with migrants	
ECTS	2,5	2,5	3	4		3	
Contact hours (ConHrs)	25	25	30	40		30	
Student's total WL (including ConHrs)	75	75	90	120		90	
Teaching methods	Lectures, Seminars, E-Learning, Individual learning, Small groups assignments			Workshop, video- and supervisory feedback, simulation-patients		Small group work, Interview, preparation of presentation supported by Module-Coordinator	
Assessment	Test of knowledge Oral Presentation Portfolio			Performance Instruction video Portfolio		Group Presentation	

The curriculum is subdivided into three components, according to Blooms Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (1956), which is shown in *figure 1*: The Theoretical Background, Intercultural Communication and the Practical Field Work.

Figure 1: Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom, 1956)



In the first part the students gain knowledge about migration, acculturation, health risk factors, psychological risk factors, intercultural competence. Learning Targets and Learning Contents are formulated. Following Bloom, the first sessions provide the theoretical foundation, which includes knowledge and comprehension. This will be assured by contributing information and theory to the students by experts lectures, including discussions and the opportunity to make own experiences in interactive tasks, but also by self-study of literature. This will be measurable in a test of knowledge at the end .

The second part refers to Blooms Application and Analysis. Intercultural communication skills are acquired. Based on communication models, participants will attain a ten-lesson-training in intercultural communication with role-playing, simulated patients and supervisory- as well as video feedback. The outcome will be testable due a test of knowledge about the theory of intercultural communication and by performance of skills at the end.

The practical field work, according to Blooms Synthesis and Evaluation, will serve as a connection between knowledge and application in practical work. By talking to Experts who work in the field and making own experiences students shall be enabled to draw connections to theory, develop own ideas and evaluate the content of their studies. The results are to be presented orally to the group, to have an option of further discussion and formulating consequences.

So each of the three components shown in *figure 1* is related to different learning objectives, as described earlier.

## 5 The Pilot Project in Greifswald

The Module was chosen to be implemented and tested in Greifswald, Germany in cooperation with the Institute for Medical Psychology at the University Greifswald and the Medical University in Graz. The Pilot Project was integrated into the curriculum of medical studies in Greifswald as an obligatory elective course for third semester students. A maximum of 20 participants, who voluntarily chose this subject, was to be included. 28 lessons (45 minutes each) were to be taught in, mostly, two-lesson-sessions by members of the project, as well as external experts.

The Pilot Project was planned to take place during the winter semester of 2012-2013, the sessions were mostly weekly. The theoretical background, as well as the practical work, was to be finished until the end of December 2012. After the completion of the seminar by a weekend workshop in intercultural communication in January 2013 a test checked the participants gained knowledge. The seminar is evaluated pre and post,

as provided by a member of the project and translated into German. Additionally every session was evaluated in a short questionnaire.

The Module contains a lot of aspects, which made it very difficult to decide which topics to focus on. The aim was to give a general conspectus of the heterogeneity of the groups of migrants and the associated heterogeneity of potential risk-factors with impact on the health of migrants, covered in diverse bio-psycho-social health models. On the other side, the attention was on the improvement of intercultural competent performance, which includes an appreciating, professional and empathetic attitude towards patients of different backgrounds.

The core competencies we were going to achieve at the end of the pilot study were:

- to understand the impact of migration on the psycho-social wellbeing of migrants
- to understand the sociocultural (and social psychological, psychological) adjustment process and its consequences on health and health behavior
- to understand and cope with multicultural, multi-religious aspects of health
- to appreciate the impact of violence and torture on refugee populations and the stress and cultural impacts of leaving and entering new cultures
- to appreciate and understand the health consequences of migration related crimes like trafficking and smuggling in human beings
- to provide culturally appropriate treatment or referral services
- to understand ethical and legal issues of migration health

## 5.1 Description of Sessions

In the following every session of the pilot project will be described, naming the learning objectives, the course of the session, negative and positive aspects from the coordinators point of view and the evaluation of the sessions by the participants.

### **1 Introduction to the Seminar**

A short presentation is given about background information of the CHANCE-project, the aims of this course, its schedule and the three different components. Organizational issues like building small groups for the field work are discussed. Afterwards a motivation game was played with all participants to give a first impression of the topic and first self-experiences. This contained the option to get to know each other in a short interview.

### **2 Introduction to Migration, Escape and Asylum**

Following estimations, worldwide, about 200 Million People do not live in the country of their citizenship or where they were born. The reasons for migration are as diverse as the people themselves. In this introduction, background information for the topics escape and migration will be given. Abstract questions, like “Which explanation models do exist for migration?” will tried to be answered. But also very concrete legal- and life-issues of different groups of migration will be dealt with and an overview will be given. The aim of the course was to give an introduction and a general overview for migration, asylum and escape.

### **3 Migrants Health I: Introduction, Theory, Models**

The heterogeneity of migrants is displayed in their health situation and also in the health care system. In science and research, there are often difficulties to analyze the “group of migrants” and to make generalizable conclusions. Explanation models will be introduced, taking into account the different circumstances of different groups of migrants and statistical results. Problems in the health care system in context with migrants will be pointed out.

### **4 Migrants Health II: Escape and Trauma – Practical Example**

The referee is a psychological psychotherapist and head of a division for migrated women who need continuous assistance at the treatment center for victims of torture (bzfo) in berlin. In this division, the women, who became victims of sexual violence in their countries of origin and suffer from posttraumatic stress disorders, receive psychosocial support. The referee will give information about PTSD and its treatment, as well as experiences from her work with traumatized women and the intercultural working context.

### **5 Rescue, Help and Culture – Intercultural Competence in Civil Protection**

About 19% of the German population have a migration background. This portion is even higher in some regions and is prognostic going to increase. Therefore contacts between this populations and care givers in an emergency are common. Still there exists only little empirical knowledge about the need of people with a migration background in emergency situations. In the context of the research project “Rescue, Help & Culture – Intercultural competence in the emergency case” asked people, involved in an emergency, with and without migration background for their needs and experiences. The collected data was qualitative and quantitative. The results will be presented and discussed. The following consequences for the health care system (especially intercultural elements out of trainings) will also be presented and applied.

### **6 The critical Monitoring and Perception of one’s Self**

Observing systems are always connected to knowledge, norms, consent in their perception, recognition and behavior. In the context of racism, as well as in sexism, it is necessary to consider one’s own position. White is not recognized as a “race” and is excluded by racial categorization, but it is a mechanism of power, which causes or enables racism. Being white is linked to power and privileges and as such unconscious internalized. In the contrary, being Black is considered a “race” and is via the perception of the color of skin biologized as different. Since Black differs from the white invisible norm and is considered the Other, the subject of Black is invisible, while their position as an object is marked by the skincolor. The question is, how the white view of the Black Object can be transferred to the Black subject, so that the asymmetry in power can be pointed out. The referee, Natasha Kelly, is researcher for communication science at the University Münster and at the center for transdisziplinary gender studies in Berlin. Her emphasis is on racism and sexism research.

### **7 Intercultural Communication**

Based on the theories of Watzlawik and Schulz von Thun some manners of different cultures will be pointed out, to facilitate the ability to deal with communication problems, which might appear because of different cultural backgrounds. Role-distance, ambiguity-tolerance and empathy will be practiced. Missunderstandings often appear during communication, even if the interaction partners have the same cultural background and speak the same language. Exercises will display intercultural competence. An Introduction about prejudice and stereotypes gave a first insight into intercultural communication. Extended models of Schulz von Thun and Hofstede served as the theoretical background for intercultural efficacy. All emphasis were added by practical assignments for experience based learning.

### **8 Practical Work**

The obligate elective course “Migrants health and intercultural communication” consists of three main parts:

1. Theoretical background of migration, groups of migrants and their health
2. Intercultural Communication
3. Practical field Work

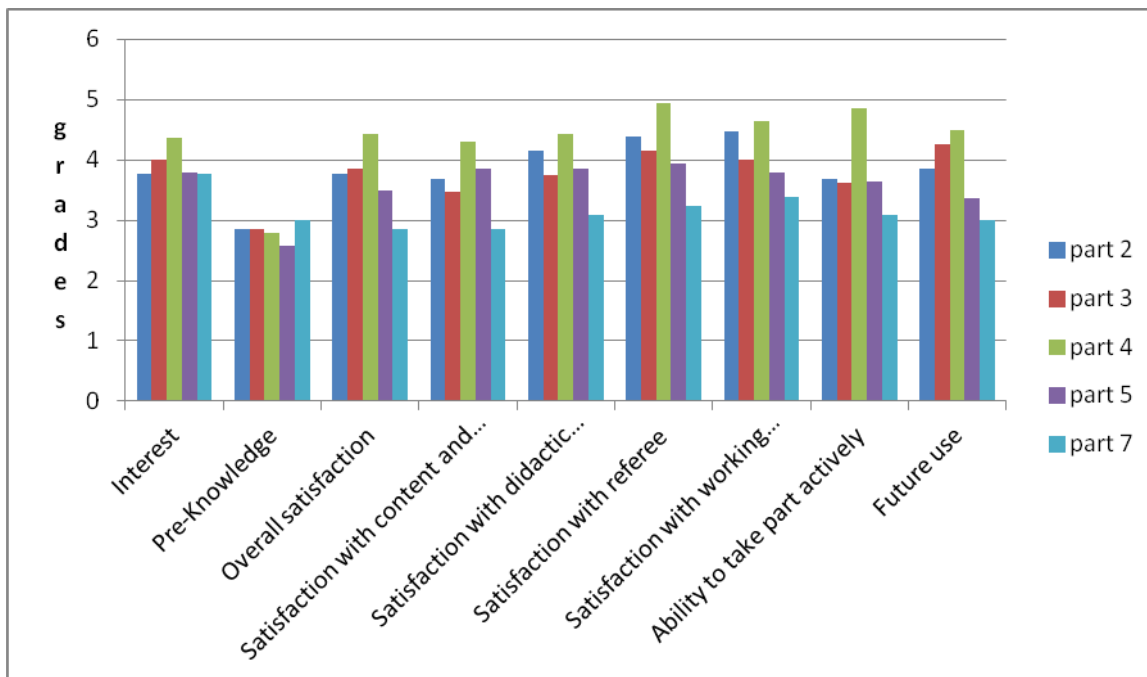
In the practical field work, we want students to accomplish interviews in small groups with a local institution, which works with migrants. This interview has to be based on the theoretical knowledge gained in the different seminars. Afterward we want you to present the results. The aim of this task is to establish a link to praxis by getting in contact with local institutions and get to know about their work, field of activity, experiences and potential problems.

*Execution:* Four groups were built. The lokal institutions chosen were the mosque, the psych-social-center for migrants and the refugee-accommodations in Greifswald and Wolgast. These institutions were first contacted by the coordinators, who explained the aim of the task. Almost all institutions (except the refugee-accommodation in Greifswald) agreed and were happy to give information.

### **5.2 Evaluation**

Sessions (2,3,4,5,7) were evaluated on a short form with nine questions about the past session according interest, satisfaction with different aspects and the use for future activities were to be answered on a scale from 1 to 5 were 1 signified “total disagreement” and 5 “total agreement” (see *Chart 4*).

*Chart 4: Evaluation data (means) of special parts of the sessions*



The test of knowledge was obligate for all participants who wanted to get the course accredited. After accomplishing the theoretical foundation and the practical field work they received a preparation paper. The test of knowledge would check the content of every session and additional literature, which was provided at the internet.

12 students took part at the test of knowledge, 7 out of 12 reached a “very good” result (grade: 1).

### 5.3 Conclusion

The results of the evaluation of the sessions show, that the participants were always rather satisfied than dissatisfied with the seminar, although there are differences between the single sessions. The comments made by the participants on the qualitative questions should be accounted for in future courses to assure a greater satisfaction. The good results of the test of knowledge represent an effective preparation for the test, but also show that it was neither too easy nor too difficult to pass.

Overall the Module 6, Social and Behavioral Aspects of Migration, of the CHANCE-Project was successfully implemented and pilot tested as an obligate elective course of medical studies. A rising interest in “Migrants Health” can be observed. However, the implementation of the CHANCE-Project will give further information about the target group of participants. There is also improvement potential of the teaching, which can be used within other frame conditions of the course, like a larger amount of time, basic knowledge and networking with other Universities.

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## **INTER-RELATIONSHIPS OF CULTURE, ILLNESS AND HEALING – PROSPECTS FOR INTEGRATION OF CULTURAL PSYCHOTHERAPIES**

By

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### ***Introduction***

The general contention of cross-cultural psychologists, like Vontress (1986), is that the central theme in counselling and or psychotherapy is culture. In order to appreciate the crucial role cultures play in effective psychotherapeutic relationships there is need to first understand the nature of culture. The paper discusses how cultures influence conceptualizations of illness, health and healthcare or psychotherapeutic practices. The paper then presents case examples to illustrate how cultural conceptualizations of illness, health and healthcare influence help-seeking behaviours, acceptance of help and methods of treatment of illnesses and or dis-ease(s). The paper ends with arguments in support of integration of cultural psychotherapies for effective services delivery. .

### ***The nature of culture***

The nature of culture is better understood from the perspective of constructivists regarding human nature in terms of person-environmental relationships. Bronfenbrenner (1979) and other constructivists contend that people shape and are shaped by their environment. As people interact and or cognitively engage with their environments they construct lenses with which they interpret their worlds, make meanings of their experiences and construct various realities including beliefs, attitudes, values, linguistic and communication patterns, institutions, labels, laws, and various other practices all of which constitute the framework of people's culture (Freedman & Combs, 1996; Shweder, 1991). Laungani (1995) describes elements which define the identity and purpose of people of a culture to include behaviour patterns, beliefs, values, expectations, philosophies and institutions. Included in these elements are ideas and rules by which people's behaviours are directed, what people hold very dearly in their minds, their modes of perceiving, relating and interpreting, all of which form part and parcel of the people's persona or psyche...Singellis' (2000) assertion is that all the realities constructed by the people are shaped by their cultural institutions, rituals, socialization practices and patterning of interactions. Kashima (2000) contends that culture is what provides the material and symbolic tools by which people adapt to their ecological and social environment and construct images of themselves and of the world in which

people live. Generally, therefore, culture is simply the way of life of a people and it includes the sum total of the people's beliefs about and procedures for coping with their environment (Hall, 1996).

### ***Cultural differences***

A people's culture is largely influenced by the conditions of the environment in which they live. Where a group of people is situated on earth determines to a large extent how the people relate to their natural environment and to themselves (Vontress, 1966). That is, people develop culture unique to the environment in which they live. Human actions are influenced by the settings in which they occur, since people attach different meanings and values to different aspects of the environments (Bojuwoye, 2001). Due to variations in ecology and adaptation to ecology peoples living in different environments have different cultures because of the different realities they have constructed with regard to their environments and the different ways by which they view the world (Berry, 1976; Nsamenang, 1992). For instance, people living in Africa have developed realities about their African environment and have developed tools, languages, attitudes, values and relationships unique to their own African environment but different from people in Europe or America. The African environment with its unique physical, social, ecological, climatic and other geographical conditions has led to the construction of realities by which African people adapt to their African environmental conditions and these realities are different from the realities the Europeans or the Americans construct for themselves in their own unique European or American environment. Notwithstanding, however, there are commonalities in many human experiences irrespective of the environments in which they live. There are, however, differences in the interpretations of or the meanings given to these experiences.

### ***Differences in conceptualizations or interpretations***

Every human being, irrespective of culture, experiences illness, dis-ease or discomfort whether this be physical, social, mental or emotional. Every human being, in every culture, experiences pain, distress, loss, sorrow, bereavement or other forms of dis-ease or discomfort. However, not every culture understands or interprets experiences of dis-eases or discomforts the same way. Rather, and as So (2005) asserts, every culture has its own unique way(s) of understanding and or explaining health, illness and healing. Depending on the environment in which people live Mariach's (2003) contention is that various knowledge systems (beliefs, values, behaviour patterns, philosophies, laws, institutions, etc) are developed to explain or interpret and respond to conditions within the environment. The knowledge system by which people explain, interpret and respond to experience of health

condition such as disease or illness and restore health to individuals who are ill cannot be separated from the culture of the people or the environment in which they live (Mariach, 2003). Although, as argues by Harkness and Keefer (2000), there are evidences of the universality of human experiences, especially those regarding health conditions, but there are also different ways that health and illness are culturally defined and treated.

Cultural knowledge systems for interpreting conditions affecting human functioning, particularly systems for explaining human health conditions and methods for restoring health to people who are ill, have been in existence since time immemorial (Bojuwoye, 2001). These knowledge systems have played and continue to play significant roles in improving human conditions and elevating quality of life, promoting health, curing diseases, preventing illness, facilitating personal empowerment, growth and social transformation (Vontress, 2000). So (2005), however, notes that each culture developed its own knowledge systems or explanatory models for illness, health and treatment methods for illnesses. Each culture has its own traditional knowledge systems and or practices (whether explicable or not) for assessment, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of conditions affecting human functioning, whether these conditions be physical, social, mental or psychological (Conserveafrica, 2006). Good and Good (1982) earlier contended that the meaning of illness for an individual is grounded in the network of meanings an illness has in a particular culture. Included in this network of cultural meanings of illnesses are the repository of accumulated wisdom, metaphors, linguistic patterns, folklore or other forms of oral or written literature associated with what might be described as the culture's theories of the causes or aetiology of illnesses, the care patterns that shape the experience of the illness and the social reactions to the sufferer (Sodi & Bojuwoye, 2011).

Cook's (1994) research findings clustered cultural beliefs about illnesses into three categories of biomedical, psycho-social and phenomenological beliefs. The biomedical beliefs about illnesses, otherwise described as Western cultural explanatory models, belong to the people of Western Europe and North America. Kleinman (1995) asserts that the biomedical model of healthcare practice in its own right is a cultural system complete with its systems of beliefs, values and faith in precise methods, empirical evidences and related forms of knowledge. Historically Western medical and or psychological practices rely on natural science with empirical means or measurable outcomes and adopt disease-based framework to explain illnesses (Vjver & Leung, 2000). Western-oriented biomedical model of healthcare practice pioneered by Hippocrates has biology as the bedrock of all forms of illness (Kleinman, 1995). Thus, Western cultural approach to healthcare practice considers all forms of illness to be the results of an individual's inner processes and treatment is mainly by removal of symptoms of illnesses (van der Vjver, Fons & Leung, 2000).

The psycho-social and phenomenological beliefs about illnesses are usually described as non-Western models and are associated mainly with the indigenous peoples of the world especially those residing in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the native Aboriginal people of America and Southern Ocean Islands Non-Western healthcare or psychological practices are often also described as traditional healing – traditional because they are deeply rooted in the socio-cultural contexts and values of the communities and represent structured systems of ordering, classifying and explaining illnesses and for delivering healthcare (Ataudo, 1985).

The non-Western cultural models of healthcare or psychological practices conceptualize realities holistically and dynamically in terms of materials, religious and spiritual dimensions (Holdstock, 2000). Thus non-Western cultures use conceptual frameworks that represent and present their illnesses and psychological discomforts different from the Western cultures. For instance, non-Western models of healthcare are holistic and treat the “whole” person unlike the Western model with its tendency to compartmentalize human experiences and treat a patient as an assembly line of body parts each to be managed with great expertise by an appropriate specialist (Chan, 2008). Vontress (2005) also contend that non-Western traditional models of healthcare do not segment individual patient into physical, social and spiritual parts in order to treat each separately. According to Buhrmann (1986), in the non-Western traditional model of healthcare practiced among many African and Asian cultures peoples’ “illnesses” are not divided into various categories of somatic or psychological, neither do peoples split themselves into good or bad parts. Rather people express their distress or discomfort as *“when part of me is ill, the whole of me is ill, irrespective of what the illness is”* (p.26). Another important aspect of the non-Western model of healthcare or psychological practice is the consideration given to the role played by social conditions, power relations and societal institutional arrangement in shaping peoples’ conceptualizations of illnesses and associated help-seeking behaviours (Angelique & Kyle, 2001; van der Vijver, Fons & Leung, 2000). Moreover, non-Western cultural healthcare practice is comprehensive with concern for illness prevention, health promotion and or cure as equal importance is given to both prevention and cure of illnesses (Sodi, 2009).. Unlike Western medical model which adopts symptoms removal as method for treating illness, non- Western model goes beyond symptoms removal for treatment of illnesses, but also addresses deeper contextual as well as emotional and spiritual causes of illness and helping patient to come to the understanding that certain forces in nature impacting negatively on people’s health may be parts of the essence of living not to be removed or wished away but rather to be negotiated and accommodated (Bojuwoye, 2001). Thus non-Western traditional healthcare model shares similar principles as contained in Mark’s (1994) assertion that procuring health is not just about taking pills, but it may also be about making decision,

adopting healthy lifestyles and taking steps to ensure that changes occur in the physical environmental and the socio-economic conditions of the people.

***Case examples to illustrate cultural differences in conceptualizations and treatments of illnesses***

As indicated earlier in this paper that human beings experience similar health conditions, but different interpretations of illnesses which also connote different methods of treatment. For instance, Sodi (2009) describes the case of depression, a health condition which when considered from Western perspectives is regarded as a consequence of some malfunction within an individual's body or psychological structures. However, conceptualization of depression by non-Western cultures especially those of sub-Saharan communities takes into account spiritual and social dimensions. For instance, a health condition with symptoms similar to Schizophrenia, described by Nguni speaking peoples (Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele) of Southern Africa as "*amafufunyana*" is explained in terms of spirits possession but described by Western-oriented practitioners as extreme form of depression with psychotic features including hysteria and suicidal tendencies.

Sodi and Bojuwoye (2011) presented cases of three people from different cultural backgrounds (British, Indian and African), who were about the same age (32 years) and of the same gender (men). but experienced similar health condition of depression with symptoms which include feeling of emptiness, diminished interest in most activities the patient used to enjoy, difficulties sleeping, inappropriate guilt, difficulties concentrating and recurrent thoughts of death. The British patient was clinically assessed involving individual one-on-one interview, medical examination with some laboratory tests and psychological tests. The results of the clinical assessment suggested that the British patient might have been suffering from major depressive episode possibly connected with his recent breakup with a girlfriend. Medication and personal therapy or counselling were suggested for treatment.

The Indian patient, who lived in an extended family system, with his parents, brothers, sisters and nephews, consulted a shaman whose method of diagnosis of his patient's illness involved consultation with the spirits world before coming into conclusion that the patient's discomfort was an indication of his being called to enter the shamanic profession and be a helper. The patient was, therefore, required to go through apprenticeship training during which period he was also expected to perform a number of rituals involving consultation with and paying homage to the family deities as well as to undergo fasting and live according to the prescribed conduct and rules governing shamanic training and shamanic way of life.

The African patient, who had left his rural home to live in a city several thousand of miles away, consulted the traditional healer who assessed his patient's problem by throwing divination bones and consulted the ancestral spirits before suggesting to the patient that he was suffering from a disease (*semenya*) which can be loosely translated into English language as simply "*bad luck*". The bad luck was said to have been inflicted on the patient by angry family ancestors who felts that the patient had turned his back on them. The patient was given herbal concoction as tranquilizer to calm his nerves and to correct his sleeping pattern. He was also asked to perform a ritual in the form of sacrifice to the ancestors by killing a goat and inviting friends and relations for a feast.

In each of the cases above the conceptualization of the illness suffered by the patient, which was within the realm of meaning which the patient's problem made sense to him, determined the treatment methods. In the case of the British patient culturally appropriate scientific and objective tools were employed as empirical means to understand the patient's problem which was narrowed down to disruption in physiological makeup of the patient as consequence of relationships breakup with his girlfriend. Appropriate intervention strategy was prescribed in the form of therapy – clinical consultative one-on-one psychotherapy. In the cases of the Indian and African patients the healers employed appropriate cultural tools to provide their patients with appropriate interpretation of life and universal connectedness that provide patients with means of making sense of their world. The healers obtained information for understanding the discomforts of their patients from the sources which made meanings to the patients within their cultures. The focus for treatment of the problems the patients might be suffering from and the remedies for their problems were not only on the patients but also on their social circumstances and their spiritual well-being. In the case of the Indian patient Sollod (1993) notes that shamanic practices almost invariably involve spiritual aspect. Moodley (2005) also notes that interpretation of a patient's problem by a shaman is usually offered by the "spirits" with the shaman informing the patient that the source of the problem could be god, devil, another soul or another person.. The treatment for the Indian patient's problem was described as education for the development of a sense of social responsibility, appropriate attitudes and values for which are acquired through undergoing training to become a shaman. During the training the Indian patient is taught to live with extended family system and to cope with factors in his extended family system impinging upon his health and to develop coping mechanism, ability to endure life difficulties, belief in the primacy of harmonious social relationship and to achieve a more positive outlook. Training in dieting (fasting) is to correct the effects of some food on his emotions, feelings and anxieties while the performance of rituals or paying homage to the family deities is to facilitate the healing of the patient by the deities or ancestral spirits.

The African healer threw the bones and read the arrangements of the falling objects as a way of identifying and connecting with the energies that govern the patient's situation and to help frame the focus of healing. The worries and anxieties expressed by the patient were said to be connected with the patient's subconscious isolation having moved from his faraway rural home to live in the city. His discomfort was said to be related to guilt feelings and anxiety around his loss of his roots and was, therefore, asked to reconnect with his ancestors, through performance of animal sacrifice or the organization of ritual feast for his friends and relations. The ancestors are the rallying points, the embodiment of spiritual connections or the archetypes of collective unconsciousness. The animal sacrifice or ritual feast served as means for bringing people together to provide a needed sense of community and identity leading to rich connections between mind, body and the spirit. According to Swartz (1997), the indigenous Africans perceive harmony between the individual and the ancestors as critical to maintaining good mental health

***Conclusion – Call for Integration of Cultural Healthcare Systems.***

The contentions from the review of literature on cross-cultural psychology, as presented in this paper, is that culture affects therapeutic helping, that a client's culture is the major healing instrument in therapeutic relationship, and, that the most effective therapeutic agents are those who embody the culture of their clients (NGOMA, 2003; Vontress, 2005). Cultures influence attitudes of people towards illnesses, affect availability and acceptance of professional help, how people cure themselves or why they seek help when they are suffering from specific health conditions and cultures affect beliefs regarding perceived efficacy of cures as well as attitudes toward overcoming health problems (Furham, 1997). Cultures are also responsible for differences in conceptualizations of experiences particularly with regard to the realities people construct to cope with their environments. There is no universal worldview regarding illnesses whether in terms of their causation or appropriateness of treatment. The differences in conceptualization of illnesses and methods of treatment have led to the difficulties in the application of one cultural model of psychological practice to people of another culture. In fact no model has universal applicability and the notion regarding a cultural therapeutic approach as being primary or superior to others is unacceptable. The truth is that all cultural models have contributions to make to effective healthcare delivery of the world as many techniques seem to be effective with the same problems throughout the world (Tseng & McDermott, 1975). In view of this contention there has been suggestion for the integration of different cultural perspectives. Integration is considered to have many advantages among which are ensuring context-sensitive practice, and practice with possibility of sharing of ideas and knowledge, the blending of different cultural initiatives in a beneficial harmony, the pooling of different



cultural resources across cultures in a world and the utilization of the best features of different cultural systems while compensating for the weaknesses of some. The world is increasingly becoming multicultural and therefore, integration not only make for giving consideration for client's cultural values in order to render appropriate or effective therapeutic services, integration also has promise for making healthcare affordable and available for people who are geographically and economically inaccessible

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**Islamic cultural tradition in the Caribbean region: opportunities and challenges to integration with Western-oriented cultural healthcare practices<sup>1</sup>**

Abstract

*This paper discusses dam karma, an Islamic healing practice, as an adjunctive therapy in the cultural and political economy of the Caribbean. It opens up opportunities for exploring further connections between areas such as counseling psychology and spirituality, or Islamic hospital chaplaincy, and that of religion and medicine. And, it offers in the form of an hypothesis, an explanation of the resistance to the practice gaining acceptance as a supplemental treatment in the health care delivery system, especially among English speaking countries of the region  
Caribbean cultural healing–spiritual practices include dam karma.*

Keywords: healing, health, medical, healthcare, Muslims, Quran, science, paradigm, politics.

The practice, references as *dam karma*, persists among Muslims, especially in Guyana and Trinidad, and even among Caribbean diaspora members in North America. This it does, despite the availability of modern medical treatment or access to mental health care services. However, its persistence is both opportunity and challenge. On the one hand, the opportunity is to integrate the practice as an adaptive or supplemental therapy in the health care delivery systems of the region. On the other hand, that opportunity is better grasped when the persistence is seen as challenge: determining the initial conditions, despite persistence, for the failure of *dam karma* to emerge as a formally recognized mental health therapy in the Caribbean. In a wider sense, the opportunity and challenge are applicable to a large number of similar healing-spiritual practices, yet to gain recognition as therapies in a national healthcare delivery system.

I would like to theorize on the failure, using *dam karma* as a case in point. More specifically, to postulate that resistance to its recognition is associated with at least two factors: 1) an epistemological assumption of the medical paradigm and, 2) a shift in the definition of religion. The integrating of this healing practice and religion has wider and related significance. That is, it is part and parcel of genre in the history of understanding of oneself with respect to human survival and well-being in countries that were once part of the British Caribbean political economy.

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<sup>1</sup>This presentation adapts contents from my forthcoming essay “Contemporary Integration of Spirituality and Healthcare Delivery: An Indo- Caribbean Case Perspective Referencing an Islamic Influenced Healing Therapy,” *Voice of the Intellectual Man* (June , 2013). A shorter version, to focus more on healing practitioners and practices, is appearing as "Islamic Influence in the Caribbean Traditional and Cultural Healing Practice," in *Caribbean Healing Traditions : Implications for Health and Mental Health* ( New York: Routledge, 2013), chapter 15.

First, something about *dam karma* as healing ritual that is Islamic influenced, before moving on to the postulate.

**A. What is *dam karma*?** It is a healing ritual based on the use of Quranic verses. An Urdu-Persian expression, *dam karma* etymologically references the performance of a specific action: the blowing or spreading the breath of life over one's body (*dam* = blood/life, *karna* = act of blowing breath). However, this act is done immediately after reciting a passage of the *Qur'an* that for adherents is a life giving or affirming Book. The *Qur'an* is not just a book but for Muslims but also a miracle, associated with the miraculous.

An healing act, *dam karma* is comprised of two components. One is the supplication or prayer/*du`ā`* that involves the reciting of the appropriate verses for the *Qur'an*.

The other is the blowing of the breath over the affected area of the person. It is not the breath itself that has the efficacy, but the spreading of the words of the *Qur'an* using as a wand the breadth with which the words of the *Qur'an* have just been uttered. Put differently, the *Qur'an* is the healing words of the healer, Allah/God.

Sometimes, instead of blowing on the body, the blowing is done over a cup of water and given to be drunk by the sick. The term for requesting the performative act is *maangna du`ā`* as if it references the two components, but in fact it literally means "asking for supplication." A Toronto hospital chaplain imam reported that in requesting healing supplication, Trinidadians and Guyanese use the expression *maangna du`ā`*, unlike Jamaicans who say *du`ā`*. But the imam would do also on the Jamaicans the blowing of the breadth, something they seem to welcome, thinking that it is therapeutically beneficial.

Sometimes too, the Qur'anic verses are written in digits on a piece of paper, folded and given to be kept in the pocket or carried in a *tabeej*/amulet worn on the body, either arm, shoulder or waist, using a string. Digits are used to represent the syllables of the verses of the *Qur'an*, a book whose words are sacred and life giving, and in reverence one does ablution before opening the text itself. The digitalized form mediates the reverence for the text and the reality that one is inescapably exposed to pollution in daily living, yet must have the self become permeated with the word of God. It may even be the case that the paper with Qur'anic verses written by the maker of the *du`ā`* is put in water to dissolve as much as possible and both are then consumed as a way of imbuing the self in the healing or life giving words of the *Qur'an*.

**B. Does it work?** To the extent that fervent prayers, exorcism, administering sacraments, etc. assist in the initiating of neuro-psychological, immunological and physical interactions that overcome mental disorders or promote healing. Much of these so called alternative therapies is gaining recognition as alternative therapies in North American health care delivery system.

In North America, recent developments are due largely to at least three factors:

1. Work in the new field of medical anthropology, specifically by researchers such Arthur Kleiman who was instrumental in introducing the culture axis in DSM 1V
2. Willingness to address conditions that will promote well being, based on shift in the moral-social order in the US (occurring in the 60's and 70's)
3. Recognition of inadequacy of health services by government and HMOs, and limitations in research scope. That is, what research gets funded are ones that rely on the use of the Gold standard (clinical trials).

Thus, to the postulate, its first factor: **Shortcomings in the gold standard (medical paradigm of clinical trials)**. They include at least three:

- 1) It fails to consider the randomness of natural processes
- 2) Epistemologically, it operates with entrenched assumption- knowledge acquisition is independent of the political climate, and socio-economic conditions
- 3) It does not accommodate personalistic aetiologies within naturalistic aetiologies.

To expand, the resistance or failure is understandable at a scientific level. The healing practice of *dam karma* clearly does not fit the medical paradigm that underscores the search for naturalistic aetiologies and the application of a falsification principle in the testing method. More specifically, it does not meet the gold standard application in medical science: randomized clinical trials. This standard is associated with the dominant registers of bureaucratic organization in current medical practice, viz., quantification, predictability, control, and efficiency. But perhaps what needs questioning is the narrowness of the standard as a methodological tool and its definitiveness. While there is no disputing of its value in neutralizing biases within test-groups, that invaluableness does not obviate questioning the assumptions that it is adequate to span the wide range of knowledge that is possible about ourselves and well-being, and that knowledge acquisition is independent of the political climate, and socio-economic realities that allow a paradigm to flourish. How the trials are set up, and how the results are interpreted are not free of bias or aspiration.

In short, the paradigm as a methodological tool has limitations that are ineluctably connected with the politics of representation that is, in effect, a source of resistance. Some other forgotten limitations include the fact that the medical science paradigm does not embody perfection. Neither does it take into consideration the randomness of natural processes with complex interconnections but is in fact an idealized aspiration.

Alternatively put, the paradigm has a utility: to serve as a schema for interpreting observations for some immediate purpose, thereby yielding an explanation that is more probable than other possible interpretations.<sup>2</sup> Recognition that it is just that, no more than an idealized aspiration, may have assisted in some quarters of North America medical and health care setting in taking a longer and open-ended view of the paradigm.

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<sup>2</sup> For a substantial discussion on theory see William R. Uttal, *Neural Theories of the Mind* (Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum, 2005), and in particular p.112

Caribbean doctors and healthcare delivery systems hold steadfast to the medical paradigm for professional reasons, eschewing its shortcomings, and thereby turning a blind eye to personalistic aetiologies, or displaying an aversion to religious sensibilities as explanatory categories.

To the second factor in the postulate: **A definitional shift in religion has inadvertently helped to reinforce the aversions. It is associated with a colonial construction** what religion is, determined on the basis of an Enlightenment model. It cashed out in terms of hostility to what was not understood as official religion, and thus created the initial conditions for the failure of *dam karma* to emerge as a recognized form of mental health therapy in the Caribbean. The initial conditions are associated with the following three actions or occurrences:

- 1) Drawing a distinction made between official religion (articulating truth claims) and religion as lived experience with ritual performance, entailing emotions and disposition.
- 2) Misunderstanding lived religious experience under British laws as practice of magic and chicanery.
- 3) Ruling out *dam karma* and other forms or ritualized practices associated with spirituality as being religious and thus driving them underground.

To explain, at a cultural level, there is more to understanding the resistance to *dam karna* and for that matter any traditional and cultural healing practices showing influences of other religions in the Caribbean. In fact, the resistance makes it much harder to study or write systematically about healing practices that do not fit or cohere with the medical paradigm that conceptually camouflage political and socio-economic realities. The reason may lie in the colonial construction of what constitutes religion in the Caribbean region, including Guyana. There has been generally hostility to what was not understood as official religion or seen in relation to the Enlightenment enterprise as articulating truth claims compared to dealing with the performance of rituals obligations.<sup>3</sup> Vernacular religion was (mis)understood as dealing with warding off evil-eye or expelling malevolent spirits, and thus was considered at the level of false religion, witchcraft and superstition. In fact such is the case with obeah that Jamaica outlawed in 1760 Jamaica, as a way of quelling slave rebellion. By the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century anti-obeah laws were enforced across all British Caribbean colonies.<sup>4</sup>

At the vernacular level of society, traditional healing and cultural healing practices such as *dam karna* would have fallen in the sweep of laws that defined religion in terms of Christian theological understanding of magic, witchcraft, and communication with the devil. There was in fact in the indentureship arrangement a provision not to interfere or bar the practice of religion among the indentured. But it did not prevent the administration of the law to view suspiciously situations that ran counter to reason and

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Harrison, "*Religion and the Religions in the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1990), 25–26.

<sup>4</sup> Diana Paton, "Obeah Acts: Producing and Policing the Boundaries of Religion in the Caribbean," *Small Axe*, 13/1(March 2009), pp. 2, 5, and Aisha Khan, *Callaloo*, pp. 105f.

involved malevolent spiritual beings. One need only recall that for British anthropologists such as Edward Tylor and James Frazier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, magic and superstition are hallmarks of primitive society. By comparison,<sup>5</sup> rational religion focusing on the comparison and examination of truth-claims is a hallmark of civilized society. The Trinidad's Summary Conviction Law of 1868, as Diana Patton points out,<sup>6</sup> adopted the language of the English Vagrancy Act of 1824 with respect to the definition of rogues and vagabonds as those seeking to deceive by subtle craft, as fortune telling, palmistry, or on the assumption of supernatural powers or knowledge for gains. Adopted by the United States and still in force today in England, Scotland, and Ireland, the Act was used in persecution of Quakers and even artists. Its language, Patton notes, was used in Jamaica's Obeah Act of 1898, and in the British Guiana (Guyana) Statute of 1918. If obeah is considered fraud and its practitioner a charlatan on account of superstition and blasphemy then it would not be a far leap to include cultural healing practices that did not reinforce the values of civilized society.

Further, there is really no consolidated body of traditional healers to articulate their right to practice openly or to lobby on their behalf. Still further, it is not clear whether those who do *dam karna* would want to consider themselves healing practitioners or care to deal with the resistance by official religion, regulatory bodies and regulations. The point made here, however, is that the construct of religion influenced by the Enlightenment enterprise is as much a humbug as the paradigm of modern medical science to traditional and cultural healing practices gaining acceptance as an adjunctive or supplement to the healthcare system in former British crown colonies in the Caribbean region.

Enlightenment doctrine and philosophical precepts might be best characterized as favouring the principle of cause and effect, determinism, materialism, and rationalism in the form of truth and falsity. Ironically, the Enlightenment movement was intended to marginalize or get rid of religion as an explanatory category, or at least its dead slag of customs, but in fact did more. As it began rooting its legitimacy in that movement, religion acquired a new lease on life to become a form of veiled politics. It underwent a shift in its understanding of *religio* from heedful ritual obligations and personal piety to *religio* as commitment to propositional truths or right belief, and by extension to speak about true and false religions. Consequently, it tended to constrain rather than promote new research programs that did not mesh with Enlightenment categories and for that matter true religion. That constraining tendency continues to manifest itself in the social space of the Caribbean and Guyana, and hence to be a humbug to new and innovative research programs. Overcoming the constraint is not to say that the quest for intelligibility and naturalistic etiologies have to be abandoned.

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<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Sheehan, "Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay," *The American Historical Review* 108/4 (October, 2003), paragraphs 24-31, accessed April 1, 2010 at <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/108.4/sheehan.html>. See also J. Samuel Preus, *Explaining Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 132-135 for Tylor's equating of culture with civilization, and his insistence on a naturalistic account of religion.

<sup>6</sup> Patton, p. 6, and the Appendix that list the Anti-obeah Provisions adopted between (1840-1920) in the territories of the British Caribbean.



To conclude, the postulation is that failure of *dam karna* to gain recognition as a supplemental mental health therapy is associated with at least two factors: 1) an epistemological assumption of the medical paradigm and, 2) a shift in the definition of religion. Together, they lent each other support in the formation of a civilized society and thus the creating of the initial conditions for the failure.

The first factor has led to the rejection of etiologies that are non-naturalistic or ailments that do not fit neatly the disease patterns normally correlating with western medicine diagnostic categories. The second factor ruled out heedful ritual obligations as part of religion, stressing instead commitment to truth claims and holding right belief as indicative of civilized society. These two factors, I theorized, are associated with the three initial conditions forming the matrix for the resistance of *dam karna* and similar healing-spiritual practices to become integrated as supplemental therapy in a national mental healthcare delivery system in the Caribbean region.

As a therapeutic intervention *dam karna* is not without antecedents. It presupposed that Allah/God is the healer. In that sense it belongs to that genre of the miraculous or of well documented cases of miracles,<sup>7</sup> one of the criteria for canonization by the Vatican. Work in medical anthropology, a highly interdisciplinary field that emerged in the last fifty years, has led to a growing acceptance in North American medical circles and healthcare systems that negotiating of meaning and management of illness occurs within an ethnic, socio-economic, political and cognitive matrix.

In short, the antecedents are furthermore backing for considering how *dam karna* and similar healing practices might contribute to health and well-being in the cultural and political economy of the Caribbean. Acceptance of the integration of healing and spirituality as part of a psycho-therapeutic model does not mean an abandonment of the quest for intelligibility. For without that quest no human science is possible nor for that matter the academic study of the interplay between religion and medicine.

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<sup>7</sup> See Jacalyn Duff, medical scientist and historian, studying the role of religion in medicine examined numerous miracle and healing records going back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the Vatican archives and finds that the Catholic Church relies on medical knowledge in affirming a connection between healing and religion and thus does not have much less ambivalence when compared to the medical profession. See her *Medical Miracles: Doctors, Saints, and Healing in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) is a close study of numerous miracle and healing accounts in the Vatican archives by a medical scientist and historian.

## **A Healing Ministry Model among Caribbean Christians for Healthcare Delivery: A Critique**

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### Abstract

*This paper queries a healing model among Caribbean Christians, identified as the Whole Person Healing Ministry. Congregation-based and aiming to treat the whole person, the model draws on a multi-disciplinary team of health care professionals, and thus includes prayer as a healing modality. It holds out the possible of recognizing spiritual gifts of healing, or divine healing, along curative vocations such as the medical arts, nursing, psychological counseling, and social work, as part of a community health care delivery system. The model was developed to resolve a cultural tension created by two ways of understanding religion: Eurocentric versus Afro-centric Christianity. It purportedly makes room for healing and healing practices, for the training and formation of healers, as part of a community ministry to deliver health care services in areas where the government initiatives are inadequate. It represents as such another approach – healers, practitioners and sites- to the study of religion, and the study of the interaction between religion and medicine. However, the question remains as to whether the model or approach can work in a multicultural setting? The presentation offers some reflections along the lines of that question.*

**Keywords:** healing, prayer, Christian, health, medical, counseling, multicultural, ethnic and Caribbean

One of the Caribbean cultural healing models is associated with the Whole Person Healing ministry. It is ground in African healing traditions and influenced by a post colonial interpretation of Christianity and reading of the Bible.<sup>1</sup> The question that this presentation addresses is about its applicability in a multicultural setting with respect to public healthcare delivery. Would this ministry as a healing model work in societies and cultures that are multi-ethnic? Two limitations to it are discussed here as telling against an affirmative answer. But first, to an understanding of the model or healing ministry – termed Whole Person Healing and considered to be a holistic understanding of healing.

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<sup>1</sup>Materials for this presentation are adapted from the forthcoming essay by E.A. Allen and Abraham H. Khan ;“Christian Spirituality, Religion, and Healing in the Caribbean,” in R. Moodley and P. Sunderland (2013) *Caribbean Healing Traditions : Implications for Health and Mental Health* ,( New York: Routledge).

## **Model**

The model is closely associated with the name E. Anthony Allen, a consultant psychiatrist and advocate of whole person healing ministry movement that began in Jamaica more than 40 years ago. Briefly, the model incorporates different healing approaches and strategies. It is integrative, congregationally based, takes into consideration the whole person, and is guided in its understanding by Biblical paradigms.

Originally adopted by the Bethel Baptist Church in Jamaica, the model is comprised of medical services, counselling, prayer and spiritual care, social care and outreach activities (Allen 2005). Its medical services are community based and comprehensive, meaning that they are promotive, preventative, curative and rehabilitative.

Curative services are integrated with the aid of a Wholistic Assessment Questionnaire. On the basis of the questionnaire, patients/clients are then assigned to the appropriate medical doctors, psychological counselors, prayer counselors, conflict resolution counselors, or the church's social worker.

Preventative and divine healing services include the spontaneous laying on of hands, special healing services, invitations for healing in regular services, and a prayer "hot line."

The healing and spiritual assessment approach is open-ended to assisting both counselors and clients. Open-endedness allows counselors to become culturally competent in understanding the relationship of the client's possible ethnic and social class-influenced culture and the culture conflicts (if any) with their healing worldviews and expectations.

The assessment elicits the client's self-understanding of faith and lived experiences: practices, crises, ego strengths and weaknesses, and desire for change. It provides an opportunity for clients to share their spiritual world view/cosmology and their understanding of health, illness, cure and living, and to relate them to their own situation or dis-ease for which they seek remedy. Further, clients may gain clarity as to whether the healing modality is to be one that is mental, physical, social, spiritual, or other. Still further, the approach is instrumental for clients with problems concerning any cultural conflict that may exist.

Counselors and volunteer assistants of the Whole Person Healing Ministry try to discover the available relevant 'functional' and ethical healing resources within the Christian belief system. They try to understand the terms of reference, and denominational and cultural nuances of the client's situations as disclosed in the assessment. They network to learn of available culturally sensitive religious clergy who might assist specific clients. They encourage the client to reflect on self-help approaches that are auxiliary to prayer for healing, and to take advantage of wholistic peer support in their home congregation. Counselors do not seek to influence the client's beliefs through coercion or use of a spiritual healer. Rather, they understand their approach as co-participatory and ethically responsible. As a healing congregation, Bethel church provides over 15 non-professional volunteers who work with 17 paid staffers to render multidisciplinary services.

Whole Person Healing Ministry, according to Allen, has been adopted elsewhere in Jamaica and in English speaking Caribbean countries, especially in poverty stricken areas. In Jamaica, for example, there have been many joint workshops sponsored by ecumenical faith and health coordinating and capacity building agencies and the Ministry of Health. Trinidad, Barbados, the Leeward Islands and Haiti are also involved.<sup>i</sup> The Caribbean Conference of Churches (*About CCC*, 2008) has been facilitating initiatives in churches related to HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and violence. In a transnational and metropolitan world, Caribbean immigrants have taken with them culture conflicts and solutions about healing. Apart from a continuance of Pentecostal healing, some evangelical and mainline leaders have set up aspects of new integrative healing programs for Caribbean diasporas in England and America.

### **Healing Prayers**

However, healing practices among English speaking Caribbean Christians have central to them prayers that are Biblically based and are in keeping with the tradition of the Christian Church. Prayers vary, but fall in one of three broad categories and may be integrated as needed, rather than used separately. Further, they are relatively simple, with minimum use of personal charisma, ritual, or sacred objects. Still further, they incorporate Biblical passages appropriate for healing from the Gospels in the New Testament, or the Psalms in the Old Testament, but are by no means limited to those parts of the Bible, and fall into one of the three broad categories.

Prayers for miraculous healing or formal healing prayers comprise the first category. They are an integral part of congregational or special worship services. They may be said at evangelistic prayer crusades, in private homes, and at healthcare or other residential institutions. They are comprised roughly of three steps, involving the intercessor, or prayer leader and the afflicted person. The intercessor is either a priest, church member with special gifts, or lay reader. The first step is for the intercessor to prepare the afflicted for healing by providing encouragement through Biblical exhortations to recognize God's desire and ability to heal. Next, the afflicted individuals state their ailment or health concerns. Or, sometimes through the gift of "a word of knowledge", God may give the intercessor a revelation of the complaint and a confirmation of the healing to come. This leads finally to the third step: the healing prayer or activity itself that may be just a simple word of revelation that indicates restoration is occurring. The steps apply also to prayer for the healing of memories, for past hurts or trauma followed by counselling, and for the casting out of demons or spirits. The latter prayers belong to the ministry of deliverance in the work of Pentecostal or Charismatic non-denominational churches. In the healing activity of this deliverance, someone on the prayer team whom God has given the gift of discernment of spirits invokes the authority and name of Christ as the power that enables the casting out of the demons.<sup>ii</sup> Altogether, in healing prayers the intercessor and the afflicted recognize that God in Christ is the healer who operates through humans as agents. Thus, in standard church practice, the Christian seeks healing by calling direct

upon the authority, or name of Christ, rather than invoking perceived power, resident in any person, object or ritual.

In a second category are prayers that are accompanied by touching of the afflicted and Biblical exhortations. Either the hands of the intercessor are laid on the forehead of the afflicted, or the thumb of the priest–intercessor is dipped in oil and then used to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the afflicted.<sup>iii</sup> Each such act is done with words spoken in the name of God, for the activity symbolize the touch of God and the bestowing of spiritual power. In conjunction with either one, the Eucharist or Holy Communion may be administered, or Confession made. Both are sacramental means of God’s grace and hence channels of healing. The act of Confession involving the acceptance of the assurance of God’s forgiveness is itself a powerful therapeutic aid to healing. Though not a sacrament, fasting by the intercessor may be a potent facilitator in preparation to become a tool of God’s power. These rituals, accompanied by prayers, may require repeated performance.

A third category consists of prayers that are supplemental to knowledge of medical and human sciences. Christ expressly stated that it is not the healthy but the sick that is in need of a doctor.<sup>iv</sup> By the 4<sup>th</sup> century the Church had started infirmaries and hospitals – monastery hospitals to care for the sick (Horden, 2005). Today, medical missionary movements of the Church build hospitals, provide doctors, and staff medical schools (Koenig, McCollough & Larson, 2001). Catholics, Anglicans and Seventh Day Adventists, all run Caribbean hospitals. The healing prayers, considered part of pastoral care during visitation in an institutional setting, are an adjunctive to medical treatment or therapy. They consist of reading Biblical passages, laying on of hands, and anointing, as the occasion might accommodate. More specifically, the healing act in certain cases may require follow-up with psychological counselling, and social work with the family to encourage patience with the afflicted and give interpersonal, emotional and concrete support to the timid and weak.<sup>v</sup> In an institutional setting a chaplain, church priest, or trained lay reader may serve as intercessor.

Altogether, the model of a healing ministry discussed opens up possibilities for a close working relation with medicine, in healing and restoration of health to the infirmed. However, the health care professional needs to understand any client’s core beliefs about health, disease and healing, for the model incorporates different approaches to healing: from prayer or holiness sessions to social and psychological counselling. Adopting one approach does not exclude the others, for the model is integrative and wholistic.

### **To a critique:**

That said, the model is not without limitations relative to a national health care delivery that tell against its applicability in a multicultural, multi-ethnic society. There are at least two. One is tied to its specific presupposition – the embracing of all aspects of African culture that are excluded by a Euro-centric Christianity that mainline Protestant and Catholic churches represent. The embrace has to be understood as a resistance to exclusion. But in that embrace, it excludes individual Christians of other ethnicity and whose world view is corporate in a different social, psychological and cultural matrix, from one that is Afro-centric based. Arguably,

there are multiple interpretations of Christianity. They are informed by cultural backgrounds and social context. For example, members of Mainline churches, having opted for the integrative model, are more content to practice a Health Ministry that combines insights gained from psychology, medicine and sociology, and to abandon for the most part the practice of miraculous healings to Pentecostal and Charismatic churches (Henlin, 2006).

In brief, then, healing practices are associated with Afro-centric Christianity or form of life, and less so with interpretations of Christianity that are indicative of civilized, cultured or secular society. Clearly, where the ministry seems to take root is primarily in the poverty-stricken areas among the predominantly Afro-centric population. Health, disease and healing are to a large extent social-cultural constructs. However, a question that is raised in relation to social stratification is the extent to which spirituality, hence mental health counselling or therapy, is a cultural manifestation. That is, whether the form of the spiritual is determined by the content of the culture, and thus has implications for health and well-being. Alternatively put, is the model of the whole person healing ministry restricted to a specific cultural-social context?

A second limitation is somewhat related to the first. That is, individuals or ethnicities that do not share a Christian world view are excluded from the benefits offered by Whole Personal Healing ministry, or its associated healing practices. The ministry in part was originally to dissuade church members from visiting local African healers and without having guilt or internal conflict doing so. Now, the church could offer another option, But this option does not seem to cohere with insights about the wholeness of life from cultural neighbours in the population: Chinese, East Indians, Amerindians, and other ethnicities. They too are Caribbean, and make up its Christian community. Many, however, are outside of a Christian religious community, sharing in a different set of presuppositions about human life and the individual's role and place within the world. That is, in multi-ethnic communities it is likely that we would find competing world views about what it means to be a human person, and what is presumed to have gone wrong in an ontological sense, and hence to occasion the ailment.

Put differently, how a body is constructed or interpreted rests on a presumed metaphysical arrangement. The arrangement varies, as do interpretations and expressions of it. Accordingly, they determine the construction of a body and well being. Or, in the case of ailment what has gone wrong and has to be set right. A presumed difficulty with the healing ministry model is that it speaks to one metaphysical arrangement – a Hebraic Christian- Afrocentric one. While it has its strengths, this model of healing ministry simply would be less than effective in addressing constructs of well-being that fall outside a Biblical –religious framework. In terms of a national health care delivery system, it would have to be one among a plurality of models that are recognized.

These limitations add to the challenge of incorporating a healing ministry model into a dominant or publicly funded medical or healthcare system. For, connected with a spiritualized healing, there is no consistency of findings and efficacy of out-comes, or validity of treatment that would make it generalizable to all communities of and society or population. It lacks the scientific legitimacy of hard evidence that it works for all

people in all situations. In that respect it is unlike biomedical and clinical researches much of which rely on industry based funding or for-profit organizations that are sales driven. Such organizations, however, make an impact on government policies as to what count for treatment and hence would promote corporate growth. By comparison with biomedical research and treatments, spiritualized healing seen as integral to a healing ministry is at a disadvantage with respect to meeting the benchmarks of consistency, efficacy, and validity as to whether a treatment gets recognized or paid for by public funds. Further, they present a dilemma for biomedical researchers sympathetic to undertaking new strategies in the study of the healing phenomenon for which there is limited or no public funding.

## Conclusion

Thus, law and policy makers have a challenge. If the healing practices bring about desired outcome (attaining health and well being) but lacking consistency or repeatability and predictability, integration in a public healthcare system may not be stalled indefinitely. Moral courage would be required of them at some point. Similarly with biomedical researchers, they too would require moral courage to undertake, without corporate business funding, rigorous study of a phenomenon whose underlying logic is completely different from what is co-terminus with current basic medical science. It is a tall expectation, but no taller than believing in a postulate – the tripartite division of the human psyche and their relationality.

In closing summary, the answer to the questions posed at the outset is that limitations discussed constitute resistance to the healing model working in societies and cultures that are multi-ethnic. Public funding for treatment cannot show preferential religious treatment. It would be true of similar models as well in a national health care delivery system: no single model or approach would fit all communities comprising a multiethnic society.

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<sup>i</sup> These are based on personal communication by Rachel Vernon, 2000; and Oral Thomas 2010, as reported by Allen & Khan (2013).

<sup>ii</sup> Mark 1:34 and 6:13.

<sup>iii</sup> Mark 6:5, and 6:13; Acts 5:16; and James 5:14

<sup>iv</sup> Matthew 9:12, and Luke 5:31.

<sup>v</sup> Thessalonians 5:14.

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## **Traditional healing in South Africa: Integration of African and Western Cultural Practices and Opportunities**

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### **Introduction**

Mental Health professionals' major challenge is to be culturally competent when providing services to clients from different cultural groups (Paniagua, 1998). This is supported by Hall and Maramba (2001) who maintain that psychology should address issues of diversity if it is to be responsive to the needs of the population it serves. According to Louw and Edwards (1993) South African psychology students' training is based on American-European model, which is not relevant to some cultural groups in South Africa. The authors further mention that complex diversity reflected within the South African context, demands the model that addresses the mental functioning and problems of all South Africans. The contribution of culture is being increasingly recognised and integrated in all fields of psychology. Africans have their own believe system which is sometimes not understood by practitioners from different cultural groups. Traditional beliefs and practices concerning illness and health are still widely followed especially in rural areas of South Africa. Since the traditional healers are easily available and represent the same cultural group as their clients, they are trusted and perceived as well-trained.

### **Views on Western and Indigenous Psychology**

Towards the late 1970's various psychologists placed great emphasis on an indigenous psychological approach (Hwang, 2005). Hwang (2005) further argues that various psychologists did research in the psychological field of non-western countries such as Mexico (Diaz-Guerrero, 1975), Korea (Kwon, 1979), Japan (Azuma, 1984), the Philippines (Enriquez, 1977, Legmay, 1984), India (Sinha, 1986) and Taiwan (Yang, 1997). The major driving force behind the development of indigenous psychologies is the dissatisfaction stemming from dominant Western Psychology. Indigenous psychology involves a critical attitude towards intellectual influences from the West, including imported Western Psychology (Allwood & Berry (2006). Allwood &

Berry (2006) further explains that the imported Western Psychology was not useful for solving local social problems. Marai (1997, in John, 2012) argues that many students from the developing countries who studied in the West, when they complete their studies and return to their countries of origin, they usually find that they cannot apply what they have learnt in their home countries. It is evident that the relevance of Western Psychology is questionable when applying it in contexts which are not dominated by western ontology (John, 2012).

Indigenous Psychology is characterized by its attempt to produce a local psychology within a specific cultural context (Allwood & Berry, 2006). There is a strong need amongst indigenous psychologists to build theories on the basis of local phenomena, findings and experiences (i.e., bottom-up) became more evident (Allwood & Berry, 2006). An important aspect mentioned by various leading indigenous psychologists is that Western Psychology methods are not universal and should not be used uncritically, (Allwood & Berry, 2006). Azuma (1984) supports this argument when stating that Western Psychology lacks some concepts crucial to describing and understanding the mind in a very different culture. Further on Allwood & Berry (2006) pointed out the importance of investigating psychological phenomena by means of the local language and of using samples of genuine local cultural material (including video recordings, or vignettes in questionnaires). According to Holland (2001, in John 2012), an understanding of the African world view of ‘self’, separation and connection with others, the predominance of inter-relationships and networks, extended kinship ties and obligations and ongoing generational connections with ancestors is the key to effective counselling in the African context.

### **The Difference between Indigenous and Western Scientific Knowledge**

Fasokun, Katahoire, and Oduaran (2005) refer to indigenous knowledge as a concept that describes locally relevant or community knowledge that has been commonly generated on the basis of particular peoples’ experiences. Worldviews, in this context, refers to the different ways in which we look at the world, developed through a combination of social, cultural and individual histories and dynamics (Wilber, 2001, in Odendaal, 2010).

**Table1: Distinction between Indigenous and Western Scientific Knowledge**

(Adapted from Wolfe 1991:12 in Odendaal, 2010)

	<b><u>Indigenous knowledge</u></b>	<b><u>Western Scientific Knowledge</u></b>
<b><u>Relationship</u></b>	Subordinate	Dominant
<b><u>Dominant mode of thinking</u></b>	Intuitive	Analytical
<b><u>Communication</u></b>	Oral Teaching through doing and story-telling	Literate Didactic
<b><u>Characteristics</u></b>	Holistic Subjective Experimental	Reductionistic Objective Positivist
<b><u>Data creation</u></b>	Slow/inclusive	Fast/selective
<b><u>Prediction</u></b>	Short time cycles Recognizes the onset of long term cycles	Short-term linear Poor long-term prediction
<b><u>Explanation</u></b>	Spiritual – includes the inexplicable	Scientific Hypotheses Theory and Laws
<b><u>Biological classification</u></b>	Ecological Inclusive-internally differentiating	Genetic and Hierarchical Differentiating

Indigenous knowledge is characterized as *closed, non-systematic, holistic* rather than *analytical, without an overall conceptual framework*, and advances on the basis of new experiences, not on the basis of a deductive logic (Banuri and Apfell-Marglin, 1993; Howes and Chambers, 1980, in Odendaal, 2010). Magga (2005 in Odendaal, 2010) states that indigenous

knowledge is *oral, usually not written* and Indigenous Knowledge views things as *wholes*. He argues that Western science believes itself to be *objective*, while indigenous knowledge is deliberately subjective and sees human beings as part of a *whole*. Indigenous knowledge systems are said to be ‘high context’ systems which means that they are designed to incorporate a very high level of *contextual information specific to a given locale*. Indigenous knowledge tends to take a subordinate position where western scientific knowledge is dominant. The dominant mode of thinking in indigenous knowledge is *intuitive* in contrast with the western scientific knowledge that draws upon an *analytical mode* of thinking. Communication in terms of indigenous knowledge is *oral*. Teaching takes place through doing and story-telling. Odendaal (2012) argues that the western mode of communication is literate and didactic. Indigenous knowledge characteristics can be described as *holistic, subjective and experimental*, where on the other hand Western scientific knowledge is *reductionistic, objective and positivist*. Data creation differs in the sense that indigenous knowledge regards it as *slow and inclusive*, where western scientific knowledge regards it as *fast and selective*. The prediction element in indigenous knowledge is regarded as *short time cycles* and recognises the *onset of long term cycles*. In contrast with this, western scientific knowledge view prediction element as *short-term linear and having poor long-term prediction*. Indigenous knowledge can be explained as *spiritual with the inclusion of the explicable*. On the other hand western scientific knowledge can be explained through *scientific hypotheses, theory and laws*. The biological classification of indigenous knowledge is *ecological and inclusively-internally differentiating*. Western scientific knowledge uses a *genetic and hierarchical basis to differentiating* (Odendaal, 2010).

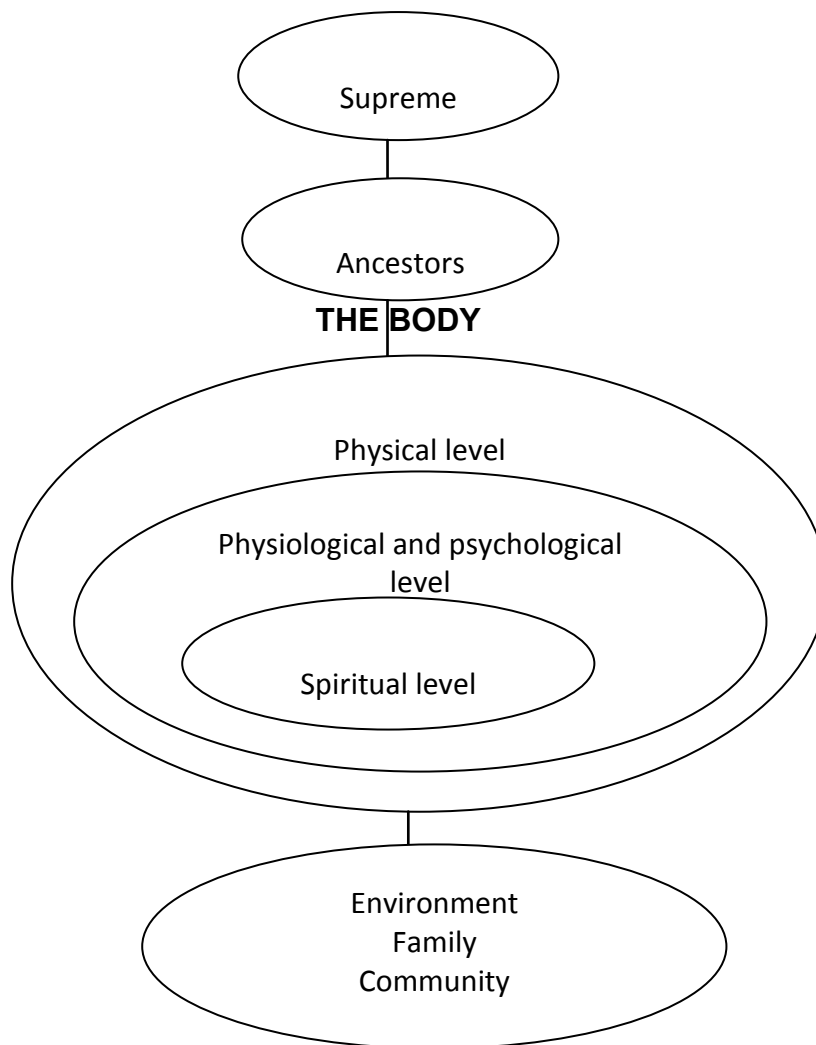
### **Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Healing**

An understanding of indigenous knowledge is crucial when providing psychological service to indigenous people. Moletsane (2008) explored the importance of the use of a South African indigenous game (masekitlana) in child psychotherapy. Masekitlana is a traditional seSotho game that is mostly played by children in South African townships and rural areas. It is a monologue play, played by one child at a time, alone or while other children are listening attentively. During play children usually relate stories about things that worry or excite them, things they imagine, their wishes, things they detest and/or about people and things around them. In her study, Moletsane (2008) found that Masekitlana played a significant role in psychotherapy

by assisting traumatized children to come to terms with the fears to which they were vulnerable. Masekitlana was effective therapeutic tool in child psychotherapy. Games such as masekitlana can play a significant role in healing children in distress. Masekitlana is an African asset that has been in existence for decades and needs to be preserved.

Nsamenang (2001 in Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 2002) points out that, modern views in psychology, about the individual as autonomous differ from the African concept in which the person coexists with the community, with the world of spirits, and with the ecological environment. The existence of an indestructible vital force which continues to exist in the world of spirits after death is emphasized in Africa. Personhood is a manifestation of this vital force through a body. The model of African personality is indicated below in diagram 1.

**DIAGRAM 1: AFRICAN PERSONALITY MODEL**  
(Adapted from Botha and Moletsane, 2012)



According to Moletsane (in Botha and Moletsane, 2012), indigenous Africans believe that there is a powerful being which supersedes all of us, as indicated in Figure 1. This supreme power is invisible and can be seen as God or comprising more than one god. Bojuwoye (2003) maintains that God is the supreme-being and the ultimate source of life energy. Below this supreme-being are the ancestors, as indicated in Figure 1. Ancestors are people who have died but whose spirits are still alive and are among the living. They are watching and protecting their living relatives and they play a crucial role in people's lives by communicating with God on behalf of the living. The ancestors use dreams, signs, or traditional or spiritual healers to deliver the messages from God (or the gods) to those who are alive.

In Figure 1, the person is represented as 'the body'. The body needs to be active in order to be in a good *physical* shape. There are other levels of functioning, such as the *physiological*, which focuses on the body's physiological functioning and the *psychological*, which focuses on the stability of a person's mind. The physiological and psychological levels of a person are important; for the body to survive and to be healthy it needs good nutrition and a stable mind. The *spiritual part* is the inner part or the seed of a person. The spirit is regarded as the seed because it does not die even after the body has died (Moletsane, 2012). Sow (1977, in Berry et al., 2002) also regards the inner layer as the spiritual principle, which represents a soul that can never perish. It can leave the body during sleep and during trance states and leaves definitively upon death. Sow (1977, in Berry et al., 2002) further states that the spiritual principle does not give life to the body; rather, it has an existence of its own, belonging to the sphere of the ancestors and representing that sphere in each person.

People are connection to their environments. If people do not adapt to their environment, they get sick. This happens because their state of equilibrium is weak. The lines in Figure 1 represent the firm connections between the gods or the supreme power, the ancestors, a person, the environment, the family, and the community. This bond or connection also represents the state of equilibrium. If the different levels are held together firmly (the levels being the supreme power, ancestors, physical, physiological and psychological, and spiritual), then there is a state of equilibrium in a person's life. In that state, a person is healthy and happy, or satisfied with life in general. This can be because the ancestors are satisfied that she or he has a strong bond and good relationships with his or her family or he or she takes good care of the elderly people in the family, etc. On the other hand, if one or more (or all) of the levels is/are not held firmly, then the

person is in a state of disequilibrium. While in a state of the disequilibrium, the person is unhappy and gets sick often because the relationships or bond between the levels is weak. For example, amongst others, this can happen when a person has angered the ancestors by not performing rituals. The African Personality model described above helps to provide an explanation of the aetiology and treatment of illness and mental disorder. In order to diagnose the illness or disorder, the traditional healer has to establish where in these lines of connection the disturbances have occurred (Moletsane, 2012).

According to Sow (1977, in Berry et al., 2002), a rupture of the connection between a person and their ancestors leads to serious chronic psychotic states, a rupture of the connection between a person and their family leads to organic illness, while a disequilibrium in the connection between a person and their community leads to more benign organic and psychosomatic illnesses as well as neurotic states. Once the site and nature of the rupture have been identified, the person's equilibrium can then be restored by means of therapy or other indigenous ways of healing by the traditional healer. Thus, healing occurs when there is resolution of conflict with community, family, and/or ancestors because by doing so the connection lines will become firm again and the connection will not be disturbed. Traditional healers need to have the knowledge of the African Personality Model and understand the frame of reference of patients in order to make appropriate decisions and intervention.

### **African Health Care Delivery Approach**

The traditional African Health care delivery approach has three main stages which include establishing a relationship, identification and discussion of the problem, and the problem-solving stage (Bojuwoye, 2003). Certain principles guide the decisions, choices and actions which take place in these stages. Some of them are (Bojuwoye, 2003):

- ***The principle of education or information:*** The traditional healer educate the patient about the different elements contained in the universe, for example, the connection between the different levels that constitute a person according to African personality theory. This helps the patient understand how their illness or misfortune may be caused by their state of disequilibrium.
- ***The principle of interconnectedness or the phenomenal world:*** This principle is found in the African world-view which states that people are interconnected. For instance, if a mother

is sick or not happy, her situation will affect other people such as family members, neighbours, colleagues at work, etc.

- ***The principle of social contact and interpersonal relationship:*** This principle ensures harmony within the universe. Problems are dyadic in nature and using relationships to address some of them may be a good strategy. Activities such as ritual ceremonies are regarded as important for interpersonal growth.
- ***The principle of personal empowerment:*** By performing rituals a person is empowered. If a person is empowered, the power is transferred to other people. For example, if one is positive about life and healthy, the positive energy spreads to people around him or her.
- ***The principle of psychological arousal:*** During the ritual ceremony, through the vigorous exercise of singing and dancing, the spirits are lifted and this process arouses people psychologically and emotionally. It is a space where people can express their emotions.
- ***The principle of ritualistic support:*** Participating in vigorous body movements during ritual ceremony is therapeutic. During these ceremonies, people are made aware that they are not alone but their problems and grief are shared with others.

### **Integration of Western and Indigenous Knowledge**

Ratele (2004, in John, 2012) points out that people in certain societies are often in an ‘in-between’ state of being, that is, in between their traditional ethnic culture and another more dominant or universal, worldly culture. Ratele (2004, in John, 2012) describes it as a ‘cultural in-betweenity’ in which ‘new’ and ‘old’, ‘modern’ and ‘indigenous’ coalesce, ‘one modifying the other and each losing in consequence its original character. He describes how, in South Africa, more now than ever before, the youth are emulating the ‘Coca-Cola Afro-American’ culture where individualistic aspirations and ‘looking out for number one’ (yourself) are important. He cautions, however, that this can lead to identity confusion and conflict with old values. Mkhize (2004) also believes that South African youth of all cultures are exposed to the global world and globalization where overseas travel is considered part of growing into early adulthood and, therefore, the integration of Western and non-Western ideas and identities will inevitably occur and should be accepted within traditional cultures.



## Conclusion

Traditional healers are starting to be acknowledged for their extraordinary knowledge of histories, religions, philosophies, institutions and other bodies of knowledge and language of their culture. Psychological disorders are often caused by multiple factors, which are also complex in nature. Alongside traditional healing, the biopsychosocial model and other Western models of healing and psychotherapy can also provide us with broad theoretical frameworks that allow a number of different perspectives to be used, thus demonstrating the multidimensional nature of psychopathology.

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## **The Integration of Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge and Healing Practices into Psychology and Psychotherapy**

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### **Abstract**

From its inception, psychology has defined itself as a scientific discipline that seeks to understand and explain human thought and behavior. Whilst it is generally accepted that psychology is an established science that can be applied to deal with human problems, there are many voices that have challenged the notion that the discipline's theories and methods can be universally applied in all societies. Central to this criticism is the view that the dominant psychological theories, including the different psychotherapeutic methods are embedded in a Western cultural and socio-political ideology that ignores the worldviews and experiences of non-Western communities. In this paper, I suggest that psychology has the potential to become truly universal if it could embrace the African healing traditions and philosophies. I discuss some of the key elements found in African healing traditions (like the concepts of self and community, *Ubuntu*, indigenous African ethics, and illness prevention) and suggest that psychology could be enhanced if it embraces these indigenous philosophical constructs. I conclude the paper by arguing that collaboration between the two healing traditions is possible only if there is mutual respect and commitment by traditional and western trained health practitioners.

### **The history of psychology and psychotherapy**

As is commonly known, the Greeks are believed to be the first people to have identified mental illness as a medical condition that required (medical) treatment like other diseases.

Hippocrates (460 – 377 BC), the Greek physician of antiquity, denied the intervention of evil spirits, demons and deities in the development of mental illness (Lewis, 1941). Contrary to the popular exorcistic healing practices prevalent during his time, Hippocrates prescribed treatment methods that could be seen as the precursors of modern psychotherapy. For example, for the treatment of melancholia (one of the three categories of mental disorders – others being mania and phrenitis), Hippocrates prescribed a regular and tranquil life, sobriety and abstinence from all excesses, a vegetable diet, celibacy, exercise short of fatigue, and bleeding if indicated.

It is these early methods of treatment that gave rise to modern day psychotherapy and other psychological healing methods. The concept “psycho-therapeia” (later changed to psychotherapy) was apparently introduced by an English psychiatrist known as Walter Cooper Dendy. The work of Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) popularised the value of “talking” in the treatment of emotional problems (Freud, 1941). Freud believed that mental illness was the result of keeping thoughts or memories in the unconscious. Based on this assumption, Freud proposed that the treatment of mental illness could be achieved by listening to the patient and providing interpretations. In his view, this could bring the hidden memories to the forefront and thus decrease the symptoms

It is these early developments regarding the treatment of emotional problems that paved the way for many new methods of psychotherapy as we know them today.

### **The Eurocentric basis of psychology**

A number of prominent scholars have criticized psychology in the developing world (including Africa) as being Eurocentric and unresponsive to the needs of the inhabitants of such communities (see Nsamenang, 2004; Guthrie, 2003; Holdstock, 2000; Nobles, 1986). Psychology’s Eurocentric focus is pertinently demonstrated in the application of psychotherapeutic approaches which tend to focus mainly on the individual and less on other systems. As Gaines (1982, p.82) puts it:

*“Talk and insight therapies are clearly based upon some notion of self as an alterable yet consistent and coherent entity which is self-reflective ... [These therapies] entail an implicit ... conception of the person as an empirical being, always in the process of becoming or, for that matter, unbecoming”*

There is a strong view that the talk and insight therapies referred to above may not be appropriate for a person who comes from what Marsella and White (1982) refer to as the socio-centric cultural milieu (like in the case of most African cultures) where psychological problems tend to be explained in terms of socio-moral conflict or strained relationships within a significant group (Mkhize, 2004; Edwards, 2011; Vontress, 2005; Bojuwoye & Sodi, 2010). In such socio-centric cultures, effective psychotherapy should entail treating the relationships – the marriage, the family, the relationship between the person and the supernatural being, and even the relationship between the person and non-living entities

### **Other contributions to psychology and psychotherapy**

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition and appreciation of the profound impact that culture can have on the way people think about and perceive the world around them. The development of Asian psychology and other indigenous psychologies, including the therapeutic methods associated with these alternative psychologies, bear testimony to this fact. For example, in an essay entitled “*Asian Psychology Coming of Age*”, Shinobu Kitayama (2007) argued that unlike the traditional Western and American viewpoint which accentuates the importance of the self and makes oneself independent, an Asian will instead feel more interdependent. Similar sentiments have been expressed in other writings by Asian scholars.

The most popular therapies associated with Asia are meditation and yoga. Though most often associated with India, these therapeutic activities are actually found throughout much of Asia. Meditation, as we know it today, is aimed at training an individual to have greater voluntary control of his/her mental processes. This control helps to foster development and to nurture mental qualities like awareness, concentration, joy and compassion. Though regarded as belonging to the same family as meditation, yoga is a more inclusive activity that encompasses ethics, life-style, body postures, diet, breath control, study and intellectual analysis.

The realization of the importance of culture, the emergence of indigenous psychologies and the rise of alternative therapeutic activities like meditation and yoga, have given credence to the notion of epistemological pluralism. In other words, there is a great need to appreciate that Western psychology is but one of the many contributions to the epistemological landscape.

## The African perspective

In this paper I take a view that there is an African way of being-in-the-world. In this regard I use Afrocentrism as a lens through which I look at the possible contributions that Africa can make to psychology and psychotherapy. Afrocentrism or Afrocentricity as a philosophy can be traced back to the works of African-American scholars like Marcus Garvey, WEB Du Bois, Wade Nobles and many others in the African diaspora. The main emphasis of Afrocentrism is the assertion that African culture can make a tremendous contribution to world civilization. According to Molefi Kete Asante,

*“Afrocentricity is a mode of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values and perspectives predominate. In regards to theory, it is placing of African people in the center of any analysis of African phenomena. Thus, it is possible for any one to master the discipline of seeking the location of Africans in a given phenomenon. In terms of action and behavior, it is a devotion to the idea that what is in the best interest of African consciousness is at the heart of ethical behavior. Finally, Afrocentricity seeks to enshrine the idea that blackness itself is a trope of ethics. Thus, to be black is to be against all forms of oppression, racism, classism, homophobia, patriarchy, child abuse, pedophilia, and white racial domination” (2003, p.2).*

In the African continent, different shades of Afrocentrism are reflected in the writings of many prominent scholars. For example, the philosophical writings of prominent scholars like Leopold Senghor, Kwasi Wiredu and John Mbiti all take an Afrocentric approach in their analysis of the African human condition. Similar expressions of Afrocentrism are also reflected in the literary works of novelists like Ngungi wa Thiong’o (Weep not child); Chinua Achebe (Things fall apart); and Wole Soyinka (Myth, literature and the African world).

In psychology, there is a growing number of scholars who are assertively taking an Afrocentric perspective in their writing. Bame Nsamenang (2004) in his many writings on human development, has **consistently argued that cultural, physical, social and economic opportunities shape and constrain an individual’s development**. In his book entitled “Re-examining psychology: Critical perspectives and African insights”, Len Holdstock (2000)

warned against the unqualified adoption of mainstream principles and methodologies by psychologists from Sub-Saharan African when investigating psychological phenomena.

### **Some key elements in African healing traditions**

Taking a closer look at some of the writings by the scholars mentioned above and many others, one can identify a number of elements in African healing traditions that are worth looking at in the context of modern psychology and psychotherapy. In this regard, the paper will focus on the following: Concepts of self and community; *Ubuntu* (or personhood), indigenous African ethics, and illness prevention.

**Concepts of self and community:** In the context of many African communities, the concept of self and community are very much interlinked. To quote John Mbiti (1989):

*“Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his being, his duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himself and towards other people. When he suffers, he does not suffer alone but with the corporate group; when he rejoices, he rejoices not alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbours and his relatives whether dead or living. When he gets married, he is not alone, neither does his wife belong to him alone. So also the children belong to the corporate body of kinsmen, even if they bear only their father or mother’s name. Whatever happens to the individual happens to the group, and whatever happens to the group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: I am, because we are; and since we are therefore I am”* (p.106)

The same understanding of self and community articulated by Mbiti is also reflected in the popular Sesotho saying: *“Motho ke motho ka batho”* (roughly translated to mean: *“One becomes a human being through other human beings”*). There are similar expressions in many other African languages.

The way of conceptualising the self and community as reflected above, has serious implications in terms of how one could provide Western oriented psychotherapy to an African patient whose culture tends to put emphasis on interdependence and collective responsibility

**The philosophy of Ubuntu – Botho:** The notion of Ubuntu is well articulated by the former President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela when he was interviewed by a journalist:

*“A traveller through a country would stop at a village and he didn't have to ask for food or for water. Once he stops, the people give him food, and entertain him. That is one aspect of Ubuntu, but it will have various aspects. Ubuntu does not mean that people should not enrich themselves. The question therefore is: Are you going to do so in order to enable the community around you to be able to improve?”*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu\\_philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_philosophy))

The inspiration behind *ubuntu* is the principle of shared destiny and acts of compassion and generosity. *Ubuntu* is characterised by caring, just and respectful relationships (Mkhize, 2004). The relationship attributes like caring and compassion are also emphasized in Western psychotherapy.

**Indigenous African ethics:** In a study that sought to investigate traditional healing practices among the Venda and Tsonga speaking people of Limpopo Province, South Africa, the importance of ethics was expressed by traditional healers. Some of the key findings related to ethics in terms of issues of competence, dealing with minor children and confidentiality. For example, when it comes to issues of confidentiality, the following extracts illustrate this point:

Participant: “There is no time to disclose my patient’s information. What goes on is between me and my patient”

Participant: “I can never disclose my patients’ problems to other people. Otherwise the ancestors will not be happy with me”

On the issue of minor children, the traditional healers had this to say:

Participant: “I do not help unaccompanied minors ... they have to come with their parents. I can't treat them without their parents’ concern”

Participant: “If a patient is a minor who cannot take their own decisions, I tell them to come with their parents or relative. I do not treat a patient who comes without his or her relative”

**Illness prevention:** It has often been suggested that illness prevention is a very critical step in the maintenance of health in many African communities. In this regard the role of



spirituality and the centrality of relations have been emphasized. **For example, many people in Africa believe that it is critically important to** constantly interact with spirituality. Failure to do so is believed to lead to wrath of ancestors and possible ill health and misfortune.

### **Is marriage between the healing traditions possible?**

Looking at the concepts of self and community, *ubuntu*, indigenous African ethics, and illness prevention one gets a sense that Western psychotherapy can benefit from these and other healing traditions of Africa.

However, the challenges of bringing the two healing traditions together are aptly summarised in an article by Sodi and Bojuwoye (2011, p.352):

*“Philosophies underpinning the healing approaches of Western medical and non-Western health practices are considerably different ... Therefore, any effort aimed at integrating traditional healthcare or psychotherapeutic practices with Western-oriented models is likely to be confronted with some difficulties given the divergent epistemological origins of Western and indigenous traditional models”*

### **Summary and conclusion**

In concluding the paper, I wish to suggest that psychotherapy may be enhanced if it could embrace some of the values that are embedded in African philosophical constructs like *ubuntu*, self and community. In the same way, African healing traditions could be enhanced if they could open up to other healing traditions, including Western psychotherapy.

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## **Dinamiche psicosociali e assistenza terapeutica ai rifugiati e richiedenti asilo: l'importanza del lavoro di gruppo con gli operatori**

Di Paolo Ballarin

Da maggio 2011 la Società Cooperativa Lai-momo è impegnata in provincia di Bologna nel **Programma d'Accoglienza per Richiedenti protezione internazionale** provenienti dalle aree del Nord Africa (**Emergenza Nord Africa**), attraverso una complessa serie di interventi.

Questi vanno dalla preparazione delle strutture e dell'accoglienza prima e dopo l'arrivo, al sostegno alla comprensione della situazione e del luogo in cui si trovano, alla soddisfazione di bisogni primari e di quelli relativi ai documenti, all'apprendimento della lingua italiana, alla mediazione nelle relazioni con i cittadini autoctoni, all'accompagnamento ai diversi servizi del territorio tra cui quelli sanitari e di salute mentale, alla mediazione nei problemi legati alle convivenze, all'inserimento lavorativo, all'accompagnamento verso l'autonomia abitativa e quindi l'uscita dall'accoglienza.

Complessivamente siamo stati impegnati nell'accoglienza di 106 persone provenienti da diversi Paesi, principalmente Nigeria, Mali, Ghana, Costa d'Avorio, Somalia, Sudan e Burkina Faso (S. Festi, 2012).

Nell'insieme, il progetto di assistenza si basa su quattro pilastri teorico-pratici, che a loro volta si iscrivono all'interno di una cornice epistemologica caratterizzata da una **visione sistemica** (o bio-psico-sociale) della realtà e da un **approccio interculturale**, distinto da quello *transculturale* e *multiculturale*, in quanto basato non sulla ricerca di elementi comuni universali, né sulla loro mera copresenza, ma piuttosto sulla apertura alla relazione, all'interazione, allo scambio.

A. Portera, 2007)

Scopo di questo intervento è dare una sintetica panoramica di questi pilastri, che rappresentano il quadro di riferimento teorico e metodologico, soffermandomi in particolare sull'ultimo punto, che anticipo, quello del lavoro di gruppo con gli operatori e le operatrici impegnate negli interventi di assistenza.

Data la brevità del tempo a disposizione non mi soffermerò ad esplicitare e chiarire l'accezione di alcuni dei concetti utilizzati, come pure meriterebbe, come ad esempio il concetto di assistenza terapeutica, rimandando eventualmente ad una discussione successiva all'esposizione.

1. Il primo pilastro è rappresentato dai concetti di **processo e progetto migratorio**: i rifugiati e richiedenti asilo sono prima di tutto persone migranti, che hanno quindi vissuto e stanno vivendo un processo di trasformazione del proprio senso di identità.

La migrazione è infatti un processo complesso, che inizia prima della partenza dal Paese di origine e che in un certo senso non si può mai considerare concluso, poiché accompagna la persona per tutta la vita nella costruzione del proprio senso di identità (C. Edelstein, 2003a), portando quindi inevitabilmente ad una ridefinizione di sé nelle dimensioni di identità e appartenenze (N. Losi, 2000; M. Andolfi, 2004;).

Da un lato è importante evitare il rischio di considerare l'esperienza migratoria come di per se stessa patogena né esclusivamente problematica, dall'altro occorre mettere in evidenza come possa evidentemente rappresentare un "fattore di rischio" per problematiche psicologiche, sociali e anche fisiche.

La nostra ipotesi è che il modo in cui è stato costruito (o non costruito) e vissuto il progetto migratorio e come si è dipanato il processo migratorio rappresenti un elemento di primaria significatività, seppure non in una prospettiva lineare di causa-effetto, ma in una prospettiva di complessità. (P. Ballarin, 2011)

2. Il secondo concetto chiave è quello di **trauma**, che richiederebbe una articolata riflessione, a cui possiamo qui solamente accennare: da una parte l'esperienza migratoria, specialmente se forzata, si presta ad essere letta come di per se stessa traumatica, in quanto espone a vissuti che mettono a repentaglio la propria integrità. E quindi, in particolare nel lavoro con rifugiati e richiedenti asilo, è di fondamentale importanza la conoscenza dei meccanismi caratteristici dei vissuti traumatici (B. Van der Kolk, 1996).

La conoscenza degli effetti delle esperienze traumatiche è relativamente recente. Uno degli aspetti che emerge dalle ricerche con una certa chiarezza è la necessità di approcciare il tema del trauma e degli interventi possibili per attenuarne le conseguenze negative in una prospettiva bio-psico-sociale. Infatti, sia le manifestazioni, che le cause, che gli elementi di cura e di protezione risiedono in tutti i differenti livelli sistemici. In particolare, le ricerche sul DPTS evidenziano la copresenza di diversi processi patogeni, fra cui:

- 1) un'alterazione permanente dei processi neurobiologici, che portano ad una cronica iperreattività;
- 2) l'acquisizione di reazioni di paura condizionata agli stimoli relativi al trauma;
- 3) alterazione degli schemi cognitivi e della comprensione sociale, causata da una profonda divergenza tra l'esperienza traumatica e la precedente conoscenza del mondo.

Questa combinazione rende il DPTS una "trappola biopsicosociale", in cui un livello di un disturbo impedisce i meccanismi di auto guarigione sugli altri livelli" (A.Y. Shalev, 1996).

Al tempo stesso l'attenzione all'aspetto del trauma rischia di essere fuorviante e paralizzante, in primo luogo perché rischia di creare una fittizia comunanza di esperienze tra tutte le persone che si trovano nella condizione di rifugiati o richiedenti asilo, i quali possono invece avere esperienze molto diverse tra loro e avere vissuto in modi molto diversi le differenti fasi dell'esperienza di rifugiato: anticipazione, eventi devastanti, sopravvivenza, adattamento (R. Papadopoulos, 2002) È interessante a questo riguardo come alcune ricerche (E. Montgomery, 1998) evidenzino come le peggiori esperienze dei rifugiati e richiedenti asilo possono essere vissute durante la fase della sopravvivenza (ad es. nei campi profughi), piuttosto che nella fase degli eventi devastanti. Si rischia inoltre di costruire una corrispondenza tra trauma e condizione patologica, congelando i rifugiati e richiedenti asilo nel ruolo di vittime, di malati, di persone "rotte" e ignorandone le potenzialità costruttive: "nel tentativo di esprimere una condanna legittima nei confronti degli individui, dei gruppi e delle politiche che portano all'oppressione politica e ai crimini contro l'umanità, presentiamo come "prova" il fatto che la gente è stata traumatizzata da quelle azioni infami. Agendo così (...) finiamo per fare violenza proprio alle persone che vogliamo aiutare" (R. Papadopoulos, 2002).

3. I rifugiati e richiedenti asilo sono accomunati dall'aver perso "**casa**", intesa non solo come elemento tangibile e concreto, ma soprattutto come intangibile quanto potente insieme di elementi psicologici di sicurezza, legami affettivi e appartenenza.

Papadopoulos illustra l'ampio spettro di significati del termine casa: "da una comunità fisica e geografica al luogo psicologico del rapporto e della comunione; dalla sede delle origini alla meta ultima al di là dei conflitti, il luogo del riposo (...) "casa" è sia il luogo percepito di origine sia la destinazione desiderata, la meta, il fine, il telos" (R. Papadopoulos, 2002, pag.7-8) e sottolinea come venga generalmente posto l'accento sull'aspetto regressivo (tornare a casa per riposare) (esercizio retrospettivo) e non su quello propositivo e di crescita (avere un obiettivo, un fine, una spinta a realizzare qualcosa)

La perdita e il desiderio di ritorno a casa espongono ad un **disorientamento nostalgico** caratterizzato da una totalità di vissuti che include “tre gruppi di elementi binari dicotomici”: il significato di “casa” come entità tangibile e intangibile; due momenti successivi del ritorno: esteriore (arrivo fisico) / interiore, psicologico (riconnettersi con il senso di sé, avere accesso alle parti smembrate della propria personalità); due direzioni opposte: retrospettiva/prospettica

La condizione di rifugiato e di richiedente asilo espone quindi in modo particolarmente significativo al rischio di perdita della propria integrità, a livello personale, familiare e sociale (A. Portera, 1997; A. Sayad, 1999).

“E’ come se l’assenza della casa creasse nei rifugiati una lacuna che li fa sentire non contenuti e allora si guardano intorno per colmarla, per riparare la perdita, per ricreare la membrana protettiva e contenitrice della casa (...) la casa è in grado di fornire il senso profondo e fondamentale di uno spazio in cui possono essere contenuti e tenuti insieme tutti gli opposti e tutte le contraddizioni. (...) quando la gente perde la propria casa si crea una mancanza primaria e fondamentale che, al di là di qualsiasi altra perdita di cui siano consapevoli e di cui facciano consciamente il lutto, si impadronisce impercettibilmente dei rifugiati (...) la perdita della casa non riguarda semplicemente la perdita conscia della casa di famiglia con tutti i suoi valori materiali, sentimentali e psicologici, ma che è di un tipo molto più fondamentale e primario e che crea un disturbo (...) più vicino a ciò cui ci si riferisce come “insicurezza ontologica” (R. Papadopoulos, 2002, p.41-43)

Queste riflessioni, lette alla luce della nostra esperienza di assistenza, ci portano a valutare che il lavoro con rifugiati e richiedenti asilo richieda di considerare le reazioni psicologiche e comportamentali all’interno di una risposta più ampia agli eventi socio-politici che hanno vissuto. Anche le manifestazioni che possono apparire francamente sintomatiche vanno considerate all’interno di questa cornice e svincolate da una valutazione di per sé patologica delle reazioni che le persone adottano di fronte a situazioni estreme.

Occorre allora coltivare un approccio alla assistenza ai rifugiati e richiedenti asilo che mantenga in primo piano, accanto alla comprensione empatica per le sofferenze e il disorientamento, anche le risorse di cui sono portatori, le forze promotrici di autocura e auto guarigione, le opportunità di iniziare una nuova vita.

“Il trauma non è semplicemente una condizione intrapsichica creata in modo lineare e causale da avvenimenti esterni violenti. È una costruzione sociale che permea anche la funzione e le strutture dei nostri servizi di salute mentale, organizzati per far fronte alle difficoltà dei rifugiati. Ciò significa che alcuni tipi di fornitura di servizi e di reti di riferimento possono anche perpetuare delle versioni patologizzate del discorso sul trauma del rifugiato. A meno che la natura primaria, e in realtà archetipica, del processo del ritorno a casa sia inclusa nella concettualizzazione, nella pianificazione e nella attualizzazione di interventi di questo tipo, è probabile che la fornitura di servizi viri verso modelli patologizzanti del trauma. In altre parole, è importante sottolineare l’inclusione della “casa” come categoria psicologica e psicoterapeutica importante (e non solamente come epifenomeno) nell’assistenza terapeutica ai rifugiati” (R. Papadopoulos, 2002, p.65)

La nostra riflessione va nella direzione di evidenziare e sottolineare l’importanza di facilitare le persone, le famiglie, le comunità a rimettere insieme le loro storie “smembrate”: principalmente attraverso una forma di “relazione d’aiuto” basata su un ascolto empatico e non giudicante, gli individui, le famiglie e le comunità possono condividere le narrazioni dei dolori e delle risorse per affrontarli e ristrutturare se stessi e la propria capacità di stare in relazione e costruire relazioni. Hanno cioè la possibilità di ricreare le condizioni primarie di “casa”.

4. Il valore fondamentale del **gruppo**, sia come esperienze offerte agli assistiti, sia come lavoro con gli operatori.

Nella esperienza di intervento psicosociale a cui faccio qui riferimento le opportunità di promuovere incontri di gruppo con i rifugiati e richiedenti asilo sono state piuttosto limitate e svolte in condizioni che hanno solo in parte permesso di attivare i fattori di promozione del cambiamento caratteristici dei piccoli gruppi (C. Rogers, 1970; I. Yalom, 1995). Tra questi: incontri per risolvere specifici problemi abitativi, per dare comunicazioni relative al progetto di accoglienza, per rassicurare rispetto a timori legati all'audizione, alla ricerca del lavoro, alle condizioni abitative, a questioni inerenti i buoni spesa, ecc.

Consapevoli della sua importanza, nel proseguimento del nostro intervento abbiamo già previsto un incremento di questo tipo di attività, sempreché le condizioni istituzionali, continuamente mutevoli e spesso di ostacolo, lo consentano.

Per gli assistiti le esperienze di gruppo possono rappresentare un importante elemento catalizzatore di processi riparativi.

Infatti, come abbiamo detto prima, il tema principale che sembra porsi per queste persone è la problematicità di un elemento umano primario, riconducibile alla dimensione della "casa" e della sua perdita e che rimanda alla presenza di un contenitore, un involucro fisico e psicologico, che contiene e permette di dare senso ai contenuti, cioè all'esperienza di sé e dell'altro.

Esperienza di sé ed esperienza dell'altro sono interdipendenti e non sono svincolabili dalla dimensione del senso di appartenenza, in particolare alla famiglia e alla comunità.

Questi aspetti fondamentali della vita umana possono andare in crisi in varie forme e gradi nell'esperienza migratoria, specialmente se forzata e se avvenuta in un contesto di violenza e distruzione.

Sappiamo come un aspetto di questo travaglio risieda nella ridefinizione del proprio senso di identità alla luce del conflitto, che è prima di tutto interiore, tra la fedeltà alla propria comunità di origine e il desiderio/bisogno di radicamento in quella di accoglienza; laddove invece il vissuto tende spesso ad essere quello di un proprio "rinnegamento" da una parte e dall'altra di un rifiuto altrui.

Questa dimensione di "doppia assenza" (A. Sayad, 1999), può allora stritolare e disintegrare il rifugiato se non ha la possibilità di essere attraversata e rielaborata. Processo questo evidentemente complesso e in un certo senso mai concluso, che può però non solo non portare necessariamente ad uno stato di dis-integrazione, ma diventare occasione di arricchimento e opportunità di vivere in modo più creativo.

Gli incontri di gruppo rappresentano una importante occasione per la attivazione di questa occasione, grazie alla opportunità di ricostruire il filo narrativo delle propria esistenza e delle vicende, più o meno marcatamente traumatiche, che hanno portato alla condizione di rifugiato o richiedente asilo e attraverso la creazione di una dimensione sovra individuale che promuova la ricostruzione di quella dimensione di "casa" di cui ho detto prima.

Grazie all'ascolto di altre storie e di altri vissuti e alla condivisione dei propri, diventa inoltre più facilmente possibile arginare il rischio di rimanere intrappolati nella costellazione narrativa aggressore/vittima/salvatore (N. Losi, Papadopoulos R., 2004), che gli assistiti condividono con gli operatori.

A loro volta gli operatori necessitano infatti, più che mai in questo genere di interventi, di contesti di gruppo dedicati alla progettazione, al coordinamento, alla supervisione.

Nel contesto di lavoro a cui sto facendo riferimento, come del resto in tutti i progetti in cui siamo coinvolti come Cooperativa, i gruppi sono costruiti e condotti in modo da promuovere un senso di reciproca fiducia, di assenza di minaccia rispetto all'espone le proprie incertezze, dubbi e insicurezze, a condividere i timori e gli errori, in modo che ciascuno senta di poterci essere come

persona intera e non solo come professionista che deve dimostrare le proprie competenze e la propria adeguatezza.

Una delle funzioni del lavoro di gruppo con gli operatori è appunto legata alla dinamica del “triangolo perverso”, che tende a perpetrarsi all’infinito, con persone diverse negli stessi ruoli, come ho avuto occasione di osservare più volte nella attività di supervisione degli operatori. In particolare ho osservato passaggi dal ruolo di “salvatore” a quello di “persecutore”, in genere in conseguenza di un vissuto di “tradimento” vissuto dagli operatori quando qualcuno degli assistiti rompe il patto (implicito, più che esplicito) di assistenza, oppure di vittima, con eventuale alleanza con gli assistiti, perseguitata dal “sistema” e dalle istituzioni.

Attraverso il lavoro di gruppo, e quindi sia il confronto con i colleghi sia la facilitazione di un supervisore, gli operatori hanno l’opportunità di rendersi maggiormente consapevoli del modo in cui le proprie motivazioni, bisogni, aspettative, valori possono contribuire ad alimentare dinamiche disfunzionali come quelle identificabili nel triangolo perverso (N. Losi, R. Papadopoulos, 2004).

Come detto, il gruppo di lavoro rappresenta per gli operatori non solamente un riferimento strettamente professionale, ma un contenitore che contribuisce a costruire un senso di appartenenza e quindi in senso lato una “casa” che li aiuti a non essere risucchiati nel vortice della disgregazione a cui possono essere esposti.

Anche a questo riguardo ho avuto importanti riscontri nella esperienza di lavoro a cui sto facendo riferimento: la coesione, la disponibilità al reciproco sostegno, emozionale e pratico, l’abitudine al confronto di punti di vista ed emozioni, oltre ad aiutare a vedere e arginare i propri “fantasmi”, promuove la capacità di mantenere aperto uno sguardo plurale sulla realtà e facilita l’acquisizione di elementi utili a placare ansie di fronte a sintomi psichici e/o fisici (spesso difficilmente inquadrabili attraverso le tradizionali nosografie) e al tempo stesso a valutare se e come intervenire.

Inoltre, un’altra importante funzione dei lavori di gruppo consiste nella promozione della capacità di rimanere saldi (“sicuri”), pur nella estrema incertezza degli interventi e del contesto in cui si attuano, e della capacità di leggere il contesto istituzionale, politico, sociale, culturale e il suo impatto sulla vita degli assistiti e sul lavoro di assistenza.

Infine, viene alimentata una necessaria quanto impegnativa disponibilità a mettersi in gioco in una relazione “da persona a persona”. (C. Rogers, 1980)

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## **Lesbiche e gay in psicoterapia: le caratteristiche dell'approccio rogersiano, partendo da alcune riflessioni su stereotipi, gruppi sociali e strumenti di potere.**

Di Maurizio Betti

*Questo lavoro si propone di esaminare il rapporto fra la diversità e il potere cercando di offrire un contributo rispetto alle dinamiche implicate nella costruzione sociale del ruolo del diverso, nel suo etichettamento e nel suo inserimento all'interno di un sistema di valori e di potere.*

### **La pervasività del pregiudizio antiomosessuale: un dato di realtà**

Il pregiudizio antiomosessuale è un fatto. Una realtà estremamente diffusa e allo stesso modo spesso considerata socialmente accettabile. Esso viene veicolato dai messaggi sociali, dalle barzellette e più in generale dal linguaggio, in maniera perlopiù inconsapevole.

Questo è il punto di vista che vorrei sviluppare, al di là di tutte le letture del fenomeno, qualcosa succede: sentimenti spesso fortemente negativi vengono messi in gioco. Accade. Neppure nell'universo psicosociale le cose succedono per caso. Se il Dio di Einstein non gioca a dadi, neppure le forze che regolano l'espressione delle regole sociali si permettono la casualità. Dove non ci può essere la casualità c'è la causalità. Esistono quindi delle precise funzioni psicosociali degli atteggiamenti LGBT<sup>1</sup>.

### **Le funzioni sociali degli atteggiamenti antiomosessuali e in genere contro le forme di diversità**

Almeno due importanti concetti inerenti le scienze psicosociali sono fortemente legati all'espressione degli atteggiamenti omosessuali. Essi sono lo stereotipo e il pregiudizio. Definiamo lo stereotipo come una modalità di rappresentazione mentale semplificata che riguarda solitamente una categoria di persone e che viene accettata da gran parte del tessuto sociale (Stallybrass, 1977). Spesso lo stereotipo si accompagna al pregiudizio, ovvero "la tendenza a considerare in modo ingiustificatamente sfavorevole le persone che appartengono ad un determinato gruppo sociale" Mazzara (1997), quindi questa tendenza preclude verosimilmente ad un atteggiamento e potrebbe orientare il comportamento. Stereotipo e pregiudizio condividono la caratteristica di essere resistenti al confronto con la realtà esterna.

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<sup>1</sup> LGBT è l'acronimo di Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual e Transgender

## Lo stereotipo omosessuale

L'esigenza a cui risponde lo stereotipo è sia individuale che sociale. Esso assolve allo scopo di ridurre la complessità, categorizzando e rispondendo ad un'esigenza di "ordine" su una base prettamente cognitiva. Nella complessità delle informazioni che ci raggiungono, non esiste un ordine intrinseco, tuttavia la nostra mente ha la necessità di crearlo, di vedere il mondo come un sistema binario, dicotomico, ordinato. Un mondo "ordinato" risponde a esigenze di mera economia cognitiva, ad ottenere una informazione classificabile in tempi brevi, a scapito di criteri di precisione e correttezza. L'ordine serve a ridurre la complessità ed a rendere più semplice lo scambio e la memorizzazione delle informazioni; pensiamo al DSM IV<sup>2</sup> che categorizza il mondo indefinito ed ineffabile del disturbo mentale. Lo stereotipo inoltre ha la funzione di assorbire ed incasellare il nuovo; ciò che è sconosciuto, come spesso l'omosessualità, può suscitare curiosità, ma anche altri sentimenti spesso negativi che derivano dalla tonalità emotiva associata alla rappresentazione sociale. Sappiamo che al non rispetto della norma, ovvero alla devianza, in generale, viene attribuito un significato negativo, in quanto ciò che "devia" dal normale flusso rappresenta elemento di destabilizzazione dell'ordine costituito.

Ciò che devia deve essere ricondotto alla norma categorizzandolo: la categorizzazione o stereotipizzazione è una forma di depersonalizzazione, è un processo simile a quello a cui sottostarono gli ebrei nei campi di concentramento, di cui racconta Primo Levi (1986): gli ebrei venivano rasati a zero, privati dei loro vestiti, ovvero della loro individualità, per diventare qualcosa di neutro, la cui umanità veniva ridotta al minimo, perchè nei campi di concentramento uccidere un ebreo non rappresentasse più uccidere qualcosa di simile a se stesso, ma un elemento neutro, altro.

La stereotipizzazione non è, tuttavia, un processo di solo impoverimento, ma allo stesso tempo di coloritura, con colori spesso foschi, oscuri, sinistri. Perchè c'è bisogno di attribuire questi colori a certe minoranze quali ebrei o, nel nostro caso, agli omosessuali? Per creare veramente diversità bisogna creare alterità, togliere ogni punto di riconoscimento comune. Ai gay viene tolto il proprio vestito naturale e ne viene fatto indossare un altro, vengono tolte le proprie particolarità e viene sovrapposta una identità stereotipata.. Perchè a certi gruppi viene imposta la camicia di forza rappresentata dallo stereotipo? Oltretutto è un indumento particolarmente rigido, in quanto quando il pregiudizio, come in questa epoca, sembra sgretolarsi, è solo per riapparire in forme più sottili e più difficilmente individuabili, magari in quanto soggetto al "*politically correct*", oppure al dettame morale della tolleranza, spesso se il pregiudizio scompare e per riapparire in altra forma, solitamente in quella del *messaggio invalidante* "che rappresenta

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<sup>2</sup> Il DSM è il manuale diagnostico e statistico dei disturbi mentali, viene utilizzata in campo psichiatrico perché esplicita i criteri diagnostici del disturbo mentale

la forma più insidiosa e pericolosa di omonegatività, in quanto da una parte viene misconosciuta la portata aggressiva da parte di chi la perpetra in quanto la definisce “scherzo o roba di poco conto”, dall'altra le persone LGBT non sono immediatamente consapevoli della sottrazione di valore che viene attuata attraverso messaggi di questo tipo” (Graglia, 2012). Qualche esempio: “ma perchè si vogliono sposare?”, “non abbiamo mai affrontato questo tipo di problema nella nostra scuola”, “chissà chi dei due fa la donna” etc.

Nella creazione e nel mantenimento di stereotipi e pregiudizi avremo modo di vedere la sinergia tra esigenze del singolo, del gruppo e, in ultima analisi, del potere, ovvero delle dinamiche che privilegiano alcuni gruppi rispetto ad altri.

### **Il pregiudizio sessuale**

Abbiamo detto che ciò che è sconosciuto provoca imbarazzo, curiosità e disagio. Quest'ultimo può essere facilmente strumentalizzato. Al disagio viene associato, attraverso meccanismi psicosociali, un significato di potenziale pericolo. In questo le esigenze psicosociali vengono incontro al potere: la devianza spesso rappresenta pericolosità, la paura è che ciò che è diverso rappresenti una potenziale minaccia per il singolo e, ad un altro livello, per l'“ordine” “intrinseco” nel sistema.

### **Al crocevia del pregiudizio**

E' il luogo in cui si incontrano

- ✦ bisogni individuali: le categorizzazioni sociali e il giudizio preconstituito proteggono l'individuo dall'ansia, in particolare da quella dovuta alla complessità della pulsione sessuale e alla paura di essere diverso: il sistema sposta invece il diverso “altrove”, la nostra paura di essere diversi e magari sbagliati viene proiettata al di fuori di noi e punita nell'altro che “si concede”, “sceglie”, ciò che noi faticiamo a reprimere. Per usare le parole di Hesse (1969), quando odiamo qualcuno spesso odiamo in lui la parte di noi stessi che noi rifiutiamo inconsapevolmente. Nel rifiuto dell'omosessuale o della persona con handicap noi opponiamo un rifiuto inconsapevole, rispetto alle nostre zone di fragilità. Infine il pregiudizio aiuta ad affermare le proprie posizioni e a polarizzarle: un cattolico, attraverso la negazione dei comportamenti omosessuali, sente di affermare la propria fede attraverso l'affermazione dei propri valori.
- ✦ bisogni sociali o del gruppo: così come aiuta ad esprimere i bisogni del singolo, il pregiudizio aiuta ad affermare i valori di un gruppo contribuendo alla fortificazione dell'identità sociale e al senso di appartenenza (*ingroup e outgroup*)
- ✦ bisogni non dell'individuo o del gruppo, ma della struttura, bisogni del “potere”,

ovvero bisogno di stabilità, di sottomissione da parte del singolo e di determinati gruppi sociali tramite l'adesione acritica ai valori culturali proposti.

### **Rapporto fra pregiudizio e potere**

Una delle esigenze fondamentali del potere è la stabilità, essa, a sua volta, poggia sull'ordine. Chi esprime devianza è quindi un potenziale problema in quanto destabilizza l'ordine costruito, attraverso il quale il potere promuove i propri valori attesi e mantiene il proprio ruolo di egemonia. Senza un deciso schieramento sui valori il potere, inteso in senso sociale, semplicemente non potrebbe esistere, il potere non è "neutro", ma dà delle indicazioni di valore.

E' questo il crocevia in cui esigenze del singolo e del gruppo da una parte ed esigenze del sistema dall'altra si incontrano.

### **I vantaggi del singolo e del gruppo**

Il bisogno individuale di sicurezza contro l'ansia di essere diverso viene soddisfatto dal potere, tramite la creazione di un "diverso" molto distante da sé, una macchietta talmente caricaturata che è impossibile riconoscersi. Viene in questo modo soddisfatto un bisogno di sicurezza, per il singolo ed, allo stesso tempo, di appartenenza da parte del singolo rispetto al gruppo (io sto dalla parte giusta), mentre il potere soddisfa il bisogno di creare un ordine che offra un comodo, quanto illusorio, binario su cui lasciarsi trasportare: *uomo-donna, mascolinità-femminilità, eterosessuale-omosessuale*.

I bisogni di sicurezza e di appartenenza espressi dal gruppo vengono supportati tramite lo stereotipo da un lato negando l'esistenza, l'identità al diverso. Esso viene rappresentato come una "scheggia impazzita" rispetto al proprio gruppo, non fa parte di noi, è altro (*ingroup e outgroup*). La negazione di identità avviene attraverso gli strumenti della prescrizione al silenzio (di omosessualità non è bene parlare, non si sa bene perchè, ma è così), della conseguente invisibilità (a tal proposito ricordo lo slogan degli attivisti *antiHIV* negli anni 80: *SILENCE=DEATH*), oppure tramite la mancanza di modelli positivi per "l'altro", a cui viene, in tal modo, negata l'identità.

Il bisogno di appartenenza del singolo rispetto al gruppo viene soddisfatto in via indiretta anche da barzellette e scherzi antigay. Scherzando sull'omosessuale io mi riconosco come membro a tutti gli effetti di un gruppo ben definito, quello degli eterosessuali, i miei valori, la mia aderenza al genere vengono esaltati e io posso essere oggetto di stima per la mia adesione ai valori condivisi.

### **I vantaggi per il potere**

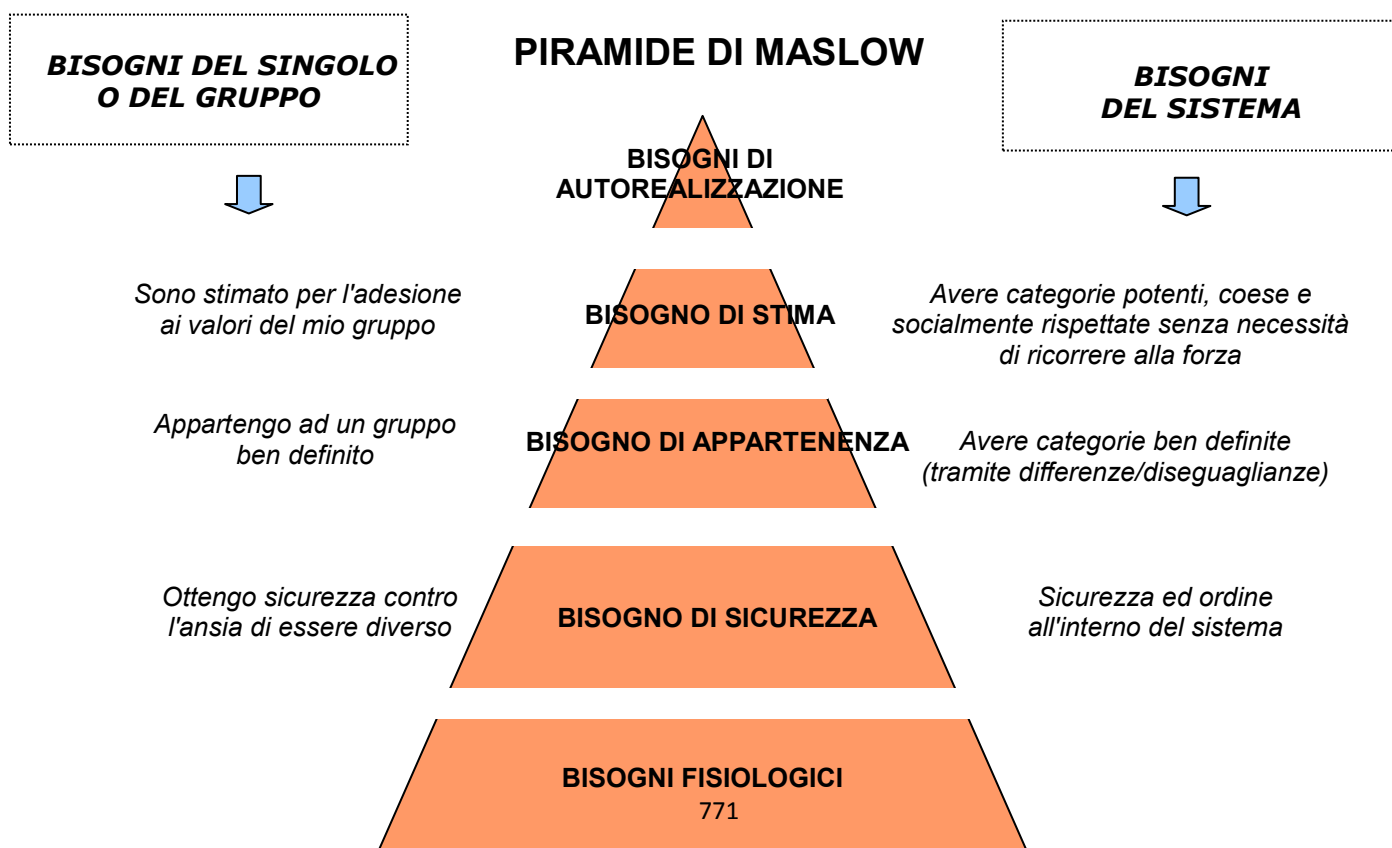
Se definiamo il potere come la possibilità di avere il controllo sul comportamento dell'altro

è subito chiaro che l'autorità, per poter essere esercitata, ha bisogno o di ricorrere alla forza o, ancor meglio, di creare delle diseguaglianze, meglio ancora se interiorizzate (ad es. il nero si sente davvero inferiore al bianco, in quanto lo stigma è stato interiorizzato). Serve una parte che controlla (*esercita il potere*) e un'altra parte disposta ad essere controllata (*subisce il potere*). Servono quindi categorie tanto definite (ordine) quanto diseguali: una controlla ("si sa" che è superiore") e l'altra subisce il controllo ("si sa" che è una categoria inferiore). Su questo piano le esigenze del singolo e della società da un lato e del potere dall'altro trovano un comune terreno di incontro: alle categorie che abbiamo definito tramite un'operazione culturale diamo un diverso valore nella scala sociale.

Questo principio viene espresso in maniera eloquente già da Rousseau (1755) tramite l'aforisma "la natura crea delle differenze, l'uomo le trasforma in diseguaglianze" che spiega molto bene come mai, in natura ad es, una pera e una mela, seppure diverse, non sono soggette ad una scala di importanza e di valore. A livello sociale, invece, ogni differenza diventa possibile terreno di diseguaglianza (*destrimani vs. mancini, bianchi vs. neri, italiano vs. straniero*)

Un'autorevole osservazione su questo processo e sul particolare ruolo del potere nella sua costruzione è offerta da Jordan "Potremmo dire che esistono due cose: le differenze e il potere. Ed è il potere che determina il significato delle differenze" (Jordan, 1994).

Nell'immagine che segue viene messo in evidenza come le esigenze del singolo e dei gruppi, valutate sulla *scala di Maslow* (Maslow, 1954) incontrino quelle del sistema.. Questa convergenza è mantenuta tramite la stereotipizzazione di identità e di valori



Notiamo che mentre possono coincidere largamente i bisogni dell'individuo e del gruppo, il vertice della piramide non è raggiungibile, in quanto il bisogno di autorealizzazione è perseguibile solo al prezzo di far coincidere i bisogni del singolo con quelli proposti dalla cultura (è il livello dell'ideologia), ma se sono diversi è l'individuo (o il gruppo) meno potente a soccombere. In altre parole i bisogni di autorealizzazione del "sistema" possono differire notevolmente, quando non contraddire, quelli del singolo. Se questo accade lo stigma si riversa sulla parte più debole. Lo stereotipo e il pregiudizio agiscono come "agente di polizia" riportando l'ordine deciso dal sistema, ma, in tal modo, tralasciando le istanze di autorealizzazione dell'individuo.

E' da notare che anche il primo gradino della piramide, quello dei bisogni fisiologici, non viene soddisfatto per il soggetto ad orientamento omosessuale, in quanto se segue le linee proposte dal potere e dalla società su cosa è giusto e cosa è sbagliato, il soggetto tenderà a non soddisfare i propri reali bisogni di identità, né le proprie pulsioni sessuali, in quanto entrambi ampiamente stigmatizzati dalla società.

### **La costruzione sociale della realtà**

Questo processo trova la sua ragion d'essere nella reciproca convenienza fra società e potere. Le "regole sociali" che prevedono il pregiudizio per determinate categorie rappresentano una necessità sociale, come tali, tramite la cultura, noi le "introiettiamo con il latte materno". Esse provengono e vengono continuamente validate attraverso un movimento dall'alto al basso, dal livello delle istituzioni a quello del singolo. Se le istituzioni (come lo Stato o la Chiesa) inviano un messaggio negativo alla società, svalutando una certa categoria di cittadini (anche solo negando loro diritti e protezione contro la violenza) la popolazione viene incentivata a svalutarli, il disprezzo e la discriminazione da parte della società arrivano fino all'interno del singolo (*omofobia interiorizzata*)

Questo processo è l'espressione di una dinamica psicosociale, ma viene percepito come un dato di valore oggettivo e "naturale".

### **Come la regola sociale diventa una realtà**

Un dato socialmente costruito diviene *realtà* attraverso il processo di reificazione (Berger e Luckmann, 1966)



La convergenza tra bisogni sociali e bisogni del potere genera e codifica delle regole sociali convenienti per entrambi (o almeno per la maggioranza meglio rappresentata), queste regole rappresentano un frutto della costruzione sociale. Poi l'uomo e in generale la società, che hanno costruito quel significato, si dimenticano di avere compiuto questa operazione. Ovvero un significato viene creato, proiettato fuori da sé, staccato da sé e riconosciuto come qualcosa di esistente a prescindere dall'umano, spesso attribuito alla divinità o alla Natura e che viene arricchito di significati dai "discorsi" dei *poteri forti*, come la religione o la scienza, gli strumenti attraverso i quali gli uomini hanno da sempre attribuito significato al mondo. Anche la psicologia si pone come "agente significante", portando la lettura dell'omosessuale non più come peccatore (religione), ma come malato o persona vittima di un blocco nel proprio processo evolutivo, come nelle teorie psicoeziopatologiche degli anni 70 o nelle "moderne" "teorie riparative". Così ogni società crea le sue malattie.

### **Orientamento sessuale e psicologia: le caratteristiche dell'approccio rogersiano.**

#### *Psicologia e potere*

Vediamo così come anche le scienze psicologiche sono state più spesso parte del problema che della soluzione. Eppure psicologia e libertà di essere se stessi sono due espressioni che dovrebbero coincidere. A mio parere il senso ultimo della psicologia è quello di rivelare l'uomo a se stesso.: "Ogni corrente di psicologia ha implicita una sua filosofia dell'uomo" (Rogers, 1957) e di conseguenza una propria idea di come poter restituire il potere all'uomo di essere se stesso.

Per il comportamentista puro l'essere umano è una macchina, a questo uomo, frutto degli eventi esterni, non si riconosce la qualità di soggetto agente il proprio potere per i propri fini interni di libertà di essere se stesso. Per il freudiano l'uomo appare come un essere irrazionale in preda alle proprie pulsioni. Che cosa succederebbe se questo essere fosse veramente libero di essere se stesso? ... non sembra una prospettiva accattivante.<sup>3</sup>

Entrambi le *mainstream* della psicologia, quindi, sembrano porre il potere al di fuori dell'uomo, ma, se l'uomo non ha potere, allora il potere è altrove, probabilmente nel sistema. Attraverso questa negazione di potere all'uomo ed alla sua esperienza le psicologie corrono il rischio di allearsi anch'esse con le esigenze di potere del sistema.

Se i propri significati l'uomo non è libero di crearseli da solo, tramite la propria

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<sup>3</sup> E' interessante notare come il teorico delle teorie riparative, Joseph Nicolosi, se la prenda proprio con Rogers per avere rifiutato il razionalismo della tradizione psicanalitica. E sentite in che modo: "La psicologia umanistica, secondo Nicolosi, introduce il concetto di piena accettazione della persona, senza alcuna diversa aspettativa su di essa. Seguendo l'influenza di Rogers i terapeuti crederanno che sia giusto essere neutrali, non direttivi e non contaminare la terapia attraverso alcun sistema di valori"

personale esperienza, serve qualcosa di esterno che determini il significato che dev'essere dato all'esperienza, un significato fisso, quindi che non tenga conto delle varie sfumature presenti nella realtà, quindi stereotipato.

Gli stereotipi “non sono quindi solo il prodotto della mente individuale per ragioni di economia cognitiva (Tversky, Kahneman,2003).<sup>4</sup>, ma rappresentano una forma di attività sociale. Svolgono quindi la funzione di dare omogeneità a credenze e valori. Essi “veicolano quello che deve essere pensato ad esempio su determinati gruppi sociali” (Graglia, 2012) rispondendo ad un'esigenza di creare categorie. Ma l'esigenza di creare categorie produce, come abbiamo detto, sempre un altro invariabile effetto, ogni categoria viene anche immediatamente classificata tramite un'etichetta di valore.

Riporto quanto Kushner fa dire a uno dei suoi personaggi nella rappresentazione teatrale “*Angels in America*”: “così noi crediamo che l'etichetta di omosessuale o di lesbica possa fare capire con chi uno va a letto e invece non è così. Come ogni etichetta ti dice solamente una cosa: quale posto ha nella gerarchia sociale un individuo classificato secondo questi parametri. Non l'ideologia o le preferenze sessuali, ma qualcosa di molto più semplice: il potere.”

### **Il primato dell'esperienza quale fattore qualificante dell'approccio rogersiano**

Pensiamo che guaio per il sistema se l'uomo si prendesse il diritto di prendere i significati direttamente da quello che sente dentro, dalla propria esperienza (“*sono una donna e sento attrazione per un'altra donna, invece che per un uomo*”). Traducendo il significato è: mi piacciono le donne, lo sento sulla mia pelle ed è bene per me e.. *va bene così*, nessuno venga a dirmi che quello che sento è giusto o sbagliato, non mi sento per questa ragione inferiore o superiore a qualcuno, inoltre salvaguardo la regola aurea di ogni religione, ovvero non faccio del male a nessuno. Pensate a quanto questi significati contrastano con quelli già confezionati della religione<sup>5</sup>, di un contesto storico o politico particolare<sup>6</sup>, di una qualsiasi realtà che è stata un giorno costruita da qualcuno con uno scopo determinato.

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<sup>4</sup> La social cognition, una corrente relativamente recente delle scienze umanistiche, mutuata dall'economia, vede l'uomo come un economizzatore di risorse anche a livello psicologico. Il principio dell'economia cognitiva è che l'uomo non si ponga sempre come utilizzatore razionale delle risorse, ma che applichi strategie (bias) per acquisire le informazioni importanti in mezzo alla grande mole di comunicazione. In tal senso lo stereotipo gli consente di accedere direttamente ad un significato pronto, condiviso ed immediatamente disponibile.

<sup>5</sup> durante le persecuzioni della Santa Inquisizione molti omosessuali venivano bruciati nei roghi e per non far sentire al pubblico l'odore acre della carne bruciata allora si usava aggiungere del finocchio per coprire quell'odore. Da qui, tra l'altro, sembra provenire l'appellativo di finocchio.

<sup>6</sup> Le porte dei campi di concentramento si aprirono per gli omosessuali molto presto: nel 1933 abbiamo i primi internamenti a Fuhlsbuttel, nel 1934 a Dachau e Sachsenhausen. Molte centinaia furono internati in occasione delle Olimpiadi di Berlino del 1936 per "ripulire le strade". Vi è concordanza sulle cifre degli omosessuali morti nei campi di concentramento tra il 1933 ed il 1945: circa 7.000

Se l'uomo si facesse costruttore di significati, senza permettere che qualcuno li costruisca per lui, che fine farebbero allora il *potere*, l'*ideologia*, la *religione*, oppure gli strumenti di potere ancora più occulti come l'*etica*, il *diritto* (anche il diritto che sembra lo strumento forte, che mette tutti sullo stesso piano, in realtà si presta alle interpretazioni...), nonché tanti modi di intendere le scienze e, perchè no, tante psicologie.

### **Rogers e il cliente omosessuale**

Se andiamo a fare ricerca sulle esperienze cliniche<sup>7</sup> di Carl Rogers rispetto alla omosessualità e al significato che attribuisce alla diversità di orientamento sessuale troviamo che la sua è una lettura molto moderna, addirittura rivoluzionaria per il proprio contesto storico e culturale.

I concetti più recenti espressi dagli LGBT studies, come il *minority stress* (Meyer, 1995)<sup>8</sup> o il concetto di *omofobia interiorizzata* vengono anticipati di cinquant'anni da Carl Rogers e sono già deducibili attraverso la lettura della teoria della personalità e del cambiamento (Rogers, 1951)

Nel "*caso di Mr. Lin*", una seduta completamente registrata in cui Carl Rogers ha come cliente un giovane studente, questi si dichiara preoccupato in quanto omosessuale. Nella seduta appare evidente che, tramite l'esplorazione del problema, Mr. Lin comincia a rendersi conto che forse non è del tutto esatto dire che l'omosessualità è il problema centrale. Si rende conto che ha numerose difficoltà nei rapporti con gli altri e la seduta si centra rispetto a queste difficoltà, anziché rispetto all'orientamento sessuale del cliente. La volontà evidente sembra essere quella di non patologizzare necessariamente l'omosessualità.

Il pensiero di questo autore è particolarmente chiaro quando scrive (Rogers, 1951):" *il primo di questi elementi viene definito accettazione positiva incondizionata. Essa si riferisce agli individui, specialmente genitori, insegnanti o anche amici, che dimostrano amore incondizionato. Più precisamente questi individui vi amano, gli piacetete e vi rispettano per ciò che siete, non importa cosa... un esempio potrebbe essere quello di un genitore di un ragazzo o una ragazza gay che amano il loro figlio, indipendentemente dalla sua omosessualità. Carl Rogers sostiene che se le persone non fossero fagocitate dalle restrizioni sociali e potessero crescere e svilupparsi in maniera libera e autonoma, il risultato sarebbe una persona pienamente funzionante*".

Lo stesso concetto verrà di nuovo enunciato in "*A Way of Being*", a pg. 346 del testo

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<sup>7</sup> Tutti gli articoli, originariamente in lingua inglese, sono stati tradotti da me. Questa potrebbe essere la causa di involontarie imprecisioni.

<sup>8</sup> Stress da minoranza, o minority stress. È così che è stato classificato il disagio psichico delle persone discriminate in quanto minoranza sociale, le ricerche mostrano quanto l'essere parte di una minoranza discriminata sia fonte di problemi psicologici, fisici e sociali derivanti dal pregiudizio, dal bullismo e dall'omofobia interiorizzata

originale (Rogers, 1980) . Ciò che Rogers definisce “restrizioni sociali” è leggibile in altri termini come omofobia del sistema sociale di riferimento.

Ancora, nella prefazione a “The Quiet Revolutionary” (pubblicazione di dialoghi di Rogers, 2002) Gendlin scrive: *“la scoperta di Rogers va oltre! Egli comprende che ogni persona ha un profondo senso intrinseco. Questo senso evolve e si corregge spontaneamente. Nel 1945 i neri, le donne, i gay e le altre minoranze trovano aiuto presso il Centro di Counseling di Rogers, perchè qui i terapeuti sono aperti all'esperienza reale del cliente, sapendo quanto questa abbia da raccontargli circa la verità interna di quel cliente. Una cliente nera avrebbe potuto insegnare al terapeuta che cosa significa l'esperienza di essere persone di colore in una società di bianchi, tuttavia un altro cliente di colore avrebbe potuto dire al terapeuta, con sollievo: “con lei mi sento a mio agio”. Questi terapeuti non avrebbero mai forzato le scelte di un cliente. Non avrebbero mai forzato una donna a rimanere dentro a un matrimonio, come poi la psicanalisi in genere ha fatto”*. Per i terapeuti formati da Rogers era ovvio che ogni persona è un grado di dirigere la propria vita e che la si può solo aiutare a comprendere il senso della propria complessità e nel proprio percorso personale. E' la visione esattamente complementare a quella delle terapie riparative nelle quali il “giusto valore” sembra essere situato altrove rispetto al sentire proveniente dall'esperienza.

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## VORREI TORNASSERO LE ROSE

Da circa quindici anni mi occupo di relazione. Ho cominciato a lavorare nel sociale come operatrice interculturale seguendo l'inserimento scolastico dei primi bambini e ragazzi stranieri presenti nelle scuole del basso veronese.

Attualmente lavoro come formatrice presso il C.S.F. Enaip Veneto di Verona, ente che negli ultimi anni si è particolarmente impegnato nell'attivare percorsi d'integrazione ed inclusione sociale, data la rilevanza quantitativa della presenza di alunni stranieri nei corsi di formazione di base.

Gli allievi in prima formazione di Enaip Veneto di Verona, che in questo momento frequentano il ciclo triennale di qualifica sono 305 di cui 132 stranieri, 59 femmine e 73 maschi, provenienti da 35 paesi.

Si potrebbe parlare di "quotidiano laboratorio di integrazione", anche se è indubbio che la convivenza non sempre risulta semplice, per le reciproche diffidenze e le differenze culturali.

Ogni giorno ho quindi l'opportunità di vivere a stretto contatto con culture e mondi diversi. Ogni mattina quando arrivo a scuola mi sento un po' nell' "Ombelico del mondo" cantata da Jovanotti "dove si incontrano facce strane di una bellezza un po' disarmante pelle di ebano di un padre indigeno e occhi smeraldo come il diamante facce meticce da razze nuove come il millennio che sta arrivando...", un po' come andare in vacanza dalla propria realtà per viverne una più grande, in movimento e, assicuro, piena di energia.

Perciò quando sento il termine intercultura non mi vengono in mente solo teorie ma visi, persone e storie.

Ho deciso di scrivere una parte della mia esperienza dopo aver letto l'insero di Animazione Sociale "Raccontare oggi il lavoro sociale", suggeritomi dalla dott.ssa Paola Schiavi del Ser.d. di Legnago, tutor che ha seguito il mio tirocinio della scuola di counseling.

Tra i vari interventi mi ha colpito molto quello di Franca Olivetti Manoukian che parla di "casalinghitudine".

La casalinghitudine è un modo di stare nel proprio quotidiano secondo modalità chiuse e ripetitive. Spiega "Scrivere, raccontare è esporsi, è aprirsi all'interlocuzione con il mondo. Si scrive perchè si vuole comunicare con gli altri, esporre la propria visione delle cose, entrare in dialogo, confrontarsi. Per questo occorre uscire dalla casalinghitudine per scrivere e raccontare. La scrittura è infatti prendere parola in pubblico."

Trovo importante quanto complicato uscire dalla casalinghitudine, rompere gli schemi quotidiani, è più semplice entrare nel lamento, soprattutto in questo momento critico per chi, come me, lavora nella scuola e nel sociale. Per cui ho deciso di mettermi in gioco pensando che questo possa servirmi a trovare ulteriori stimoli di riflessione e di crescita personale e professionale.

Ho deciso così di prendere tempo e selezionare immagini e sensazioni che desidero condividere.

Nel 2007 ho partecipato presso il Centro Enaip di Legnago al progetto "Protagonisti del processo di integrazione – progetto di integrazione sociale e scolastica" che ha visto come organismo titolare l'Aulss 21 di Legnago.

Le linee di intervento avevano i seguenti obiettivi:

- migliorare l’inserimento degli allievi stranieri facilitando anche l’apprendimento della lingua italiana e favorendone l’inserimento scolastico e sociale;
- sensibilizzare il corpo docente e i tutors alla nuova utenza immigrata a conoscere il percorso scolastico e di vita degli alunni stranieri, costruendo un’alleanza educativa con le loro famiglie;
- formare insegnanti e tutors sul ruolo e il significato della figura del mediatore linguistico-culturale come strumento di supporto alla realizzazione dell’attività didattica;
- coinvolgere le famiglie nei processi educativi facilitando la comprensione delle metodologie e degli obiettivi formativi previsti dal percorso.

Una delle necessità che la scuola esprime nei confronti degli alunni stranieri è che siano competenti nella lingua italiana, che siano tranquilli e che partecipino volentieri alle attività proposte. Questo sappiamo che non è mai scontato per molti fattori. Il principale, come riporta Silvana Cantù nel suo articolo “Ponti di parole”, è che la lingua è il modo di interagire con il mondo e si costruisce in base al luogo, ha una storia e un vissuto. Apprendere una lingua all’interno della vicenda migratoria non è un’esperienza neutra, riconducibile solo all’acquisizione di elementi lessicali e di regole morfosintattiche, ma è un processo complesso e faticoso, che investe la rielaborazione e la costruzione della propria identità. Per cui spesso non è sufficiente lavorare sull’apprendimento della L2 ma diventa più utile un impianto educativo di tipo narrativo che passa attraverso una ricomposizione e un “fare unità” dentro di sé.

Come Duccio Demetrio ci insegna, il laboratorio può configurarsi come un luogo privilegiato dove diventa centrale lavorare pedagogicamente sull’ascolto: ascolto di sé, della propria soggettività e della soggettività dell’altro.

Porsi in una relazione d’ascolto significa anche accogliere i silenzi, i gesti, le emozioni, le paure, i pudori, legati talvolta a tradizioni culturali e appartenenze cognitive differenti, riconoscendo e rispettando i “confini” individuali.

L’ascolto e il racconto autobiografico promuovono la narrazione di sé e incoraggiano a riconoscersi come individui dotati di una vita importante e degna di essere raccontata.

Il racconto autobiografico attiva e mette in gioco tre tipi di processi: uno di natura introspettiva, uno retrospettivo e uno appartenente alla dimensione della progettualità futura. Il raccontarsi e il comprendersi secondo l’asse temporale passato-presente-futuro facilita la costruzione della propria trama vitale come trama narrativa che stabilendo nessi tra eventi, ricordi, incontri, dà alla propria identità senso e significato reinterpretabili.

Con questi presupposti ho proposto un laboratorio che richiama i processi del racconto autobiografico, riprendendo un’esperienza a cui avevo partecipato durante una formazione sulla mediazione culturale, con l’obiettivo di creare uno spazio d’ascolto delle storie dei nostri allievi.

Il laboratorio è stato suddiviso in tre momenti:

- il far rivivere ai ragazzi, grazie alle suggestioni create dalle mie parole, immagini, colori e profumi della loro terra, il viaggio che hanno affrontato per arrivare in Italia, la loro vita nel presente e i desideri per il futuro.

In un'aula abbastanza grande in cui ognuno ha scelto liberamente il proprio spazio, ho chiesto loro di chiudere gli occhi e di lasciarsi trasportare dalle mie parole.

I ragazzi, per i quali pensavo non fosse semplice, sono stati al gioco e si sono lasciati andare.

- la ricerca di immagini su delle riviste che rappresentassero il loro passato, il presente e il futuro, da incollare poi su tre cartelloni che rappresentavano i tre momenti della vita;

- il racconto dei cartelloni. I ragazzi sono stati liberi di scegliere che cosa raccontare. E' stata più volte condivisa e ribadita la regola della riservatezza e del non giudizio.

Anch'io ho costruito i miei cartelloni e ho scelto di raccontarmi per prima. Questo credo abbia agevolato l'apertura della narrazione dei ragazzi. Penso sia importante, quando possibile, togliere la barriera del noi e loro e credo che la narrazione sia uno strumento che ci mette sullo stesso piano.

A chi non è capitato di avere momenti di crisi, dovuti a difficoltà specifiche e a traumi legati alla 'fragilità' dell'esistenza (lutti, malattie, incidenti, separazioni, cambiamenti di lavoro o di casa) o a 'naturali' passaggi esistenziali (crisi 'evolutive', inerenti a processi di crescita, dalla pubertà, alla relazione di coppia, alla nascita di un figlio), come momenti di gioia e spensieratezza?

Queste sono le mie immagini.



Un passato di cura, amore e attenzione, a volte troppa visto che sono figlia unica.

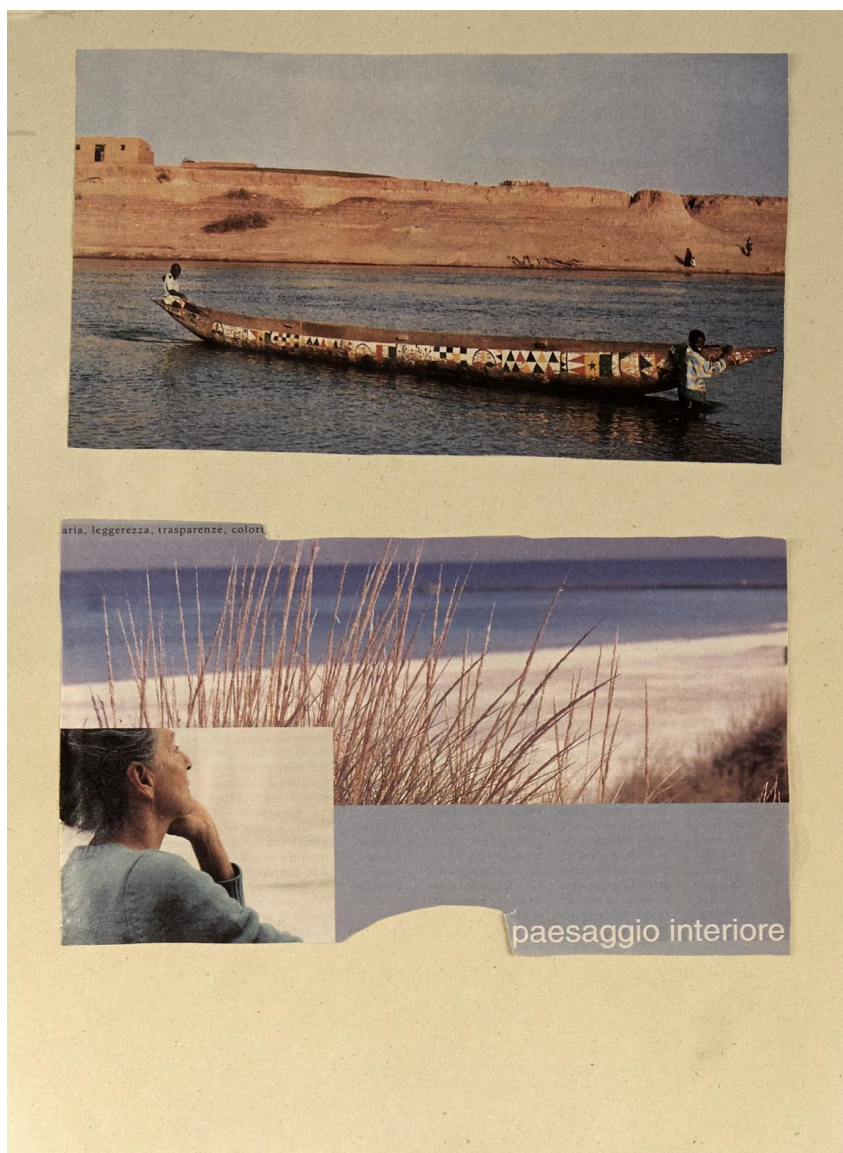
I primi viaggi e il desiderio di conoscere e confrontarmi.





Nel presente un momento doloroso. Era morto mio zio, per me il primo lutto di una persona con cui sono cresciuta. La mia casa stava crollando, la paura più grande che ho sempre avuto. Il mio corpo ne ha risentito, ho avuto anche qualche attacco d'ansia. Ho conosciuto qui la sofferenza dell'anima e del corpo, comprendendo che quello che succede nella mente succede anche nel corpo e viceversa. Per la prima volta mi sono rivolta ad un terapeuta perchè mi aiutasse a capire che cosa mi stesse succedendo.





Il futuro solitario con il desiderio di orizzonti sereni.

La mia storia è diventata lo strumento che mi ha permesso di viaggiare con i ragazzi da un luogo all'altro e di trovare il modo di legittimare e accogliere la percezione che l'altro ha della realtà.

Questi sono i cartelloni di Y. un ragazzo di nazionalità marocchina che ha scelto di descrivere le immagini.

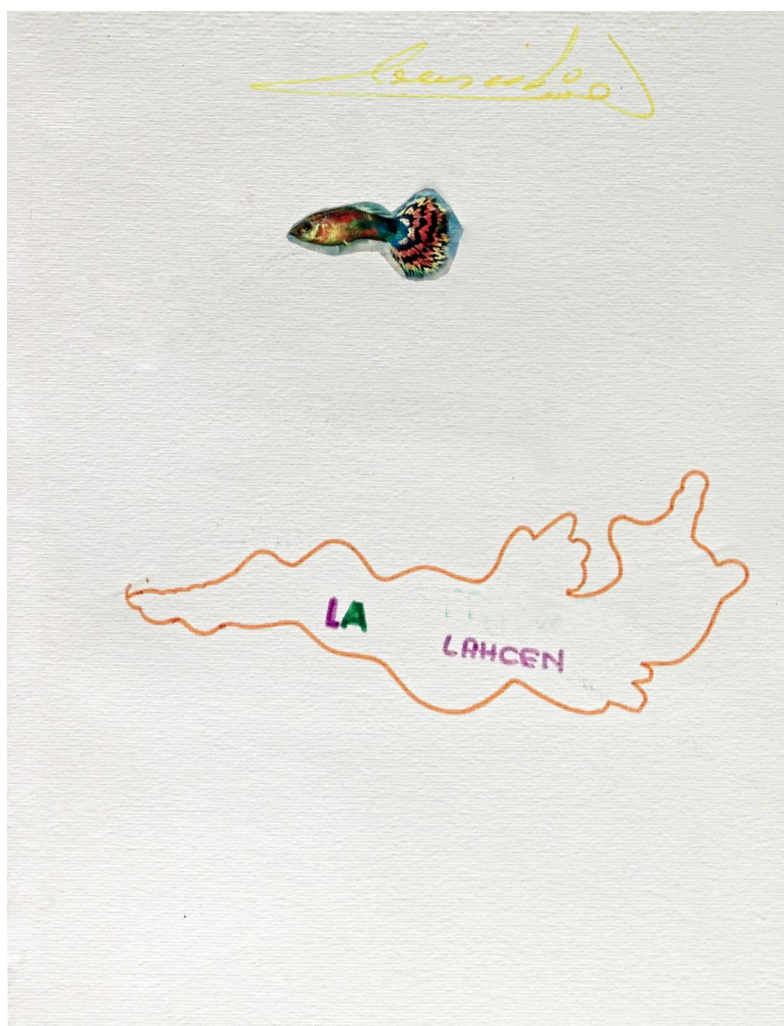


# FUTURO

Nel mio futuro vorrei tornare ad avere le mie rose e piati che segnavo con la strada dell'anima

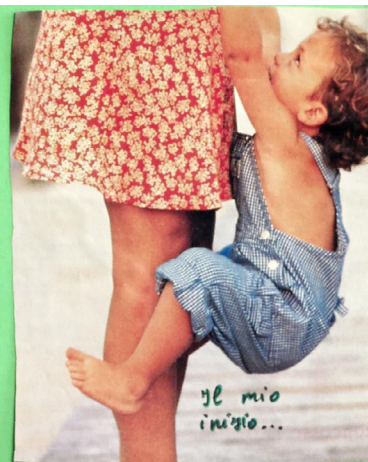


L. della stessa nazionalità di Y., nel cartellone del presente ci evidenzia quello che spesso troviamo scritto nei testi, cioè quanto ci si possa sentire pesci fuor d'acqua in un nuovo paese avendo una scarsa padronanza della lingua del luogo che ci ospita.



Anche I. descrive con parole le sue immagini. Ricordo ancora il silenzio che ha creato quando ci ha raccontato il suo viaggio per arrivare dalla Moldavia in Italia per raggiungere il fratello, da solo con mezzi di fortuna.

Passato



il mio  
inizio...



Ricordi  
delle  
primavere  
trascorse...

I PAESAGGI CHE NON DIMENTICHERO MAI



Il Presente



Nuove città



Nuove Tradizioni



Il mio hobby...

Paesaggi  
stupendi  
che  
NON  
avrei  
mai  
visto



Nuovi lavori



Nuovi piatti...

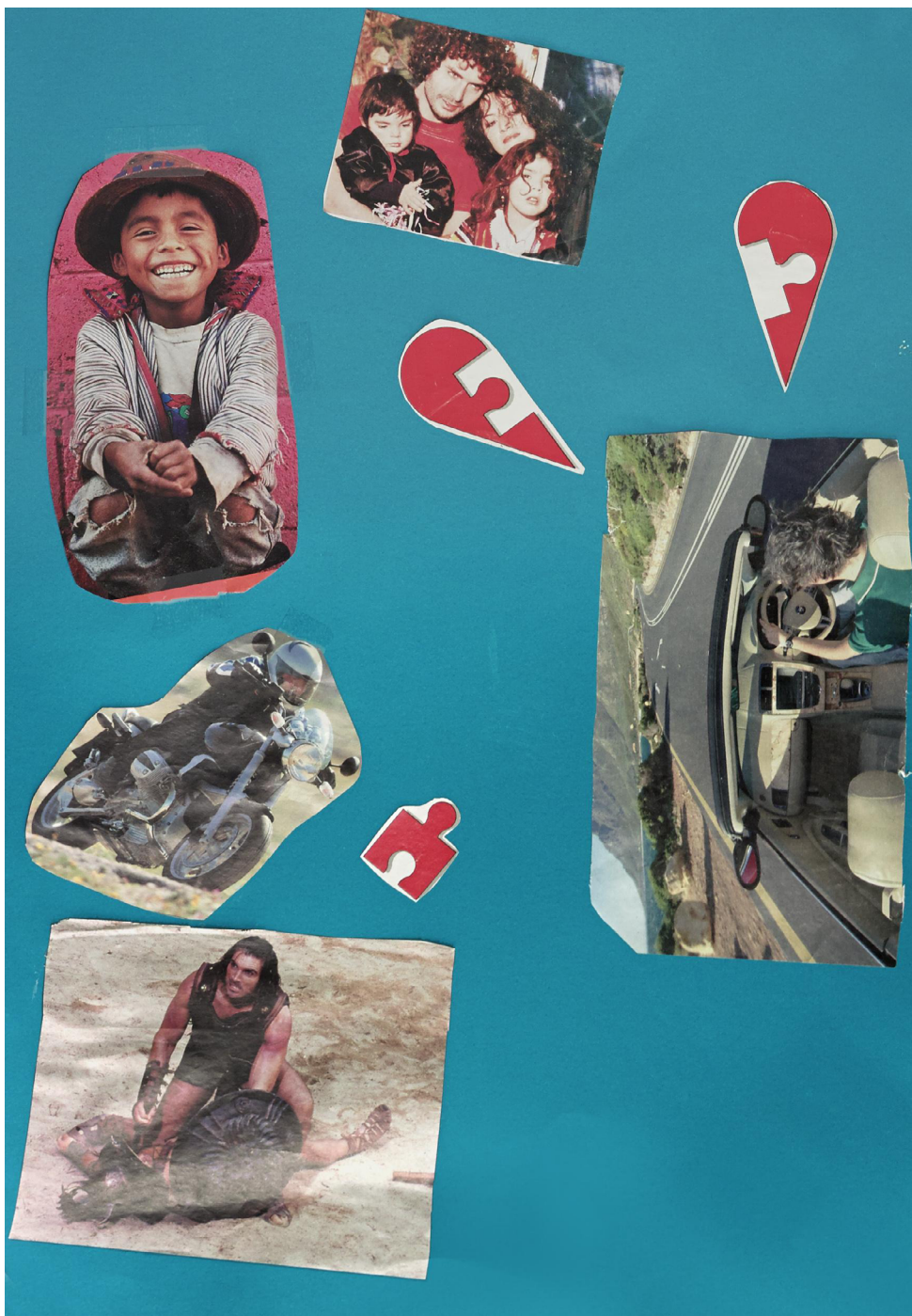
Il Futuro



Mi rimane solo  
da aspettare che  
arrivi il  
sole...



Immagini di un cuore spezzato emergono nel cartellone del passato di A.



La scritta “in trappola”, un labirinto, un cane imprigionato, occhi spaventati, per esprimere il suo momento di disperazione nel presente. Con il motorino aveva investito un signore anziano in bicicletta che cadendo è morto. Si è trovato ad affrontare un’esperienza triste e complessa sia dal punto di vista personale che legale.



Nel futuro la speranza che le ferite del cuore vengano rimarginate.



Abbiamo potuto sperimentare che nel clima facilitante, di rispetto e fiducia, la persona tende ad aprirsi, trova il coraggio di parlare di sé, sentendosi accolta in una relazione di condivisione e di umanità.

In quest'occasione gli alunni sono stati le vere figure competenti e ci hanno insegnato cosa significa viaggio, lasciare il paese in cui si è nati e quali sono le speranze di chi parte. Ci hanno descritto com'è stato il loro primo giorno in Italia, come stavano vivendo il momento presente, quali i loro sogni e progetti per il futuro. Hanno condiviso con noi la nostalgia per la loro terra e per quella parte di famiglia e di amici rimasta nel paese d'origine.

Ci hanno fatto comprendere cosa significa vivere in casa una dimensione legata al proprio paese e immergersi all'esterno in un'altra cultura di cui sono loro gli esperti, non i genitori.

Ci hanno fatto sentire, al di là di ogni teoria, come viene vissuto il cambiamento.

Le loro parole mi hanno aiutata a comprendere quanto può essere complesso trovarsi spaesati in una terra di nessuno, né là né qua, soprattutto in un periodo complesso come quello dell'adolescenza.

Grazie a questa e ad altre esperienze fatte con i ragazzi ho sentito la necessità di approfondire e acquisire nuove competenze.

Ho scelto quindi di frequentare il centro I.P.SO. di Milano, diretto da Luciano Marchino, in cui mi sono formata come insegnante di Classi di Esercizi di Bioenergetica e in Counseling ad indirizzo somato-relazionale.

Secondo la definizione approvata dal Comitato Scientifico di AssoCounseling, a cui fa riferimento questa scuola, il counseling professionale è un'attività il cui obiettivo è il miglioramento della qualità di vita del cliente, sostenendo i suoi punti di forza e le sue capacità di autodeterminazione.

Il counseling offre uno spazio di ascolto e di riflessione, nel quale esplorare difficoltà relative a processi evolutivi, fasi di transizione e stati di crisi e rinforzare capacità di scelta o di cambiamento. È un intervento che utilizza varie metodologie mutuare da diversi orientamenti teorici. Si rivolge al singolo, alle famiglie, a gruppi e istituzioni.

E' importante tenere presente la definizione di counseling perchè devo sempre ricordare che, anche quando l'utenza con cui lavoro è straniera, ho di fronte a me persone competenti che non hanno lasciato i loro saperi nel luogo in cui sono nate.

Il counseling somato-relazionale, proposto dall'I.P.SO. di Milano, nasce dall'integrazione di due diverse scuole di psicoterapia: l'Analisi Bioenergetica di Alexander Lowen e l'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona di Carl Rogers.

Il counseling somato-relazionale è un counseling di orientamento rogersiano sul quale si immettono tecniche, abilità e prospettive che appartengono al corredo teorico dell'Analisi Bioenergetica.

La scuola che ho frequentato ha scelto di far convergere l'approccio corporeo in quello umanistico di Carl Rogers.

Il counselor somato-relazionale è allenato a vedere il corpo del cliente, conosce la struttura e le dinamiche dell'armatura caratteriale e può utilizzare questa sua abilità per comprendere le tematiche caratteriali del

cliente e le risorse a cui egli può accedere.

Per questo può cogliere nel cliente anche una serie di segnali che hanno a che fare con le emozioni che lo attraversano.

Queste informazioni potranno essere rimandate alla persona dando così rilievo a una parte della comunicazione che di solito è inconscia e sottovalutata.

L'attitudine all'autoascolto, propria di chi svolge lavoro bioenergetico, diventa uno strumento prezioso all'interno della relazione di counseling. In ogni relazione, infatti, per sentire l'altro è necessario sentire se stessi, anche i propri pregiudizi, perchè se si perde il contatto con se stessi si perde anche il contatto con l'altro.

Poiché i propri pregiudizi prendono corpo nelle tensioni somatiche, gli strumenti della bioenergetica danno al counselor la competenza necessaria non solo per sentire queste tensioni/preconcetti ma, spesso, anche per scioglierle e decondizionarsene. Il counselor può quindi raggiungere uno stato di consapevolezza e apertura che gli consente di vedere l'altro e di stare veramente con lui senza pregiudizi o comunque lo rende consapevole di quelli che ha e lo facilita a prenderne le distanze.

Il counselor somato-relazionale può utilizzare la propria competenza per introdurre nella seduta alcuni elementi di lavoro corporeo. Per esempio, quando il cliente, per non entrare nell'emozione, riduce il proprio respiro al minimo vitale, il counselor, per rimetterlo in contatto con il suo sentire, può suggerirgli di respirare profondamente per qualche minuto. Oppure, quando la persona esprime un'emozione, il counselor può invitarla all'autoascolto, chiedendole in quale parte del corpo la sta sentendo. Per aumentare la sensazione di contatto con il suolo e di radicamento del cliente, il counselor può proporgli di alzarsi e di assumere la "posizione base" della bioenergetica: un lavoro che induce vibrazioni alle gambe, scioglimento e un'accresciuta capacità di sentire. Se tiene le spalle sollevate, può essere stimolata ad esasperare questa postura perché il suo significato e i suoi contenuti emotivi diventino più evidenti.

Spesso durante la formazione ci siamo raccontati, abbiamo ascoltato, osservato e permesso agli altri di leggere i nostri corpi.

In questo modo abbiamo vissuto in prima persona cosa significano empatia, congruenza e accettazione positiva e incondizionata.

Questo percorso, quindi, mi ha permesso prima di tutto di lavorare su me stessa, circostanza non semplice dal punto di vista emotivo, e di comprendere con chiarezza quali competenze deve possedere chi lavora nella relazione, sempre e in particolare con utenti migranti.

Mi è chiaro che la competenza del counselor è nella relazione. La relazione è qualcosa che si vive. Come il corpo.

Credo che sia indispensabile come counselor fare un grosso lavoro su se stessi perchè anche noi dobbiamo sentire cosa vuol dire raccontarsi per essere pronti ad accogliere le storie degli altri con pieno rispetto.

Dobbiamo renderci conto di come ci si sente quando ci si racconta e ci si affida ad un'altra persona. Ci si

emoziona, ci si commuove, magari si sorride e così è anche per l'altro, da qualsiasi parte del mondo provenga.

Ho scelto l'approccio somatorelazionale per l'amore che ho per alcune discipline corporee e perchè ho potuto sperimentare sulla mia pelle che il corpo sono io e che quindi dice sempre la verità su chi sono.

E' un modello che ho sentito mio, non perchè migliore di altri ma perchè ha soddisfatto la mia necessità di apprendere attraverso l'esperienza.

Ho appreso l'importanza del mantenersi aperti sia rispetto alle dichiarazioni verbali della persona sia ai messaggi non verbali, espressi dalla qualità della voce, del movimento, della postura e dell'espressione somato-emozionale. Ho fatto mio l'atteggiamento etico e metodologico del minimo intervento necessario, esprimendo la necessità di un ascolto preciso e profondo.

Mi concedo sempre il piacere di lasciarmi sorprendere dalla unicità delle persone che incontro cercando di porre meno filtri cognitivi e preconcetti possibili.

Ad ogni incontro mi impegno a vedere l'altro come unico soggetto in grado di dichiarare la verità su se stesso perciò ho maturato l'idea di apprendere sempre dai clienti.

Spesso invece le richieste delle istituzioni che ti coinvolgono è quello di sapere che cosa c'è oltre le parole del cliente e non è sempre semplice spiegare che non siamo degli investigatori ma che la nostra possibilità è unicamente restare con la verità delle persone.

E' soprattutto grazie all'esser viste, ascoltate, comprese e accettate umanamente che le persone imparano a vedere, ascoltare, comprendere e accettare se stesse e gli altri.

Empatia, congruenza e accettazione positiva e incondizionata devono essere qualità caratteriali profonde che non si possono "mettere in scena". Ne possiamo disporre pienamente solo dopo esserci conosciuti, dopo esserci confrontati con la nostra storia e accettati profondamente, abbastanza in pace con noi stessi da poterci aprire al nuovo e al diverso. Abbastanza in pace con noi stessi da poter accedere al calore e all'accoglienza che abbiamo dentro di noi per incontrare le parti più fragili di chi ci sta davanti, stabilendo una relazione nel rispetto di noi stessi e dell'altro.

Credo che, come tutti, il migrante senta il bisogno di essere accolto, soprattutto in società che, come la nostra, non sono ancora completamente pronte a dare il benvenuto.

Con un'associazione che si occupa di mediazione interculturale, Il sorriso di Ilham-onlus, di cui faccio parte, abbiamo attivato uno sportello d'ascolto in una scuola media e mi capita di ascoltare storie di minori stranieri che esprimono sofferenza e solitudine.

Vorrei dividerne alcune.

M. è una ragazzina albanese di 13 anni che chiede da sola il mio intervento. Mi racconta che è molto preoccupata perchè sta attraversando un brutto momento, non si accetta perchè è brutta e grassa e l'unica cosa che la fa stare meglio è l'autolesionismo. Viene a conoscenza di questa pratica su siti internet e blog in cui condivide il suo malessere con persone che, come lei, si tagliano. Spesso dice di ricevere suggerimenti in

base ai quali viene incitata a tagliarsi più frequentemente per stare meglio. Dice di essere stata vittima di bullismo mentale. L'estate scorsa ha frequentato un centro estivo e si è sentita derisa perchè più alta e più robusta della media dei suoi coetanei. Sta mangiando poco in modo da poter perdere peso. Le è capitato di avere desideri suicidi. Ha provato a comunicare il suo disagio ai suoi genitori, peraltro giovanissimi, ma non si sente presa sul serio. Loro minimizzano quello che lei racconta dicendole che i problemi sono altri e quando si ha cibo e una casa non ci si deve lamentare. Stiamo costruendo insieme la modalità migliore di coinvolgimento della famiglia e l'eventuale invio ad altri specialisti.

S. un ragazzo di quindici anni marocchino che frequenta la terza media mi viene segnalato dalla scuola a causa di un netto peggioramento rispetto all'anno precedente sia nel rendimento che nel comportamento. Condivido quello che la scuola mi riporta con la mia collega marocchina per capire se sia più opportuno un mio o un suo intervento. Mi dice che è una situazione che già conosce e che, per tale caso, ritiene la mia figura più appropriata.

S. si dimostra disponibile al colloquio. Mi racconta che ha iniziato ad avere problemi da quando sua sorella è scappata da casa. Sorella che da sempre è stata il suo punto di riferimento. Sceglie di raggiungerla e per qualche giorno vengono ospitati da un loro connazionale più grande di loro. Questi gli fa delle proposte sessuali che S. riesce a rifiutare. Dopo alcuni giorni lui torna a casa mentre la sorella no. Inizia a bere e fumare canne. Una sera si ubriaca e gli amici, quando vedono che ha esagerato, lo lasciano da solo su una panchina. Si sente male e un passante che lo vede chiama l'ambulanza: finisce al pronto soccorso. Viene avvisata la famiglia che lo raggiunge in ospedale. Parliamo di amicizia, legalità e salute. Per lui il momento è così complicato che non riesce a trovare soluzioni se non nel perdere la lucidità. Di notte non riesce a dormire per l'ansia e di giorno per stare sveglio beve, oltre agli alcolici, bevande energetiche e stimolanti. I carabinieri lo fermano più volte per controlli perchè sospettato di risse e furti. Questa cosa non mi viene riportata da lui, la vengo a sapere dalla scuola. Nel tempo che trascorre con me spesso mi chiede che cosa combinano gli altri ragazzi che vedo e quali sono le conseguenze di quello che fanno. Vuole sapere se nessuno ha mai avuto problemi con la legge o è mai stato portato in carcere.

La scuola chiama il padre per informarlo rispetto alle difficoltà del figlio e il papà inizia a scaldarsi urlando e alzando le mani tanto che il dirigente deve intervenire per tranquillizzarlo e per spiegargli che si sta facendo un grosso lavoro per aiutarlo. Emergono anche i problemi economici della famiglia su cui grava anche uno sfratto.

Si delinea un quadro familiare complesso perchè si tratta di un nucleo familiare che ha perso le proprie radici e che di fatto non è né marocchino né italiano. All'interno di questo nucleo vi è un figlio che ha squalificato i genitori e che non si sente parte di niente. Durante l'ultimo colloquio mi fa ascoltare la canzone 21 grammi dei Duplici di cui riporto alcune strofe:

“Sento il tempo che mi schiaccia quindi corro senza freno  
so che si vive una volta soltanto e che domani è un giorno in meno  
ho una crew che lo spinge più in là

una famiglia dei ricordi e tremo se mi chiedo cosa resterà ...

io, credo che ci sia qualcosa dopo

o forse è solo la speranza di non perdere tutto nel vuoto...

nel mio cuore restan sensazioni forti

certe notti, zitto fisso il soffitto

prego un dio diverso da quello che mi han descritto ...

a volte senti il peso è una domanda che ti opprime

quindi vivi cercando il tuo posto per un lieto fine

io no, non sono pronto a rassegnarmi

e racchiudo amore odio pace e sclero in 21 grammi

credo nel futuro con dei sogni più grandi

sorrido a questa vita e a quello che ha voluto darmi ...

cerco un abbraccio vero che mi dia ancora calore

la serenità del cuore fino all'ultimo sole

mentre passano le ore ed io non so cosa c'è in serbo

vivo sentendo il bisogno di trovare un punto fermo

vivo per la mia famiglia per una penna e un quaderno”.

G. un ragazzo di origine brasiliana segnalatomi dalla scuola perchè crea problemi per la sua aggressività e per la sua poca voglia di fare. Durante il primo colloquio di conoscenza si siede di fronte a me e praticamente inizia a raccontarsi da solo. Ha quindici anni e da cinque è in Italia. E' venuto con i genitori e il fratello maggiore. Il papà da alcuni mesi li ha abbandonati ed è tornato in Brasile. Dice di soffrire molto di questa situazione e di aver perso la figura di riferimento della famiglia, la persona che gli dava delle regole. Lui senza paletti non riesce a funzionare. Prima era tutto diverso ma da quando non c'è più il padre ha anche cambiato amici e per essersi intromesso in una rissa è stato portato per la prima volta in caserma. Decidiamo insieme di iniziare a vederci.

Alcuni di questi ragazzi, con le loro storie, sono quelli che spesso vengono definiti bulli. Ma quanta sofferenza nasconde la loro rabbia?

Non avrei mai pensato che ragazzini così giovani potessero avere problemi così importanti e profondi. Trovo siano molto coraggiosi nel dividerli, ma capisco anche la mancanza di figure di riferimento. Vedo dolcezza nei loro occhi e bisogno di attenzione.

Mi chiedo spesso se stiamo vedendo le loro necessità, se siamo capaci di accogliere o solo di avere delle richieste. Quello in cui credo è che una parola, uno sguardo d'amore possa nutrire e nutrirci.

I migranti possono vivere momenti di enorme sofferenza e spiazzamento e il nostro compito è quello di dar loro supporto nell'affrontare crisi di transizione culturale tipiche dei processi migratori.

Dobbiamo saperci aprire al nuovo, ascoltando senza imporre né escludere.

Ascoltare storie, emozioni, sentimenti.



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## La Teoria Centrata sulla Persona e la Psichiatria Transculturale: una ricerca complementarista<sup>1</sup>.

### Marianna Cento<sup>2</sup>

«Iniziate a scoprire che c'è qualcosa che vi penetra  
e che trasforma dall'interno la vostra stessa tradizione, da una parte e dall'altra.  
Nasce qualcosa. Se è un dialogo vero, deve essere fecondo e farà nascere una terza cosa,  
che non rinuncerà necessariamente ai propri genitori, ma sarà un'altra cosa.  
Vogliamo sempre dei modelli, ma diamo un po' di fiducia a quello che nascerà!».  
(Panikkar, in W. Weick e A. Andriotto, 2000).

La ricerca che presento nasce dalla simultanea frequentazione del Quadriennio I.A.C.P. a Milano e del Diploma in Psichiatria Transculturale presso l'*Université 13* di Parigi, nonché dal desiderio di trovare una conciliazione fra l'anima terapeutica e quella transculturale che vorrei poter abitare.

L'ipotesi che sostanzia la ricerca è se sia possibile un arricchimento reciproco fra l'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona e la prospettiva Psichiatrica Transculturale francese sia a livello teorico, che clinico e dei rispettivi setting.

La metodologia adoperata è quella "complementarista"<sup>3</sup>. Infatti, il padre dell'Etnopsicoanalisi, Georges Devereux, sosteneva la necessità di utilizzare un doppio discorso, ovvero in un primo momento la disciplina antropologica ed in seguito quella psicoanalitica, in modo obbligatorio ma non simultaneo. Parimenti nella presente ricerca mi sono servita del metodo del complementarismo in riferimento alla C.C.T. e alla Psichiatria Transculturale francese. Inoltre, ho adoperato la metodologia dell'auto-analisi, mediante lo strumento della supervisione individuale e di un percorso di analisi personale ed ho abbracciato la prospettiva "metaculturale" proposta da Devereux<sup>4</sup>. In tale ottica non si richiede che il terapeuta appartenga alla stessa cultura del paziente né che sia tenuto a conoscere tutte le culture dei pazienti che incontrerà (meta per altro irraggiungibile), quanto piuttosto che padroneggi il concetto di "cultura" e sia in grado di impiegarlo per favorire il processo terapeutico. Inoltre, la ricerca si pone nell'ottica del "meticcio",

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<sup>3</sup> Devereux, G., 1978

<sup>4</sup> Devereux, G., 1969, citato da Baubet, T., Moro, M.R., 2003.

ovvero a partire da un concetto dinamico di cultura, intendendo ogni essere umano come originariamente “meticcio”<sup>5</sup>, alla ricerca di contaminazioni fra culture e approcci differenti, nell’ottica di una “mutua fecondazione”<sup>6</sup>.

L’elaborato si struttura in tre fasi: in un primo tempo si esplorano i postulati teorici della C.C.T. e della Psichiatria Transculturale francese, in un’ottica complementarista. Successivamente tale metodologia viene applicata alla presentazione di alcune situazioni cliniche seguite a Torino e a Parigi. In questa sede intendo soffermarmi sulla presa in carico di una famiglia cinese, avvenuta presso la *Clinique de s Adolescents* di Cochin, a Parigi, descrivendo il funzionamento del setting transculturale creato dalla Moro sul modello di Nathan. Non presenterò, invece, altri casi per ragioni di tempo.

Infine, si delineano i possibili contributi reciproci fra i due approcci, a livello teorico, clinico e dei setting.

Pertanto, i postulati teorici che ho ritenuto salienti nella C.C.T. sono il concetto di “filosofia della natura umana” rogersiana, ovvero il modello di uomo che il terapeuta veicola, mantenendo viva la fiducia nella capacità del cliente di auto-determinarsi e facilitando il dispiegarsi della sua tendenza attualizzante, la nozione di “setting interiore” (l’atteggiamento del terapeuta) ed “esteriore”, co-costruito nella relazione fra terapeuta e cliente; l’apporto della “fenomenologia” alla C.C.T., volto a restituire dignità al vissuto soggettivo, l’incontro “Io-Tu” (Rogers, Buber, 1957) come fulcro del processo terapeutico, la “teoria della personalità” di Rogers (secondo la quale il processo terapeutico procede da un determinato grado di rigidità nella strutturazione della personalità del cliente ad uno di maggior flessibilità) ed, infine, la “flessibilità del setting tradizionale” della C.C.T.

Rispetto alla Psichiatria Transculturale, prima di esplorare i contributi francesi, mi sono interrogata in merito all’ esistenza di eventuali radici italiane coeve allo sviluppo della scuola francese dell’Etnopsichiatria; a tal fine mi sono immersa nei contributi dell’antropologo De Martino e dello psichiatra Riso, sul finire degli anni ’50.

Nello sviluppo della disciplina della Psichiatria Transculturale francese ritengo fondamentale l’apporto di due concetti mutuati dall’antropologia: quello di “cultura”, inteso come dinamico, un “fiume” di significati<sup>7</sup>, nonché la “nozione antropologica di persona”. In molte culture, infatti, la persona non coincide con l’individuo, ma si struttura su “anti-

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<sup>5</sup> Sul concetto delle “logiche meticce” e dell’essere umano concepito come originariamente meticcio, si veda il pensiero di Amselle, J.L., 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Panikkar, R., a cura di Weick, W., Andriotto, A., 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Geertz, C., citato da Remotti, F., 2001.

principi di individuazione”<sup>8</sup>, acquisendo senso ontologico solo nella relazione con l’alterità, con gli spiriti, gli antenati, i familiari etc.

La rivoluzione di Devereux risulta un contributo cardine dell’Etnopsichiatria e si concretizza sul piano metodologico con l’apporto del “complementarismo”. Parimenti esistono dei postulati teorici su cui poggia l’Etnopsichiatria francese che ritengo basilari: l’“universalità psichica” e la “codifica culturale”. Pertanto, secondo la prospettiva strutturalista di Devereux (mutuata dall’antropologo Lévi-Strauss<sup>9</sup>), in ogni essere umano esistono delle strutture mentali simili, con un analogo funzionamento, a prescindere dalla cultura di appartenenza (“universalità psichica”). Tali strutture, però, vengono “riempite” con contenuti culturali differenti (codifica culturale”), articolati mediante rappresentazioni culturali sia “ontologiche”– ovvero che cos’è un bambino, una bambina, un uomo, una donna in una determinata cultura – che “eziologiche” – ossia inerenti il senso (e non la causa) della sofferenza della persona - e “terapeutiche” - che riguardano quello che si è fatto e si fa per curare il malato - . Infine, un ultimo apporto che considero essenziale nella Psichiatria Transculturale è il concetto di “setting transculturale”, che procede da quello classico psicoanalitico di Devereux, al grande gruppo transculturale di Nathan<sup>10</sup>, per confluire nel “dispositivo a geometria variabile” di Moro<sup>11</sup>, chiamato così perché passibile di modificare la propria geometria in funzione dei bisogni del paziente e della sua famiglia (dal grande gruppo transculturale, al piccolo gruppo, al setting individuale terapeuta/paziente).

Per illustrare il funzionamento del grande gruppo transculturale, desidero presentare la presa in carico di una famiglia cinese presso la *Clinique des Adolescents* di Cochin, alla quale ho avuto l’occasione di partecipare; la seduta si è svolta con il seguente setting:

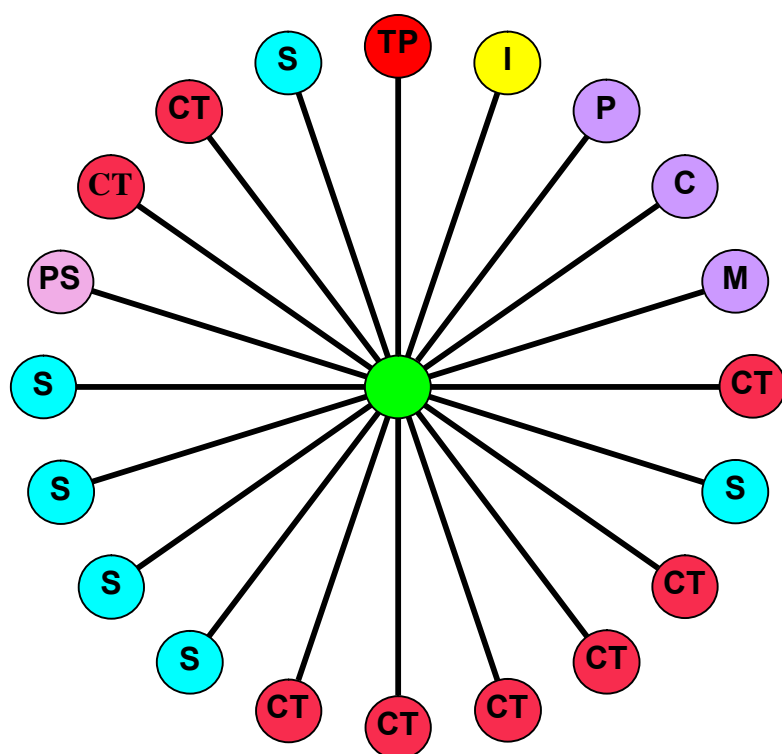
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<sup>8</sup> Bastide, R., 1973.

<sup>9</sup> Lévi-Strauss, C., 1949.

<sup>10</sup> Nathan, T., 1993.

<sup>11</sup> Moro, M.R., 1998.



**Setting della Clinica degli Adolescenti, Parigi:**

**TP=** Terapeuta Principale  
**CT=** Co-terapeuta  
**I=** Interprete, assente nella seduta  
**P=** Padre del paziente  
**M=** Madre del paziente  
**C=** Chantal, la paziente  
**S=** Stagista  
**PS=** La mia posizione di Partecipante e Stagista

La famiglia cinese che prende parte alla seduta è composta da quattro membri: il padre, la madre e due figlie, che ho chiamato con un nome fittizio Chantal e Laurance, rispettivamente di 14 e 12 anni. La figlia minore è assente poiché si trova in Cina presso il nonno materno. Chantal viene inviata alla consultazione da un reparto di psichiatria infantile poiché soffre da due anni di un Disturbo del Comportamento Alimentare (D.C.A.). I sintomi dell'anoressia sono insorti quando Chantal aveva 12 anni.

Durante la prima seduta presso il grande gruppo transculturale di Cochin si ricostruisce la storia dei genitori di Chantal, cresciuti in Cina negli anni '50, all'epoca del comunismo. Si raccoglie l'anamnesi delle due ragazze per poi "fissarle" all'interno della loro parentela (ovvero ricostruendo il processo di nomina di queste ultime si attribuisce loro una collocazione in rapporto agli antenati, ai nonni, ai genitori etc.). Ognuna delle due ragazze, infatti, porta tre nomi: un nome inglese, uno francese ed uno cinese.

Infine, emerge un conflitto educativo fra i genitori.

La problematica alimentare di Chantal sembra delinarsi come un sintomo familiare: infatti, quanto Chantal manifesta i primi segni di miglioramento, la sorella, alla stessa età in cui è insorto il D.C.A. della primogenita, incomincia a sviluppare il medesimo disturbo.

Prima di addentrarmi nella dinamica della seconda seduta, intendo precisare che si svolge in tre fasi.

Durante la prima, la T.P. accoglie la famiglia e ricostruisce l'eziologia della sofferenza di Chantal secondo la famiglia. Per tutta la durata di tale prima fase e della seconda, la ragazza resta in silenzio, a testa bassa.

Frattanto, la madre manifesta il proprio senso di colpa in relazione alla sofferenza delle figlie, della quale si sente responsabile. Emerge un sentimento depressivo di fondo che la spinge a desiderare di “partire”, “lasciare la vita”. Il modello educativo che la figura materna sostiene è volto alla trasmissione delle radici della cultura cinese.

In contrapposizione, il padre appoggia un modello pedagogico transnazionale e riconduce il disagio delle figlie al comportamento dei genitori, che non le avrebbero sufficientemente spronate a separarsi da loro. Si delinea così un conflitto educativo fra i genitori, per il quale il padre non riesce a mettere in atto il proprio ruolo paterno all'interno della famiglia e, di conseguenza, la moglie si sente sovraccarica e percepisce le figlie come “incollate” a lei.

La T.P. restituisce l'immagine che ogni membro della famiglia porti un pezzo della sofferenza familiare e interroga i genitori su che cosa sia stato fatto in precedenza per curare tale sofferenza. In risposta, la madre riferisce di aver consultato la medicina cinese, che ha identificato un “blocco di Chantal sull'immagine paterna”, con la conseguente prescrizione per tutta la famiglia di assumere dei *fiori di Bach*, per liberarsi dal senso di colpa (prescrizione non eseguita). Dal canto suo, il padre chiama in causa il *Feng Shui*<sup>12</sup>, riconducendo la sofferenza familiare alla cattiva disposizione della casa. La T.P. concorda dunque con la prescrizione della medicina tradizionale cinese in merito alla necessità di liberare la famiglia dal senso di colpa.

Nel corso della seconda fase, la T.P. fa circolare la parola nel gruppo. Chiede ai CO-T di fornire delle interpretazioni della situazione mettendo a disposizione del gruppo le proprie rappresentazioni culturali di riferimento (che, spesso, sono contraddistinte da questo incipit: “al mio paese si dice che...”, “si fa così..”).

Quando la seduta volge al termine, a seguito delle differenti interpretazioni che danno voce ai vissuti della famiglia e al bisogno di amore delle figlie, un Co-T afferma che Chantal mangerà, avrà molto piacere e diventerà una donna adulta, sollecitando per la prima volta una risposta (ironica ) di quest'ultima. Inoltre, il Co-T dà voce alla paura di

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<sup>12</sup> Il *Feng Shui* è un'arte geomantica taoista della Cina, ausiliaria dell'architettura. I principi di tale arte indicano che esistono direzioni maggiormente propizie per la costruzione della casa, per lo svolgimento delle varie attività al suo interno e sanciscono la necessità di armonizzare l'energia all'interno della casa per portare serenità e benessere alla famiglia che la abita.

perdere i propri genitori che sembrerebbe bloccare la crescita di Chantal e Laurence, le quali rifiutando il cibo paiono non volersi separare da questi ultimi.

Si ipotizza, inoltre, l'esistenza di un "trauma intergenerazionale", laddove la madre delle ragazze all'età di 8 anni era stata costretta, a sua volta, a separarsi dalla propria madre per andare a vivere con i nonni. Il bisogno di amore e affetto sembra a questo punto prendere il posto del bisogno di separazione. Infine, il Co-T coglie il vissuto di fallimento, il senso di colpa, e la vergogna esperiti dai genitori, i quali sembrano sentirsi visti e compresi da tale rimando empatico.

Nella terza fase, la T.P. conclude la seduta e fornisce una prescrizione alla famiglia, esplicitando la necessità di impiegare tutte le risorse disponibili, anche quelle messe a disposizione dalle rispettive famiglie d'origine, in modo tale che ognuno trovi la propria collocazione nella famiglia utilizzando le sue risorse. Di conseguenza, si invita la madre a seguire la cura dei fiori di Bach e a portare un sogno per la seduta successiva, mentre si prescrive al padre di fare appello al *Feng Shui*.

A seguito della discussione nel grande gruppo verificatasi post-seduta, elaboro alcune riflessioni in merito a quanto accaduto. L'assenza dell'interprete, causata dal ritardo di quest'ultimo, ha reso impossibile la libera espressione dei sentimenti, anche conflittuali, fra i genitori, libertà che sarebbe scaturita, invece, qualora fosse stato impiegato il mandarino durante la consultazione.

I sentimenti di "vergogna, fallimento, colpa" - talmente opprimenti da spingere la madre a desiderare di "partire" - possono, a mio avviso, essere meglio compresi nel quadro della costruzione della persona in Cina, che è in primis sociale. Pertanto, lo sguardo altrui riveste un ruolo fondamentale nel determinare il valore della persona.

Rispetto al "livello ontologico", i genitori sembrano presentare delle rappresentazioni differenti sulla figlia Chantal: per il padre quest'ultima è "forte, solida, intelligente", mentre la madre la descrive come "oppositiva ed incollata a lei". A "livello eziologico", i genitori manifestano pareri conflittuali sul senso della malattia, concepita dal padre come sofferenza familiare e vissuta dalla madre come una colpa personale, che grava su di lei. Infine, in merito al "livello terapeutico", all'interno della seduta viene conferito uno status paritario ai differenti sistemi (ovvero alla medicina cinese ed alla terapia psicologica transculturale) concordando su una comune "diagnosi", che vede necessaria la "liberazione della famiglia dal senso di colpa".

Per quanto concerne l'arricchimento reciproco fra i due approcci, a livello **metodologico** si ritiene che la C.C.T. arricchisca la Psichiatria Transculturale attraverso il concetto di

**“filosofia della natura umana” e di “principio dialogico”**, esplicitando il modello di persona veicolato dal terapeuta e favorendo il dialogo del terapeuta con le nozioni antropologiche di persona, spesso relazionali, veicolate dai migranti. Parimenti il concetto di **“codifica culturale”** può aprire la C.C.T. alla centralità della dimensione culturale dell’incontro terapeutico, facilitando il confronto fra le rappresentazioni culturali del terapeuta e del paziente, a livello ontologico, eziologico e terapeutico.

Sotto il profilo clinico, se il rogersiano concetto di **“congruenza”** rende esplicito il coinvolgimento affettivo del terapeuta nell’*hic et nunc* della relazione, quello di **“controtransfert culturale”** ne sottolinea le implicazioni culturali. Inoltre, laddove la C.C.T. propone la necessità dell’**auto-analisi** e della **supervisione individuale** dei casi clinici, la Psichiatria Transculturale opera attraverso un **confronto grupale** e potrebbe arricchire la C.C.T. introducendo la necessità di **lavorare con l’interprete** nella presa in carico dei migranti.

In merito all’arricchimento dei setting, se il concetto di **“costruzione intersoggettiva del setting”**<sup>13</sup> sottolinea la dimensione socio-politico e relazionale dell’incontro fra terapeuta e cliente, la **“decolonizzazione di se stessi”** proposta da Fanon<sup>14</sup> mette in luce come tale incontro si giochi sul palcoscenico della storia, precedendo la relazione “Io-Tu”. Solo nell’ottica di un’assunzione di consapevolezza rispetto ai propri stereotipi e pregiudizi nei confronti del cliente/paziente migrante – nonché di come questi ultimi siano condizionati dalla storia dei rapporti fra le popolazioni di appartenenza del paziente e del terapeuta – si rende possibile l’incontro terapeutico.

Infine, entrambe gli approcci presentano una centratura sui bisogni rispettivamente del cliente e del paziente ed assegnano a quest’ ultimo una posizione di potere. L’approccio rogersiano conferisce potere al cliente attraverso l’assunzione di un atteggiamento non direttivo da parte del terapeuta, fiducioso nei confronti della tendenza attualizzante del cliente. Parimenti, nella Psichiatria Transculturale si sostiene l’autodeterminazione del paziente favorendo la sua capacità di padroneggiare gli strumenti terapeutici e culturali che gli vengono offerti (quali la possibilità di parlare la lingua materna durante la seduta, di portare dei sogni ed interpretarli etc.).

In conclusione, si sostiene la possibilità di creare dei setting “a geometria variabile” e “meticciati” (Moro, 1991), aperti all’incontro fra terapeuta e cliente nelle sue dimensioni storiche, politiche e sociali e porosi alle contaminazioni fra i due approcci.

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<sup>13</sup> Greggio G.L., Zucconi, A., 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Fanon, F., 1952.



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## **Weaving a meaningful narrative : reconciling cultures in an ethnopsychiatric setting**

Nilima Changkakoti<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction : clinical ethnopsychiatry**

#### *When things go wrong*

What happens in a multicultural society when different cultures, different worldviews are brought together in institutions that are highly cultural, like school or the mental health and social systems? Under the pressure of migration movements and the subsequent diversification of the population, universalist conceptions and the practices based thereupon have been questioned and often found lacking. Patients do not respond to treatments, school children and their parents resist the system and whatever attempt is made to reach out to them, or get them to conform. Although intercultural (crosscultural) approaches in education and mental health have been developed that try to address these issues, old ideas die hard (Dasen & Akkari, 2008). Professionals may be unaware that the theoretical and practical framework they rely on is as much a cultural construction as the distant worldviews they may be exposed to when working in a multicultural environment. They also tend to neglect the influence of social and political issues and power relations on their practice. When confronted with feelings of failure and powerlessness the temptation is great to fall back on ethnocentrism and assimilationism.

Hoping to overcome the inherent ethnocentrism of western approaches to therapy, french psychologist and anthropologist Tobie Nathan (Nathan, 1998) created a specific setting in order to deal with patients from other cultures (distant from a standardized occidental culture) based on George Devereux's complementarity principle, compulsory yet non simultaneous use of anthropology and psychoanalysis (Devereux, 1972, 1998).

#### *Why a specific setting?*

Some may object that a specific setting will only enhance and crystallize cultural differences, with the risk that the ethnopsychiatry clinic turn into a therapeutic ghetto. However, this specific setting is intended to enable discussion between cultures through discussion about cultures where communication had reached a dead end. When therapeutic theories are not shared, or conflict, the setting provides a space where patients and therapists can negotiate a more or less common framework, "where the therapist is able to remain coherent with his own theory [...] and where, at the same time, the patient can express a culturally shaped suffering"(Corin, 1997, p. 348). Although the risk of essentializing culture exists and has given rise to heated controversy around Nathan in France (Corin, 1997; Fassin, 2000; Sturm, Nadig, & Moro, 2011), the primary intention is to bridge divides, not the contrary. Thus

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clinical ethnopsychiatry only steps in when other attempts prove unsatisfactory and patients are always referred and accompanied through the whole process by the “first line” professionals involved in the situation.

Ethnopsychiatry posits that all cultures have theories about health, illness, growth, education, that are to be taken seriously and not treated as mere beliefs. “Traditional etiologies,” should therefore be considered as dynamic representation systems which may introduce positive change, active elements of the therapy (Sturm, Nadig & Moro, 2011).

Nathan (2000) thus defines the specific setting “as an experimental space for mediation between scientific systems of thought, and thought systems brought with them by immigrant populations”.

Clinical ethnopsychiatry develops the idea of cultural envelope on the basis of Anzieu’s concept of the psychic envelope (1987) and its extension to groups: there is no group without a common skin, a containing envelope. Growing up in a group, one thus interiorizes the external cultural framework . In exile, the connection between the external and internal cultural frame is ruptured, which may induce severe loss of meaning (Pocreau & Martins Borges, 2006). One of the aims of the ethnopsychiatry approach is to restore a sense of affiliation in order to facilitate movement between cultures and recover meaning.

### ***Description of the setting and principles organizing the clinical work***

Clinical ethnopsychiatry takes place within a group :

- a group of therapists from different cultures, all “western” trained as doctors, psychologists or social workers;
- the patient with his family;
- the professionals who have referred the patient;
- a community interpreter or culture broker from the patient’s culture.

The group setting secures an “enveloppe” around the patient, stabilizing a space where a multiplicity of interpretations can be exchanged without degenerating into an arena of dual confrontation (Nathan, 2000), where meaning can be recreated. This implies that the therapists have the ability to inhabit (at least) two universes of thought.

Discourse is indirect: only the leading therapist and the interpreter, when invited to do so, address the patient directly. The group’s words are reformulated by the main therapist (see Table 2). In the circulation of ideas about the situation, the community interpreter is a vital resource, he has insider’s and “outsider’s” knowledge, he has his own experience of immigration, he is a specialist of the navigation between worlds, languages and meanings.

Words and the life-worlds they activate are discussed, so is the translation of the patient's and his family's statements, which turns the patient into an expert, a necessary partner in an enterprise of exploration, of construction of an explanatory narrative, a coherent interpretation of (and then antidote to) the clients' experiences (Kaim, 2008).

As mentioned above, traditional etiologies will provide the narrative lines, and dreams, welcome and invited, will be treated in the cultural way.

### *Ethnopsychiatry with children and adolescents*

Ethnopsychiatry is by definition a manifold and evolving practice (Pocreau & Martins Borges, 2006). Different practices have developed in France itself (Sturm, Nadig & Moro, 2011), in other european countries, Switzerland or Canada. In France, whereas Nathan concentrates more on the primary cultural affiliation, Moro (1998, 2002), resorting to a more dynamic conception of culture such as the one proposed by Cuche (2001) has shown specific interest in family dynamics, hybrid cultural identities and work with children with an immigrant background. Duvillié (2006) as well does specific work with children: as a school psychologist trained in ethnopsychiatry, she has organized an ethnopsychiatry setting within a school in Paris. In this type of work, Moro (1998) uses the concept of specific vulnerability of children with an immigration background. Because of the aforementioned disconnection between external and internal cultural framework for the parents, inequalities in the host society, loss of status preventing the parents of being identification models, the child is at risk of growing up in a divided way. This risk can be overcome if the parents are integrated in a community that supports them, if they refer to cultural knowledge when raising their children, if the generation before (grand-parents) is made to exist, if the children can be tutored by adults outside the immediate family in their acculturation process.

#### **An ongoing research: through the ancestors' looking glass and what school found there<sup>2</sup>**

##### *Context*

The research presented in this paper is an ongoing research realized at the ethnopsychiatry clinic in Geneva<sup>3</sup>, which functions since 1990 following the model of the Georges Devereux Center in France<sup>4</sup>. Children and adolescents are regularly referred to the clinic by teachers, social workers and education counsellors. The present study examines how the initial narratives of the professionals who refer the children blend (or not) into a coherent narrative with the other voices expressed during the course of therapy (see above).

##### *Methodology*

The first stage of the research analyzes three case studies, the actors of which are briefly presented in the following table.

**Table 1. Patients, family, carers and duration of therapy**

Name <sup>5</sup> & age of the child	ethnic group and religion(s) of the family	language spoken	referred by	accompanying carers	accompanying members of the family	interpreter, cultural informant	Nb sessions
Gabriel 8	bakongo, Congo;(disappeared father baluba);stepfather:	french, lingala	school, education counsellor	education counsellor; teacher, trainee teacher	Mother; stepfather	bakongo, Congo	7 (1 year)

<sup>2</sup> In reference to Lewis Carroll.

<sup>3</sup> [www.ethnopsychiatrie.ch](http://www.ethnopsychiatrie.ch).

<sup>4</sup> [www.ethnopsychiatrie.net](http://www.ethnopsychiatrie.net).

<sup>5</sup> All the names are fictitious.

	bakongo Angola evangelical						
Cora 14	Krio (creole) Sierra Leone Mother : muslim, estranged father christian	english krio	Scool psychologist	Psychologist; teacher; special needs educators from youth welfare service and home, school nurse	Mother	same "ethnic" name, not same language	13 (15 months)
Anaïs 11	Parents : bete, Côte d'Ivoire, first generation christians	french	Dr from youth health service	Dr, school nurse, teacher, education counsellor	mother	Guere, Côte d'Ivoire	6 (8 months)

The leading therapist is a psychiatrist, founder of the clinic. Five to ten co-therapists<sup>6</sup>, all voluntary, psychologists, trainee psychologists, anthropologists and social workers, participate in the sessions.

### *Data analysis*

A content analysis was carried out on the verbatim of the sessions taken by the trainee psychologists. The following items were examined:

- pre-migration divides and traumatisms ;
- losses and divides due to migration;
- initial narratives of school, educational, psychological and medical world;
- first session scenari;
- ambivalence and resistance.

In previous research conducted by Goguikian (Goguikian & Changkakoti, 2004), a narrative structure of the first session more or less common to all therapies was identified.

**Table 2. Unfolding of first ethnopsychiatry session**

<b>Time zero : presentations</b>	Why refer to the clinic (in general) ; presentation of co-therapists (name, origin, sometimes languages spoken, profession). Confidentiality rules.
<b>Phase 1 : clarifying of the request, information sharing (reported history of the situation)</b>	The leading therapist asks the external referrer (doctor, social worker, psychologist) <i>What prompted you to refer X to the clinic?</i> The referrer gives the history of the patient and why she/he thought of the clinic.
<b>Phase 2 : clinical investigation (direct collecting of the history)</b>	The leading therapist questions the patient further about certain points of this history. She may ask the cultural informant for more information. The group does not speak up much at this stage.

<sup>6</sup> The researcher is a co-therapist, has participated in a few of the sessions, but has not followed through these therapies from beginning to end.



<b>Phase 3 : quest for relevant « narrative lines »</b>	Various avenues are explored with active participation/solicitation of the cultural informant and the group members (co-therapists) The result of the group’s discussions is is rephrased and returned to the patient, who reacts, etc.
<b>Phase 4 : closure (closing of the session ?)</b>	The leading therapist summarizes the group’s feeling about the situation. According to the hypothesis that has come to the foreground, she makes a prescription or recommendation that is then translated for the patient. She checks that it has been understood and seems acceptable for the patient.

(Goguikian Ratcliff & Changkakoti, 2004, pp. 257-258)

As the purpose of the paper is to investigate how a coherent narrative can be co-constructed during sessions, the unfolding of the sessions was examined with the grid of the prototypical 5 part narrative structure: exposition (of the situation); rising action (through conflict); climax (or turning point); falling action; and resolution (Adam, 1996).

**First results**

All the histories are marked by severed ties and dissensions at different levels, visible and invisible. Gabriel’s mother left her family for a man they did not approve of, she had four children with him and he left her when she was pregnant with Gabriel. She tried to have an abortion, went to see a doctor who prescribed rituals and medicine. She then fled the country believing she wasn’t pregnant anymore. In Switzerland she discovered she was still pregnant. She has four bigger children, still in Congo of whom she has no news. It appears later on in the therapy that her mother had her abort three times earlier on. Her parents have died since.

Anaïs was born under the sign of war (in Côte d’Ivoire). At the time of the first session, her father, working for the army had been called back to the country and there wasn’t any news. Her mother is a first generation christian. Her mother’s mother died in childbirth. Although the father came back safely later on, he never attended the sessions, saying he did not believe in the work that could be done there.

Cora is born of a mother from a strict muslim family and a christian father. The parents did not marry, because the families did not approve. The mother came alone, Cora lived with her maternal grand-parents until the mother was in a position to send for her, although according to their customs, she belongs to the father’s lineage. However when she was still in Sierra Leone she used to see her father from time to time. Her mother is on bad terms with her own parents.

One can see from this brief presentation, that for all three the cultural envelope of the child and it’s family has been “attacked” more than once and not only through the migration process (war, abortion, mismatches, conversion).

*Exposition phase : the initial narratives of the referrers.*

On the child's side, the problems are identified as behaviour problems. They are expressed by the different professionals with the vocabulary of their trade:

*Teacher: she is not taking on her student's job.*

*Education counsellor: she does not know how to deal with her emotions.*

*Doctor: She suffers from behavioural disorders with a touch of aggressivity.*

In two cases the mother is accused of bad treatment (Cora, Gabriel).

The description of the child's behaviour by the professionals as well as the parents in all three cases provides the first common point that may produce a narrative line (phase 2 in Table 2). The child's gaze is not what would be expected: all three stare their parents in the eye, which is the contrary of a respectful behaviour for an african child. Although the teachers do not have the same expectations, they too express feelings of strangeness at times when fixed by the children. This strangeness combined with the violent bouts when everyone agrees that Gabriel or Cora are not themselves raises the following question on the part of the therapists: *who are they then?* This points to a traditional etiology of possession, although it is not said as such at the first session. Anaïs is identified as special first by the therapists because she stares and behaves like a boy and the elder child when she is the youngest. Her mother takes up this narrative line by saying that she was born that way, *with the caul*. This would indicate a predisposition for communication with the spiritual world, an ability to manipulate spiritual forces. But when the therapists pursue this line, she resists. The idea here is that due to the mother's conversion, the ancestors have been forgotten and are maybe reclaiming Anaïs. At the end of the sessions recommendations are made: dreams are invited, drawings are asked for in the hope of gathering material that can be fed into the narrative.

### ***Ambivalence and resistance***

Like the mother of Anaïs, the parents are often reluctant to acknowledge a world where ancestors or djinnas can have their say. These traces of the past are difficult to reconcile with being a strict muslim or evangelical. Mother and father sometimes do not agree on their explanation of the difficulties of their child.

Professionals may also at some point feel threatened. The teacher of Anaïs feels let down at the second session because she has not been given keys as how to react with her in the classroom. In Cora's case, it's a nurse who was introduced later on in the case who feels she cannot respect her work ethics in the ethnopsychiatry setting. In Gabriel's situation, allegedly because of the legal status (his family are asylum seekers), the youth protection service decides to send him away from one day to another, although a delay to prepare the departure and organize a network had been granted. A few days later he is expelled from his new school and ends up in hospital with suicidal and murderous ideas.

Divisions amongst the professionals often repeat the pre-migration traumatism. If they cannot be resolved and integrated into the narrative, the success of the therapy can be compromised. Misunderstandings in the sense of La Cecla (2002) provide a space of encounter where identities can be worked out if each agrees to go to the border to meet the

other. These “borderland” encounters can also happen if words are talked about as proposed in the ethnopsychiatry approach.

### *Narrative climax*

In all three therapies a narrative climax is reached around the fourth session.

For Anaïs the climax follows an anticlimax: the girl’s behaviour has improved slightly as far as the school is concerned, but the mother is desperate. The cultural informant says that in their culture, one would not try to find out *what to do*, but *who Anaïs is* and gives an example from his own family (Anaïs is also named after a grandmother....).

At the next session Anaïs is calm, she encourages her mother to accept the decisions of the school professionals with bible parables, she is recognized as a go-between. But the two sides are not yet bridged, so the mother is asked to make an offering to her church for the grandmother. Which she does, reconciling her faith and an ancestor from before the conversion... The last session sees mother and daughter quite happy. Anaïs looks much more feminine. The mother has the feeling she has reconnected with the previous generation. The session concludes with the following words: *To make a child, you need a village and three generations*. In this situation, the secure frame created around Anaïs and her mother has been particularly important. The mother was cut off from her past, and difficult to reach. Neither daughter nor mother dreamt in spite of repeated invitations. However the teacher and the education counsellor each dreamt once. Likewise, the cultural informant did what the mother could not.

For Cora, from the fourth session on the connections with Africa are renewed. The mother talks to her family, the grandparents finally agree that something is wrong and should be done, Cora talks regularly with her grandmother. However the situation in Geneva is very difficult, nothing works anymore. All, even the judge, agree that the next step is in Africa. The last sessions prepare a trip to Africa for Cora, where she will be taken care of by a traditional practitioner.

For Gabriel, the violence of the lack of legal status (Mestre, 2007) has prevailed even though some negative effects of the legal decision have been patched up.

### **What school found there**

The secure and active frame the ethnopsychiatry setting creates for the patients works also for the accompanying professionals. Although confronted with ideas that must certainly appear very peculiar, they change perspective, join forces and therefore feel less alone.

Misunderstanding as a space of encounter means you meet without being obliged to agree on everything. It is an invitation to adventure, some have even found an ancestor on the way (for instance a psychiatrist talking shyly of witchcraft in her country). During the sessions a common language is created, some of the accompanying professionals start reasoning and talking like the co-therapists. One thing appears too, which would have to be checked with other cases: the institutional support helps. The schools of Gabriel and Anaïs are urban schools in an underprivileged and multicultural area, schools belonging to a priority

education network. These schools focus on a close relationship with the parents, where the school system is explained, and a partnership with the parents to support the child in it's school work can be created. They have an education counselor within the school, who will support teachers and students and make home visits when deemed relevant. The school also collaborates closely with the social and counseling services. Not all schools and teachers adress children to the ethnopsychiatry clinic... Teachers or social workers who do so often have followed training sessions or know somebody who has already experienced this kind of work. The next step of the research, interviews with the accompanying professionals, will answer "what school found there" further.

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## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

The relationship between mindfulness and self-esteem: a cross-culture study.

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## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

### Abstract

As Western psychology continues to incorporate mindfulness practices into psychotherapies, there is an interest in identifying the potential conceptual and philosophical differences between psychology-based definitions of mindfulness and original Buddhist mindfulness practices. The present study was designed to examine the cross-cultural validity of Western conceptualizations of mindfulness in the newest mindfulness measuring scale - the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ). This study compared Chinese monks (n=9) and Chinese students (n=21) to Western psychology professionals (n=15) and Western students (n=15) on the FFMQ. The role of Western psychological definitions of self-esteem, measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), was examined within the context of mindfulness definitions within the Western and Chinese cultures. The cultural differences regarding mindfulness was demonstrated by the monks' lower FFMQ score in association to their greater mindfulness practice experience, when compared to the Western sample. Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was found between self-esteem and mindfulness. The result of this study suggested a need for Western psychology to re-examine its current understanding of mindfulness. Therefore, it is important for future research to replicate the current study in Buddhist monks from other Eastern countries, in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of this Buddhist practice.

*Keywords:* mindfulness, self-esteem, Chinese, Buddhism, cultural validity

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

The relationship between mindfulness and self-esteem: a cross-culture study.

The practice in mindfulness is rapidly expanding in Western psychology and is increasingly being integrated in clinical interventions (Bishop, Lau, Shapiro, Carlson, Anderson, Carmody, Segal, Abbey, Speca, Velting, & Devins, 2004; Baer, Smith, Lykins, Button, Sauer, Walsh, Duggan & Williams, 2008). Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR; Kabat-Zinn, 1990) and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002) are examples of how mindfulness has been incorporated into Western psychotherapy. These methods conceptualize daily formal mindfulness meditation exercises as the essential element of therapy, which are associated with the amelioration of chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), anxiety reduction (Kabat-Zinn et al., 1992), and in the prevention of depressive relapse (Segal et al., 2002; Teasdale, Segal, Williams, Ridgeway, Soulsby, & Lau, 2000). The creators of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT; Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999) also use mindfulness practice as a technique to reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Batten & Hayes, 2005). Furthermore, mindfulness practices have been used to treat borderline personality disorders through dialectical behavior therapy (DBT; Linehan, 1993). Additional mindfulness-based interventions have also been developed to treat suicidal behavior (Linehan, Armstrong, Saurez, Allmon, & Heard, 1991), couple distress (Christensen, Sevier, Simpson, & Gattis, 2004), eating disorders (Kristeller & Hallett, 1999) and substance use disorders (Marlatt, Witkiewitz, Dillworth, Bowen, Parks, Macpherson, Lonczak, Larimer, Simpson, Blume, & Crutcher, 2004). Besides the growing empirical support for the effectiveness of mindfulness-based intervention for psychological problems (Baer, 2003), it is also suggested to result in physical improvement in conditions, such as diabetes (Gregg, Callaghan, Hayes, &



## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

Glenn-Lawson, 2007) and HIV/AIDS (Archer, 2008). Moreover, mindfulness training is also used with non-clinical populations to improve learning skills (Langer, 2000), personnel development (Walach, Nord, Zier, Dietz-Waschkowski, Kersig, & Schupbach, 2007), emotion-regulation and approaches to problems (Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, & Laurenceau, 2007; Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Mindfulness, a spiritual practice with roots in Eastern Buddhism, needs to be precisely defined as it is employed by the West as a mental health treatment.

### **Mindfulness in the Eastern Context: a Case of China**

Buddhism was introduced to China for over 2,000 years. It has become a constituent of traditional Chinese culture that largely influenced the Chinese way of life (Zhang, 2009). The number of Chinese Buddhists has already exceeded 100 million by 2003 (Tang, 2009a) and the high reputation of Chinese Buddhism is demonstrated recently as the second World Buddhism Forum being held in Wuxi City of China in March, 2009 (Tang, 2009b). To a large extent, the essence of the Chinese Buddhism is consistent with the larger Buddhist context, which includes the Four Noble Truths and Noble Eightfold Path (Gao & Schachler, 2003).

Buddha's Four Noble Truths, which are the key to understand Buddhism (Epstein, 1995), are (1) life is painful; (2) the origin of all those suffered pain is desire; (3) the cessation of those pains is to end desire; and (4) the goal of ending desire is called *nirvana* (涅槃). The *nirvana* is achieved through a path of rights, which is his Noble Eightfold Path. These are (1) "right speech (语)," (2) "right action (业)," (3) "right livelihood (命)," (4) "right effort (精进)," (5) "right mindfulness (念)," (6) "right concentration (定)" (7) "right understanding (见)," and (8) "right thought (思)" (Coogan, 2005). The first three are grouped into "moral conduct (道德伦理)" as the first principle of attaining the *nirvana*. This principle is primarily about the need of

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

being absent from harmful actions because of the law of *karma*, which follows the belief of receiving good by doing good and receiving evil by doing evil (Buddhadasa, 1989). The next three “rights” are grouped as the second principle - “mental concentration (定禪)”, which helps removing the desire that leads to the harmful actions. The final principle – “wisdom (慧)”, which is constituted by the final two “rights”, takes away the false sense of self that serves as the region of the whole process of “having desire” to “conducting harmful actions” (Coogan, 2005).

As indicated above, “mindfulness” in the Buddhism context is an awareness of being aware (Hirst, 2003) and it is an interdependent phenomenon that is hardly able to be developed without the understanding of *karma* and the attainment of wisdom (Coogan, 2005). The Venerable Master Chin Kung (2005) in China notes that the true practice is based on the foundation of belief, understanding, practice and realization, and what truly makes Buddhism so valuable is the understanding both of the true reality (i.e., *karma*) and the final attainment (i.e., *nirvana*). Although the importance of developing conviction of *karma* along with meditating is again pointed out recently by Dalai Lama (2006, p. 87), the interconnection between these concepts is still ignored by the Western operationalizations of mindfulness (Leary & Tate, 2007; Shapiro, Carlson, Aston, & Freedman, 2006).

In addition, there is also a discrepancy between the Western psychology’s and Buddhism’s way of exploring the nature of mental well-being (Wallace & Shapiro, 2006). According to Walpola Rahula (1974), Buddhism holds a unique standing in the history of human mind by denying the existence of the “self”. In Buddhism, the method for keeping away from suffering is to understand the Buddha’s truth of suffering, impermanence and no-self. (Buddhadasa, 1989). Forming a sense of self is considered as problematic in Buddhism because it causes an

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

individual to attach to the phenomena in consciousness (Hirst, 2003) and turns out to engage in egoism (Buddhadasa, 1989). One's egoism and self-centeredness further produce desired goals to this individual (McIntosh, 1997) and this is where the troubled relationship with the environment formed (Epstein, 2008). Specifically, people suffer from having a desire till the time the desire is met, and the suffering continues after the desire is met because of the principle of impermanence in Buddhism, which indicates that what has been attained eventually will be lost (Hirst, 2003). Bhikkhu Buddhadasa (1989a) writes that the self is the cause of all suffering and pain, and the cessation of pain is to remove the sense of self. Thus, the goal of the "right mindfulness" is to sever all the attachments including the "self", and then form the "right view" of the impermanence nature of the reality (McIntosh, 1997; Hirst, 2003). After completing the two steps above, people then can finally reach the *nirvana* - the present moment experience in the emptiness (Coogan, 2005), that is with no suffering and pain.

Radically different from the Buddhism's interpretation of the self and suffering, Western psychotherapies help individuals to achieve a more positive mental state by attempting to develop a stronger ego, in other words, to promote a higher level of self-esteem (Mosig, 2006). Self-esteem has been considered as an important notion within the clinical practice in Western context (Butler & Gasson, 2006) and there are a number of measurements have been developed for assessing this notion (Allik & Schmitt, 2005). Among some of the most frequently used scales are the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) developed by Fitts and Warren (1996), the Self-Esteem Index (SEI) by Coopersmith (1981) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965).

A high level of self-esteem has been documented by Western psychology as one of the most powerful predictors of psychological well-being (Hellen & Furnham, 2003; MacInnes,

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

2006). The concept of self-esteem is generally defined as an individual's positive image of the self-based on the assessment of the individual's competence by oneself (Chrzanowski, 1981).

Raising one's level of self-esteem is considered as the attempt to add more favorable evaluation of the self or to bolster one's positive self-image (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, Vohs, 2003), which includes liking oneself, approving oneself, and believing in one's talents (Komaroff, 2007). High levels of self-esteem were reported to relate to less anxiety, lower depression level (MacInnes, 2006) and fewer other psychological problems, such as eating disorder (Baird & Sights, 1986; Komaroff, 2007). Self-esteem enhancement is also empirically demonstrated to be an effective therapeutic approach in treating some severe mental disorders, such as schizophrenia (Borras, Boucherie, Mohr, Lecomte, Perroud, & Huguelet, 2009).

Attaining an increased level of self-esteem is both a technique and a goal in a number of Western psychological interventions, which includes the most recent developed mindfulness-based interventions (e.g., Tanner, Travis, Gaylord-King, Haaga, Grosswald, & Schneider, 2009; Goldin, Ramel & Gross, 2009). As Epstein (1995) points out, Western psychology's resistance of the low self-esteem indicates its tendency to foster the self's growing by fulfilling the self's desire of inexhaustible abundance, the self and desire that Buddhism sees as the root of suffering (Mosig, 2006). How, then, has Western psychology integrated mindfulness, an Eastern Buddhist practice that aims to negate the self, into its own psychological interventions that help one to strengthen one's self by raising one's self-esteem?

### **Mindfulness in the Western Context**

Western researchers have defined mindfulness as an intensified wakefulness (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000), paying attention to the ongoing stream of internal and external stimuli in the present moment as they arise (Bear, 2003) without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994), and as an

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

acceptance with the awareness of the present experience (Germer, Siegel, & Fulton, 2005).

Bishop et al. (2004) proposed a two-component model that operationalized mindfulness as (1) a self-regulation of attention that promotes a non-elaborative awareness of current experience and (2) an orientation to the experience with attitudes of curiosity, openness, and acceptance. The term has been defined as different constructs by a number of researchers and there is no consistency across them. As a result of the absence of an operational definition (Bishop, 2002), the psychological processes of mindfulness and sufficient methods for measuring the construct remain unaddressed. (Bishop et al., 2004; Bishop, Lau, Shapiro, Carlson, Anderson, Carmody, Segal, Abbey, Speca, Velting, & Buis, 2006; Leight, Bowen, & Marlatt, 2005; Christopher, Christopher, & Charoensuk, 2009; Davis, Lau, & Cairns, 2009).

To respond to the need of measuring mindfulness, Western psychologists have developed several self-report measures over the past several years. These measures include (1) the Southampton Mindfulness Questionnaire (SMQ; Chadwick, Hember, Mead, Lilley, & Dagnan, 2008), (2) the Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale–Revised (CAMS-R; Feldman et al., 2007), (3) the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006), (4) the Toronto Mindfulness Scale (TMS; Bishop et al., 2006), (5) Mindfulness Questionnaire (MQ; Chadwick, Hember, Mead, Lilley, & Dagnan, 2005), (6) the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS; Baer et al., 2004), (7) the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS; Brown & Ryan, 2003) and (8) the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI; Buchheld, Grossman, & Walach, 2001). Although these measures have revealed promising evidence by showing high external validity, there are considerable differences among the measures in how the construct mindfulness is defined (Kohls, Sauer, & Walach, 2009).

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

Western psychology has put efforts in identifying the mechanisms of action of mindfulness by using various self-report questionnaires (e.g., the FFMQ and the TMS). However, these measures and therapies are developed by and are tested on primary White Americans and testing with diverse population has been extremely underreported (Bernal, 2006; La Roche & Christopher, 2008). Although mindfulness is rooted in Eastern Buddhism, Kabat-Zinn (2002) suggests that mindfulness practice is isolated from its original religious and cultural traditions of their origins when it is introduced to the West. It has also been noted that the Buddhist mindfulness meditation has been adapted to fit the Western ideals, and it may become distorting and ethnocentric if this adaption continues (Christopher et al., 2009). Furthermore, a recent study conducted by Christopher et al. (2009) reveals a difference in the understanding of mindfulness between their Tai and American samples by showing KIMS variant across the two subject groups. Consequently, further evaluation of mindfulness measures with a sample of Eastern culture background minority is needed based on two underlying factors. First, because of the rising demand for culturally relevant evidence-based psychotherapies in the current society (Christopher et al., 2009), assessing mindfulness in racial and ethnic minorities can help identifying more accurate mindfulness mechanisms that are related to its positive effects across different cultures. Second, there seems to be a necessity to address whether the concept of mindfulness that those Western inventories measure is the same as it is in the Eastern Buddhist context.

As noted above, as suggested by its different roles in Chinese Buddhism and North America mindfulness-based psychotherapies, there is a discrepancy between the Western and the Eastern conceptualizations of mindfulness. The difference is exemplified by the two distinct perspectives from the two cultures on both the definition of mindfulness and the

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

ultimate goal of practicing mindfulness. The difference in the definitions of mindfulness can be demonstrated by the mindfulness measures that are currently using by Western psychology, as they are developed based on the Western conceptualization of mindfulness. They measure mindfulness as an independent personality trait rather than an interdependent phenomenon in the Buddhism context. On the other hand, because of its departure from the “no self” project in Eastern Buddhism but emphasized on boosting positive self-image instead, the distinct goal of practicing mindfulness in Western psychotherapies can be evident in a positive relationship between mindfulness and self-esteem. Therefore, there are two goals in the current study: 1) testing the applicability of Western mindfulness measures among a small group of Chinese Buddhist monks and Chinese college students, and compare with a small sample of Canadian psychology professionals and Canadian college students. 2) examining how self-esteem level is related to mindfulness. Responding to the problems above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*Hypothesis 1:* On the mindfulness scale, Canadian psychology professionals will score the highest among all groups. Chinese Buddhist monks will score higher than Chinese college students and Canadian college students. Canadian college students will score higher than Chinese college students.

*Hypothesis 2:* On the self-esteem scale, Chinese Buddhist monks will score the lowest among all groups. Canadian psychology professionals will score higher than Chinese college students and Canadian college students. Chinese college students will score lower than Canadian college students.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

The participants were 9 Chinese Buddhist monks, 15 Canadian university professors, 15 Canadian college students and 21 Chinese college students. All Chinese participants were currently live in China. The monks were recruited from Buddhist temples located in the Jiangxi Province and the Guangdong Province of China. The mean age of the monks was 41.67 years ( $SD = 8.85$ ). The monks also reported 9.67 mean years of mindfulness meditation experience ( $SD = 8.71$ ) and an average of 2.78 hours ( $SD = 2.98$ ) of daily mindfulness meditation practice. The Canadian professors were university professors recruited from Laurentian University at Georgian College Barrie campus. The mean age of the professors was 46.73 ( $SD = 11.68$ ). Among the 15 Canadian professors, 6 reported having mindfulness meditation practicing experience and 4 reported completing daily meditation practice. The Canadian professors who have practiced mediation reported 5.26 mean years ( $SD = 9.23$ ) of meditation experience and 0.88 mean hour ( $SD = 3.08$ ) of daily meditation practice. Chinese college students were recruited from a public university in the Guangdong Province of China. The mean age of the Chinese students was 21.19 years ( $SD = 1.4$ ) and none of them reported having experience in mindfulness meditation. The Canadian college students were recruited from Georgian College in Barrie, Canada. The mean age of the Canadian students was 23.47 years ( $SD = 5.01$ ). One of the Canadian students reported having practiced mindfulness meditation experience and daily meditation, which resulted an overall 0.2 mean year ( $SD = 0.77$ ) of meditation experience and an average of 0.06 hour ( $SD = 0.26$ ) of daily meditation practice for this group. The ethnic make up the Canadian sample was 93% ( $n = 28$ ) Caucasian Canadian, 3% ( $n = 1$ ) African Canadian and 3% ( $n = 1$ ) Indian Canadian.

### Measures

*Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)*. The RSES is a 10-items scale, which consists of 5



## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

positively worded items (e.g., ‘On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.’) and five negatively worded items (e.g., ‘‘At times, I think I am no good at all’’) (Kim, Peng, &Chiu, 2008).

Participants are asked to rate on these 10 statement on a 4-point scale (SA=Strongly agree to SD=Strongly disagree). The sum of the scores for the 10 items is calculated, with higher score indicating a higher self-esteem level. (Crandal, 1973). The RSES scale has been documented as the most widely used self-esteem measure (Roth, Decker, Herzberg &Brähler, 2008).

According to Allik and Schmitt (2005), the RSES has been translated into Chinese, Japanese, Persian and almost all Indo-European languages, and it has been used in over 53 Nations. It is considered as the most highly regarded measure for cross-culture studies (Kim, Peng, &Chiu, 2008), therefore it is used in the current study.

*Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFM.)* The FFMQ is one of the newest mindfulness measures. According to Baer et al. (2006), the FFMQ has 39 items that are taken from five of most frequently used mindfulness measures (i.e. the MAAS, the FMI, the KIMS, the CAMS and the MQ), which are rated on a 5-point likert scale (1 - rarely or very rarely true to 5 – very often or always true). It suggests a five-factor solution of mindfulness, which includes observing (attending to experience), describing (labeling internal experiences), acting with awareness (behaving non-mechanically), nonjudging of inner experience (experiencing with a nonevaluative stance) and nonreactivity to the inner experience (allowing feelings and thoughts to come and go). The FFMQ reports a .75 to .91 internal consistency among its subscales and as Baer et al. (2008) notes, the FFMQ is the only questionnaire that can measure these five factors of mindfulness.

The original version of both questionnaires was in English. They were translated into Chinese by a Chinese – English bilingual undergraduate student. The adequacy of the

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

translation was further verified by a Chinese – English bilingual university professor at Laurentian University at Georgian College.

### **Procedure**

The FFMQ and the RSES were combined into one package named “Mindfulness and Self-Esteem Survey” and the surveys were given out to the participants directly. Surveys were collected immediately upon completion and participants were thanked once the surveys were filled out. Participants received no compensation for their participation, and participants were informed of the voluntary and confidential nature of the study before and after their participation.

### **Statistical analyses**

All analyses were conducted using SPSS for Windows version 17.0 (SPSS Inc., 2009). The reliability of both scales was measured using Chronbach's Alpha analysis. The relationship between FFMQ and RSES was examined using Pearson’s correlation. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the mean difference between monks, Canadian professors, Canadian students and Chinese students for the FFMQ score and RSES score. For the one-way ANOVA’s the following planned comparisons were completed;

1. University Professors and Monks compared to Chinese and Canadian students.
2. University Professors compared to Monks
3. Chinese Students compared to Canadian Students.

If the FFMQ is a valid measurement for mindfulness, then it is predicted that the Monks and Professors should score higher on mindfulness than the Chinese and Canadian Students. In addition, it is predicted that the Professor should score higher on the FFMQ than the monks. For the RSES, if mindfulness is conceptually distinct from self-esteem and if self-esteem is a

MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

distinctly Western phenomena, then it is predicted that the Monks should score relatively lower on the RSES than the Professors, and the Chinese students should score lower than the Canadian students.

**Results**

Both scales were found to have high reliability: the Alpha coefficient for FFMQ was 0.89 and for RSES was 0.82. The FFMQ score ( $M = 129.85, SD = 17.33$ ) and RSES score ( $M = 20.45, SD = 4.62$ ) were found to be significantly positively correlated ( $r = 0.58, p < 0.001$ ).

*Table 1. Mean scores on the FFMQ and RSES for monks, Canadian professors, Canadian students and Chinese students*

	Chinese Monks (n = 9)		Canadian Professors (n = 15)		Chinese students (n = 21)		Canadian students (n = 15)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
FFMQ	126.78	15.84	147.06	14.72	120.95	12.60	126.93	15.10
RSES	17.00	1.94	24.13	5.62	17.86	2.39	22.47	3.38

Note: FFMQ = Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire; RSES = Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

Mean scores on FFMQ and RSES for monks, Canadian professors, Canadian students and Chinese students are shown in Table 1. Regarding the planned comparisons, the Monks and Professors did not differ from the Chinese and Canadian students in self-esteem  $t(56) = -0.405, p = 0.683$ . But the Monks reported lower self-esteem than the professors  $t(56) = 4.635, p < 0.01$  and the Canadian students reported higher self-esteem than the Chinese students  $t(56) = -3.736, p < 0.01$ . For FFMQ, Monks and University professors reported higher levels of mindfulness than Chinese and Canadian students  $t(56) = 3.366, p < 0.01$ . This difference was due to the Professors reporting a greater level of mindfulness than the Monks  $t(56) = -3.372, p < 0.01$ . The Chinese and Canadian students did not differ in mindfulness  $t(56) = 1.240, p = 0.220$ . The results

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

for RSES were mostly as predicted, the monks revealed lower levels of self-esteem than the professors and the Chinese students scoring lower on the RSES than Canadian students. This finding, which the Monks scored lower than the professors in mindfulness, suggests that there is a lack of consistency across cultures in the conceptualization of mindfulness.

### Discussion

The overall goal of this study was to determine whether the Western conceptualization of mindfulness is the same as the mindfulness concept in its origin - Eastern Buddhism. There were two procedures involved in this study. The first goal of the study was to test the applicability of FFMQ, a new mindfulness scale created based upon the Western conceptualizations of mindfulness, with a sample of Chinese monks and Chinese college students. The result provided evidence for single-culture validity because Canadian professors scored higher than Canadian students and Chinese monks scored higher than Chinese students. However, the result failed to demonstrate cross-cultural validity as the monks were found to score lower than both Western groups on the FFMQ scale while they actually had the longest meditation experience among all groups. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that the definition of mindfulness itself is different between Western societies and traditional Buddhism. This difference can be explained by different definitions that Western psychology and Buddhism apply to mindfulness.

Western psychology generally sees mindfulness as a personality trait that is manifested as an individual's tendency to be mindful in daily life (Bishop et al., 2006). In regard with the FFMQ scale, higher mindfulness scores are predicted by a joining of an inclination of observing and acting consciously, the ability to describe, and a tendency to perceive one's own inner experience nonjudgmentally and nonreactively in the daily life context (Baer et al., 2008).

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

The founder of MBSR therapy, Kabat-Zinn (1994) defined mindfulness as the final attainment of meditation and stated that it can be achieved only by practicing with a clear intention, excessive attention and a positive attitude (e.g. nonjudgmental) of an individual's feelings and thoughts. Mindfulness is also suggested by Shapiro, Carlson, Astin & Freeman (2006) to be a process of re-perceiving, which requires an individual to achieve greater consciousness awareness of one's mental-emotional content and form a more objective perspective about the contents of one's consciousness. Shapiro et al. (2006) believe that this path will eventually lead to good health.

Contradicting with Shapiro et al.'s (2009) perspective, mindfulness in Buddhism is not consciousness overloading but a state where consciousness and self-consciousness are diminished (Conze, 2001). It is also not about attending and being in the present moment as Kabat-zinn (2004) suggested, but to let go of the external and the internal, of being and nonbeing, to realize and experience a sense of "emptiness" (Dumoulin, Heisig & Knitter, 2005). The "emptiness" in Buddhism, as explained by the Chinese Buddhist Master Shen-hui, is found in the final attainment (i.e. Wisdom) and is mainly manifested as "no-mind" (无心), "no-thinking" (无念) and no-self" (无我; Dumoulin et al., 2005). Furthermore, mindfulness in the Buddhism context is never a goal but a non-extractable part of the complete and nonvisible process of entering the *nirvana* (Trainor, 2004). Spirituality based meditation (i.e. on the Four Noble Truths) is taught within the Buddhism philosophy as the essential task in a Buddhist's life (Conze, 2001). Therefore, in this study the monks' extremely low FFMQ score is explainable because mindfulness meditation in Buddhism is not about an individual's inner experience but is a process of accepting of the impermanence of the whole universe (Christopher, 2009).

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

The second procedure was designed to examine the relationship between mindfulness and self-esteem. The significant positive correlation between FFMQ scores and RESE scores indicated that, in this population, the more mindful the participants were, the greater their positive self-regards were. By looking at the result separately, this relationship was mainly contributed by the result from the Western sample, where the Canadian professors' mean self-esteem score exceeded Canadian students' by 1.66 points, along with a 20.13 points excess in the mean mindfulness score. Among the Eastern sample, however, while the monks showed a higher mean mindfulness score than Chinese students, it was followed by a lower mean self-esteem score for the monks' by 0.86 point. This result, therefore, supported the hypothesis that in relation to mindfulness practices, self-esteem plays a different role in the two culture contexts. Specifically, this result demonstrated self-esteem's role as a beneficial byproduct of practicing Western mindfulness, but as a concept and quality that should be reduced and eliminated in Buddhism.

One may argue that the monks' lower self-esteem comparing to the Canadian professors is another piece evidence of the difference between Eastern and Western traditional cultural values. Indeed, there are many studies that have shown evidence of lower self-esteem among Chinese when comparing to North Americans (e.g. [Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, Wang & Hou, 2004](#); [Y. Kim et al., 2008](#)). However, both [Spencer-Rodgers et al.'s \(2004\)](#) and [Kim et al.'s \(2008\)](#) reported that Chinese lower self-esteem scores are result from participants agreeing with both positively worded statements and negatively worded statements, where North Americans agree with the positive ones and disagree with the negative ones. In other words, it can be suggested that in the general population, the evidenced self-esteem difference between Eastern and Western is due to Eastern people's greater awareness of the negative aspects of

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

themselves. Differently from the finding above, monks in this study, when comparing to Western professors, their relatively lower self-esteem was found to be mainly contributed by their inclination to respond on all statements in a less extreme way. For example, Western professors were found to respond with “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree” more often than monks, and monks chose to respond with “agree” or “disagree” at most of the time. Therefore, the monks’ self-esteem score did not reflect how they view themselves, but how much they regarded themselves overall.

According to the “no-self” spirituality in Buddhism, the “self” is only a perception that does not actually exist in the reality (Kwang & Chang, 2009). Things that exist in the reality are matter (i.e. physical substance), feelings (e.g. happy, unhappy), perceptions (e.g. hearing), impulses (e.g. hate, love, faith), and the consciousness of all these (Conze, 2001). However, people often insert a fictitious “self” into their experience with the reality and make connections between the reality and the “self” (Trainor, 2004). As these connections start to form, people begin to develop a false sense of belongingness between the reality and the “self”, or perceive a false non-existing control over reality (Kopf, 2001). For example, people will mistakenly think that feelings originate from “me” and accordingly “I” can control these consciously. These false connections and the feeling of belongingness can also be exemplified by the statements on the RSES scale. For example, statement 2, 5, 6 and 7 are about “my” feelings about “myself”, which are examples of false connection between the “self” and the feelings in reality. As stated earlier in this paper, in Buddhism, because of the impermanence of the reality, these perceived connections will eventually lead to suffering. Buddhists thus are taught from the beginning of their Buddhist journey, to separate the sense of “self” from the world. For Buddhist monks, their journeys of Buddhism are begin with physical alienating

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

themselves by leaving home and entering temples to break connections with other people and the outside world (Hwang & Chang, 2009). They are then taught to let go of the subjective reality (Epstein, 2007), which are the feelings of awareness that arise from a posited center of the “self” and the obsession over these “self”-centered experiences (Trainor, 2004).

Accordingly, well-educated monks are expected to rate neutrally on the statements on the RSES scale, including both the positive ones and negative ones, because they are trained to remove all subjective perspectives about the “self”. As an absence of neutral response options on the scale, the monks in this study could choose only “agree” or “disagree” responses as the mean to express their weaker “self”-centeredness. For a Buddhist monk, by doing so they are on the right path to the achievement of a sense “no-self” as the final attainment of mindfulness meditation in Buddhism. Mindfulness meditation in Western psychology on the other hand, in addition to missing the concept of “no-self”, focuses on a further development of the sense of “I”. Western professors’ extreme positive and negative responses on the RSES scale in this study indicated their heavy focus on the “self”, which is contrary to Buddhist rejection of the concept of “self”.

The findings in this study suggest some important differences between the Western and the Eastern conceptualizations of mindfulness. Western psychology appears to not have actually assessed the full Buddhist definitions of mindfulness, choose to focus on certain components of mindfulness instead, such as attention and acceptance. However, mindfulness cannot be taken out from the Buddhism context, because with no other mental disciplines (i.e. the other seven Noble Paths), mindfulness skills and its benefit will not be attainable (Conze, 2001). Researchers need to compare mindfulness conceptualizations across cultures and hopefully will come to realize the importance of the interdependence among Buddhism



## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

principles. Nevertheless, this realization certainly has not happened among the majority at this moment, as there is still no Western mindfulness-based psychotherapy found to have included the full extent of Buddhism spirituality. While Western psychology is still enthusiastically using its own mindfulness conceptualizations, it is getting further away from what ought to be – the inherently interconnected sense of mindfulness. More importantly, by keeping the role of a proponent of self-esteem enhancement within the mindfulness context, mindfulness-based psychotherapies violate the original expectation of mindfulness meditation in Buddhism - the final attainment of “no-self”.

Even though researches showed encouraging results on mindfulness-based psychotherapies’ effectiveness, the improvements that these therapies produced on one’s mental health were all demonstrated by its relationships with other psychological constructs in Western psychology. Ironically, among these constructs, self-esteem has been documented as the most predictive one on mental well-being in the literature (Hellen & Furnham, 2003; MacInnes, 2006). Therefore, the “no-self” attainment in Buddhism does not only question the effectiveness of mindfulness-based psychotherapies but the effectiveness of Western psychotherapy as a whole. Although there has always been a debate about whether low self-esteem or high self-esteem is related to well-being (DiClemente, Crosby & Kegler, 2009), as indicated by the implication of the result of the current study, the debate should be about concerning or not concerning about one’s self-esteem can promote mental health. To respond to this debate, future studies should strive to replicate the current study in other Eastern Buddhist population, such as monks in Tibet, India or Japan. In order to measure the effect of “no-self” more precisely, neutral responses should also be included.

## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

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## **Diventare madri in terra straniera. Donne africane nella Svizzera tedesca: difficoltà e risorse.**

### **Introduzione.**

L'interesse per queste tematiche nasce in seguito ad un'esperienza lavorativa di tre anni in una Casa Accoglienza per madri, dove ho potuto osservare quante situazioni di fraintendimento o difficoltà si creassero quando queste donne con diversi background sociali e portatrici di altri patterns culturali entravano in relazione con educatori, psicologi, infermieri, medici etc. Di conseguenza quanto possa essere importante che si crei un clima di ascolto attento all'altro che faciliti l'espressione di bisogni e soprattutto sia aperto ad accoglierli anche quando sono espressi in maniera diversa.

Credo che l'approccio centrato sulla persona possa dare un grande contributo affinché ciò avvenga. La diversità e la distanza culturale, infatti, non è caratteristica solo dell'incontro con l'immigrato ma è comune a molti tipi di incontro. Le tre condizioni rogersiane (empatia, congruenza e accettazione positiva e incondizionata) permettono l'ascolto attivo e creano un clima che favorisce la comunicazione, l'espressione e la legittimazione dei bisogni e la gestione dei conflitti, facilitando il difficile lavoro di comprensione tra persone appartenenti a culture diverse.

### **Uno sguardo sul fenomeno migratorio.**

Il fenomeno migratorio è oggi un fenomeno sociale estremamente rilevante, è il risultato di cambiamenti strutturali che interessano il mondo intero e ha un forte impatto sulla società, l'economia, la politica dei paesi interessati, influenzandone i costumi, le abitudini, lo stile di vita e le relazioni umane.

La Svizzera è da molti anni un paese di immigrazione, accoglie un gran numero di stranieri provenienti da tutto il mondo, il 22.1% della popolazione residente è composta da immigrati (Ufficio Federale della Migrazione, 2011), questo ha un impatto notevole sulle politiche e la società civile. In parallelo con la migrazione tradizionale dei lavoratori, ci sono un numero considerevole di richiedenti asilo, il cui status legale, sociale ed economico è limitato e il cui stato di salute è a volte precario.

Nello specifico il flusso migratorio dall'Africa verso la Svizzera è in costante crescita, nel 2008 risiedevano in Svizzera 49923 persone di origine africana (22901 donne, 27022 uomini), nel 2009 i residenti sono diventati 57704, con un incremento di 7781 persone; nel 2010 il maggior numero di richieste d'asilo (7196) è stato fatto da persone provenienti dall'Africa (Ufficio Federale della Migrazione, 2011). La maggior parte degli immigrati africani ha un'età che va dai 20 ai 40 anni (età fertile). Di fronte ad un numero crescente di bambini nati da madri immigrate, sarebbe auspicabile che agli operatori sanitari e sociali venga offerta una formazione che permetta loro di dare una maggiore attenzione sia agli aspetti sociali e culturali, sia agli specifici problemi di salute di questa popolazione.

### **Il trauma della migrazione.**

Il progetto migratorio in sé è un attivatore di ansia e stress, porta ad uno sradicamento sociale e culturale che comporta problemi di ricostruzione dell'identità; ci si trova ad affrontare una vasta gamma di problematiche come lo shock culturale, la lontananza da casa, la nuova lingua, i problemi

abitativi, l'assenza della rete di supporto sociale e familiare e varie difficoltà nell'approcciare il sistema sanitario e sociale e le istituzioni. Gli immigrati, quindi, possono essere particolarmente soggetti a sviluppare depressione o altri tipi di disagio psicologico. Le donne incinte sono ancora più vulnerabili di fronte ai cambiamenti legati alla migrazione e le personalità più fragili, con meno risorse e meno capacità di adattamento, possono più facilmente sviluppare la depressione post parto (Gagnon et al. 2004; Zelkowitz et al. 2004).

La gravidanza è un evento allo stesso tempo condiviso e intimo proprio della donna, della coppia, della famiglia ma anche del gruppo culturale a cui si appartiene. Dovunque, la donna incinta viene protetta dalla sua famiglia e dal suo gruppo perché è più vulnerabile, ma le modalità di protezione differiscono da un paese all'altro ed è importante rispettarle e non pensare si tratti di usanze retrograde, di costumi arcaici e superati (Moro, 2010). Da una parte la donna nel Paese ospitante ha a disposizione una assistenza medica migliore, dall'altra è nella quasi impossibilità di compiere questi rituali. Un altro tema centrale è quello della solitudine, vissuta durante la gravidanza e il parto, non poter condividere con qualcuno ansie, paure, sogni; non c'è vicino alla futura madre, la rete di accogliimento, il "contenitore affettivo ed esperto", rappresentato nel paese di origine dalle donne adulte, parenti ed amiche (Cattaneo, Dal verme, 2005; Moro, 2008, 2010).

Vorrei qui proporre una lista dei possibili fattori che aumentano il rischio di sviluppare la depressione post parto e altri tipi di disagio e sofferenza psicologica.

#### Possibili fattori di stress premigratori e postmigratori:

- lutti che precedono la migrazione.
- una lunga separazione dalla famiglia.
- sfruttamento e abusi di ogni tipo in cambio di cibo o documenti necessari per il viaggio.
- persecuzioni, fame, torture, guerre, disastri ambientali e umanitari.
- traumi legati alla gravidanza (stupro o perdita del partner).
- una prolungata permanenza nei centri di permanenza temporanea.

#### Aspetti culturali e psicologici:

- Perdita o indebolimento degli elementi sociali e culturali che normalmente permettono di rappresentare in anticipo come si diventa genitori, dando un significato alle trasformazioni dovute alla gravidanza. In esilio questi elementi appartengono alla sfera privata e non sono condivisi con la società ospitante e possono essere in contrasto con le procedure mediche.
- Sensazione di isolamento (sistema sanitario e sociale diverso, limitate competenze linguistiche, difficoltà nell'esprimere emozioni etc.).
- Rottura con tutta la serie di rituali sociali culturalmente codificati che accompagnano la gravidanza, il parto, il diventare madre e che hanno il compito di sancire il cambiamento avvenuto.

- Difficoltà dopo il parto di seguire alcune prescrizione (alimentazione, riposo, pratiche igieniche, pratiche di puericultura) che aiutano la neo-mamma a riprendersi dal parto, ad adattarsi al nuovo ruolo ed a sviluppare un buon legame di attaccamento con il neonato.
- mancanza della propria madre e di un sistema familiare allargato, che possa sostenere e funzionare da sistema di protezione per la neo-madre.
- cambio di ruolo nella famiglia e di status sociale.

### Aspetti clinici

Alcuni aspetti clinici, quali il taglio cesareo, problemi legati alle mutilazioni genitali, esami di routine etc. si rivelano molto delicati. Marie Rose Moro sottolinea che non si dà alle donne immigrate una rappresentazione culturalmente accettabile e comprensibile del nostro sistema di cure mediche, che sono spesso vissute come moralmente offensive e “violente”(Moro, 2005, 2010). Noi crediamo che le tecniche mediche e i protocolli standard siano sufficienti a garantire la corretta gestione della gravidanza e del parto. Tuttavia, alcune procedure mediche ritenute inoffensive non rispettano le modalità culturali di protezione del bambino, esponendolo ad attacchi di stregoneria, malocchio, jinx, un esempio è l'ecografia che “mostra ciò che Dio ha nascosto” (Moro 2005, 2008, 2010).

Il taglio cesareo (TC) e le mutilazioni genitali femminili (MGF) possono creare ansia e preoccupazioni nelle donne immigrate (Pasquinelli 2007).

- i rischi legati al TC, nei paesi di origine, sono alti e anche quando l'intervento viene eseguito nei nostri ospedali da equipe specializzate e in condizioni igienicamente sicure, nelle donne persiste qualche preoccupazione.
- l'epidurale può essere vissuta negativamente perché non consente di essere totalmente attive nel passaggio da donna a madre.
- il TC può essere percepito negativamente perché viola il ventre sacro della donna e può compromettere la fertilità → in alcune culture questo può creare problemi di accettabilità sociale.
- il TC può essere percepito negativamente perché secondo alcune credenze popolari, se il bambino non nasce in maniera spontanea significa che non è ancora pronto a lasciare il mondo degli antenati e devono essere fatti dei rituali per farlo arrivare nel mondo dei vivi.
- MGF→ problemi durante la gravidanza e il parto, in particolare se è stata praticata una escissione parziale o totale, perché il duro tessuto cicatriziale che si forma provoca l'occlusione parziale o totale dell'apertura vaginale e ostacola la dilatazione del canale del parto.
- MGF possono essere causa di stress psicologico e tensioni dovute alla richiesta di de-infibulazione fatta dal medico prima del parto e di re-infibulazione chiesta dalla donna dopo il parto.

**“Maternità altrove”.**

Ogni donna, dovunque si trovi durante la gravidanza, sperimenta un identico processo fisiologico e biologico, le differenze sono dovute al significato dato alla gravidanza, al parto e al periodo post-natale. Uno sguardo antropologico nell'avvicinarsi a queste donne è molto importante per capire la dimensione culturale e sociale del divenire madri perchè ci sono molti modi per partorire, molti modi di accogliere il bambino (Stern, Kruckman 1983; Moro, 2005). Il modo di vivere la gravidanza, infatti, cambia molto da un paese all'altro: in Europa, ad esempio, se ne parla presto e nei dettagli; in Africa occidentale invece c'è l'uso di mantenere il segreto sulla gravidanza, si dice solo alla madre, al marito e alle sorelle. Si temono le cattive intenzioni delle persone e l'uso della stregoneria contro la mamma ed il bambino, per invidia, gelosia o per questioni familiari. Un altro momento molto importante è il periodo che segue la nascita del bambino; la madre è soggetta a delle interdizioni (solitamente di carattere igienico e alimentare) che variano a seconda della tradizione. Essa si occupa solo di nutrire il bambino, gli altri compiti vengono svolti da altre persone. La solidarietà e la disponibilità sono totali: la neo-mamma è aiutata nelle faccende, nella preparazione del cibo e si agevola il suo riposo accudendo il bambino. Si tratta di una rete di supporto molto importante, in cui l'offerta e la ricezione d'aiuto si collocano in un ciclo di reciprocità continua che con la migrazione si rompe.

Le madri immigrate hanno spesso interiorizzato un modello di cura dell'infanzia che si compone di tecniche più tradizionali e di pratiche moderne. Il mantenimento delle pratiche tradizionali e dell'identità culturale rassicura la madre e crea un legame di continuità tra le generazioni. Al contrario, l'abbandono improvviso delle cure materne più tradizionali, spesso disconfermate e criticate dai servizi e dagli operatori, può portare ad un impoverimento del maternage. Il contatto con gli operatori, se da una parte contribuisce ad acquisire nuove informazioni ed a modificare alcune convinzioni, dall'altra disorienta rispetto al "sapere" ed al "saper fare" precedente già sperimentato. Dovrebbe invece instaurarsi una forma di complementarità rispetto ai due nuclei di messaggi e di informazioni, che aiuti la donna a vivere questa attesa in maniera serena e a prepararsi ad essere una buona madre secondo il suo modo e non il nostro. Questo è possibile promuovendo modalità di intervento che siano consapevoli delle diversità culturali e che siano più adeguate alla complessità dell'utenza immigrata e quindi più efficaci.

### **L'ascolto.**

La riflessione sulla maternità e sul suo significato sociale e culturale ci porta a interrogarci su come si possano accompagnare queste donne, su come mettere in comunicazione il sistema di cure tradizionale e il sistema sanitario occidentale. L'ideale sarebbe costituire in tutti gli ospedali e anche nei servizi sociali un team multiculturale o per la meno avere a disposizione dei mediatori culturali; ma spesso queste risorse non ci sono e allora una risposta la si può trovare nell'approccio centrato sulla persona che permette, attraverso l'ascolto, di creare un clima di accoglienza che facilita l'incontro con l'altro. Bisogna però saper ascoltare ed agire in maniera adeguata le *core conditions* rogersiane (empatia, congruenza, accettazione positiva ed incondizionata) quindi formare, secondo questo approccio, gli operatori che lavorano a contatto con gli immigrati, aiuterebbe a creare le condizioni per avviare il difficile lavoro di co-costruzione della comprensione tra persone appartenenti a culture diverse.

### Carl Rogers: l'approccio centrato sulla persona.

Rogers sostiene che ognuno di noi è abitato da una spinta che tende verso lo sviluppo di tutte le potenzialità: la *tendenza attualizzante* (Rogers, 1978, 2007). Quando si crea, grazie alle *core*

*conditions* (empatia, congruenza e accettazione positiva e incondizionata) un *clima facilitante*, si favorisce una comunicazione aperta e si aiuta l'individuo a sviluppare il suo pieno potenziale.

Gli psicoterapeuti, i counsellor e gli operatori che seguono l'approccio rogersiano raccolgono davvero una sfida enorme e per poterla accettare e portare avanti bisogna lavorare sempre e costantemente su se stessi, al fine di potenziare, apprendere e sviluppare la propria sensibilità, la fiducia in se stessi e le abilità/atteggiamenti che questo tipo di approccio richiede e che qui vorrei approfondire.

#### *Accettazione positiva e incondizionata.*

Il concetto di accettazione positiva e incondizionata è legato al riconoscimento ed al rispetto delle altrui differenze. Il counsellor infatti deve essere disponibile nei confronti del cliente, quali che siano i sentimenti e i significati che lui porta in quel determinato momento (Rogers, 1995). Riassumendo quel che dice Rogers: se il cliente sente accettato tutte le parti di sé, col tempo riesce ad assumere lo stesso atteggiamento verso se stesso. Questo processo può avvenire perché un'altra persona è stata capace di adottare il suo schema di riferimento, di percepirlo insieme a lui con accettazione e rispetto (Rogers, 2007). La relazione sarà quindi tanto più efficace quanto più l'accettazione sarà positiva e incondizionata.

#### *Comprensione empatica.*

Rogers definisce l'empatia come la capacità di immergersi nel mondo personale del cliente "come se" fosse nostro, senza mai perdere la qualità del "come se". Significa saper stare con l'altro, entrare nel suo mondo senza pregiudizi, lasciare in un certo senso da parte se stessi. Questo può essere fatto solo da una persona che è sicura del suo sé, che sa che non si perderà nel mondo dell'altro e che potrà uscirne quando desidera e rientrare nel suo mondo. L'empatia non è una tecnica di risposta, è un processo: *il processo di essere con il cliente* (Mearns, Thorne, 2009).

#### *Congruenza.*

Se il counsellor non è congruente, non ci possono essere empatia e accettazione positiva e incondizionata. Per poter essere congruente, l'esperienza reale del counsellor deve essere congruente con l'immagine che egli ha di sé; egli deve essere quello che è realmente nei confronti del cliente e questi deve poterlo percepire, deve poter sentire che il counsellor c'è nella relazione senza frenare in alcun modo la sua esperienza. Il counsellor non dovrebbe mai celarsi dietro il suo ruolo ma essere autentico nel rapporto (Rogers, 1995, p. 282). Inoltre il counsellor deve conoscere i propri limiti, deve essere in accordo con se stesso, essere consapevole ed in contatto con le sue emozioni e sentimenti, deve essere capace di esprimerli quando ciò è appropriato, prestando molta attenzione, però, a non proiettarli sull'altro; di ciò che arriva a lui dal cliente, egli deve restituire solo ciò che al cliente può essere utile a realizzare la sua tendenza attualizzante senza svelargli ciò che non è pronto ad affrontare (Rogers, 1995).

Congruenza, empatia, accettazione positiva e incondizionata non sono abilità tecniche e apprendibili attraverso lo studio teorico, come scrivono Mearns e Thorne, si tratta di un "*modo di essere che caratterizza l'intera esistenza del counsellor non solo la sua attività professionale*" (Mearns, Thorne, 1988, trad. it. p. 41).

Un altro caposaldo dell'approccio rogersiano è la *non direttività*. All'interno della relazione di aiuto ognuno ha pari responsabilità e dignità. Il counsellor ricopre il ruolo di facilitatore ma il vero esperto, sulla situazione del cliente, è il cliente stesso.

In sintesi in tutte le relazioni d'aiuto ciò che garantisce il successo, secondo gli insegnamenti rogersiani, è l'atteggiamento del terapeuta.

### **Conclusioni.**

L'approccio centrato sulla persona si può applicare a qualsiasi relazione, i termini counsellor/cliente si possono tranquillamente sostituire con insegnante/allievo, partners (Rogers lo ha fatto in primis), madre/ figlio, operatore/utente e il significato profondo di quello che si legge non cambia; l'approccio centrato sulla persona è interculturale e può essere usato ogni volta che le persone entrano in relazione le une con le altre. Qualsiasi rapporto umano trarrebbe beneficio se fosse fondato su questi valori e atteggiamenti.

La Moro insiste nel dire quanto sia importante mettere in atto un lavoro di decentramento quando si lavora con gli immigrati, quanto sia importante imparare a guardare da un altro punto di vista e rendersi conto che non si è il centro del sapere ma accettare l'idea che il sapere dell'altro è una realtà (Moro, 2005); quanto sia importante mettere l'altro nella condizione di comunicare le sue emozioni, i suoi significati, la sua ipotesi culturale ed essere realmente autentici nell'accogliere tutto ciò che emerge. Ritroviamo in qualche modo le teoria di Rogers, si tratta di accettare l'altro in maniera autentica e non giudicante (accettazione positiva e incondizionata e congruenza), di mettersi al posto dell'altro, sentire come l'altro (empatia), e ritenere che l'altro detenga il significato di ciò che gli accade (non direttività).

Concludendo, l'adozione di una prospettiva antropologica sulla salute (intesa come stato di completo benessere fisico, mentale e sociale) dà ai professionisti dell'aiuto degli strumenti innovativi che facilitano l'incontro con le "tradizioni culturali altre", i differenti modi di percepire la malattia, la salute e il disagio; l'approccio centrato sulla persona contribuisce alla costruzione di una relazione d'aiuto efficace anche quando il terapeuta (o medico, educatore etc.) ha poca o nessuna familiarità con la cultura del cliente, perchè si basa sul rispetto della persona e sulla fiducia nelle sue potenzialità, non mette etichette e lascia spazio all'altro. Usati entrambi costituirebbero un validissimo aiuto per gli operatori del settore nel fornire "cure culturalmente competenti".

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## Verso la ricerca di senso nella realtà schizofrenica di un africano

Di Pamela Coccetta

**Metodologia.** Nei primi tre incontri ho seguito la modalità dell'intervista non-strutturata (Castelli, Giovannini, 2000), in cui l'obiettivo è stato quello di raccogliere informazioni sulla storia familiare e socio-culturale del cliente per fornire all'antropologa indizi sulla società d'appartenenza dello stesso, e poter così comprendere i legami sociali, le regole, i riti, ossia il modo di funzionamento socio-relazionale del cliente. A queste 3 interviste, su diretta richiesta del cliente i nostri incontri sono proseguiti, quella intrapresa con lui è una terapia di supporto, volta a sostenere la struttura di personalità, per rafforzare le competenze di *coping*, l'autoefficacia, l'*hardiness*, l'autostima, e la capacità di comunicazione e di risoluzione dei problemi; che in altre parole può essere considerata come una terapia volta al rafforzamento dell'organismo nell'affrontare gli stress ambientali (Zucconi, Howell, 2003).

**Il caso di Patrick.** Patrick è un uomo di 40 anni originario di uno stato africano. I genitori biologici sono deceduti. Il padre era un maestro delle elementari, animista-tradizionalista, capo tribù (carica ereditaria) e capo famiglia; è deceduto in circostanze sospette quando Patrick aveva 25 anni, dopo aver ricevuto una carica notevole ed aver sfidato il suo superiore. Al momento della sua morte il padre non aveva nominato il figlio successore delle sue cariche. A Patrick è stato chiesto di prendere il ruolo, ma lui si è rifiutato. Ancora oggi nessuno della famiglia ha preso il posto del padre deceduto. La madre è morta in seguito al parto dell'ultima figlia. Patrick ha ricevuto gli insegnamenti spirituali dalla nonna materna e per lui rappresenta un problema non averli ricevuti dal padre. A 15 anni ha scelto consapevolmente di seguire la religione animista come il padre, una religione che attribuisce un'anima a tutti i fenomeni naturali, è un'energia fonte di ogni fenomeno che pervade tutto il mondo visibile ed invisibile; da quando è in Italia Patrick segue anche la religione cristiana cattolica, l'accettazione di una nuova religione non si contrappone ai suoi principi animisti. Poco più che ventenne è venuto in Italia per studiare, e si è laureato in medicina. Una volta laureato è tornato in Africa, dove ha provato a lavorare da medico 3 mesi con lo zio paterno, ma è stato un fallimento ed è tornato in Italia.

Patrick ha cominciato ad avere allucinazioni uditive da quando è venuto in Italia per studi, da allora è seguito dal Servizio Sanitario Nazionale italiano. Per curarsi accede sia alle cure della medicina occidentale, tramite la psichiatria, la psicologia, e l'assistenza sociale, sia alle cure tradizionali. Quest'ultime avvengono principalmente in due modalità: tramite i guru (nella vita di Patrick ci sono guru della foresta, americani, francesi, musulmani ed altri ancora) e dato che secondo tali cure è solito che uno dei membri "sani" della famiglia entri a far parte del percorso di cura dell'ammalato, per Patrick questo membro è rappresentato dal cognato, che egli stesso definisce "*migliore amico*", "*consigliere*".

Le sue voci hanno un volto, sa chi sono e parlano diverse lingue (inglese, francese, italiano), che "*per fortuna*" lui conosce. Ha seri problemi a dormire la notte, in quanto è la fase della giornata in cui, per la cultura africana, si entra appieno nel mondo spirituale, e le sue notti sono "*trafficate, tempestose*". Queste voci si alternano per parlare con lui, alcune sono benigne, altre invece sono maligne. Sono più lente ed è maggiormente in grado di gestirle quando riesce a dormire la notte e quando riesce a svolgere le sue funzioni quotidiane, soprattutto quando va in chiesa (Patrick va in chiesa tutti i giorni, anche più volte al giorno). Quando è tornato in Africa per qualche mese, le voci sono sparite perché attraverso i riti i guru riescono a chiudergli la mente; in Italia le voci lo travolgono, ma grazie agli psicofarmaci riesce a ragionare.

Nei nostri colloqui Patrick alterna momenti di flusso normale di pensiero a momenti di associazioni eterogenee senza significato logico (fusione). Le sue capacità di *problem solving* rispetto alla sua critica situazione economica e burocratica di permanenza in Italia risultano sempre inadeguate. Il *locus of evaluation* di Patrick è risultato principalmente esterno ed a volte delirante.

Un aspetto ridondante in Patrick è il dilemma dell'usufruire e del partecipare/praticare. Sin da subito, è emerso come egli può solo "usufruire" dei riti magici delle sue cure animiste, ma non può "partecipare". In seguito è emerso come il "partecipare" equivale al "praticare". Per esempio per la sua debolezza spirituale, quando va in chiesa, può soltanto "ascoltare"; se provasse ad "adorare", "pregare" Dio, cadrebbe in "depressione psicofisica", si "frantumerebbe". Fino a giungere ad affermare esplicitamente che il suo problema è la "pratica".

Patrick esplicita il timore che la diagnosi psichiatrica redattagli "Schizofrenia con gravi deliri, allucinazioni uditive" possa compromettergli il futuro, perché con questa diagnosi la polizia lo verrebbe a cercare, e comparirebbe anche sul suo codice fiscale, visibile a tutte le autorità (secondo il punto di vista clinico si tratta di un delirio persecutorio). Si stupisce di come quando era in un'altra città d'Italia ed era invaso dalle voci fosse meno etichettato, riferisce che gli era stata diagnosticata una "Sindrome di disadattamento con alcuni disturbi psicotici", ed ora che si sente meglio gli pesa l'attuale diagnosi psichiatrica. Continua ad identificarsi nella precedente diagnosi, poiché ritiene che le proprie capacità di apprendimento, come allora, non sono compromesse. Rispetto alle emozioni solo al nostro 16° incontro per la prima volta esprime i sentimenti intensi che lo hanno coinvolto in una sua esperienza del giorno precedente, parla di "vuoto", "angoscia", "solitudine", "ho bisogno d'affetto"; fino ad esclamare con sorpresa "Si sono le emozioni!", emozioni che non riesce a provare nell'immediato, che gli altri sembrano accorgersene prima di lui, mentre lui le percepisce dopo, tutte insieme e lo travolgono. Vorrebbe imparare a sentire e gestire le sue emozioni nel qui ed ora, che lui definisce "nell'immediatezza". Anche se non più in modo così immediato, libero e sentito, Patrick in diverse occasioni ha espresso sia verbalmente che non verbalmente le sue emozioni: la delusione avuta dal padre per non aver ricevuto da lui gli insegnamenti spirituali; la delusione avuta dallo zio medico in Africa, che una volta giunto lì dopo essersi laureato, non lo ha aiutato, "mi ha mollato"; la sua preoccupazione di tornare in patria, poiché tornerebbe con un "handicap" (non sa praticare), sarebbe "abbandonato"; l'"angoscia continua", che colma andando in chiesa e chiamando al telefono il cognato.

**Patrick tra cultura e normalità-anormalità.** Per comprendere quanto di patologico c'è in Patrick e per attenuare il pericolo di considerarlo esclusivamente un malato mentale, in quanto deviante dall'ordine istituzionale a cui appartengo, ho inserito la nostra relazione in una visione fenomenologica della realtà come costruzione sociale, ed ho fatto appello alla teoria della relatività, alla teoria generale dei sistemi, al paradigma biopsicosociale, ed alla psicopatologia descrittiva (Berger, Luckmann, 1966; Capra, 1982; Zucconi, Howell, 2003; Von Bertalanffy, 1968; Oyebode, 2008); tutte argomentazioni che racchiudono e sono racchiuse nella approccio rogersiano (Rogers, 1942; 1951; 1961; 1970; 1980; Rogers, Kinget, 1965; Zucconi, 1986).

Pur essendo inserita in questa visione ho avuto la necessità anche di far appello al concetto di cultura ed a quello di normalità-anormalità psichica; Devereux sostiene "l'etnopsichiatria si sforzerà di confrontare e di coordinare il concetto di «cultura», con la coppia concettuale «normalità-anormalità»" (1973; trad. it. 2007, p.23). Ed inoltre, alla preoccupazione già accennata di cadere nella trappola del "patologizzare" completamente l'altro, l'autore aggiunge il rischio dell'etnologo/antropologo di considerare "normale" ciò che in realtà è patologico. In altri termini, il rischio è quello di scegliere od il polo dell'universalismo, per il quale la malattia mentale è uguale ovunque; od il polo del relativismo assoluto, secondo cui la malattia mentale è solo culturalmente determinata e solo un tecnico della stessa cultura può comprenderla (Ballarin, 2011). Già da queste

prime battute emerge l'indicazione del luogo di frontiera in cui un professionista si trova ad operare di fronte a malattie mentali di altre culture.

Un esempio di confronto e coordinamento dei concetti di cultura e di normalità-anormalità da parte delle società occidentali, è dato dalle “*culture bound syndrome*” (sindromi legate alla cultura) del DSM-IV-TR, in cui vengono indicate alcune sindromi presenti soltanto in specifici contesti culturali, tale capitolo è stato inserito affinché “*il clinico che non ha familiarità con le sfumature della cornice culturale di riferimento del soggetto può erroneamente giudicare come psicopatologia quelle normali variazioni di comportamento, convinzioni o esperienze peculiari della cultura dell'individuo*” (APA, 2000; trad. it. 2009, p.12). Malgrado questo sforzo della società occidentale di classificare anche le patologie “altre”; continuano a sussistere innumerevoli discussioni sull'utilità delle etichette nosografiche.

Una chiara espressione del concetto di cultura è la seguente definizione “*l'insieme di idee e comportamenti appresi che gli esseri umani acquisiscono in quanto membri della società. Gli uomini si servono della cultura per adattarsi al mondo nel quale vivono e per trasformarlo*” (Schultz, Laveda, 1988; trad. it. 2003, p.5), ed è proprio il concetto di cultura ad essere al centro della prospettiva antropologica.

Rispetto alla dicotomia normale-anormale, faccio richiamo la seguente classificazione (Lalli, Manzi, 1999) che ritengo più esaustiva e chiara:

- la norma ideale: la quale fa riferimento ad un sistema di valori , è il “dover essere”, indica all'individuo quali comportamenti adottare per rientrare nel benessere psichico, diventa così una norma limite a cui tendere;
- la norma statistica: si rivolge al normale come al più frequente, si possiede il benessere psichico quando si è come la maggioranza della popolazione;
- la norma funzionale: si riferisce allo sviluppo psichico adatto alla realtà in cui è inserito l'individuo.

Rispetto all'apparato epistemologico preso in considerazione la norma funzionale risulta quella clinicamente più idonea e pensando a Patrick, alle sue esperienze, ai suoi processi cognitivi e comportamentali, risultano per la maggioranza “non normali”, sia nella nostra cultura che in quella sua d'origine. All'interno del nostro sistema di salute-malattia mentale, Patrick presenta disturbi riferiti alla consapevolezza della realtà con allucinazioni e deliri; e nella cultura d'origine tornerebbe con un “*handicap*” e sarebbe “*abbandonato*” in quanto non in grado di “*praticare*”. Ciò però non esula il professionista ad affiancare al pensiero epistemologico, quello ermeneutico, per scoprire nuove configurazioni di senso e nuove modalità relazionali (Montinaro, Santarcangelo, 2003). L'ACP, dà importanza ad entrambi gli aspetti, reputando la diagnosi il territorio all'interno del quale è possibile passare dalla descrizione fenomenologica della patologia, alla comprensione del significato fenomenologico dell'esperienza di quel determinato cliente. Così è possibile dare un senso alle limitazioni del cliente, che possono a loro volta permettere l'individuazione del campo delle risorse e delle potenzialità (*empowerment*), all'interno del quale il cliente si può muovere. Rispetto a Patrick, le sue potenzialità sono state riconosciute sia nella nostra cultura (la capacità di fare affidamento ad un sistema di cura occidentale, le sue capacità di instaurare relazioni con persone significative al livello politico e decisionale) che in quella di origine (la capacità di mantenere i contatti con un parente nella terra madre e mantenere attivo un percorso di cura spirituale).

E' proprio in questa visione ermeneutica-epistemologica che acquisisce un senso anche quello che ho considerato delirio persecutorio di Patrick, rispetto all'essere ricercato dalla polizia per la gravità della sua diagnosi, “*Schizofrenia con gravi deliri, allucinazioni uditive*”, ho sperimentato con lui la pesantezza e l'invalidità che può procurare un'etichetta diagnostica fine a se stessa.

La situazione attuale di Patrick non rientra nella condizione di salute definita dall'OMS (Carta di Ottawa per la Promozione della Salute, 1986): *“la salute è lo stato di completo benessere fisico, mentale e sociale e non semplicemente l'assenza di malattia o di infermità”*; ma se al posto del carattere statico che tale definizione riporta con l'accezione di “stato”, sostituiamo una concezione sistemica parlando di “processo” dinamico in continuo mutamento, si può avere fiducia in Patrick affinché possa anche lui raggiungere la “propria” salute mentale (Zucconi, Howell, 2003; Capra, 1982).

Un rilevante punto di comunanza, tra etnopsichiatria e l'ACP è per me la visione filosofica pragmatica, per la quale un concetto è valido non perché associato al criterio della verità ma a quello di funzionalità, sia per l'individuo che per la società, ne consegue che anche un sistema di cura è valido affinché è utile per individui e società. Prendendo a prestito il concetto di “democrazia” del pragmatico Dewey (1916), Rogers lo ha reso operativo attraverso un setting terapeutico “democratico”, delinea una relazione in cui pur mantenendosi la *“divisione del lavoro”* (Rogers, Kinget, 1965; trad. it. 1991, p.329) tipica di un rapporto professionale, il terapeuta non funge da esperto, si hanno due persone in relazione asimmetrica, ma tale asimmetria non vuol significare una differenza di potere nella relazione, bensì fa riferimento alla diversità dei ruoli, ossia dei compiti e delle responsabilità (Bastianoni, Simonelli, 2003); ne consegue che cliente e terapeuta hanno la stessa dignità esistenziale. Allo stesso modo possiamo dire che ogni cultura è portatrice del proprio sistema di cura e nessuno è superiore all'altro, ed anche nella relazione terapeuta-cliente, ognuno rappresenta e porta con sé il proprio sistema culturale di salute-malattia-cura. I soggetti in relazione, potrebbero essere portatori di modelli culturali simili ma mai identici, ed ognuno ha pari diritti di esistenza e di efficacia (AA.VV., 2009; Coppo, 2003).

L'etnopsichiatria ha permesso di mettere in risalto alcuni aspetti non patologici o parzialmente patologici di Patrick, reinserendoli su di un piano di “normalità funzionale” secondo la sua cultura d'origine. Come per esempio il fatto che Patrick pur avendo notevoli capacità intellettuali, non riesce a svolgere nessun lavoro, atteggiamento incompreso fino a che con il contributo dell'antropologia è emerso che Patrick non può *“praticare”* ma solo *“usufruire”*. Inoltre, molti dei deliri di Patrick si sono rivelati di tipo secondario, ossia sono divenuti comprensibili grazie alla sua storia personale, culturale e psichiatrica (Oyebode, 2008). Quello che sembrava essere un delirio inspiegabile (delirio primario) (*ibed.*), rispetto alla persecutorietà di Patrick, soprattutto da parte delle voci e della polizia, assume un significato nel contesto familiare e religioso. La famiglia fa pressione su Patrick, poiché, lui sarebbe il successore ideale al padre morto, ma Patrick si potrebbe essere sottratto da tale responsabilità, scelta non ammissibile per la cultura familiare. Inoltre, al livello religioso, tutti i morti diventano antenati e quindi Dei che possono entrare in contatto con i vivi e potrebbero anche questi far pressione a Patrick sulla questione aperta dell'eredità della carica paterna. Da qui è emerso anche l'aspetto non delirante della sua paura di essere *“abbandonato”* una volta tornato in Africa, destino amaro che gli toccherebbe. E' emersa l'importanza dell'alterità per la sua cultura, dal momento che Patrick ha la necessità di acquisire diverse conoscenze in diverse sfere, da quella religiosa (animista, cattolica, musulmana), a quella di cura (sistema di cura occidentale, sistema di cura africano), a quello degli stili di vita (occidentale-italiano, francese, americano, africano, franco africano).

Questi contributi ed altri, mi hanno tutelata nel non selezionare e scegliere per Patrick i percorsi di cura più idonei (per me) da seguire, se avessi considerato patologici tutti quelli che reputavo deliri, avrei imboccato una strada a senso unico, quella della supremazia del sistema di cure occidentali.

E' grazie alla collaborazione con l'antropologa che ho potuto abbassare le mie difese rispetto alla minaccia di stare di fronte a qualcuno culturalmente molto diverso di me, e ciò ha permesso a me e Patrick di ricercare insieme molti significati della sua esperienza presente.

**Alleanza di lavoro, motivazione intrinseca ed estrinseca.** Uno dei fattori comuni alle diverse psicoterapie ai fini del successo della terapia è l'instaurarsi dell'Alleanza Terapeutica (Zucconi, 1982; Lingiardi, 2002; Lingiardi, Colli, 2003). Greenson nel 1965 parla di Alleanza di Lavoro per sottolineare il vantaggio che non è incluso nella definizione di Alleanza Terapeutica, ossia "*la capacità del paziente di lavorare finalisticamente alla situazione terapeutica*" (Greenson, 1967/1972; trad. it. 1998, p.163). Indica l'atteggiamento del terapeuta che oltre ad affrontare i vissuti interni del cliente, tende anche a gestire le relazioni del cliente con gli altri e tra gli altri, e la relazione con i vari aspetti dell'esistenza dello stesso (Sulprizio, 2011). L'alleanza con Patrick è avvenuta in maniera finalizzata alla ricerca di soluzioni alle problematiche relative alla relazione con gli altri (con i conviventi nella struttura residenziale e con i familiari per l'eventuale rientro in patria) oltre che del proprio vissuto interiore (rappresentato dalla necessità del cliente di dare un senso alle voci), delineandosi così a mio avviso un'Alleanza di Lavoro che ha condotto Patrick a richiedere un proseguimento degli incontri dopo le 3 interviste non-strutturate.

Inoltre è opinione comune che una buona Alleanza avviene quando il cliente si sente accolto, ascoltato, compreso oltre che nei sentimenti espressi ed i significanti connessi, anche negli obiettivi e nelle aspettative, si sente comodo, in sicurezza, e può dunque fidarsi dell'altro, in questo caso del terapeuta (*ibid.*). Sintetizzando, mi sento di affermare che se sussistono le 3 condizioni necessarie e "sufficienti" (comprensione empatica, accettazione positiva incondizionata, congruenza) è alta la probabilità che si instauri un'Alleanza di Lavoro. Con Patrick ciò è traducibile nel seguente modo: nelle interviste non-strutturate, l'instaurarsi di un clima facilitante attraverso le 3 condizioni, ha permesso l'iniziazione di un'Alleanza di Lavoro. Ed ancora, secondo me, l'instaurarsi di un'Alleanza di Lavoro ha permesso il passaggio da una "motivazione estrinseca" del cliente, secondo la quale gli incontri sono stati previsti da terzi per ricostruire la storia familiare e culturale di Patrick (quello che Rogers chiama "*cliente indirizzato*"), ad una motivazione intrinseca tramite una richiesta diretta del cliente di portare avanti gli incontri per cercare di risolvere alcune sue specifiche problematiche (quello che Rogers definisce "*cliente volontario*") (Rogers, Kinget, 1965; trad. it. 1991, p. 335).

**Conclusioni.** Con Patrick ho potuto constatare personalmente l'inefficacia di un approccio diagnostico-nosografico su di un cliente di altra origine culturale, poiché soffermandosi sul concetto di malattia, si focalizza sul sintomo perdendo di vista la persona. Mentre, un approccio fenomenologico, tipico dell'ACP, permette di passare dalla descrizione della patologia alla comprensione dell'esperienza soggettiva del cliente, dei suoi deliri, delle sue voci; adottare un approccio fenomenologico (Oyebode, 2008) ha significato co-costruire insieme a Patrick il significato delle sue esperienze personali, sociali e culturali, e ciò ha permesso di orientarmi verso il recupero del suo potere personale, e soprattutto di non togliergli questo potere.

Nella prassi agita della relazione tra me e Patrick, la collaborazione con l'antropologa mi ha permesso di rendere operativa l'attualizzazione di una visione democratica, fenomenologica e pragmatica alla realtà del cliente di altra origine culturale.

Inoltre, ho rilevato come l'instaurarsi con Patrick di un'Alleanza di Lavoro sin dal *setting* dell'intervista non-strutturata ai fini conoscitivi, ha comportato a sua volta, anche il riposizionarsi di Patrick nella relazione, da cliente indirizzato a cliente volontario (Rogers, Kinget, 1965).

Schematizzando il contributo dell'ACP nella relazione con un cliente di altra estrazione culturale, posso affermare che:

- ha permesso l'instaurarsi di un'Alleanza di Lavoro con il cliente;
- ha facilitato l'inserimento nello schema di riferimento del cliente;
- ha facilitato l'espressione delle emozioni del cliente;
- ha facilitato l'attivazione delle capacità personali del cliente nel far fronte a situazioni ambientali stressanti;

ha facilitato dei “movimenti” all’interno del processo terapeutico.  
 Ed inoltre, le conoscenze antropologiche hanno permesso di affinare gli assunti di base dell’ACP, nello specifico:  
 ha permesso di comprendere le sfumature dei vissuti emozionali del cliente;  
 ha permesso di fare attenzione a non cadere nella trappola dell’accettazione selettiva del vissuto del cliente;  
 ha permesso di affrontare in maniera meno minacciosa il contatto con una realtà culturale diversa e di facilitare così un atteggiamento sempre più autentico alla realtà del cliente;  
 ha facilitato il cliente nella ricerca di soluzioni alternative a fronte dei propri problemi, qualora il solo punto di vista occidentale rischiava di restringere bruscamente il ventaglio delle opzioni;  
 ha permesso di rilevare alcuni aspetti non-patologici, o parzialmente patologici del cliente;  
 ha permesso la modificazione di alcuni deliri primari del cliente (deliri non spiegabili) in deliri secondari (deliri comprensibili).  
 Nel porsi la domanda “*E’ questa l’unica realtà?*”, Rogers fa riferimento ad un antropologo Carlos Castaneda, ed invita gli psicologi, a ricercare realtà che non appartengono ai nostri cinque sensi “*una realtà in cui passato, presente e futuro sono reciprocamente presenti l’uno nell’altro, in cui lo spazio non è una barriera, e il tempo è scomparso [...]. Questa è una delle sfide più eccitanti che si pongono alla ricerca*” (Rogers, 1980; trad. it. 1983, pp.213).

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## RELAZIONE CONVEGNO VERONA – APRILE 2013

### INTRODUZIONE ELEMENTI DI PEDAGOGIA INTERCULTURALE

I fenomeni interculturali, o meglio, le situazioni che vedono realizzarsi l'incontro con l'altro non sono fenomeni nuovi. Il problema del diverso è presente ed è stato affrontato in tutte le culture e in tutti i tempi con modelli d'integrazione o di esclusione molto diversi tra loro, giustificati da altrettanto diverse motivazioni culturali, economiche, politiche e sociali, contestualizzate in un determinato periodo storico e in uno spazio geografico.

Ogni società, ogni comunità o gruppo sociale ha sempre cercato di fornire risposte adeguate ai quesiti, alle sfide e alle problematiche che sorgono nel momento in cui si viene a contatto con l'altro. Generalmente la presa di coscienza di questa realtà porta a formulare modelli e strategie etnocentrici, di assolutizzazione dei propri valori, di difesa, di salvaguardia della cultura e dell'identità del gruppo di appartenenza, a cui corrisponde l'attivazione di un meccanismo di negazione dell'altro basato sul concetto di diversità.

Fabietti a questo proposito individua le diverse possibilità di incontro tra identità culturali e alterità:

#### 1. Negazione dell'alterità

Non solo non viene riconosciuta l'alterità ma viene anche soppressa;

#### 2. Riconoscimento e accettazione dell'alterità

L'alterità viene riconosciuta e ammessa ma rimane una dimensione ininfluyente per la realizzazione della propria identità;

#### 3. Alterità interna all'identità



Riconoscimento dell'alterità come dimensione costituente dell'identità, in un processo continuo di negoziazione con il sé e con l'altro.

È importante uscire dalla logica di identità culturali fisse, immutabili e anche superiori, per entrare nell'ottica comunicativa degli scambi e dei meticciamenti.

Nel nuovo secolo ci si trova a dover affrontare in modo sempre più urgente la sfida della multiculturalità: negli ultimi decenni il susseguirsi dei flussi d'immigrazione ci ha portato a ripensare le interrelazioni tra le minoranze portatrici di diversità culturali e la società che le accoglie. Siamo davanti ad un terzo millennio sempre più caratterizzato da mutamento, complessità e transizione.

Anche la scuola, incaricata di trasmettere e diffondere i contenuti e i valori della società dominante, si trova a dover rivedere le proprie dinamiche interne, inadeguate nei confronti di contesti caratterizzati da pluralismo e diversità.

La presa di coscienza di questa realtà multiculturale porta alla riformulazione dei modelli socio-educativi, fondati su presupposti etnocentrici, ritenuti validi per qualsiasi gruppo minoritario.

Alla multiculturalità, termine che descrive una realtà sociale caratterizzata da diverse culture che coesistono insieme, si affianca il concetto di interculturalità, che è la direzione da percorrere, la risposta, il progetto da costruire.

Di fronte alla realtà multiculturale, quindi, a partire dagli anni ottanta circa, nasce e si sviluppa la cosiddetta pedagogia interculturale, in seguito ad una riflessione sull'educazione interculturale che andava lentamente assumendo una valenza sempre più importante nel corso del tempo.

Da qui la consapevolezza che c'è una nuova prospettiva da realizzare per trovare diverse modalità di rapporto con l'altro, per aprirsi al confronto, al dialogo, dove ciascuno possa conservare la propria identità, predisponendosi, allo stesso tempo, a costruirne una nuova.

La multiculturalità, come sostiene Filtzinger, è una categoria descrittiva, che indica la coesistenza di culture diverse. L'Interculturalità è invece una dimensione pedagogica che ne concettualizza l'integrazione interattiva. Se la pedagogia generale ha come scopo quello di accompagnare il processo di costruzione dell'identità del soggetto e di rafforzarla, la pedagogia interculturale è ad essa complementare nel rendere consapevoli gli individui della molteplicità



Croce Rossa Italiana

delle identità possibili. Questo modello infatti costituisce la base per il diritto alla differenza, intesa come ricchezza e bene comune. La cultura di ognuno, così come l'istituzione scolastica, mezzo fondamentale di trasmissione della cultura stessa, devono diventare luogo d'incontro, di dialogo e di arricchimento tra i diversi modelli culturali, attraverso la pedagogia e il contributo delle altre scienze dell'educazione e la pratica interculturale. Questo implica il ripensare la scuola e la società non più in un'ottica omologante ma come luogo di opportunità e di occasioni per favorire il dinamismo culturale. Per questo motivo la pedagogia e l'educazione interculturali non sono solo un'occasione di innovazione scolastica e sociale, ma diventano delle scelte politiche, che tengono conto del fatto che le minoranze etniche sono parti integranti delle nostre società, che assumono un'ottica problematicistica e complessa piuttosto che un atteggiamento paternalistico. L'educazione interculturale si concretizza allora nel tentativo pedagogico di creare nella realtà multiculturale un rapporto e un'interazione costruttiva e produttiva tra persone e cittadini socializzati in altre culture o appartenenti a culture diverse.

E' la "nuova normalità" dell'educazione del nostro tempo: non si tratta di educazione speciale, straordinaria, compensativa, ma normale ed ordinaria.

I principi essenziali che la contraddistinguono sono:

- L'interculturalità è una caratteristica strutturale e non temporanea o marginale della società ed è elemento costitutivo dell'identità all'interno della società globale.
- L'interculturalità è fondamento di una società che si fonda sulla diversità intesa come convivenza costruttiva e democratica, contro l'omogeneizzazione delle differenze.

Le relazioni interculturali sono relazioni tra culture ed identità diverse, che devono essere riconosciute nella loro "differenza", gestite e decostruite. La decostruzione, termine indica un atteggiamento critico nei confronti delle forme totalizzanti e assolutizzanti di ogni tradizione culturale. In questo processo c'è la disponibilità a compiere esperienze di decentramento, una sorta di "fuoriuscita" dalle proprie certezze, nella consapevolezza che l'etnocentrismo è presente in tutte le culture e che il rapporto tra le diverse culture è spesso un rapporto di forza asimmetrico.



L'interculturalità non nega il conflitto ma educa a risolverlo attraverso modalità non violente, nel rispetto anche della dimensione emozionale dell'incontro con l'altro.

L'educazione interculturale inizialmente ha posto il suo focus sugli immigrati e sulle minoranze, ponendo attenzione alle culture dei paesi di provenienza. L'obiettivo principale della sua azione è infatti quello di promuovere una serena convivenza pluri-etnica e un equilibrio nei rapporti sociali, dove le diversità non devono costituire un ostacolo.

Le strategie d'intervento delineate da Filtzinger sono un punto di riferimento articolato e complesso per l'educazione interculturale, che si può realizzare tenendo conto di:

1. Educazione nel contesto politico e sociale: come risposta educativa e sociale ai contesti multiculturali;
2. Approccio educativo integrato: educazione interculturale come concetto educativo globale, non speciale;
3. Interculturalità come principio didattico trasversale: educazione interculturale in tutte le situazioni di apprendimento, non solo nelle attività o nei progetti specifici;
4. Orientamento alle situazioni quotidiane: non solo promozione culturale e manifestazioni di folklore ma confronto costante con le situazioni quotidiane concrete;
5. Interazione e cooperazione: conservazione e rispetto delle culture e promozione di una nuova cultura quotidiana;
6. Partecipazione: coinvolgimento degli immigrati;
7. Partecipazione intergenerazionale: coinvolgimento di bambini, giovani e adulti nelle attività educative;
8. Approccio socio-ecologico: interventi non solo nelle agenzie educative ma nel territorio.

L'educazione interculturale, nonostante l'ampiezza del suo intervento, non esaurisce la complessità dell'esigenza formativa, non offrendo sufficienti risposte alla gravità dei problemi sociali, che sorgono dalla diversità culturale. La quantità e il tipo di informazioni e di preparazione impartite non sono infatti sufficienti per contrastarne i pregiudizi e i conflitti.

Alla base c'è la convinzione che una maggiore conoscenza delle culture delle minoranze favorisca la tolleranza, riducendo il razzismo.



Croce Rossa Italiana

Bisogna comunque tenere presente che anche se l'approccio dell'educazione interculturale non è rivolto principalmente alla risoluzione dei conflitti, bisogna non cadere nell'errore di ignorare i momenti conflittuali e faticosi che caratterizzano la convivenza pluriethnica.

Un ulteriore rischio è quello di fornire gli strumenti che caratterizzano l'azione interculturale solo agli "altri", pensando che siano loro a doversi adattare e mettere in gioco, mentre gli autoctoni non hanno nessun vantaggio dal confronto con la diversità.

**Verso un nuovo modello dell'Incontro.** Come si è cercato di fare emergere nelle pagine precedenti, non c'è un modello di "integrazione" che possa essere applicato ad una realtà, avendone compreso e interpretato in modo esauriente la complessità degli elementi culturali, sociali, storici.

L'intento è quello di costruire un orizzonte educativo interculturale, nel significato di "essere tra", attraversare le culture, che garantisca spazi di incontro, dialogo e confronto, in un'ottica non preconfezionata, ma flessibile e problematica. Il modello pedagogico di riferimento è costituito dalla pedagogia dell'incontro che offre una prospettiva secondo la quale la diversità rispetto al modello socioculturale dominante non viene più interpretata come deficit o, tanto meno, come colpa, bensì come risorsa positiva specifica dalla cui conoscenza partire per favorire l'inserimento originale del singolo individuo nel proprio e nell'altrui contesto culturale.

La pedagogia dell'Incontro offre un approccio educativo non più speciale ma globale, accompagnato da uno studio di fattibilità delle situazioni specifiche, per una progettazione didattica differenziata (in termini di obiettivi, contenuti e strumenti).

All'interno di questa progettazione le modalità operative infatti non sono "pacchetti" pronti per l'uso, né risposte precostituite; sono indicazioni di lavoro, sperimentabili e concrete, per poter costruire, produrre, inventare attraverso la ricerca di una fattibilità e di diversi stili didattici. Questi percorsi tengono conto inoltre della dimensione affettiva e cognitiva, delle relazioni e dell'apprendimento, in un coinvolgimento emotivo ed affettivo che si intreccia con la complessità della conoscenza.

L'obiettivo principale è quello di proporre delle metodologie operative, basate su processi di scoperta, comprensione e costruzione, sempre nell'ottica di un sistema formativo integrato



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all'interno del quale le famiglie, le scuole e il territorio, in qualsiasi contesto, possano trovare modalità di azioni comuni per collaborare.

Il processo di scoperta vuole condurre ad una conoscenza oggettiva dell'altro. La scoperta si basa sulle competenze culturali che, attraverso la ricerca e l'osservazione, favoriscono la comprensione della cultura dell'altro. Solo riconoscendo gli stereotipi e pregiudizi di cui siamo portatori, a volte inconsapevoli, e risolvendoli con un autentico interesse per le diverse realtà sociali e culturali, possiamo affrontare in modo positivo gli atteggiamenti di paura, rifiuto e sospetto, che spesso caratterizzano il "non-rapporto" con loro. Motivazione principale per intraprendere questo viaggio deve essere la consapevolezza che i modelli e i comportamenti che adottiamo e proponiamo come educatori e insegnanti vengano trasmessi ai nostri bambini e alle nostre bambine. Sta a noi la scelta e la responsabilità di proporre loro esperienze con contenuti stereotipati, di non proporre esperienze con contenuti che riteniamo abbiano un rischio di conflittualità troppo elevato, oppure di proporre e di condividere con i bambini e le bambine esperienze interculturali, che affrontano criticamente le differenze nell'ottica dell'incontro.

Il processo di comprensione si fonda sulla conoscenza dei soggetti e del loro ambiente, attraverso la comunicazione e il confronto diretto, necessari quando si vogliono instaurare relazioni di orizzontalità che non siano dogmatiche e "a senso unico" ma problematiche, stimolanti, rispettose della ricchezza e della complessità interna. Questa dimensione formativa riguarda la necessità di interpretare l'altro, elaborando autonomamente e consapevolmente la cultura che nasce dall'incontro con l'altro da sé. L'obiettivo è quello di creare delle possibilità di generalizzazione, in un'interazione costante tra diversità/uguaglianza, e di trasferibilità dei saperi prodotti.

Infine, il processo di costruzione che implica un concetto di intervento, di azione, di costruire insieme, di ricerca-azione, di strategie operative. Spesso quando si lavora in contesti multiculturali si incontrano numerose difficoltà. Molte di queste nascono perché, anche se dettate dalle migliori intenzioni, si organizzano attività, si "fanno cose" per loro, senza partire da un'analisi attenta delle motivazioni, degli interessi e dei problemi e soprattutto senza considerare l'importanza della partecipazione attiva dell'individuo e del gruppo nel processo di sviluppo. In ambito scolastico questo atteggiamento si riscontra nella progettazione di percorsi didattici





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differenziati, che sfociano spesso in situazioni di esclusione. Il processo di costruzione deve essere basato sul concetto di fare con l'altro, che significa avere la possibilità di condividere e cooperare, anche se talvolta è necessario creare le condizioni oggettive per favorirlo. Nell'ottica di una didattica interculturale il fare insieme richiama i concetti di scambio, interazione, dialogo, differenza, integrazione, reciprocità, riconoscimento, amicizia, solidarietà, contaminazione.

La metodologia a cui si fa riferimento è quella della ricerca-azione, poiché ogni soggetto è coinvolto in un viaggio inquisitivo che accompagna la costruzione dell'identità e che ha come obiettivo principale quello di realizzare e valorizzare le potenzialità-specificità di ogni individuo sul piano socio-affettivo, cognitivo ed esistenziale. La ricerca-azione con la sua metodologia attiva, aperta alla molteplicità delle variabili che interagiscono in tutti i processi formativi, attenta alla problematicità dei soggetti e degli oggetti del processo, è particolarmente funzionale ad un contesto in cui ci si vuole confrontare con le diversità, accettandone le sfide.

Ognuna di queste tre dimensioni che costituiscono un possibile modello di didattica dell'incontro si integrano, costruendo costantemente interconnessioni: conoscenza, interpretazione e azione sono dimensioni che si possono sviluppare separatamente, ma in modo imprescindibile, secondo una sequenza anche non lineare ma all'interno della quale non venga mai a mancare la compresenza e la pluralità degli approcci.

La Pedagogia Interculturale si può quindi intendere come teorizzazione della e sulla educazione del mondo d'oggi.

Ne consegue che la distinzione tra educazione ed educazione interculturale non ha fondamento perché l'educazione o è apertura all'altro o non è educazione.

L'educazione interculturale è quella che avverte le necessità emergenti del nostro tempo, si configura come la formula attuale del discorso pedagogico generale ed evidenzia le nuove esigenze educative della nostra società complessa, globale e multiculturale.



## **VALUTAZIONE E GESTIONE DELLO STRESS DEGLI OPERATORI CRI IMPEGNATI NEL LAVORO CON I MIGRANTI AGLI SBARCHI E DURANTE LA PRIMISSIMA ACCOGLIENZA**

Nell'ambito del Progetto Praesidium VII, in seguito ai risultati ottenuti da un monitoraggio psicosociale dei centri governativi per migranti nell'anno 2012, è stato inserito un Progetto di Valutazione e Gestione dello stress degli operatori CRI, a partire dal mese di Ottobre 2012 e successivamente inserito nel Progetto Praesidium VIII del 2013.

Tale Progetto è consistito nello svolgimento di gruppi di valutazione e gestione dello stress con gli operatori della CRI impegnati nel lavoro di accoglienza dei migranti, durante gli sbarchi e nei primi giorni di permanenza nel territorio italiano.

Precisamente, sono stati svolti 3 gruppi in Puglia, nelle città di Lecce e Foggia, 3 gruppi in Sicilia, nelle città di Trapani, Licata e Catania, 3 gruppi in Calabria, nelle città di Crotone, Roccella Jonica e Monasterace.

Ciascun gruppo è durato la media di due ore ed è stato svolto in due parti:

1. Primi 30 minuti circa: somministrazione di una scheda sociografica per la raccolta di informazioni personali, di un questionario autovalutativo sullo stress e di un questionario autovalutativo sul burnout;
2. Seconda parte: gruppo di supervisione delle attività svolte dagli operatori: racconto di esperienze particolarmente difficili affrontate durante il lavoro con i migranti e di situazioni che contribuiscono ad aumentare lo stress, sempre nell'interazione con i migranti.

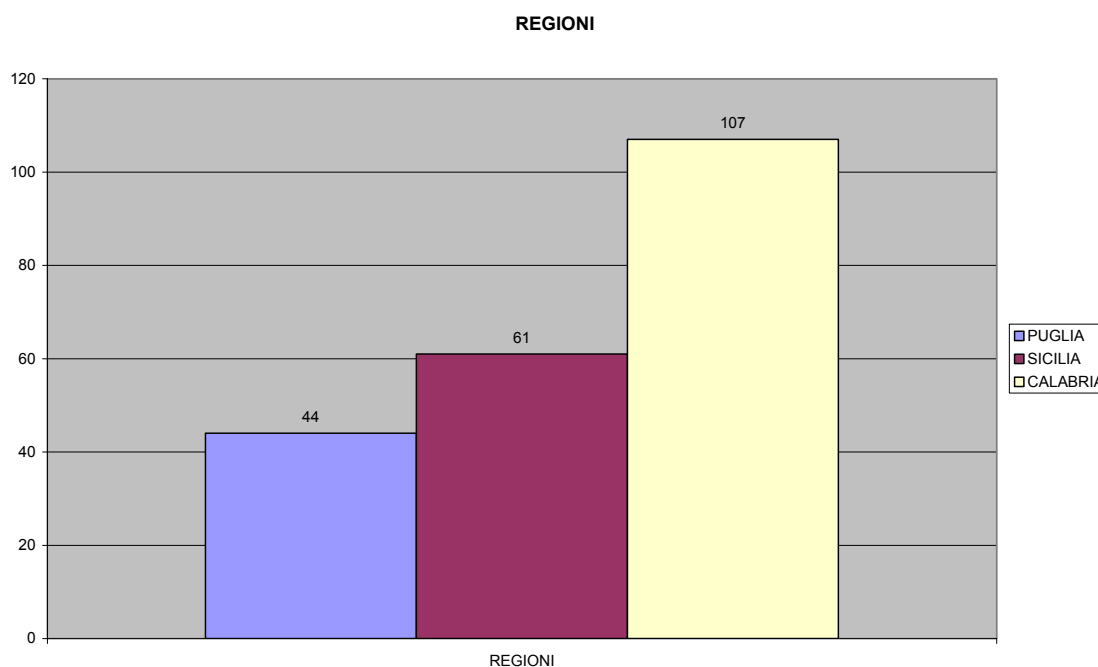
Per quanto riguarda le informazioni ottenute dalla prima parte dei gruppi, sono stati somministrati, in anonimato, i seguenti questionari:

- 44 in Puglia, 18 a Lecce, 11 al Cara di Foggia, 15 al Comitato Provinciale di Foggia;
- 61 in Sicilia, 12 a Trapani, 18 a Licata, 31 a Catania;
- 107 in Calabria, 63 a Crotone, 25 a Roccella Jonica, 19 a Monasterace,

per un totale di 212 soggetti.



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I questionari utilizzati presentano i seguenti valori di analisi:

**STRESS:**

valori inferiori a 13= soggetti sani

valori 13-14= tendenze allo stress

valori uguali o maggiori di 15= presenza di stress

**BURNOUT (MOSS BURNOUT INVENTORY):**

valori inferiori a 2,6= soggetti sani

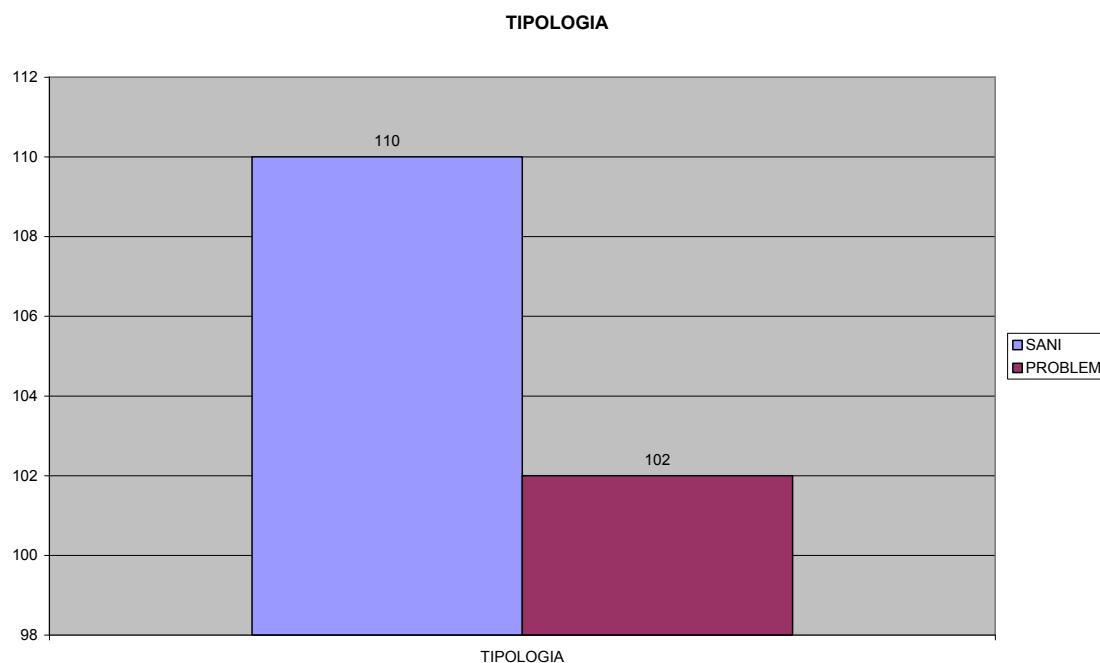
valori compresi tra 2,6 e 2,9= tendenze al burnout

valori uguali o maggiori di 3= presenza di burnout

Dall' analisi quantitativa risulta che 102 soggetti su 212 (48,1%) intervistati presentano problematiche inerenti stress o burnout e 110 soggetti su 212 sono sani (51,9%).



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In letteratura ci sono alcune variabili individuate che vengono citate come particolarmente rilevanti per il contributo che danno all'insorgenza di stress e burn out. Esse sono:

- Sesso
- Basso livello di istruzione
- Giovane età
- Disoccupazione
- Non possibilità di carriera
- Lavoro di responsabilità
- Stato civile: mancanza di supporto familiare
- Tanti anni di lavoro
- Inesperienza



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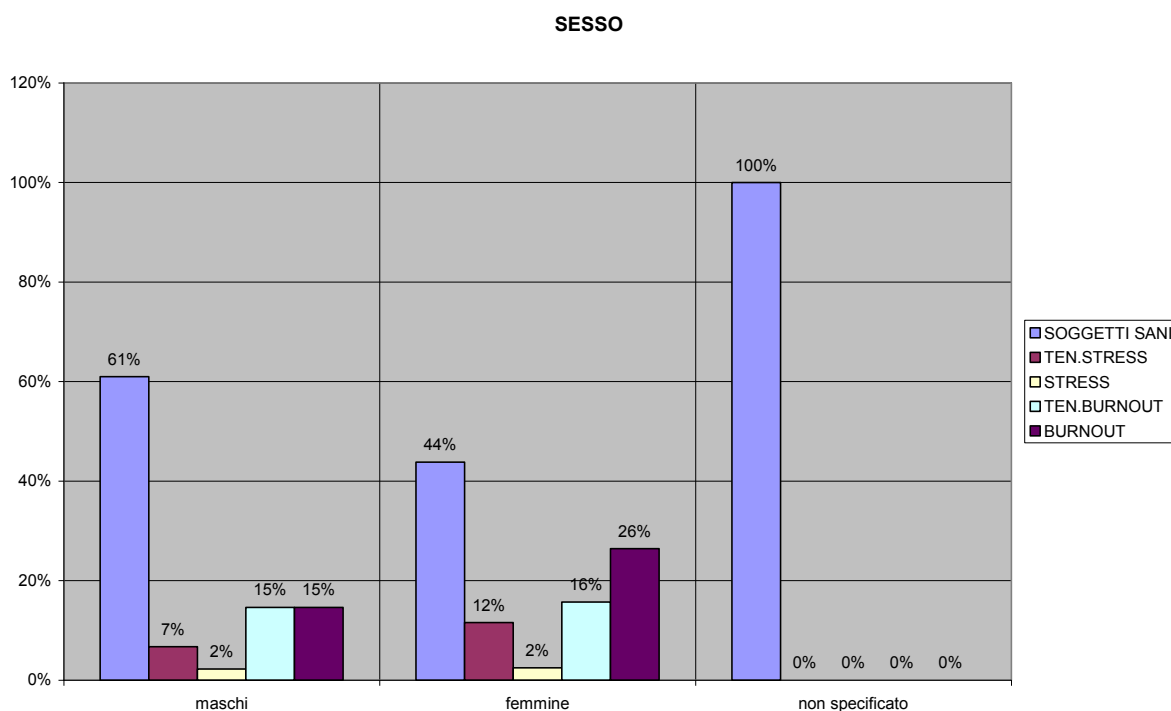
**CALCOLO PUNTEGGI ASSOLUTI E PERCENTUALI TENDENZE E VALORI CONCLAMATI DI STRESS E BURNOUT PER CIASCUNA VARIABILE CONSIDERATA**

VARIABILI	VALORI ASSOLUTI					VALORI PERCENTUALI						
	SOGGETTI SANI	TEN.STRESS	STRESS	TEN.BURNOUT	BURNOUT	TOT SOGGETTI	SOGGETTI SANI	TEN.STRESS	STRESS	TEN.BURNOUT	BURNOUT	TOT SOGGETTI
maschi	55	6	2	13	13	89	61%	7%	2%	15%	15%	100%
femmine	53	14	3	19	32	121	44%	12%	2%	16%	26%	100%
non specificato	2	0	0	0	0	2	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
LICENZA MEDIA	25	1	0	14	11	51	49%	2%	0%	27%	22%	100%
ETA' < 20 aa	3	1	0	2	6	12	25%	8%	0%	17%	50%	100%
DISOCCUPAZIONE	9	0	0	2	5	16	56%	0%	0%	13%	31%	100%
NO POSSIBILITA' CARRIERA	17	3	1	10	3	34	50%	9%	3%	29%	9%	100%
LAVORO DI RESPONSABILITA'	8	1	3	1	5	18	43%	6%	17%	6%	28%	100%
nubile	18	5	2	4	12	41	44%	12%	5%	10%	29%	100%
celibe	19	2	1	3	6	31	62%	6%	3%	10%	19%	100%
convivente	3	0	0	1	2	6	50%	0%	0%	17%	33%	100%
divorziato	2	0	0	1	1	4	50%	0%	0%	25%	25%	100%
vedovo	4	0	0	1	1	6	66%	0%	0%	17%	17%	100%
separato	5	3	0	2	2	12	41%	25%	0%	17%	17%	100%
coniugato	44	9	2	16	14	85	52%	11%	2%	19%	16%	100%
non specificato	14	1	0	5	7	27	51%	4%	0%	19%	26%	100%
ANNI DI LAVORO CON I MIGRANTI > 10	24	3	0	4	5	36	67%	8%	0%	11%	14%	100%
ANNI DI LAVORO CON I MIGRANTI < 1 INESPERIENZA	21	7	2	4	10	44	47%	16%	5%	9%	23%	100%
USO ANSIOLITICI	0	1	0	2	0	3	0%	33%	0%	67%	0%	100%



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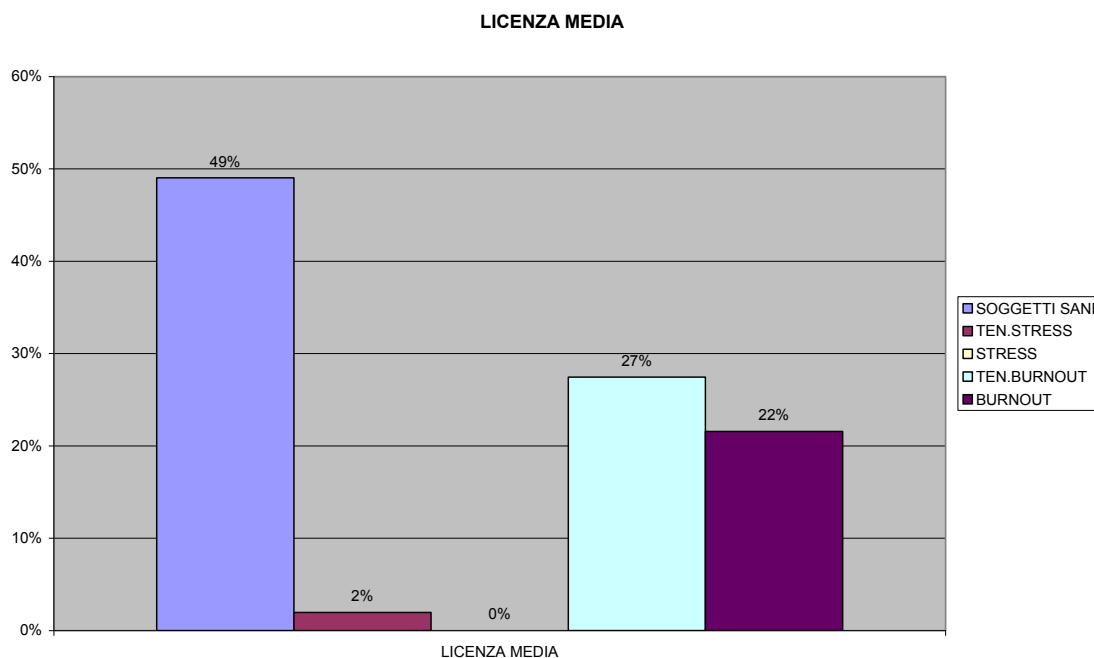
Come si può rilevare dalla tabella, per quanto riguarda la variabile sesso, su 89 uomini, 55 sono sani (61%), 6 presentano tendenza allo stress (7%), 2 stress (2%), 13 tendenza al burnout (15%) e 13 burnout (15%). Su 121 donne, 53 sono sane (44%), 14 presentano tendenza a stress (12%), 3 stress (2%), 19 tendenza al burnout (16%) e 32 burnout (26%). Due soggetti che non specificano il sesso nella scheda sociografica sono sani.



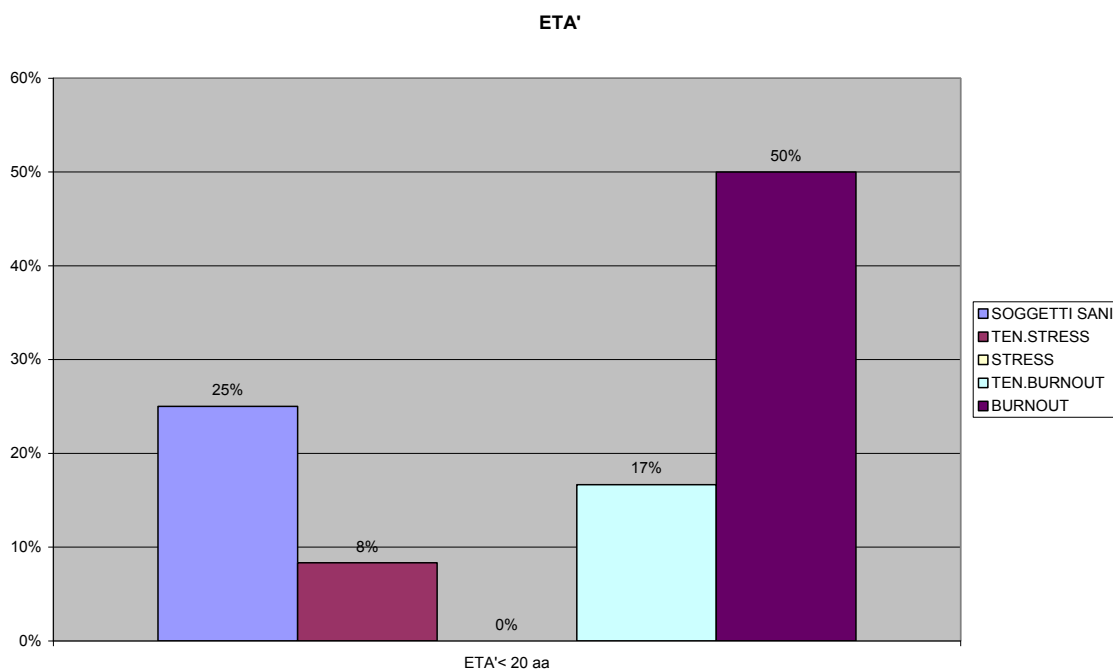
Il livello più basso di istruzione rilevato è stato la licenza media inferiore; su 51 soggetti che hanno questo titolo di studio, 25 sono sani (49%), 1 presenta tendenza allo stress (2%), 0 stress, 14 tendenza al burnout (27%) e 11 burnout (22%).



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Il livello inferiore di età considerato è <20; su 12 soggetti che hanno questa età, 3 sono sani (25%), 1 presenta tendenza allo stress (8%), 0 stress, 2 tendenza al burnout (17%) e 6 burnout (50%).





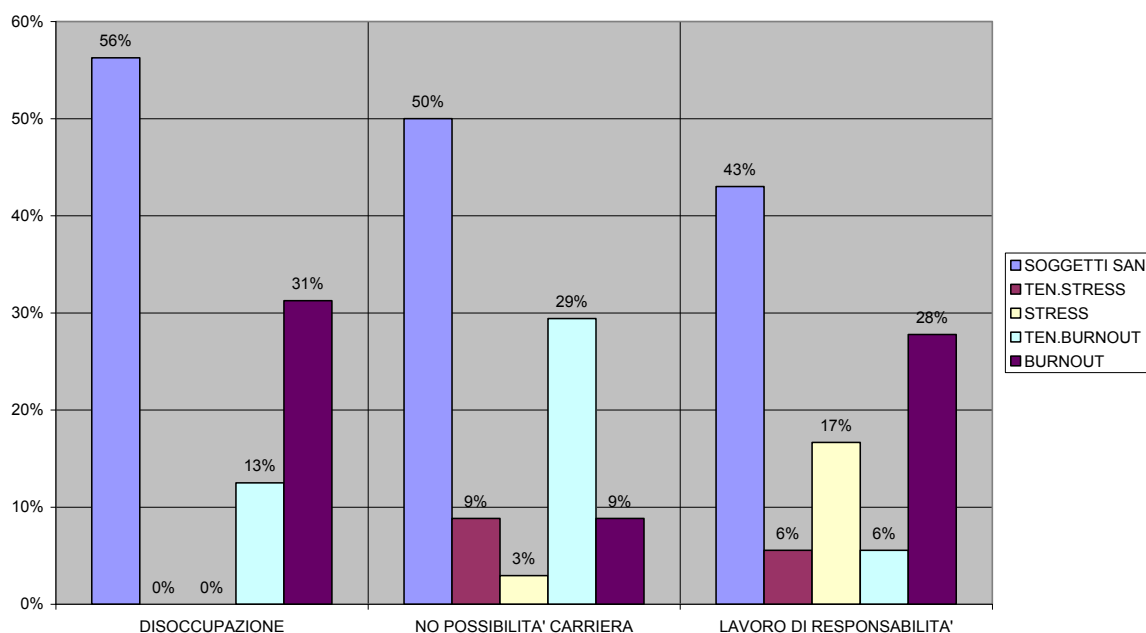
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Per quanto riguarda la variabile disoccupazione, su 16 soggetti disoccupati, 9 sono sani (56%), 2 presentano tendenza al burnout (13%) e 5 burnout (31%).

Su 34 soggetti che dichiarano di non avere possibilità di fare carriera, 17 sono sani (50%), 3 presentano tendenza allo stress (9%), 1 stress (3%), 10 tendenza al burnout (29%) e 3 burnout (9%).

Su 20 soggetti che svolgono un lavoro di responsabilità (libero professionista, assistente sociale, medico, avvocato, responsabile area tecnica, imprenditore, psicologo, field officer, fisioterapista, docente), 8 sono sani (43%), 1 presenta tendenza allo stress (6%), 3 stress (17%), 1 tendenza al burnout (6%) e 5 burnout (28%).

STATO LAVORATIVO



Per quanto riguarda lo stato civile e la mancanza di un supporto familiare, si può rilevare che su 41 **nubili**, 18 sono sane (44%), 5 presentano tendenza allo stress (12%), 2 stress (5%), 4 tendenza al burnout (10%) e 12 burnout (29%). Su 31 **celibi**, 19 sono sani (61%), 2 presentano tendenza allo stress (6%), 1 stress (3%), 3 tendenza al burnout (10%) e 6 burnout (19%) Su 6 **conviventi**, 3 sono sani

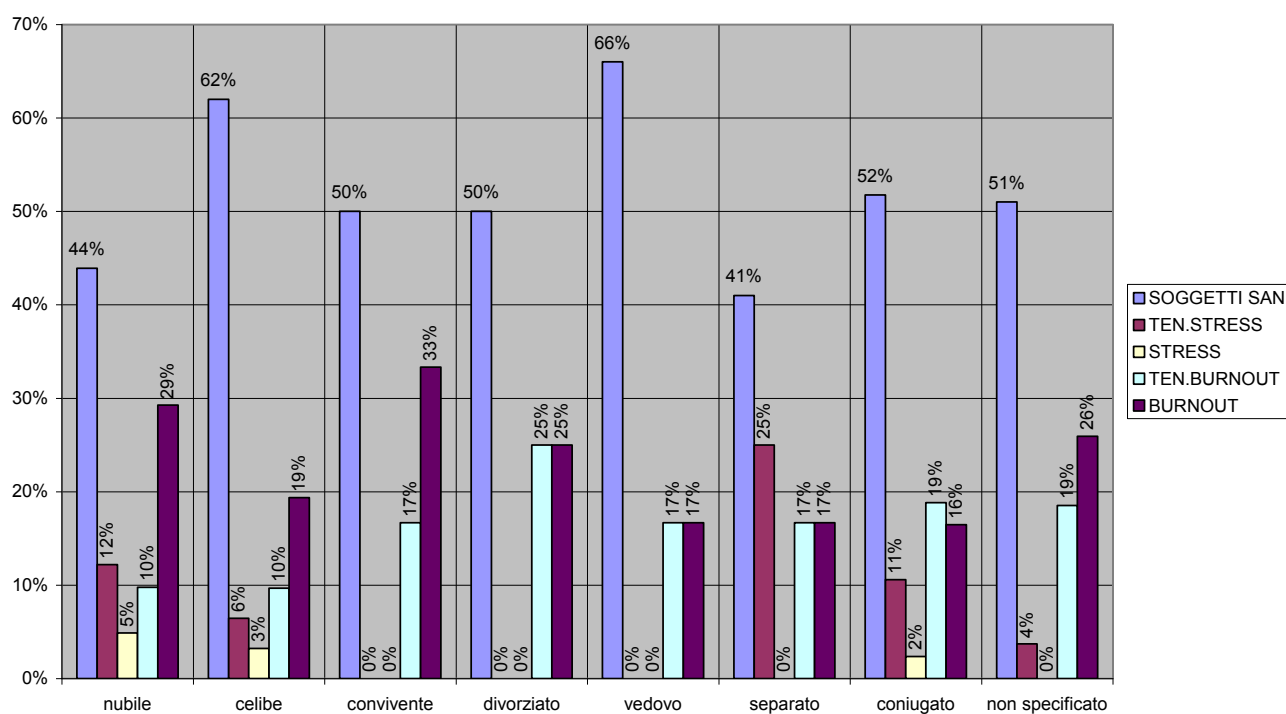




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(50%), 1 presenta tendenza al burnout (17%) e 2 burnout (33%). Su 4 **divorziati**, 2 sono sani (50%) 1 presenta tendenza al burnout (25%) ed 1 burnout (25%). Su 6 **vedovi**, 4 sono sani (66%) 1 presenta tendenza al burnout (17%) ed 1 presenta burnout (17%). Su 12 **separati**, 5 sono sani (41%), 3 presentano tendenza allo stress (25%), 2 tendenza al burnout (17%) e 2 burnout (17%). Su 85 **coniugati**, 44 sono sani (52%), 9 presentano tendenza allo stress (11%), 2 stress (2%), 16 tendenza al burnout (19%) e 14 burnout (16%). Su 27 soggetti che non specificano lo stato civile, 14 sono sani (51%), 1 presenta tendenza allo stress (4%), 5 tendenza al burnout (19%) e 7 burnout (26%).

### STATO CIVILE

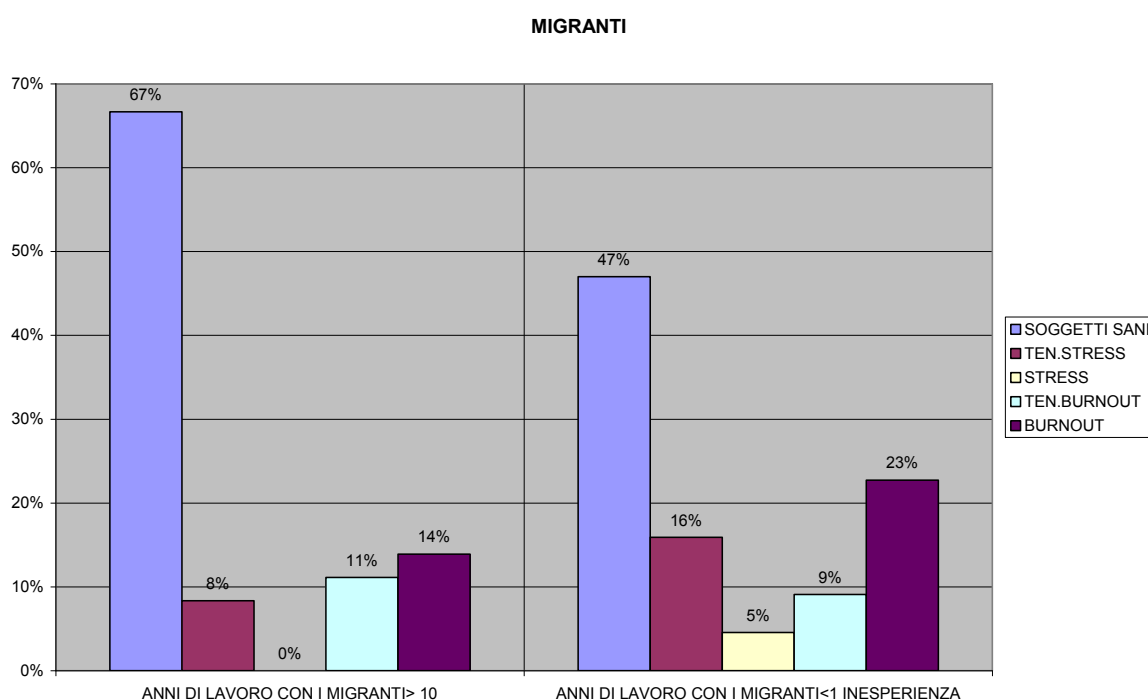


Per quanto riguarda tanti anni di lavoro con i migranti, sono stati considerati un numero di anni uguale o superiore a 10; su 36 soggetti, 24 sono sani (67%), 3 presentano tendenza allo stress (8%), 4 tendenza al burnout (11%) e 5 burnout (14%).



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Per quanto riguarda l'inesperienza, sono stati considerati un numero di anni inferiore ad uno e nessuna esperienza con i migranti; su 44 soggetti, 21 sono sani (47%), 7 presentano tendenze allo stress (16%), 2 stress (5%), 4 tendenza al burnout (9%) e 10 burnout (23%).



Per quanto riguarda le informazioni ottenute dalla seconda parte dei gruppi, dai racconti degli operatori sono state rilevate delle criticità, connesse ai seguenti argomenti:

- Difficoltà di relazione con istituzioni come Prefettura, Questura, Forze dell'Ordine, Ministero dell'Interno.
- Gli interventi con i migranti non costituiscono più interventi in emergenza, in quanto sono diventati ordinari; per questo dovrebbero essere organizzati e strutturati. A tal proposito, i gruppi di supervisione potrebbero servire ad impostare tali interventi, essendo degli incontri costanti dal punto di vista temporale;
- La disponibilità non sempre garantita di mediatori linguistici può creare problemi di comunicazione o incomprensioni con gli ospiti;



- Poche risorse messe a disposizione dalla Sede Centrale di CRI e dal Ministero (spesso i volontari prendono cose da casa propria per accogliere gli ospiti e ciò a lungo termine può essere un fattore di stress in quanto fa percepire l'invasione e la prorompentezza da parte dello straniero);
- Soggettività del fattore stress, che non sempre fa capire il punto di vista dei colleghi;
- Prolungamento della permanenza degli ospiti nei centri, che fa avere problemi di igiene, di attesa e di ordine pubblico;
- Necessità di formazione e di aggiornamento, sia rispetto alla cultura del Paese di provenienza dei migranti, sia rispetto all'attività di supporto del soccorritore volontario.

Lo svolgimento del Progetto "Valutazione e gestione dello stress", nelle fasi successive, potrebbe prevedere i seguenti interventi:

- Gruppi di supervisione mensili per gli operatori e gruppi separati per i loro responsabili, i quali non potranno prendere parte a quelli svolti con gli operatori, in quanto questi ultimi devono potersi esprimere liberamente durante la supervisione, senza sentirsi osservati dal capo. *Nel caso in cui fossero individuati soggetti bisognosi di percorsi terapeutici individuali, si potrebbe pensare di coinvolgere collaboratori psicologi delle unità di emergenza psicologica locali della CRI, che potrebbero occuparsi di tali percorsi terapeutici individuali;*
- Gruppi di supervisione mensili per tutti gli operatori del Progetto Praesidium, ossia field officer, mediatori linguistici ed operatori della sede centrale, svolti in sedi differenti (Puglia, Calabria, Sicilia), affinché ci si possa confrontare sul modo in cui si lavora negli altri contesti in cui è attivo il progetto;
- Corsi di formazione/aggiornamento per gli operatori CRI e per gli operatori del Progetto Praesidium, che siano comprensivi di nozioni sulla cultura, sulle abitudini e sui modi di fare dei Paesi di provenienza dei migranti.

*Interventi strutturati in questo modo permetterebbero di intervenire sugli operatori con problematiche di stress e burnout, di tutelare quelli con tendenza a stress o a burnout e di prevenire e promuovere la salute psicologica di quelli che presentano una situazione di normalità.*



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Roma, 06/02/2013

Il Coordinatore Psicologo  
Dott.ssa Gessica De Cesare

**Il contatto gestaltico:  
Il modello integrativo tra spiritualità, psicoterapia e counselling.  
Un'esperienza di avvicinamento alla pedagogia del professionista  
della relazione di aiuto.**

Mario Fernández Alameda  
Associazione Spagnola di Counselling

**Introduzione:**

Per lo sviluppo di questa relazione è necessario stabilire un accordo sui concetti, perché la mente concettuale è vasta e si espande per territori sconfinati, e se da un lato favorisce speculazioni intellettuali da l'altro è anche fonte creativa di nuovi sviluppi.

Intendo, per poter contestualizzare, spiegare almeno il significato di queste tre fonti: spiritualità, psicoterapia e counselling; la loro operatività e la loro messa in scena all'interno della (a mio avviso, in modo sbagliato) denominata "salute mentale", termine secondo me impreciso e insufficiente per definire il benessere delle persone e di cui spiegherò più avanti l'inadeguatezza perché classificatore e riduzionista.

Il "benessere" sarebbe, quindi, l'esperienza che si trova all'origine di metodi che aiutano le persone a rimanere il più a lungo possibile in questo stato. Impegnati in questo sforzo troppo spesso ci dimentichiamo di quanto naturale e insito nella vita stesso sia il "cambiamento", un movimento progressivo e circolare che ci obbliga a continuare a migliorare, imponendoci la necessità costante di adattamenti, e nei cui scenari si decide l'esperienza del benessere.

Questo sarebbe il momento di introdurre il concetto di "salute", ma non esclusivamente mentale, bensì in una cornice più ampia che i possa aiutare ad organizzare tutte le nostre forze e le nostre risorse per produrre l'adattamento necessario.

A questo scopo userò il concetto di "auto-regolazione organismica" (Perls 1973; 1951), che sostiene che nessun organismo è autosufficiente ma che fa parte di un campo comprendente lo stesso organismo ed il suo ambiente. Questo equilibrio omeostatico (benessere) o processo di autoregolazione è sì sinonimo di salute, perché se l'organismo rimane in stato di squilibrio con il suo ambiente, non riuscendo a soddisfare le sue necessità, finisce coll'ammalarsi.

Il concetto organismico introdotto da Perls si riferisce alla condizione olistica della persona ma all'interno di un contesto o campo che la include e che sarebbe lo scenario ove la vita viene proiettata, poiché altrimenti si tratterebbe soltanto di movimenti intrapsichici e non relazionali, o meglio interrelazionali.

Per la psicologia umanistica e per tutte le scuole sviluppate da questa fonte bisogna cominciare dal fatto che nessun organismo vivente in buone condizioni di salute tenderà mai verso il malessere o l'autodistruzione, bensì verso la vita. Detto da Carl Roger, l'essere umano è basicamente buono, quindi potremmo

affermare che il nucleo basilico del benessere o il malessere è la vita, e... il modo di viverla, di vivere la propria esistenza, rappresenta lo scenario dove si sviluppano tutte le tradizioni e le eredità del passato, i movimenti sociali, i modelli terapeutici, l'educazione ed i modelli di pensiero che tentano di modellare l'esistenza.

Questo sarebbe quindi il contesto in cui intendo spiegare l'integrazione tra spiritualità, psicoterapia e counselling. Bisogna dire però che per poter unire o integrare prima è necessario stabilire la singolarità e la specificità, perché i concetti non bene differenziati non si possono unire.

Il mio proposito è presentare la scuola dell'approccio gestaltico come una scuola nelle cui basi filosofiche, pedagogia e modo di fare terapia è implicito un modello integrativo che permette lo sviluppo del fenomeno "il tutto è superiore alla somma delle parti". Da questo modello, è facile riconoscere la capacità integrativa della scuola della Gestalt, dopo che sono scomparsi il pensiero fisicalista e l'esoterismo religioso e sono stati sostituiti dal modello fenomenologico, in cui il significato non dipende da un sistema di credenze, simboli o miti esterni, ma che dimana dall'esperienza diretta interna e contemplativa dell'anima.

Così, parlare di cura tradizionale, spiritualità, psicoterapia e counselling sarebbe la stessa cosa, ogniqualevolta lo sviluppo della persona venga considerato con la prospettiva dello sviluppo totale di tutte le sue potenzialità, del diritto a essere sé stessa e delle variabili di auto-responsabilità e inter-responsabilità che dimanano dalla sua esistenza.

La mia scelta del counselling dopo averlo confrontato con altri campi professionali rispetto all'essere umano e le sue vicissitudini (psicoterapia dinamica, misticismo religioso, sciamanesimo, cure tradizionali, ecc.), è dovuta al fatto che esso rappresenta un modello basato sulla persona e la sua esistenza più che sulle sue manifestazioni "storte", sintomi che in qualche modo definiscono quello che è "normale" oppure "patologico", almeno per buona parte della comunità terapeutica attuale. Ma il Counselling è rivolto allo sviluppo della *diversità* e alla capacità intrinseca dell'essere umano di adattarsi e crescere in questa diversità, e una linea coerente con questo esercizio professionale è la scuola della Gestalt, la cui traiettoria terapeutica considera non solo che l'"uomo" è multiforme ma che si dirige verso la gestione democratica interna e l'integrazione della diversità che è in tutti noi. Detto con le parole di Paolo Quattrini sulle dinamiche intrapsichiche: la persona è una molteplicità che ha bisogno della democrazia, poiché un'unità stabile di intenzioni non è altro che un'illusione di tipo monarchico.

## **Relazione:**

Come qualsiasi altro counsellor, io ho il mio proprio stile terapeutico condotto dalla mia visione sull'essere umano. Io credo che ogni rapporto terapeutico deve prendere in considerazione la persona insieme al suo mondo di contingenze, il suo mondo di possibilità. E questa visione non rappresenta una differenza semantica rispetto a quanto oggi si conosce come "olistico", ma anzi delimita e definisce le caratteristiche e specificità che questo "olismo" deve possedere.

Si dice “la persona è olistica”, “la mia terapia è olistica”. Ma cosa è che veramente intendiamo con questo? Potrebbe sembrare che ci stiamo modernizzando perché lasciamo da parte le specializzazioni, dato che queste prendono in considerazione un solo segmento. Ad esempio, se teniamo conto soltanto del mondo psichico della persona, lasciamo da parte la sua biologia e fisiologia. Se invece guardiamo soltanto il corpo ed il suo funzionamento perdiamo gli aspetti della vita, le aspettative, i desideri. Se ci orientiamo verso i valori superiori della persona, dimentichiamo le sue necessità più basiche. Questi sono tre esempi facilmente riconoscibili nell’ampio mondo delle relazioni di aiuto: il primo parla delle terapie e terapisti che considerano che è il mondo psichico della persona, e non il suo rapporto con esso, quello che determina i suoi stati di salute e benessere. Il secondo esempio è ampiamente conosciuto nella medicina olistica, ove si considera che il corpo e le sue funzionalità non hanno quasi nulla a che fare con la persona. Questo diventa notorio soprattutto in caso di malattie gravi, dove spesso non si permette alla persona di prendere decisioni su sé stessa e sul proprio trattamento. Il terzo esempio si riferisce a quegli spazi terapeutici che evocano una spiritualità finta nella convinzione che potenziare ed esaltare in modo mentale lo spirito della bontà ed eliminare tutte le emozioni ed i pensieri cosiddetti “negativi” deve per forza portare la persona ad uno stato di serenità e pace interna capaci di sistemare ogni squilibrio.

Al giorno d’oggi tutte le terapie si proclamano olistiche, ma spesso dimenticano il fenomeno della teoria del campo di Kurt Lewin, che affermò: *“La condotta deve essere dedotta da un insieme di fatti coesistenti che hanno la caratteristica di essere un “campo dinamico”; lo stato di ognuna delle parti di questo campo dipende da quello di tutte le altre parti”*.

Se non teniamo conto di questo fenomeno, “olistico” è soltanto un concetto morto e nulla più.

Intendo, a modo mio, tentare di fare delle approssimazioni per chiarire l’idea dell’Integrazione.

Da un lato, troviamo la spiritualità, che come concetto ci parla della parte elevata dell’essere umano, della trascendenza, dell’invisibile. Da un altro lato, la psicoterapia, i suoi modelli e scuole e l’influenza di questi su ciò che bisogna fare per stare bene. E per ultimo, questa nuova forma professionale occuparsi della vita delle persone conosciuta come “counselling”. Forse dovrei includere anche l’approccio tradizionale, che naturalmente ha a che fare con le tradizioni e le consuetudini che fanno parte della vita di ogni popolo o nazione, ma si tratta di un tema eccessivamente vasto per poterne parlare in quest’occasione. Terremo quindi la cura tradizionale come campo di riferimento, con la sua propria forma e personalità che la differenziano dagli altri tre campi.

Comincerò parlando di spiritualità attraverso le parole di Ken Wilber, nel suo articolo “Psicoterapia e Spiritualità”:

*“Ciò che intendo dire è che non è possibile parlare di scienza e religione, oppure di filosofia e misticismo senza prima mettersi d’accordo su quello che si intende per religione. In quest’intervista dovremmo almeno distinguere tra le religioni esoteriche e quelle esoteriche.”*

*La religione exoterica od esterna è una religione mitica, molto concreta e letterale, che crede, ad esempio, che Mosé fece aprire le acque del Mar Rosso, che gesucristo nacque da una vergine, che il mondo fu creato in sei giorni, che la manna piovve veramente dal cielo, ecc. Le religioni exoteriche di tutto il mondo si fondamentano su questo tipo di credenze. Gli induisti, ad esempio, credono che la terra è appoggiata sulle spalle di un elefante, a sua volta appoggiato su una tartaruga, anche lei appoggiata su un serpente. Ma quando li chiediamo: “E il serpente, su chi è appoggiato?”, ci rispondono “parliamo d’altro”.*

*Se li ascoltassimo dovremmo anche credere che Lao Tse aveva 900 anni quando è nato, che Krishna fece l’amore con 10.000 pastorelle, che Brahma sorse da una crepa in un uovo cosmico, ecc. Le religioni exoteriche sono così: un insieme di sistemi di credenze che cercano di spiegare i misteri del mondo in termini mitici, anziché in termini di esperienza diretta o di evidenza.*

*Così, la religione exoterica od esterna consiste fundamentalmente in credenze e non in evidenze: se credi a tutti questi miti ti salverai, e se non ci credi andrai all’inferno. Da questo punto di vista non c’è alternativa. Questo tipo di religione fondamentalista si trova in tutte le parti del mondo. Io non la metto in discussione, ritengo invece che questo tipo di religione non abbia nessuna somiglianza con la religione mistica, esoterica od sperimentabile. Questo è il tipo di religione a cui sono veramente interessato.*

*Esoterismo significa interno od occulto. Una religione non sarà esoterica o mistica perché sia occulta, segreta o qualcosa del genere, ma perché è una questione di esperienza diretta e di coscienza personale. Non richiede di avere fede in nulla in particolare né di sottomettersi a nessun dogma. Invece è un insieme di esperimenti personali scientificamente eseguiti nel laboratorio della propria coscienza. Come qualsiasi altra scienza, la religione esoterica non è basata su credenze o desideri bensì su un’esperienza diretta validata e verificata pubblicamente da un gruppo di simili che hanno eseguito lo stesso esperimento: la meditazione.*

*La conoscenza meditativa è interna, ma allo stesso modo di, ad esempio, la matematica, può essere validata pubblicamente da una comunità di meditanti esperti che conoscano la logica interna dell’esperienza contemplativa. La veracità del teorema di Pitagora non viene determinata da un suffragio universale, bensì da esperti matematici, e allo stesso modo le diverse tradizioni spirituali affermano che l’esperienza intima dell’Essere va unita all’esperienza del mondo esterno. Ma in ogni caso è una verità che può essere verificata esperienzialmente da qualsiasi persona attraverso l’esperimento giusto. E dopo sei mila anni di sperimentazione, è lecito estrarre certe conclusioni e ipotizzare certi teoremi spirituali. Questi teoremi costituiscono lo stesso nucleo delle tradizioni della saggezza perenne.*

*Viene considerato occulto perché fino a quando non si esegue l’esperimento non si sa quello che succede e quindi non si è autorizzati a votare. Questo non vuol dire che non si possano avere delle opinioni al riguardo, ma il misticismo non è interessato alle opinioni bensì alla conoscenza. La religione esoterica, il misticismo, rimane nascosto ad ogni mente che non abbia eseguito l’esperimento giusto. Questo è il significato del termine esoterico”.*



Quando si parla di Gestalt, così come succede con lo Zen buddista, è frequente dire che non è possibile conoscere il sapore di una mela senza averla assaggiata. In altre parole, diversamente dalle convinzioni, che sono come pensieri cristallizzati, l'esperienza e l'esperienza spirituale seguono il flusso naturale della vita e senza fermarsi a creare argomentazioni che spieghino, ma sono la vita stessa. Malgrado la svolta di Kierkegaard, quando affermò che la vita non è una domanda che debba trovare una risposta, ma un'esperienza che deve essere vissuta, oggi sono ancora numerose le persone che sostengono che bisogna arrivare a conoscere la verità della vita, dimenticandosi nel frattempo di viverla. Questo fatto è la causa di molti malesseri, disordini e sofferenze inutili.

Come nella religione esoterica o mistica, la Gestalt è un'esperienza verificabile e quindi non risponde a nessun tipo di teoria, anche se possiamo affermare che per la sopravvivenza del "corpo della Gestalt" sarebbe desiderabile che questa si trovasse all'interno di una scuola di pensiero che possa procurarle delle radici teoriche solide, ed in questo senso l'approccio fenomenologico esistenziale è il principale paradigma di riferimento della terapia Gestalt.

Partendo da questo punto di vista, possiamo avvicinare questi tre campi: ogniqualvolta nella cura tradizionale, psicoterapia o counselling si utilizza il principio fondamentale della verifica del fenomeno, dell'esperienza del medesimo rispettando la sua essenza, senza fare interpretazioni né giudizi di valore. Ad esempio, davanti a un fatto come la perdita di uno dei genitori, la credenza ci spinge nella direzione del dolore, perché si fa immaginare che si tratti di un fatto doloroso. Invece dal mio studio professionale sono passati tanti clienti che non accettavano il dolore della perdita quanto altri che non accettavano l'assenza di dolore della perdita: a prescindere dalla forma in cui si esprime ci troviamo in realtà di fronte alla stessa cosa: sostituire un'esperienza verificabile con una credenza.

Fritz Perls chiamò la sua scoperta ed approccio terapeutico *psicologia dell'ovvio*, cose che sono così ovvie che si tende a tralasciarle. Faccio un esempio. Il cliente dice: *“non so cosa mi succede, dottore, quando arrivo a casa del mio fidanzato ed il suo cane si avvicina e mi lecca, mi sento malissimo...non so cosa mi succede con gli animali, forse da piccola ho avuto qualche trauma...”*

Io le rispondo: *semplicemente, non puoi soffrire il cane del tuo fidanzato*

Cliente: *è soltanto questo?*

La mia risposta: *che altro vorresti che fosse?*

Per la psicoterapia della Gestalt non è così importante conoscere le ragioni nascoste dietro ad ogni gesto o movimento di una persona, quanto la coscienza della sua esistenza e naturalmente il fenomeno di mobilità quando il cliente decide cosa fare con la sua esperienza.

L'esperienza contiene tante cose, ma ci rendiamo conto che il suo asse è sempre un'emozione o i suoi derivati (sensazioni e sentimenti) e per questo è verificabile e trasformabile.

Le emozioni contengono dell'energia, che può avere intensità diverse, e sono queste intensità quelle che regolano o alterano il funzionamento organismico della persona, o, detto in un altro modo, la sua esperienza di benessere.

Se accettiamo il fatto che la spiritualità è un fenomeno verificabile quanto l'esperienza, per esempio, del dolore, il suo significato non dipende da un

sistema di credenze, di simboli o di miti esterni, ma scaturisce dall'esperienza diretta, interna e contemplativa. In altre parole, i mistici non sono assolutamente dei credenti mitici, ma fenomenologi contemplativi, mistici contemplativi e scienziati contemplativi. Allo stesso modo, uno psicoterapeuta non può cambiare o sostituire l'esperienza diretta del fenomeno con credenze più o meno esplicative. Questo è quello che succede di solito nella psicoterapia *tradizionale*.

Per dare una definizione della psicoterapia o cura tradizionale, con indipendenza dalla scuola che la sostiene, mi baserò sulla metodologia, accomuna tutti o quasi tutti i modelli di trattamento tradizionale. Parlo del protocollo del trattamento: cioè, un diagnostico (cosa succede a questa persona?) basato su delle caratteristiche ben definite di "normalità" e "patologia" e che normalmente corrisponde ai criteri stabiliti internazionalmente nel psicodiagnostico moderno DSM oppure CIE.

Un modello di trattamento che include il ritorno alla normalità ed un pronostico alquanto determinista a seconda della gravità della malattia. Questo modello o protocollo non permette di guardare la persona (e non la sua patologia) perché il meccanicismo interpretativo non lascia spazio per la creatività né per il risveglio delle facoltà di auto-aiuto del cliente, che anche se si trovano in uno stato ipotrofico di ibernazione, esistono.

Questo modello di psicoterapia può avere successo sia se si utilizzano dei farmaci, dei placebo oppure altre vie come la conversazione, basta essere convinti che il cliente è malato e che possiamo farlo guarire.

L'imperativo è l'allontanamento da sé stessi, la alienazione e quindi l'assenza spirituale, perché il credere in noi stessi e nelle qualità genuinamente superiori dell'essere umano è qualcosa di spirituale, ma soltanto quando si fa in un contesto verificabile e non solo mentale.

Nei miei 15 anni di esperienza terapeutica ho potuto osservare un fenomeno che si ripete sempre: nella figura unica del paziente arrivano sempre minimo due interlocutori (in realtà sono di più, ma parlerò soltanto di due). Uno è *quello che sa esattamente qual'è il problema*, e l'altro *fa finta di non sapere nulla*.

Un terapeuta bene allenato, acuto e con percezione diretta, ma soprattutto onesto, non può rivolgersi al *finto tonto*, non può riporre il peso della relazione terapeutica su qualcuno che risponde "*io...non so che cosa mi sta succedendo, dottore, me lo dica lei*". Secondo me, è più intelligente e senz'altro meglio stabilire il rapporto con quello che *sa*, e cercare di smascherare insieme a lui il finto tonto. Sicuramente quando un terapeuta si rivolge alla parte "idiota", tecnicamente denominata "inconscio", del suo paziente, la terapia risulta lunga, inefficace ed in generale frustrante per ambedue le parti.

Finora ho parlato di una visione della spiritualità viva e verificabile e non di costrutti o imperativi cristallizzati in credenze di tipo moralistico sul bene e il male. Ho parlato anche sul modello di approccio terapeutico chiamato psicoterapia o cura tradizionale, che è immerso in protocolli stabiliti su cosa è normale e cosa è patologico, e che risponde con troppa frequenza alle tesi della psicologia clinica e non tanto a quelle della psicologia umanista o esistenziale.

Questo fatto si riafferma, dal mio punto di vista erroneamente, nell'imperativo imposto dalla Federazione Spagnola di Associazioni di Psicoterapia, che esige

per i psicoterapisti la laurea in psicologia oppure in medicina. In Spagna entrambe utilizzano l'approccio tradizionale che ho descritto in precedenza (\*).

(\* *In Spagna la Federazione Spagnola di Associazioni di Psicoterapia (F.E.A.P.) che è stata la prima entità ad accreditare cglì psicoterapeuti ed i programmi di formazione in psicoterapia, definisce la psicoterapia come*

*“ogni trattamento di natura psicologica che, partendo da manifestazioni fisiche o psichiche della sofferenza umana, promuove cambiamenti o modificazioni del comportamento, l'adattamento all'ambiente, la salute psichica e fisica, l'integrazione dell'identità psicologica ed il benessere bio-psico-sociale delle persone e dei gruppi come le coppie e le famiglie”.*

*Da questa definizione possiamo dedurre che il termine psicoterapia non comporta nessuna orientazione o approccio scientifico prestabiliti, ed è considerato denominativo di un'ampio dominio scientifico-specializzato che si specifica in diverse e peculiari orientazioni teoriche, pratiche ed applicate. Gli interventi terapeutici sono di natura fondamentalmente verbale e il loro scopo è la riduzione o l'eliminazione dei sintomi attraverso la modificazioni di modelli emozionali, cognitivi, comportamentyal, interpersonali o dei sistemi nei quali è immerso l'individuo.*

Parlando d'altro, e per finire l'argomento precedente, penso che i modelli di cure conosciute come *sciamaniche* non si dovrebbero includere tra le cure tradizionali, anche se rispondono meglio di nessun'altra all'aforismo tradizionale. Ma queste pratiche guaritrici appartengono a una saggezza ereditata e soggetta a rituali che si possono spiegare ed esercitano la loro influenza soltanto in un contesto storico e nella conoscenza antropologica ed etnica dei popoli che le esercitano. Si può dire che fanno ricorso ad una saggezza popolare poco o niente accettata dall'ortodossia psicoterapeutica.

È il momento di parlare sulla Gestalt, non solo come scuola di approccio terapeutico ma come asse o epicentro di un movimento integrativo che va oltre i limiti della salute individuale e la cui influenza promuove una visione nuova dell'essere umano ed un nuovo paradigma dei rapporti tra gli esseri umani. Poi, in risonanza con queste pratiche di vita aperte dalle funzionalità gestaltiche, farò un'introduzione del counselling come professione che si apre ad un nuovo modello per produrre i cambiamenti desiderati dal cliente verso il benessere, lasciando da parte i vecchi modelli clinici e proponendo un tipo di relazione di aiuto con la creatività come premessa fondamentale per produrre il cambiamento. Un rapporto egualitario tra cliente e counsellor (oppure "operatore per l'aiuto"), un'orientazione funzionale rivolta all'insegnamento del "aiutare ad aiutarsi", ed un'orientazione di tipo esistenziale, di rispetto all'esistenza dell'altro ed al diritto di vivere come si vuole la propria vita. In questo modello, come nel counselling di orientazione esistenziale e fenomenologica, si promuove il cambiamento per mezzo della conoscenza di sé stesso nel mondo che il cliente raggiunge attraverso l'*insight*.

Il rapporto tra terapeuta ed cliente é sempre l'aspetto piú importante della pratica terapeutica, sia quella tradizionale, psicoterapia oppure counselling.

Il terapeuta della Gestalt lavora attraverso il contatto: il contatto é l'esperienza del limite tra il mio "io" ed il mio "non-io". È l'esperienza dell'interagire con l'altro ma mantenendo una propria identità divisa da quella dell'altro (Martin Buber, "L'IO-TU". Nella Gestalt, il contatto non lascia mai le cose nello stesso modo in cui erano prima, è un modo di aiutare il cliente facendo in modo che questi possa sviluppare una propria forma di auto-aiuto. In questo modo lavoriamo con il dialogo ed evitiamo di spingere il cliente verso qualche scopo terapeutico. Quando i clienti sono spinti dal terapeuta verso un qualsiasi scopo, non riescono a prendere in mano il proprio auto-aiuto e la propria crescita.

Il dialogo é basato sull'esperire l'altro cosí com'è, mettendo in mostra il vero sé e condividendo il *rendersi conto* fenomenologico.

Il terapeuta gestaltico dice quello che pensa ed incoraggia il cliente a fare altrettanto. Il dialogo gestaltico comporta autenticità e responsabilità.

La relazione terapeutica nella Gestalt evidenzia quattro caratteristiche del dialogo (Gary Yontef – Processo e Dialogo, pag. 122):

1.- Inclusionione. Consiste nel collocarsi nel modo piú completo possibile nell'esperienza dell'altro, senza giudicare, senza analizzare, senza interpretare, mantenendo il senso della propria presenza separata ed autonoma. In questo modo si aiuta il cliente nel suo senso del rendersi conto accettando il modello fenomenologico esistenziale come fonte di conoscenza di quello che gli sta succedendo.

2.- Presenza. Il terapeuta gestaltico si rivolge al cliente con onestà, esprimendo osservazioni, preferenze, sentimenti, pensieri ed esperienze personali all'interno di un dialogo regolare e, senza dubbio, discriminato e riflessivo. In questo modo, il terapeuta condivide il suo punto di vista attraverso un rapporto fenomenologico, il quale invita ed insegna il cliente a prendere confidenza e a impiegare l'esperienza immediata per generare il suo *rendersi conto*.

Se il terapeuta ha piú fiducia nell'interpretazione che nella presenza personale, porterà il cliente a prendere fiducia in fenomeni che non appartengono alla sua esperienza immediata, e impedendo che possa generare i propri *rendersi conto*. È molto importante non usare sé stesso come terapeuta per portare il cliente verso obiettivi prestabiliti. Anzi, si deve stimolare il cliente a regolarsi in maniera autonoma.

3.- Impegnarsi a dialogare. Il contatto è il risultato di quello che le due persone si fanno. Non è quello che si fanno interagendo tra di loro, ma il risultato di questa interazione. Per questo motivo un vero contatto deve essere trasformatore, perché non lascia mai le cose come stavano prima. Il terapeuta gestaltico partecipa a questo processo interpersonale, lasciando che il contatto si produca e non manipolando i risultati.

4.- Il dialogo è vivo. Il dialogo è qualcosa *che si fa, non qualcosa di cui si parla*. "Vivo" enfatizza l'emozione e l'immediatezza del fare. Ci sono molti modi per dialogare: danza, canzoni, movimenti, mimica o qualsiasi altra cosa che faccia sì che l'energia si muova tra i partecipanti.

### Alcuni contributi di Yontef:

La differenza teorica tra la terapia Gestalt, la modificazione conduttuale e la psicanalisi è chiara.

Nella modificazione conduttuale il terapeuta cerca di cambiare il comportamento del cliente manipolando gli stimoli ambientali. Nella teoria psicanalistica, il comportamento è provocato da una motivazione inconscia che si manifesta nel rapporto trasferenziale. Quando la trasferenza viene analizzata, si supera la repressione e l'inconscio si trasforma in coscienza.

Nella terapia gestaltica, il cliente impara ad usare pienamente i suoi sensi esterni ed interni, raggiungendo l'auto-responsabilità ed auto-aiuto.

La terapia Gestalt collabora con il cliente e gli aiuta a ritrovare le chiavi della sua situazione, ad accorgersi del proprio *rendersi conto*.

La modificazione conduttuale condiziona per mezzo di stimoli di controllo, la psicanalisi cura *parlando su* ed scoprendo le cause della malattia mentale (il problema), e la terapia Gestalt porta verso l'auto attualizzazione attraverso esperimenti rivolti al *rendersi conto* vissuti qui ed ora.

### **Sul Counselling:**

Dato che il termine ha la sua origine da un contesto psicologico, è importante capire che un counsellor può offrire orientazione psicologica a le persone in qualsiasi tappa della loro vita. Il counsellor è un professionista con la formazione adeguata per fornire aiuto psicologico, risvegliando le potenzialità dei suoi clienti. Il counsellor considera le persone come individui sani, lasciando da parte il paradigma tradizionale di salute/malattia.

L'integrazione nella formazione dei counsellor di discipline tali come la filosofia, l'educazione, la medicina, l'antropologia e certe correnti esoteriche, ed altre ancora, fanno diventare il counselling una professione unica che permette ai professionisti che lo praticano di adottare un approccio multidimensionale e olistico (integrale) delle necessità dei clienti. Questo processo si sviluppa in un ambiente attitudinale-dialogale, relazionale, empatico, incondizionale e autentico offerto a individui, coppie, famiglie, gruppi ed organizzazioni.

Il counselling rappresenta un nuovo modello di relazioni, che va oltre i limiti della psicoterapia. La sua originalità risiede nella sua differenza con i modelli tradizionali di autorità, nei rapporti di educazione, di attenzione nelle cliniche (mediche o psicologiche), nei rapporti lavorativi e sociali di assistenza ai cittadini, nei rapporti di gestione e mediazione o in qualsiasi relazione di aiuto. Dato che il modello di autorità si è esaurito, ed i diversi tipi di professionisti (medici, psicologi, avvocati, ecc.) sono diventati degli interlocutori normali per i loro clienti, il counselling è diventato un modo di condurre le relazioni personali e professionali attraverso un'ottica relazionale che stimola il processo del dialogo, con la comunicazione come catalizzatore per il raggiungimento di altre maniere di comprendersi, migliori e più salutari.

Da questo punto di vista, il counsellor è un facilitatore della comunicazione, delle relazioni interpersonali e intrapsichiche, e perciò il suo lavoro è quello di aiutare le parti in conflitto a capirsi cognitivamente e riconoscersi emozionalmente, per poter scoprire i modi migliori per ridurre le tensioni ed i malesseri del loro rapporto. Riteniamo che l'abilità più importante per aiutare l'essere umano è la creatività, e per questo motivo diventa fondamentale che il counsellor trovi tutte le forme possibili per promuovere la propria creatività ed aiutare il suo cliente ad attivarla, perché si crede che anche se in stato ipotrofico ogni cliente ha un suo potenziale di creatività.

Con una prospettiva così ampia, e con l'essere umano come asse dell'incontro tra gli interlocutori, il counselling si può considerare come una piattaforma professionale con una propria identità. Un counselling con orientazione esistenziale e fenomenologica allaga ancora di più le sue frontiere e risponde coerentemente al modello integrativo della scuola della Gestalt.

Per concludere, citerò le parole di Claudio Naranjo al primo convegno italiano di counselling sulla spiritualità implicita e nascosta della Gestalt.

*C'è chi ha voluto "completare" la Gestalt spiritualizzandola, ma credo che questo atteggiamento si fondi sul non capire che la Gestalt è già sufficientemente spirituale – anche se appare blasfema!*

*Già la prima volta che ho parlato di Gestalt in Europa, all'apertura del 2° Congresso Internazionale in Spagna, mi hanno chiesto questo tema, ed io ho iniziato a parlare di quanto è evidente il rapporto tra Gestalt e buddismo. La pratica del "qui e ora" nella Gestalt è come una riscoperta della via del Vipassana. C'è un'affinità evidente fra l'invito alla non concettualizzazione nella Gestalt e lo spirito zen. Ho fatto riferimento anche ad un'affinità fra la Gestalt ed il cassidismo buberiano ancora più con Buber quando ha lasciato il giudaismo e la terminologia religiosa, perché la Gestalt è spirituale senza utilizzare una terminologia religiosa.*

*Tutte le tradizioni spirituali dicono che, in un dato momento della nostra storia individuale o collettiva, siamo "caduti", abbiamo perduto il paradiso, la condizione originale della mente. Tutte le terapie ci offrono di restaurare uno stato di salute originale: mi sembra che, attraverso la sua storia, la psicoterapia man mano sia diventata più autocosciente delle sue implicazioni.*

*Freud era apparentemente anti-spirituale, per lo meno anti-religioso, conosceva molto bene il fenomeno di sostituire il padre terreno con il padre celeste ed il fenomeno superegoico che attribuisce la morale alla voce di un dio. Con l'andar del tempo alcuni seguaci di Freud hanno iniziato a riconoscere come la psicanalisi porti le persone a interessi ed esperienze spirituali. Jung si ribella contro il materialismo di Freud, Reich parla di un orgone cosmico che è come la Kundalini, Fromm e Horney si interessano al buddismo zen.*

*Io credo che questo percorso di spiritualizzazione della terapia culmini, anche se in forma non esplicita, in Fritz Perls e non con la psicologia transpersonale, come sembrerebbe ovvio. La psicologia transpersonale è oggi solo un concetto, è un progetto di sintesi tra le tradizioni antiche e la psicoterapia moderna, ma è rimasta poco più di una scatola vuota, e quello che più richiama l'attenzione ad essa non è tanto la ricchezza del suo contenuto quanto la sua intenzione. Al contrario la Gestalt, pur non avendo radici nelle tradizioni spirituali, ha un contenuto preciso ed un impatto fortemente liberatorio.*

*Io credo che l'aspetto più caratteristico della Gestalt è questa implicita fede nell'organismico, una fede nell'autoregolazione che rappresenta il culmine del*

*dionisismo implicito nella psicologia postfreudiana e nella Gestalt. Però questa fede nella saggezza profonda dell'organismo non è l'unico aspetto del dionisismo gestaltico. L'altro aspetto è l'edonismo.*

*La gestalt è pervasa da un credo: non solo la ragione, ma anche il piacere è un indicatore valido per il comportamento umano. Come la pianta che si orienta verso il sole, l'organismo psicobiologico si orienta per le sue necessità e il piacere è l'indicatore della direzione più propizia. Il valore del piacere è poco presente nella storia della psicoterapia, eccetto in Reich che va ben più in là dell'enfasi meramente sessuale dei suoi predecessori. Non si tratta di edonismo nel senso del riconoscimento del valore del piacere in sé stesso; io ho parlato di un "edonismo umanista" in quanto si raggiunge il piacere come inclinazione verso qualcosa di più grande, come un'indicazione "vera". Quanto lontana sia la Gestalt da una visione meramente edonistica si può apprezzare dal fatto che in essa è molto presente quella che Gurdjieff chiama la "sofferenza cosciente": non evitare il dolore necessario alla vita ed alla crescita. Si tratta di stare aperto di fronte al dolore come di fronte al piacere.*

Questa è una cornice di riferimento che ci offre Claudio, insieme all'aver il coraggio di vedere le molteplici sfaccettature dell'essere umano e la fede intrinseca nella saggezza dell'organismo, sul quale possiamo affermare che ci condurrà sempre e senza alcun dubbio al meglio di noi stessi ed alla natura stessa delle cose. Quest'assioma del comportamento umano governa la logica dell'anima, spesso interrotta dal governo dirigista da quelli che non credono alla bontà naturale delle persone.

Per finire questa introduzione sull'integrazione della spiritualità alla pratica della psicoterapia ed il counselling sperando di essere riuscito ad aver messo in risalto che sia il counselling sia la Gestalt costituiscono un movimento rivoluzionario, un cambiamento così importante che possiamo affermare che modificherà il paradigma relazionale della salute e la malattia mentali, offrendo modelli che lo sostituiranno in modo più coerente ed appropriato ai tempi che stiamo vivendo.

Mario Fernández Alameda

## **Contact Gestalt: the integrative model between spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling. An experience of approach to the pedagogy of relationships of support professional.**

Por Mario Fernández Alameda  
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### Introduction:

The development of this paper, it is necessary to reach agreement in relation to the concepts, since the conceptual mind is vast and includes endless territories, because of intellectual speculation and also creative source of new developments.

When less will explain to be able to contextualize the meanings of these three sources: spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling; its operation, its staging in the framework of the so-called "mental health", in my view inappropriate term short in what refers to the definition of the welfare of the people, and I will show more later your inconvenience by sorting and reductionist.

The "well-being" is because the experience that encourages and exercised influence to develop forms and methods that help the human being to stay as long as possible in this State. In this endeavour, we often forget that nature and the inherent with life is 'change', a progressive movement and circular that imposes the need for continuous adaptation, whose scenarios decides the experience of good living.

Then it is time to introduce the concept of health, but not only mental, rather, in a broader context, which helps us to organize all our forces and resources to produce the necessary adaptation.

This will take the concept of self-regulation organismic (Fritz Perls) which ensures that no agency is self-sufficient, but which at all times is part of a field that includes it, both to it and to its environment. This homeostatic balance (welfare) or process of self-regulation is synonymous with health, because if the body remains in State of imbalance with their environment long sick, since it may not meet your needs.

The concept introduced by Perls organismic mentions the holistic condition of the person but within a context or field that includes and that is the stage where life is planned, since otherwise we would be talking exclusively intrapsychic and relational movements or better interrelational.

For humanist psychology and for all schools that developed from this source is necessary to assume that any living organism will move ever, in healthy conditions, discomfort or self-destruction, and that, on the contrary, its



orientation is continuously towards life. In words of Carl Roger man is basically good. We could therefore say that core base of well-being or malaise is the life and..., how do life, how to live your own existence, represents the scenario where they operate all traditions and past legacies, social movements, therapeutic models, education and thought models that attempt to give shape to the existence.

Located as the context in which I want to move me to explain the integration of spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling is needed to say that together, to unite, to integrate, it is first necessary to establish uniqueness, its specificity, as otherwise no can integrate the undifferentiated.

In this paper I propose to present to the school of gestalt as a school approach whose philosophical bases, pedagogy and therapeutic do, implicit is an integrative model that allows to develop the phenomenon that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". From this model, it is easy to recognize this integrative capacity of the Gestalt school, every time that the thought had been retired physicalist and the exoteric religious, being replaced by the phenomenological model, where the meaning depends not on a system of beliefs, symbols or external myths, but it springs from the internal and contemplative direct experience of the soul.

Therefore talk about traditional healing, spirituality, psychotherapy or counselling, is to speak of the same, provided that the purpose is as axis the development of the person from a perspective that treats the full development of their potential, to the right to be who is and the variables of self-responsibility and inter-responsibility that arise form that takes its existence.

The fact that has chosen the Counselling and not other aspects of the Professional do about human being and its vicissitudes: dynamic psychotherapy, religious mysticism, shamanism, traditional treatments, etc. It is because it represents a model that is defined in the person and their existence rather than in its twisted manifestations, symptoms that define somehow what is considered "normal" or "pathological", at least for a good part of the current therapeutic community. But the Counselling is aimed at the development of the diverse and the native ability to manage this diversity in human, and a line consistent with this practice is the school of Gestalt, whose therapeutic experience not only assumes that the 'man' is multifaceted, but also moves towards democratic governance and integration of the diversity that all human beings are. Told in the words of Paolo Quattrini speaking of the dynamic intrapsiquicas: the person in effect, is a multiplicity that needs democracy, since a stable unity of intent is nothing more than an illusion of monarchical type.

Speech:

As any counsellor, I have my own therapeutic style and this is driven by the vision of the human being. In my opinion, any therapeutic relationship must attend to the person and his world of contingencies, the world of possibilities. And this vision is not a semantic difference with respect to what is today known as holistic, but instead framed and defined characteristics and specificities which must possess that holism.

It is said that the person is holistic, my therapy is holistic. But what we mean by this? It would seem that we modernize to the rid of specializations because the specialization focuses on a particular segment leaving other parts, for example: If we Orient in the psychic world of the person leave out its biology and physiology. If we look at his body and his organic operation let out his life, your expectations, your desires. If we Orient toward the Supreme values of the person then we forget their most basic needs. Three examples that are easily recognizable in the wide world of relations of aid: the first speaks of those therapies and therapists who care to human beings with a marked determinism that is his psychic world, and not so much his relationship with him, what defines their State of health and well-being. In the second example it is tired known in allopathic medicine, where it would seem that the body and its functions would have little or very little that relates to the person in question, extreme that becomes very noticeable against diseases serious that, frequently, refuses and precludes the person to decide about herself and treatments that would consciously assume. The third example relates to these so-called "therapeutic" quarters to evoke a false or counterfeit spirituality in the belief that enhance and exalt in mental way to the spirit of kindness above all things and abolish or banish all thoughts and emotions that are called "negative," leads to a serenity and inner peace, able to restore any imbalance.

Now all therapies claim to be holistic, but frequently forget the phenomenon of the field theory of Kurt Lewin, who said: behavior is deduced from a totality of coexisting facts and these coexisting facts have the character of a 'PivotField'; the State of each of the parts of the field depends on over all the others".

If you neglect this phenomenon, holistic, it is only a dead concept, and nothing more.

I intend, in my opinion, to try to make some approximations which may be enlightening to the purpose of integration.

On the one hand, the spirituality, which speaks of the high human, of transcendence, the invisible as a concept. On the other hand, of psychotherapy and its many models and schools that exert an influence on the mode in which must be to be well. And on the other hand, this new form of professional attention to the lives of the people that we know as counselling. Adapt to the

requirement it should perhaps also add traditional care, and as natural here as in any other field, traditional has to do with the custom, and it is a fact that Customs is part of the life of every people and nation and have their peculiarities that I not talk here because it is something so broad that it would occupy more space than the desired to this paper. Let us therefore traditional healing as a field of reference exclusively with a shape and personality that distinguishes it from the other three mentioned fields.

To begin I will talk about the spirituality and will do it using the words of Wilber, k. in their article psychotherapy and spirituality where it says: (I quote):

*"What I mean is we can not talk of science and religion, psychotherapy and spirituality, or philosophy and mysticism while we can not agree on what we mean by religion." For this interview, I think that we should at least distinguish between the so-called esoteric religions and esoteric religions.*

*Exoteric or external religion is a mythical religion, a religion terribly concrete and literal, believing, for example, that Moses separated the waters of the Red Sea, that Christ was born of a Virgin, that the world was created in six days, which once literally rained manna from heaven, etc. Esoteric religions around the world say this type of belief. Hindus, for example, believe that the Earth rests on the back of an elephant and that this, in turn, rests on a turtle which rests on a snake. But when asked: and what the Snake is supported?, you answer: Let's talk about something else.*

*If we did them if we would have to believe that Lao Ts had nine hundred years when he was born, that Krishna made love to ten thousand Cowherd, Brahma sprung from a crack in a cosmic egg, etc. So are esoteric religions: a set of belief systems that attempt to explain the mysteries of the world in mythical terms, rather than in terms of direct experience or evidence.*

*So the exoteric or external religion is essentially a matter of belief, not of evidence and if you believe in all those myths you will save you; and if you don't believe in them, you will go to hell. From that point of view there is no possible alternative. This type of fundamentalist religion is located in all corners of the world. I do not dispute any of that; the only thing I say is that this type of religion, the exoteric religion, has nothing to do with the mystical, esoteric religion or the experienced. That's the kind of religion or spirituality that truly interest me.*

*Esoteric means hidden or internal. A religion is not esoteric mysticism because it is hidden, secret or something like that, but because it is a matter of direct experience and personal consciousness. Esoteric religion not asks you to have faith in nothing or you to submit meekly to a dogma. Esoteric religion, on the other hand, consists of a set of personal experiments that you carry out scientifically in the laboratory of your own consciousness. As all science self-*

*respecting, esoteric religion not based on beliefs or desires but on direct experience validated and verified that they have also carried out the same experiment that experiment publicly by a group of peers is meditation.*

*Meditative awareness is an internal knowledge. But, as in the case of mathematics, it is knowledge that can be publicly validated by a community of meditators experienced who know the internal logic of the contemplative experience. The truth of the theorem of Pythagoras, for example, not determined by universal suffrage, they are experienced mathematicians who decide on the matter. Similarly, the different spiritual traditions claim, for example, that the intimate experience of the self is one with the experience of the external world. But, in any case, it is a truth that can be verified experimental and vividly by either carrying out the proper experiment. And, after some six thousand years of experimentation, it is perfectly lawful to draw certain conclusions and apply certain theorems spiritual, so to speak. Those spiritual theorems are the same core of the perennial wisdom traditions.*

*He is considered hidden because until you do not take out the experiment you will not know what is happening and, therefore, will not be authorized to vote, in the same way as if not learn math not allow you decide on the truth or falsity of the Pythagorean theorem, which does not mean that you can not have opinions on the matter. But to mysticism not opinions, but the knowledge you are interested in. Esoteric religion, mysticism, remains hidden to all mind not carrying out proper experiment. That's all that means the esoteric term."*

Very often, when we talk about gestalt, and as in the Zen Buddhist, it is said that it is not possible to know to know an Apple unless you try it. What I mean is that as opposed to beliefs that are crystallized thoughts, experience and spiritual experience respond to the flow of natural life so they stop to create arguments or deposits that explain life, if on the other hand, are not life itself. Although Kierkegaard and its shift in the thinking of the time, when he said that life is not a question that should have a response, but an experience that must be lived. Even today, a majority of people think in terms of finding answers to what is the truth of life, forgetting in this endeavour to live it. This singular fact is the cause of many ailments, disorders and useless suffering.

As in the esoteric or mystical religion, the Gestalt is a verifiable experience and therefore does not respond to any kind of theory, although it is true that for the survival of the "body of the Gestalt" is desirable and expected that they are clearly within a school of thought that provides a solid theoretical roots, and in this sense the existential phenomenological approach is the paradigm of primary reference of Gestalt Therapy.

Because using this point of view we can already go approaching these sheds provided that in traditional healing, psychotherapy or counselling adhere to the fundamental principle of verification of the phenomenon, the experience and

the understanding of it with absolute respect to what is, without interpretation or judgment of any kind. For example: against the event of the loss of a parent, the belief pushes in the direction of pain, since it is presumed that it is a painful loss of a father or a mother. Interestingly I have had clients who have gone through my practice not to accept the pain of loss, both for not accepting the absence of pain in the loss. At the end and at the end no matter how to manifest, we're talking about the same thing: the substitution of a verifiable experience by a belief.

Fritz Perls called their discovery and psychotherapeutic approach the psychology of the obvious, that for being so obvious, is obvious, it passes. An example to illustrate what I mean: the customer argues: I don't know what Dr. happens to me When I get home from my boyfriend and his dog is approaching and I lick, I feel bad... don't know what happens with animals, perhaps I have had some trauma to small...

My answer: what's wrong is that you can't have your boyfriend's dog.

Client: Ah! and that's all.

My answer: would like more?

For the Gestalt psychotherapy is not important to know the reasons that are hidden behind each gesture or movement of the person, but if consciousness is very important of his existence and of course the phenomenon of mobility when the customer decides what to do with his experience.

Experience contains many things, but we can realize that its axis is always an emotion or its derivatives (sensations and feelings) and therefore that it is verifiable and transformable. The emotions contain energy and this can be very different intensities. And the intensity of emotions that regulate or alter the functioning organismic of the person, or put in other words, your wellness experience.

Accepting the fact that spirituality is a verifiable phenomenon as it is experience, we put a case of pain. Its meaning is not dependent on a system of beliefs, symbols or external myths, but it springs from direct experience, internal ycontemplativa. In other words, the Mystics are not, in any way, mythical believers, but phenomenologists contemplative, mystical scientific and contemplative contemplative. As a psychotherapist, you may not change or replace the direct experience of the phenomenon by more or less explanatory beliefs. Something that is commonly done in the so-called traditional psychotherapy.

For the definition of psychotherapy or traditional healing, regardless of the school which holds it, I have to be based on your methodology since it is the most significant and related to all or almost all models of traditional treatment,

and I am referring to the treatment protocol. This is: A diagnosis (what happens to this person?) that is based on a very specific sense of "normalcy" and "Pathology" and that usually corresponds to the criteria framed internationally in the modern psycho DSM or ICD. A model of treatment that includes the return to normality and a somewhat deterministic forecast based on the presumption of seriousness of the disease. This model or Protocol ends with the possibility to look through the person (and not his pathology), because interpretative mechanism does not leave space for creativity and even less to the awakening of the faculties of self-support of the customer, that even though they are almost State or hibernation, there are.

For the success of this model of psychotherapy, no matter that it is done by means of drugs, placebos, or by way of the spoken relationship or others, just firmly believe that the patient is sick and you can cure him.

The challenge is the estrangement of itself, "alienation" and therefore the the absence of spiritual, since believe in itself and the qualities genuinely superior of the human being is something spiritual, but only if handled within a verifiable situation and not only mental.

In my 15 years of therapeutic practice I have observed a phenomenon that is repeated always: query come in the figure of the patient, as a minimum, two partners, actually become more, but gird me two. One is who knows what happens, and another is that the fool is made.

A therapist well trained, sharp and direct, but above all honest, perception can not strike up a conversation with whom "the fool is made". Can not place the importance of the relationship therapeutic who responds with I... don't know what Dr. happens to me... Tell me you. It is more intelligent to me, and certainly more effective, the relationship with the partner that if knows, and allying with him to unmask that fool is made. Naturally when a therapist is allies with the unconscious, his patient's "idiot", technically called part, therapy is long, insufficient and generally frustrating for both parties.

Well, I have spoken so far of a vision of the living spirituality to the verifiable and not constructs or imperatives crystallized in beliefs of moral kind about the good and the bad. I have spoken about a model of therapeutic approach which we call psychotherapy or traditional healing immersed in established protocols about what is normal and what is pathological and responding too often to the theses of clinical psychology, and not existential or humanist psychology both.

This is a fact that reaffirms, from my point of view, wrongly, in the imperative that imposed by the Spanish Federation of associations of psychotherapy taking starting for a psychotherapist training courses in psychology or medicine. In Spain both races form the professionals in the traditional approach which I have described above. (\*)

(\*)In Spain the oldest accrediting entity both psychotherapists and training programmes in psychotherapy is the Spanish Federation of psychotherapy associations (F.E.A.P.). From this entity means all treatment of psychological nature which, from psychological or physical manifestations of human suffering, promotes the achievement of changes or changes in behavior, adaptation to the environment, the mental and physical health, the integration of psychological identity and bio-psycho-social well-being of individuals and groups such as the couple or family psychotherapy.

Therefore, the term psychotherapy does not presuppose an orientation or scientific approach defined, being considered denominative a broad científico-especializado domain, which is specified in different and peculiar orientations theoretical, practical and applied. Therapeutic interventions are primarily verbal nature and pursue the reduction or elimination of symptoms, through the modification of emotional, cognitive, behavioral, interpersonal patterns or systems in which lives immersed the individual.

Turning to another subject, and only by Apostille already mentioned, does not seem appropriate to include in the package of traditional cures to models known as shamanic cures, despite better meet than any other traditional aphorism. But these healing practices respond to a subject to rituals and inherited wisdom that explained and exert its influence on the historical context and ethnic and anthropological knowledge of the people who practice them. Let's say that they resort to a popular wisdom little or nothing accepted by psychotherapeutic orthodoxy.

I now therefore talk about gestalt, not only as a school of psychotherapeutic approach but as shaft or integrative epicenter of a movement that goes beyond the limits of individual health and whose influence promotes a new vision of the human being and a new paradigm in which human relations refers. Then, and in resonance with these practices of life open from the gestalt functionality, I will introduce the Counselling as a profession that opens to a new model of producing the changes expected by the client towards welfare, abandoning the old clinical models and championing a proposal in the helping relationship that assumes the exercise of creativity as the first premise for the change. A relationship of equals between client and Counsellor or operator assistance, functional guidance to the teaching and learning of "Help help", and an orientation of existential kind of respect the existence of the other and the right to choose as every who wants to live his life. In this model, as in the counselling of existential and phenomenological orientation, are encouraged to change mainly through learning that customer itself in the world manages through the insight.

The relationship between therapist and client is the most important aspect of the therapeutic practice, be it in the traditional way, in psychotherapy or counselling. The Gestalt therapist works with the contact; the contact is the experience of the boundary between "me" and "not myself". It is the experience of interacting with the other while maintaining an identity itself and separated from the other. (Martin Buber; THE I - YOUR). In Gestalt contact is always an experience that does not leave things as they were before, and thus manifests a help towards the customer which is developing its own system of self-supporting. In this way we work with dialogue rather than handling the customer toward a therapeutic purpose.

When customers are handled or moved by the therapist towards some goal, whatever it is, customer will not be responsible for their own growth and self-supporting.

The dialogue is based on experiencing the other person such and as it is, showing the real itself and sharing realizing phenomenological.

The gestalt therapist says what you think and stimulates the customer to do the same. Dialogue gestalt brings authenticity and responsibility.

The therapeutic relationship in Gestalt Therapy highlights four features of dialogue (Gary Yontef - process and dialogue p. 122)

1. Inclusion. It is be possible more fully on the experience of the other, without judging, without analyzing, without construing, while retaining the sense of its own, separate and autonomous. Thus he collaborates to the very sense of realizing of the client accepting the existential phenomenological model as a source of knowledge of what is happening.
2. Presence. The gestalt therapist is directed to the customer with honesty, expressing comments, preferences, feelings, thoughts and personal experience within a regular and, no doubt, discriminated against and reflective dialogue. So the therapist shares his perspective through a phenomenological report, which invites and teaches the client to trust and learn how to use the immediate experience to generate your realize. If the therapist more trust in interpreting personal presence, will take the customer to rely on phenomena that are not in their own immediate experience, separating him from the possibility of generating real awareness.

It is very important not to use himself as a therapist to the customer to conform to pre-established objectives. On the contrary, we encourage continuously that customer is regulated independently.

3. Commitment with the dialogue. The contact is the result of what two people do. Does not refer to what two people are interacting, but the result of this interaction. Therefore I say that a true contact is transformative because it never leaves things as they were before. The



gestalt therapist is delivered to this interpersonal process, allowing the contact to occur and not manipulating to make contact and control the outcome.

4. The dialogue is alive. Dialogue is something that is done, rather than something which is talked about. "Live" emphasizes the excitement and immediacy of making. There are many ways to dialogue: some of them may be dance, songs, movements, or gestures mimicking, or any modality that express to move power between participants.

Some contributions of Yontef:

The theoretical difference between Gestalt Therapy, psychoanalysis and behavioural modification is clear.

In behavioral modification customer behavior to be changed directly through the manipulation of environmental stimuli that the therapist makes.

In psychoanalytic theory, the behavior is caused by an unconscious motivation that manifests itself in the trasferencial relationship.

Analyzing the transfer exceeds the repression and the unconscious becomes conscious.

In Gestalt Therapy customer learn to fully use their senses external and internal, self-responsibility and self-supporting.

Gestalt Therapy collaborates with the client and helps to retrieve the keys to their situation. Realizing one's own to realize.

Behavioral modification conditions using control stimuli, psychoanalysis cure speaking about and discovering the causes of mental illness (the problem), and Gestalt Therapy leads to the self-actualization through guided experiments of awareness in the here and the now.

### **About the Counselling:**

Since the term stems from a psychological context, it is important to understand that a counsellor offers counselling to people at any stage of your life. The Counsellor is a trained professional to provide psychological help, waking up to the potential of its clients. The Counsellor understand the person as a healthy individual, abandoning the traditional paradigm of health / disease.

The integration in their formation of disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, education, medicine, anthropology and certain esoteric currents, among others, make Counselling a unique profession that allows professionals to use a multidimensional approach to serving holistically the needs of consultants (fully). This process has as setting a framework attitudinal-dialogical and relational, empathetic, unconditional and authentic that it provides to individuals, couples, families, groups or organizations.

Counselling represents a new model in which relations, that goes beyond the limits of psychotherapy. Its novelty and its freshness consists of the removal of the traditional patterns of authority, whether in family relationships, relationships of education, relationships of care at the clinic (either medical or psychological), in labour and social relations of citizen service, in relations of management and mediation or any help regarding. Whenever exhausted authority model where professionals, doctors, psychologists, lawyers, etc... normal partners have become clients, appears the counselling as a way to drive personal and professional relationships with a relational perspective that stimulates the process of dialogue, communication being the catalyst for the achievement of better and healthier ways of understanding. From this standpoint the Counsellor is a facilitator of communication, interpersonal relationships and intrapsiquicas, and therefore their task is to assist the parties in conflict that they understand cognitively, recognize each other emotionally to discover between the parties such as shape and reduce tensions and discomforts that disturb that relationship. More important to help the human ability to consider that it is creativity, and is therefore fundamental to the Counsellor will provide all possible ways to promote creativity and help to activate it on your client, since it is considered that this creativity of customer quota although almost State is potentially available.

With a wide vision, and human beings being the hub of the encounter between the partners, should be thinking of Counselling as a professional platform with its own identity. A counselling of existential and phenomenological orientation further expands its borders and responds consistently to the integrative model containing the school of Gestalt itself.

To finish I would like to conclude with a few words from Claudio Naranjo heard in his Conference closing of the first Italian Congress of Counselling and which referred to the implicit and hidden spirituality of the Gestalt.

*There are who wanted to "complete" the Gestalt spiritized it, but I think that this attitude is based on not understanding the Gestalt is already sufficiently spiritual - although it seems blasphemous!  
Already the first time I spoke of Gestalt in Europe, at the opening of the 2nd International Congress in Spain, and asked me this theme, I started talking about how much there is evident among Gestalt and Buddhism. The practice of the "here and now" in Gestalt is as a rediscovery of the via of the Vipassana; with an obvious affinity between the invitation to not the Gestalt conceptualization and spirit Zen. I referred also to the*

*affinity between the Gestalt and the Hasidic Judaism buberiano even more with Buber when he left Judaism and religious terminology, because the Gestalt is spiritual without using religious terminology.*

*All spiritual traditions say that, "at a given moment of our individual or collective history, "fall", we have lost paradise, the original condition of the mind. All therapies are offered to restore original health status; It seems to me that, by its own history psychotherapy has become more self-conscious of their involvement.*

*Freud was apparently anti-spiritual, at least anti-religious; I knew very well the phenomenon of replace the father land with the heavenly father and the phenomenon superegoico attributed the morale to the voice of a God. With the gait of the time some followers of Freud have begun the recognition that psychoanalysis leads to the person in interest and spiritual experience. Jung rebelling against the materialism of Freud, Reich speaks of a cosmic orgone that is like the kundalini, Fromm and Horney became interested in zen Buddhism.*

*I believe that this development of spiritualization of the therapy ends, although in not implicitly, Fritz Perls and not with transpersonal psychology; as it would seem the obvious. Transpersonal psychology today is only a concept, and a project of synthesis between the ancient tradition and modern psychotherapy, but remained as cajón de sastre; and what is striking is not so much the richness of its content as its intention. Unlike the Gestalt, while it has no roots in the spiritual tradition, has a precise content and a strongly liberating impact.*

*I believe that the most characteristic aspect of the Gestalt is this implicit faith in what organismic, a faith in self-regulation which represents the culmination of the implicit in postfreudiana psychology and the Gestalt dionisismo. But this faith in the deep wisdom of the organism is not the only aspect of the dionisismo gestalt. The other aspect is hedonism.*

*The Gestalt is imbued with a credo: not only the reason, the Apollonian, but also the pleasure is a valid indicator for human behavior. As the plant that is oriented towards the Sun, the psicobiologico body is oriented by their need and pleasure is the most auspicious direction indicator. The value of pleasure is not present in the history of psychotherapy, except with Reich which goes beyond the merely sensual emphasis of his predecessors. He is not about hedonism in the sense of recognizing the value of pleasure in itself: I have spoken of a "humanistic hedonism" as soon as you get to pleasure as inclination towards something bigger, like a 'real' inclination. To what extent has*

*the Gestalt vision merely hedonistic seen there at this very present what Gurdjieff calls "conscious suffering": not to avoid pain necessary to life and growth. **It's about being open to pain as to the pleasure.***

This frame of reference that Claudio offers along with a dare to see the many facets of the human being and the intrinsic faith in the wisdom of the body, which can say that it will lead you always and without doubt the best of yourself, to the very nature of things. This axiom of human behavior applies the logic of the soul, usually interrupted by the government interventionist of those who do not believe sincerely in the natural goodness of people.

Here I end this introduction with the integration of spirituality to the practice of psychotherapy and Counselling with the desire of having made clear that both Counselling and Gestalt represents a revolutionary movement, a movement of change so important that certainly will change the relational paradigm of health and mental illness. Offering models that replace it with greater anchorage and coherence with the times that today we live.

Mario Fernández Alameda

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## Responsibility towards Diversity.

### An Educational Proposal for the Enhancement of Democracy: the Intercultural Relevance of Lipman’s “Philosophy for Children/Community”

by Roberto Franzini Tibaldeo

#### Introduction

Even at a first glance, the past twelve years have been of extraordinary importance for the comprehension of difficulties related to the management of ethnic and religious diversity, both at the European, and at the global level. The public opinion, politicians, and scholars of many countries have levelled criticisms against multiculturalism for being unable to provide satisfactory policies on social cohesion and governance of ethnic and religious diversity (Jura, 2012). Others, however, prefer not to abandon multiculturalism in spite of its faults, and argue for its expansion (Parekh, 2000; Vasta, 2007; Silj, 2010). To some extent, the alleged ineffectiveness of multiculturalism highlights a deeper problem: since the Nineties (war in the former Yugoslavia), and especially since the beginning of the new Millennium (9/11 in the USA, 7/7 in the UK, etc.), a growing fear for the so-called “clash of civilizations” spread all over the globe. According to this trend, ethnic and religious diversities and traditions are perceived as menaces for the *status quo* and therefore trigger problematic reactions: on the one hand, the social group’s enclosure within the defensive barriers of static identities, which are often created *ex nihilo* and manipulated for political purposes; on the other hand, the tendency of the members of a dominant group not to recognize the “other” and his/her equal rights – i.e. a tendency which in some cases ends in the adoption of assimilationist policies.

In addition, the present day global economic crisis has given people and politicians of several European and Western developed countries the excuse for accomplishing further defensive processes: all those perceived to some extent as “different” or “outsiders” are likely to suffer various forms of discrimination, and are in many ways set apart and excluded from the alleged community of the “self”, which for no reason plans to give up any of its privileges. Therefore, we witness an additional social danger: the “us vs. them” conflict discriminates the weakest and the so-called “minorities within minorities”, that is – generally speaking – the young, women, and immigrants (see Ambrosini, 2005; Eisenberg-Spinner-Halev, 2005). As a result, our time seems to be affected by a series of problems, such as the spreading of social prejudice and stereotypes, discrimination, an increasing lack of faith in forthcoming opportunities, a generalized breakdown of critical and reflective thinking, and a pervasive mistrust of democracy (Bobbio, 1984; Appadurai, 1996; Galli, 2011; Pulcini, 2012; Magatti, 2012).

#### The focus on intercultural competence at school

Of course, among the many aspects directly involved in this scenery, the issue of education plays an important role, especially in the current multicultural and/or intercultural society. However, as it often happens, the relevance of education is largely underestimated or even ignored in too many Western and European countries. As a consequence, education methods, strategies, and practices appear not to be as effective as expected in facing the above-mentioned challenges – that is, in enhancing critical thinking and social integration, offering existential and job opportunities, and educating reflective democratic citizens (see, among others, Torres, 2009; Nussbaum, 2010; Grant-Portera, 2011).

To be sure, the criticism of traditional education's incapacity to be abreast of the contemporary situation and to understand the sign of times is nothing new (see, for instance, John Dewey's reflections on this matter in Dewey, 1916, or the educational reform already invoked in the USA by M. Lipman and A. M. Sharp at the end of the Seventies – Lipman, 2003). However, the present day context is quite different, due to factors such as globalization, social and cultural complexity, and the current trends in international migrations (see Gobbo, 2000; Portera, 2006; Portera et al., 2007). The Western culture has been forced to put definitely aside the presumption of being the centre of the world, and is currently undergoing a thorough revision of widespread problematic attitudes, such as the uncritical acceptance of the mainstream and the hinder of “methodological nationalism” (Beck, 2004). These issues have been seriously challenged by nowadays protagonists of globalization (Brasil, India, China, South Africa), international migrations, and the promising appearance of a generalized sensitivity to diversity. These circumstances affect also education, which is forced to review its overall aims and develop new pedagogical methods and practices, in order to reconnect itself with what is effectively happening in the world and eventually restore its formative, leading and propulsive role in society (see, among others, Portera, 2003b, pp. 22-23).

Among the new challenges to be addressed, the issue of dealing with the pluralism and diversity of values, cultures, religions, etc. is certainly of the greatest importance (and, of course, one of the most debated, as evidenced by Turgeon, 2004, pp. 102-104, which provides an interesting outline of the recent “curriculum wars” over the educational “canon”). To be sure, “diversity” is no newcomer in today's society, several forms of which have somehow been didactically and pedagogically dealt with in the last decades, especially in schools: disabilities; economic, social and cultural differences; differences concerning race, gender and sexual orientation; etc. Therefore, theoretically speaking, the specific form of “diversity” only recently conveyed by the stream of global immigration adds but only another item to the list of “intercultural” issues (Gobbo, 2000, pp. 46 ff., 89 ff.; Portera, 2003b, p. 25; Rey-von Allmen, 2003, pp. 36-37; Turgeon, 2004, p. 97). Still, it is an item that makes a difference, being it connected with a wide range of social and political challenges, which at the present are far from being successfully handled by society and educational institutions.

In this respect, my aim is to undertake an interdisciplinary inquiry into *diversity* within educational contexts, in order to highlight innovative and effective ways of successfully dealing with the plurality of existing diversities, which are to be considered not as threats, but on the contrary as opportunities for the individual and social self-awareness, maturity and education. Such analysis can gain great advantage from the *mare magnum* of existing research projects and experiences. In particular, I wish to mention projects, such as “Accept Pluralism” (European University Institute – Robert Schumann Centre for Advanced Studies; <http://www.accept-pluralism.eu>), the international and European normative framework (see the documents issued by the Council of Europe and Unesco: Coe, 2002; Unesco, 2001; Unesco, 2005), and other national/regional laws or best practices (such as, for instance, the Tuscan Region's decree “Per una scuola antirazzista e dell'inclusione” [*For a non-racist and inclusive school*] – D. R. 530/2008 – and projects, such as “La scuola di tutti. Pluralismo, intercultura, inclusione, diritti” [*Everybody's school. Pluralism, interculturality, inclusion, rights*], in which I was engaged as a researcher and teacher; [www.lascuoladitutti.it](http://www.lascuoladitutti.it)).

### **Philosophical inquiry and interculturality**

The issue of intercultural education and the development of intercultural competence at school can greatly benefit – this, at least, is the core idea I wish to argue – from philosophy, and specifically from the social *practice* of philosophical dialogue and critical reflection. As we shall see, this experience is of extreme importance for the enhancement of mutual respect, tolerance, reciprocal understanding, sense of belonging, empathy, etc. – that is, the most relevant virtues and ethical

values upon which any attempt of appreciating diversities and acknowledging their worth ultimately rests (see, among others, Taylor, 1994; Gutmann, 1994; Henry-Pirni, 2012).

Among the philosophical practices, I wish to draw specific attention to Matthew Lipman's "Philosophy for Children/Community" (P4C), which emphasizes two interesting aspects: on the one hand, the multidimensionality of creative, critical, and caring thinking; and, on the other hand, the importance of thinking-with-others, i.e. of community inquiry (see Lipman, 1995; Lipman, 2003).

Lipman's thinking begins with a negative experience: in the Sixties, while teaching philosophy to college students and adult education students, he witnesses the failure of traditional education in enhancing the ideal of reasonableness (Lipman, 1985) and in effectively spreading the civil virtues (Lipman, 2003). Therefore, Lipman goes in search of a new philosophical and pedagogical paradigm so as to comprehend the overall formation of the individual's dispositions, along with the main features of the democratic citizen.

Indeed, education and democracy ought not to be separated. This is a debt Lipman incurs directly from Dewey (see, for instance, Dewey, 1916). Like Dewey, Lipman believes that the democratic context is both the indispensable premise and the never sufficiently gained goal for a renewed education system, the aim of which is to stimulate the spread of reflective, autonomous, and critical thinking. Moreover, the aim is to give rise to dialogue, self-correction, and inquiry, in order to eliminate those forces which cause prejudice, violence, ignorance, and injustice. Democracy is, according to Lipman, the social and political environment where human relations take place, and where – I wish to add – human diversities ought to peacefully live, feel an atmosphere of mutual respect, and constructively give rise to common experiences, enterprises, and new forms of culture (Lam, 2013).

This outline is, however, incomplete without an indication of the extent to which philosophy plays a relevant role. Lipman refers to an idea of philosophy as a *philosophical practice*, and not as an exercise of theoretical and abstract knowledge only. In keeping with this, Lipman defines inquiry as perseverance in self-corrective investigation regarding relevant and problematic questions (Lipman, 1985). Such a practice requires, however, a community of people sharing the desire to participate in a "philosophical inquiry".

A "Community of (philosophical) Inquiry" (CI) originates from this common desire, whose tangible shape is the circle made by the participants' seats. Participants (normally from 13 to 15-20 per session) are reciprocally committed "to reasonableness – that is, to rationality tempered by judgement" (Lipman, 2003, p. 111), that is to undertake a broad research involving the whole thinking project. To some extent, such inquiry is an experience into which each member is at a stake with his/her values in order to come to a productive result. The community research works as a device opening the possibility for mediation or, finally, as a practice of mutual recognition and respect, self-regulation and formation aiming to responsibly assume a certain choice.

The heart and vehicle of expression of the inquiry is, according to Lipman, philosophical dialogue, which differs from conversation, debate, and mere communication (Lipman, 2003, pp. 87-93). From a technical point of view, each session of P4C follows a predetermined structure: the discussion is stimulated by what might be called a "text-pretex" (that is, an episode from specific short stories and novels written by Lipman and other researchers, like A. M. Sharp); then participants propose issues to be discussed at first by posing questions, and then by proposing, enquiring into, and debating over specific issues; each session ends with an individual and collective self-evaluation.

Philosophical dialogue is argumentative and "critical", but at the same time evidences "creative" and "caring" dimensions. Thanks to this multidimensionality, any CI can successfully tackle delicate and complex issues, such as the *sense* of individual and social values, and help participants to put into practice a "higher-order thinking" (Lipman, 1995, p. 1). As for the intercultural issue we are considering, I would like to stress the unique role played by the "caring" thinking: this dimension of rationality highlights our intense desire for reality, and for the abundance of diversities, which endow reality with worth and value (Lipman, 1995; Lingua, 2013). For this



reason, Lipman describes the “caring” thinking as it being “valuational”, “affective”, “active”, “normative” (Lipman, 1995, pp. 8 ff.). As a result, the atmosphere of mutual respect and the philosophical inquiry provide the community and its members with a parameter – gained through the common discussion – by which they increase their sensitivity to context and diversities, their empathy for other people’s situations, their ability to recognize and nurture plural viewpoints, and their capacity to evaluate what is relevant and to distinguish it from what is not (Bitting, 1995; Turgeon, 2004, pp. 105-107).

### **Responsibility, philosophical inquiry, and intercultural pedagogy**

In light of what has been said, it should be clear that the result of community philosophical inquiry is a product of common knowledge, that is, a cooperative construction of sense and a process of negotiation in which each member of the community takes part (Striano, 2005, p. 56-58). Because of its intrinsically philosophical character (that is, fallible, revisable, and self-corrective), this product ought to be continuously, dialogically and reflectively revisited (for the idea of “reflectivity”, see Dewey 1933 and Schön, 1983). In addition, the process of philosophical inquiry highlights a unique methodology: tackling a problem involves at first an effort to widen its context and horizon, in order to acknowledge which philosophical devices (terms, ideas, interpretative keys, etc.) are at issue. As a consequence, the matter is examined in a new light and in a renewed context of sense. And it might actually happen that this advance in knowledge, this product of common thinking, generates some kind of practical modification in the life of the community and of its members.

In what sense are these practical modifications to be imagined, understood and investigated? I believe the issue can be clarified thanks to the idea of responsibility, whose significance is indeed double: on the one hand, it has to do with the effective consequences of human behaviour and, on the other hand, it evidences the wider and challenging horizon of sense, within which human existence, deeds, and their consequences happen (Jonas, 1984; Nussbaum, 2010). Moreover – and this is certainly relevant for the present paper – I believe that, thanks to an interpretation of the community pragmatics in light of the ethics of responsibility, it is possible – among other things – to better understand the overall sense of human existence in terms of a reflective relationship to otherness and diversity.

In this respect, as stated by the XXth century hermeneutical, cultural, and philosophical anthropology, the human being’s essence is exemplified with a dynamic and dual polarity of opposites, such as self-centredness and “Veränderung” (being-othered), relation-to-the-self and relation-to-the-other, activity and passivity, autonomy and heteronomy, assimilation and accommodation, etc. (see, among others, Geertz, 1983; Remotti, 1992; Augé, 1995; Geertz, 2000; Gobbo, 2000, pp. 45 ff.; Friese, 2002; Paolicchi, 2007; Fistetti, 2008, pp. 111 ff.; Waldenfels, 2008; Henry, 2009; Grant-Brueck, 2011, pp. 4-5).

Also the core ethical hendiadys of freedom and responsibility may be understood in these terms. Thus, on the one hand, *freedom* can be interpreted as a tendency towards self-realization, the fulfilment of desires, the achievement of goals, the need for relationships with other (human) beings, the active giving shape to the world, the capacity to design, etc. On the other hand, thanks to *responsibility*, the human being experiences his/her own specific commitment to listen and (freely) answer to a claim coming from beyond the realm of individuality (Jonas, 1984). Indeed, responsibility endows the human being with the capacity for being sensitive to the pressure of circumstances, with the awareness of the “other’s” claims, rights, and viewpoint, along with the fact that the “other” is equally worthy of respect. In this sense, any responsible individual evidences the basic twofold possibility/duty to carry out a *critical inquiry into otherness*, in order to clearly recognize, accept, and eventually enhance or criticize the prerogatives of the so called “other” (see,

among others, Taylor, 1994; Benhabib, 2002; Zamagni, 2002; Beck 2004; Fistetti, 2008, pp. 133 ff.).

However, the “good equilibrium” to be given to this dialectical dynamics comes from thorough education only, and specifically from one which aims at the human being’s flourishing through the cultivation of personal desire, empathic recognition of the other, the practice of responsibility, and a self-reflective attitude towards our own existence/diversity (Nussbaum, 1997; Gobbo, 2000, pp. 9-16; Turgeon, 2004, pp. 98-100; Giusti, 2004, pp. 100 ff.; Nussbaum, 2010; Rosario del Collado, 2011-12).

Moreover, the close liaison between the theoretical-practical notion of education and the idea of responsibility elucidates another normative issue: that is, our *ethical duty* to build strong and dynamic relationships with the so-called “diversities”; our duty to dialogue with them, and to take care of them, but at the same time to “resist any simplistic dismissal of differences or uncritical embracing of them” (Turgeon, 2004, p. 107). And – this is a topic which requires further research – one of the most effective ways to understand the complexity of this duty, is to share with others a philosophical inquiry into the common good, like the one proposed by Matthew Lipman’s “Philosophy for Children/Community”.

This takes us back to democracy, since the idea of responsibility may also act as a guide for the realization – in the era of globalization – of innovative and democratic forms of intercultural citizenship, which distance themselves from two dreadful pathologies of the globalized age, namely the construction of “exclusive identities” (and of “endogamic communities”), on the one hand, and forms of “nihilistic relativism” (with their pendant of “unrestrained individualism”), on the other hand (Pulcini, 2012; Bleazby, 2006; Turgeon, 2004).

Before concluding, I wish to draw attention to the close relationship of these philosophical reflections to intercultural pedagogy. In particular, I wish to single out the following common issues, which unfortunately I cannot develop further in this article: a) the relevance of pluralistic dialogue, reflectivity, and the practice of empathy (Giusti, 2004, pp. 74-76; Portera, 2006; Perry, 2011, p. 454); b) interculturality as a thorough methodology for the understanding of knowledge, diversity, and human relations, and not as a specific branch of education only (Portera 2003b, p. 22; Portera, 2011, p. 17); c) the centrality of individual and social identity, and the need to abandon substantive models of interpretation of its dynamics (Rey-von Allmen, 2003, pp. 39-40; Gobbo, 2000, pp. 68 ff.).

## Conclusions

The paper intended to verify whether the combination of philosophical inquiry and intercultural education is able to provide a fruitful understanding and at least some elements of a feasible management of the complex socio-economic, political and cultural dynamics of the globalized era, especially those related to the appreciation of cultural and religious diversities in democratic contexts.

The main result of this philosophical investigation is the revision of notions, such as identity, community, democracy, freedom, responsibility, self, etc. This effort entails to abandon substantive models of interpretation and to evidence the “intercultural” structure of those ideas, that is their intrinsic connection to otherness, difference and diversity. This is particularly true for the ideas of freedom and responsibility: their unique brotherhood evidences that they can *only* be understood as co-freedom and co-responsibility. Therefore, freedom and responsibility reveal their deepest meaning, consisting in an intrinsic being-related-to-otherness. This means that any specific and concrete manifestation of freedom and responsibility (be it an individual deed or a community inquiry process) entails a reflective process of continuous re-acceptance, re-configuration, and negotiation of meanings, demands, values, etc. I believe that the selected case study – Lipman’s

P4C – succeeds in showing that this dynamics empowers individual and social sensitivity to otherness and diversity, gives strength to any attempt of supporting differences, and is fruitful for the practical enhancement of democracy.

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## **Quale incontro tra cultura di appartenenza e tendenza attualizzante? Esperienze di lavoro clinico con bambini e adolescenti.**

**Dott.ssa Francesca Farolfi, Dott.ssa Federica Gagliano**

Il fenomeno dell'immigrazione è una componente ormai consolidata da anni nella realtà sociale e demografica del nostro paese, tanto da rappresentare oggi il fattore di maggiore crescita della popolazione. Negli ultimi dieci anni, infatti, il numero degli immigrati è salito ad oltre tre milioni e la comunità più rappresentata è quella rumena che nell'ultimo decennio ha sfiorato il milione di arrivi (943.000), seguita da quelle albanese (278.000), marocchina (258.000), ucraina (215.000) e cinese (150.000) (ISTAT, 2012). Tale fenomeno ha prodotto, come conseguenza, un incremento esponenziale di alunni di cittadinanza straniera nelle scuole che, attraverso la pedagogia interculturale che si è fatta promotrice di un'educazione interculturale, ha permesso di rispondere alla sempre crescente esigenza di integrare i bambini stranieri nel sistema scolastico (Portera, 2003). Sia la pedagogia sia l'educazione interculturali hanno subito a loro volta una rivoluzione, con l'avvento dell'era della globalizzazione. Si parla, infatti, di *“cambiamento di paradigma pedagogico”* che *“ha consentito di superare le strategie educative a carattere compensatorio, dove l'emigrazione, lo sviluppo e la vita in un contesto multiculturale erano intesi solamente in termini di rischio, di disagio o di malattia”* (Portera, 2003, pag. 118). Grazie ad esso, oggi l'alunno straniero è considerato una risorsa per un maggiore sviluppo personale e relazionale, attraverso l'incontro della sua cultura di appartenenza con quella del paese ospitante (Portera, 2003).

In questa nuova dimensione di interculturalità, è importante che tutti coloro che operano nel campo dell'infanzia tengano conto, non solo dei processi psichici dei singoli bambini e delle dinamiche familiari che li circondano, ma anche del contesto sociale in cui vivono e crescono e degli eventuali fattori protettivi o di rischio che possono in qualche modo influenzare il loro sviluppo, determinando un esito piuttosto che un altro (Portera, 1999). Lo psicologo che maggiormente ha enfatizzato il ruolo del contesto nel processo di costruzione dell'identità è stato Bronfenbrenner con la sua Teoria dei Sistemi Ecologici (1979), che vede lo sviluppo umano come una modificazione continua delle caratteristiche dell'individuo e del modo in cui egli percepisce soggettivamente e affronta il suo ambiente. Nella sua teoria Bronfenbrenner (1979) ipotizza che alla nascita siamo già inseriti all'interno di vari microsistemi, che svolgono un ruolo di rilievo nello sviluppo, ad esempio la famiglia d'origine, la famiglia allargata, la scuola, il gruppo dei pari e tutti i contesti di vita ai quali un bambino partecipa. L'insieme di questi microsistemi e delle loro interrelazioni è chiamato mesosistema, che a sua volta è inserito in maniera concentrica nell'esosistema, inerente le



condizioni di vita e di lavoro, e nel più ampio macrosistema, che rappresenta la politica sociale e dei servizi. Nel quadro generale delle relazioni di aiuto si interviene principalmente a livello di mesosistema, coinvolgendo gli insegnanti, la famiglia, gli eventuali educatori e talvolta anche i coetanei e i compagni di classe. Attraverso questo lavoro di rete è possibile favorire una maggiore integrazione dell'alunno straniero in tutti questi contesti. In alcuni casi sarebbe necessario lavorare anche a livello di esosistema: ad esempio quando le condizioni di lavoro di entrambi i genitori sono troppo stressanti o usuranti, rendendoli nervosi, irritabili, frustrati e non permettendo loro di trascorrere tempo sufficiente e di qualità con i figli o ancora quando la situazione abitativa è fatiscente e malsana al punto da rappresentare un fattore di rischio notevole per la salute.

Entrando invece più nello specifico del lavoro clinico individuale, come terapeuti dell'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona, adottiamo come punti di riferimento la teoria della personalità di Carl Rogers (1951) e il principio della tendenza attualizzante (Rogers, 1980), quale spinta innata verso l'autorealizzazione di ogni essere vivente. La fiducia nella natura fondamentale buona dei nostri clienti e nella loro capacità di svilupparsi verso una condizione di maggiore benessere motiva ogni giorno il nostro impegno, soprattutto lavorando con i più giovani, che sono ancora così pieni di speranze, di desideri e di voglia di dare un senso positivo alla loro vita. In loro è vitale la necessità di essere fedeli a se stessi e la loro giovane età li rende più flessibili e adattabili al cambiamento. Tuttavia anche i bambini e gli adolescenti spesso si trovano in difficoltà di fronte alle richieste della società, in misura ancora maggiore quando queste sono diverse da quelle proprie della loro cultura di appartenenza, come nel caso dei figli di immigrati. I genitori spesso chiedono l'aiuto dei professionisti per sintomi comportamentali che destano la loro preoccupazione, come aggressività o scarso rendimento scolastico, talvolta è la scuola stessa a chiedere questo aiuto o addirittura ad offrirlo attraverso gli sportelli di consulenza.

Nella mia esperienza clinica, ho avuto a che fare bambini di età compresa tra i 7 e i 12 anni che oltre a dover affrontare le problematiche tipiche della preadolescenza, che approfondiremo in seguito, dovevano affrontare l'allontanamento dal loro paese natale, dalle loro famiglie allargate, talvolta addirittura da un genitore o da entrambi, dalla scuola e dagli amici che fino a quel momento avevano costituito tutto il loro mondo, il loro punto di riferimento. Questi bambini sono molto disorientati, confusi e spesso arrabbiati, perché non riescono a comprendere fino in fondo le ragioni che hanno costretto la loro famiglia a emigrare. L'isolamento, l'emarginazione, il silenzio di fronte a questo enorme cambiamento di vita sono le dimensioni che più spesso si osservano, in alternativa a comportamenti aggressivi di grande rifiuto della nuova condizione abitativa e sociale in cui sono catapultati, talvolta anche auto o etero lesivi. Attraverso l'utilizzo dei disegni e delle favole mi è stato possibile entrare in contatto con la visione del mondo di questi bambini e stare con le loro

emozioni, facendoli sentire accolti e non giudicati. Questo mi ha permesso di capire come vivono certe situazioni, quali sono i problemi maggiori che affrontano e come intervenire nei diversi contesti, ad esempio a scuola o in famiglia, per aiutarli e facilitare una loro maggiore integrazione. Un bambino filippino di 8 anni, che aveva vissuto fino a 4 anni nel suo paese, prima con i nonni e poi, dopo la loro morte, con degli zii, era stato finalmente portato in Italia dai genitori, che erano riusciti a trovare un lavoro nel frattempo e a comprare una casa. Loro senz'altro avevano agito con le migliori intenzioni nei confronti del figlio, pensando che avrebbe apprezzato e accettato immediatamente il nuovo e migliore stile di vita che avevano da offrirgli, ma così non è stato. Questo bambino manifestava comportamenti aggressivi e distruttivi sia a casa che a scuola con le insegnanti e i compagni di classe. Era arrabbiato con i genitori, dai quali sentiva di essere stato abbandonato e tradito, e che ai suoi occhi avevano perso la credibilità necessaria ai fini educativi. Non ascoltava né le loro indicazioni né quelle degli insegnanti. Le sue difficoltà non erano legate esclusivamente alle differenze culturali, ma anche a un grave sentimento di abbandono e ad un'antica sofferenza psicologica, dovuta alla mancanza dei genitori nei primi anni della sua vita e alla perdita dei nonni, che fino ai 2 anni e mezzo avevano rappresentato per lui le principali figure di attaccamento. Il mio obiettivo in questa relazione di aiuto è stato quello di accogliere gli stati d'animo negativi del bambino, renderli legittimi, e fare un lavoro di rete, facilitando una maggiore collaborazione e un maggior dialogo tra i genitori, le insegnanti e i servizi sociali del territorio, promuovendo anche attività extrascolastiche che permettessero al bambino di entrare in contatto con i coetanei in maniera più ludica e spontanea e meno didattica.

Un altro bambino di 7 anni che ho seguito è arrivato dalla Romania all'età di 4 anni, quando è stato affidato allo zio paterno in seguito alla morte del padre e all'allontanamento della madre in una comunità di recupero per tossicodipendenti. I suoi tre fratelli sono stati affidati alle cure di altri zii che vivevano in un'altra regione. Il bambino non si è mai sentito a suo agio con la moglie italiana dello zio, che ripudiava in lui tutto ciò che poteva ricordare le sue origini nomadi, che erano meno accentuate nel marito: la carnagione più olivastra, i capelli crespi e ricci, a tratti più chiari e l'accento straniero non ancora perduto. Numerose erano le liti con il cugino, figlio naturale dello zio, di un solo anno più grande: questi lo prendeva continuamente in giro chiamandolo zingaro, faceva di tutto per sottolineare che era ospite in casa sua e si prendevano spesso a botte. Il bambino talvolta contava addirittura gli spaghetti nel piatto, per vedere se ne aveva tanti quanti il cugino, non voleva andare a scuola e quando ci andava disturbava lo svolgimento delle lezioni. Quando ho incontrato il bambino per la prima volta era chiaro il messaggio che mi veniva dato dagli zii: il problema era insito in lui, che era lui quello ribelle che non voleva andare a scuola o seguire le loro indicazioni e loro non si sentivano minimamente responsabili per tutto ciò che gli stava accadendo.

Il bambino che ho conosciuto nel corso dei nostri incontri era molto vivace, intelligente, di una grande simpatia, molto maturo per la sua età e cercava un posto in cui sentirsi amato e accolto, una famiglia. Anche in questo caso sono stati attivati i servizi sociali, è stato mandato un educatore a casa per monitorare la situazione, sono stati svolti dei colloqui con gli zii, per far capire loro i bisogni del bambino. Gli attriti tra le mura domestiche e la gelosia nei confronti del cugino sono ancora presenti, ma il lavoro insieme è servito indirettamente per sensibilizzare gli zii e per far loro accettare questo nipote, il cui arrivo inizialmente era stato vissuto come un obbligo e un'imposizione. A riprova di ciò, dopo 3 anni hanno deciso di adottarlo e di allargare ufficialmente la loro famiglia e questa per il bambino è stata un'immensa gioia e una grande dichiarazione di appartenenza, di accettazione e di affetto. In entrambi questi casi riportati, non sono sviluppate le tematiche più propriamente legate all'interculturalità, quale l'integrazione tra diversi valori, stili di vita e credenze. Nella mia esperienza di lavoro con l'infanzia questi assumono un carattere secondario rispetto al bisogno di essere amati e al bisogno di trovare un luogo sicuro dove potersi sentire a casa. Non si osservano i cambiamenti di personalità e della struttura di pensiero tipici invece dell'adolescenza o dell'età adulta, perché la personalità stessa in questa fase è ancora molto plastica, in fase di costruzione e i processi di pensiero metacognitivo sono ancora assenti. Lo stesso Approccio Centrato sulla Persona è diretto a persone adulte, capaci di mettere in discussione se stesse e il proprio sistema di valori. Ma i bambini sono molto più in contatto di noi adulti con la loro immediata esperienza organismica (Rogers, 1951) e se le loro figure di accudimento sono disposte ad aiutarli e a rispondere alle loro esigenze, il cammino verso un maggiore stato di benessere per loro può essere molto più breve.

Nel lavoro con gli adolescenti che oggi vivono in una prospettiva culturale e sociale sempre più complessa e articolata, osservo che è sempre maggiore l'impegno richiesto ai genitori rispetto a proposte educative e valoriali chiare che peraltro gli stessi fanno sempre più fatica ad individuare, ma soprattutto a proporre in modo coerente e convincente ai figli. L'obiettivo fondamentale della fase adolescenziale è la formazione dell'identità che si sviluppa attraverso un processo attivo e aperto di ricerca del sé che lo porterà a trovare il proprio posto all'interno di una variegata gamma di referenti sociali (famiglia, gruppo dei pari, istituzioni, società). Per i figli di immigrati spesso questo processo risulta più difficile perché vivono in una situazione di conflitto tra varie aspettative esterne a loro: da una parte ci sono la scuola che li incoraggia ad apprendere l'italiano e il gruppo dei pari che per accettarli li spinge ad omologarsi al loro modo di vivere; e dall'altra c'è la famiglia che può giudicare questo allontanamento come un tradimento nei confronti delle proprie origini.

Trovare un equilibrio tra queste due istanze culturali è un compito molto difficile: questi ragazzi rischiano di trovarsi imprigionati in un limbo, in perenne bilico tra due culture, senza sentirsi mai completamente parte di nessuna delle due.

Una ragazza albanese, che è venuta in colloquio da me allo sportello d'ascolto di un Istituto Superiore della provincia di Forlì-Cesena, mi racconta che inizialmente non riusciva ad ambientarsi in Italia, i cambiamenti erano stati troppo rapidi e profondi per lei, ma poi inizia ad ambientarsi, frequenta la scuola e impara in fretta l'italiano perché, dice lei *“Capisco che sapere la lingua è l'unico modo per fare amicizia con i miei compagni e sentirmi meno sola”*. Con il tempo in effetti si inserisce in modo positivo in classe e stringe dei legami amicali con diverse ragazze, dice di sentirsi bene in Italia, ma di non dimenticare di venire da un'altra nazione. Tutto ciò le provoca una grande confusione, e la fa sentire divisa a metà.

La migrazione rappresenta un cambiamento profondo, che induce spesso sentimenti ambivalenti di perdita e separazione che influenzano l'immagine di sé, il rapporto con il Paese d'accoglienza e con la propria cultura di appartenenza. I pedagogisti Demetrio e Favaro, si sono interrogati su cosa significa *“costruire l'identità in un contesto sociale che non è quello d'origine”* (Demetrio, Favaro, 1997, p.55). Da questa riflessione emerge che gli adolescenti di origine straniera sono più fragili, in quanto devono da un lato affrontare i cambiamenti e le crisi che caratterizzano il periodo dell'adolescenza, dall'altro elaborare la propria identità all'interno di molteplici contesti culturali, ciò implica diverse conseguenze (Demetrio, Favaro, 1997). La famiglia può costituire per loro un modello di identificazione debole, poiché veicola valori e tradizioni diverse da quelle presenti nel nuovo contesto di vita. Nella nuova realtà inoltre i genitori possono perdere agli occhi dei propri figli autorevolezza e credibilità, in quanto spesso non sono in grado di muoversi con disinvoltura all'interno della nuova società. *“I cambiamenti somatici, psichici, sociali sono in qualche modo marcati etnicamente e culturalmente”* (Demetrio, Favaro, 1997, p.55), perciò l'influenza esplicita o implicita del paese di provenienza è un fattore determinante nel processo di identificazione individuale e sociale.

In molti casi gli adolescenti stranieri non possono contare su referenti esterni (la famiglia, il gruppo dei pari, gli adulti in genere) in grado di aiutarli e sostenerli nella gestione delle diverse appartenenze culturali (Demetrio, Favaro, 1997).

Gli adolescenti di origine straniera, che sono arrivati in Italia da poco tempo, devono elaborare lo *“shock culturale”* (Santos Firmino, 2008, p.72-73) causato dall'inserimento in un ambiente nuovo. Non possedere punti di riferimento stabili e certi nella società in cui si vive incide negativamente sul processo di strutturazione dell'identità in termini di autostima personale e sicurezza emotiva

Emigrare è sicuramente una scelta difficile e complessa, perché influenza profondamente l'immagine e la stima che il soggetto ha di se stesso, però non bisogna dimenticare che il migrante adulto ha deciso volontariamente di compiere il viaggio migratorio. Ben diversa è la situazione in cui vertono i figli di immigrati. Questi ultimi non hanno la possibilità di scegliere, devono obbedire alle decisioni prese dagli adulti senza neanche essere consultati; il loro parere non conta, sono troppo piccoli per avere voce in capitolo. Questa situazione di incertezza e di non considerazione mi è stata spesso raccontata durante i colloqui che ho fatto allo sportello di ascolto, un'altra ragazza straniera mi ha raccontato *“Mia mamma ed io siamo venute in Italia un anno fa perché mio padre aveva un lavoro stabile, ma nessuno mi ha mai chiesto se ero felice di venire qua, mi è stato solo detto che vivere in Italia era meglio per me, ma io non lo credo, mi mancano i miei amici, qua non ne ho”*.

In altri casi succede che col tempo la situazione cambia radicalmente e dopo un primo periodo di spaesamento causato dalla novità del nuovo contesto, dalla poca conoscenza della lingua i ragazzi stranieri iniziano ad ambientarsi nella nuova società, apprendono in fretta la lingua e i nuovi codici culturali, fino ad arrivare a muoversi con sicurezza nel nuovo contesto, spesso in modo migliore dei loro genitori. Sentendosi sempre più parte del contesto in cui vivono, diventano più autonomi e critici nei confronti dei genitori con i quali hanno scontri frequenti. Racconta una ragazza marocchina: *“ I miei genitori sono insoddisfatti del mio comportamento, dicono che voglio essere troppo italiana e mi sto dimenticando le mie origini. Io gli rinfaccio che mi hanno portato loro in Italia e che adesso che sto bene qua e mi sono ambientata voglio uscire con le mie amiche, andare alle feste, truccarmi e sentirmi uguale a loro”*.

La richiesta che ho riscontrato in molti dei racconti di questi ragazzi immigrati è stata quella di aiutarli a capire se era più giusto continuare a seguire le usanze e le regole della loro cultura di appartenenza come richiesto dalla famiglia o, invece, scontrarsi con i genitori e rispondere alle aspettative che loro percepiscono da parte del gruppo dei pari e dalla scuola. Gli adolescenti immigrati sentono la necessità di doversi schierarsi da una parte o dall'altra e non vedono nessuna possibilità di integrazione tra queste due istanze.

Il lavoro clinico che ho svolto con loro ha avuto come obiettivo proprio quello di aiutarli a capire innanzitutto quali erano i loro bisogni, e a non seguire, a priori nessuna delle due richieste. La tendenza attualizzante (Rogers, 1980) ha rappresentato per me terapeuta una forza indispensabile sulla quale poter contare, nel tentativo di aiutare i miei clienti a dare voce alle loro esigenze e di diventare persone più consapevoli e congruenti.

Nei primi colloqui ho osservato che l'incongruenza che i ragazzi vivevano faceva sì che si sentissero minacciati e angosciati, comportandosi in maniera difensiva. In questi casi ciò si

manifestava principalmente attraverso la rabbia che esprimevano nei confronti dei genitori visti o come retrogradi e rimasti attaccati alle loro tradizioni oppure come quelli che li hanno sradicati dalle loro città nei quali erano nati e dove loro avevano tutti i loro affetti e si sentivano al sicuro.

Grazie ad un clima accogliente e accettante, gli adolescenti si sono trovati in una situazione in cui si sono sentiti liberi di essere veramente se stessi e hanno potuto vedere il fatto di appartenere ad un'altra cultura non più solamente come un ostacolo, ma anche come una fonte di ricchezza dalla quale attingere, come una caratteristica da non disprezzare, ma da coltivare, anche se dall'altro lato sentono molto forte anche l'importanza dell'integrazione nella società che li ha accolti, sono riusciti a capire che non devono scegliere se essere da una parte o dall'altra, ma che tutto fa parte di loro e queste due parti possono convivere. Il mio atteggiamento di calda comprensione e accettazione incondizionata li ha incoraggiati ad esplorare le loro emozioni, che nell'atmosfera sicura del rapporto terapeutico, sono state viste non più come minaccia, ma sono state assimilate nella struttura del Sé insieme alle esperienze ormai simbolizzate e questo ha permesso loro di diventare persone adattate, mature e funzionanti, in grado di pensare in modo realistico alla loro esperienza di vita.

Nella relazione terapeutica è molto importante ascoltare veramente l'altro in modo empatico, perché questo è il primo passo per dare visibilità al suo personale vissuto e ai suoi bisogni, per fargli sentire che in quello spazio il terapeuta vuole incontrarlo nel suo modo di vedere il mondo e nelle sue emozioni, che sono il canale privilegiato per aprire la relazione. Tutto questo ha permesso, agli adolescenti che ho incontrato, di fare esperienza del proprio mondo interno, con le proprie esperienze emozionali, facilitando il progressivo superamento della distorta percezione di sé e l'acquisizione di un migliore funzionamento della persona. Le emozioni rivestono un ruolo decisivo sia nel favorire il benessere della persona, che nel processo di cambiamento di un individuo, perciò il rapporto psicoterapeutico diviene un significativo luogo del cambiamento, in cui grazie all'alleanza terapeutica (Rogers, 1961) è possibile sperimentare delle esperienze emotivo correttive. Credo che questo sia stato molto vero nei casi che ho affrontato: i ragazzi hanno sentito che potevano avere uno spazio tutto loro dove erano visti, dove potevano permettersi di essere veramente se stessi, anche con la loro fragilità, con le loro paure, con la loro rabbia, dove hanno sperimentato fiducia nei loro confronti e quell'accettazione positiva incondizionata che hanno sentito venire meno dal momento in cui sono venuti in Italia. Ogni relazione terapeutica è unica e si delinea a partire da noi terapeuti, dalla nostra crescita come persone e dalla nostra capacità di entrare in relazione profonda con il cliente, ma anche dalla nostra capacità di metterci in gioco come persone. Credo che la qualità della presenza del terapeuta, la sua congruenza e la sua capacità

di essere veramente se stesso, al di là del ruolo, determini la relazione e la renda significativa e quindi terapeutica.

Nel mio rapporto con i ragazzi immigrati penso che la mia autenticità e congruenza siano state di fondamentale importanza: fare capire loro il mio interesse profondo verso le loro storie e soprattutto che il mio era uno sguardo non giudicante, ma accettante e comprensivo nei loro confronti, li ha aiutati molto nel progredire nel loro processo terapeutico. Ciò che è avvenuto è stato un cambiamento profondo nel loro modo di essere, nell'immediatezza del sentire e in una maggiore capacità di entrare in contatto con le loro emozioni e con i loro bisogni nel qui e ora.

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**Cause e strategie di gestione dei conflitti interculturali tra infermieri e utenti.  
Uno studio fenomenologico-ermeneutico in un contesto italiano**

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**Problema:** La letteratura infermieristica indica unanimemente la necessità di comprendere e rispettare le richieste culturali dei pazienti, evitando di basare l'assistenza su paradigmi fondati sulla sola cultura dell'infermiere. Tuttavia, pochi studi descrivono le strategie attraverso cui gli infermieri possono gestire i conflitti all'interno delle situazioni assistenziali caratterizzate interculturalmente.

**Obiettivo:** Esplorare i conflitti culturali tra infermieri e utenti con differenti background culturali, al fine di identificare le loro cause e i principali elementi che ne facilitano od ostacolano la gestione positiva.

**Disegno di ricerca:** Indagine qualitativa basata sul metodo fenomenologico-ermeneutico con studio di casi multipli. Sono state condotte 16 interviste semi-strutturate con infermieri che avevano vissuto situazioni di conflitto con utenti con differenti background culturali.

**Risultati:** Sono state enucleate tre grandi tematiche:

- *Cause dei conflitti interculturali:* problemi legati all'incomprensione linguistica e differenti significati attribuiti alle abitudini di vita e curative.
- *Gestione inefficace dei conflitti interculturali.* I pregiudizi reciproci, la mancanza di conoscenze sulla cultura dei pazienti e un cattivo uso della traduzione linguistica sembrano ostacolare la risoluzione dei conflitti culturali. Spesso l'incomprensione o il conflitto sono sopiti, controllati, ma non elaborati, e la situazione si risolve con una delle parti che cede alle richieste dell'altra.
- *Gestione efficace del conflitto interculturale.* L'apertura reciproca all'altro, l'uso trasparente e responsabile della mediazione linguistico-culturale, una buona capacità di controllo delle emozioni e la volontà corrisposta di ricercare una soluzione sono le modalità di una gestione efficace del conflitto culturale. Gli esiti che ne conseguono sono positivi per tutte le parti coinvolte e creano climi lavorativi aperti a soluzioni innovative.

**Conclusioni:** i conflitti culturali sono probabilmente molto più numerosi di quanto sia stato documentato e le loro conseguenze sono difficilmente misurabili. La prima causa di conflitto è la mancata elaborazione delle differenze culturali. Gli infermieri necessitano di specifiche competenze interculturali per gestire tali situazioni.

**Keywords:** nursing; cultural competences; cultural conflict; phenomenology

## Background

Nella letteratura infermieristica, per “conflitto culturale” s’intende un contrasto tra utenti e infermieri che si riferisce alle procedure di assistenza ritenute inutili e/o preoccupanti e/o pericolose da uno o l’altro dei protagonisti, in quanto falliscono nell’incontrare le aspettative culturali dell’altro, nonché le sue credenze, valori o stili di vita (Leininger & McFarland, 2002, 65).

### Le possibili cause di conflitto interculturale nell’assistenza infermieristica

Le possibili cause di conflitto interculturale in ambito assistenziale possono essere sostanzialmente aggregate in tre categorie, molto sovrapposte e interconnesse le une alle altre (Mantovani 2000; Manara 2004).

Le *difficoltà linguistiche* sono classificate al primo posto tra i problemi di gestione dell’assistenza interculturale (Bernard et al., 2006; Festini et al., 2009), e possono portare a una diagnosi infermieristica sbagliata, a cure inappropriate per il paziente o a uno spreco di risorse (Hultsjo & Hjelm, 2005; Fathai et al., 2010). La mancanza di comunicazione può essere causa di conflitti culturali quando, ad esempio, impedisce al paziente di esprimere la propria idea, le proprie preoccupazioni su una determinata procedura infermieristica (Jirwe et al., 2010). In queste situazioni, gli infermieri riportano spesso: senso di frustrazione, disagio (van Rooyen et al. 2010), desiderio di fuga (Dogan et al., 2009), fino all’estremo dell’abbandono della professione (Liou et al., 2011). Tali difficoltà non sempre sono risolvibili con il servizio di traduzione professionale, la cui utilità è controversa (Fathai et al., 2010; Bernard et al., 2006; Pergert et al., 2007; Hoye e Severinsson, 2010a; Pergert et al., 2007; Dogan et al., 2009; Mazzetti 2003; Manara, 2004).

Una seconda causa di conflitti interculturali origina dalle *incomprensioni sui significati* che nelle diverse culture vengono attribuiti ai gesti, alle parole stesse o ai riti (Okougha & Tilki, 2010; Mantovani, 2000; Mazzetti, 2003). Le differenze di significato sono soprattutto evidenti nella comunicazione non verbale (Okougha & Tilki, 2010; Van Rooyen et al, 2010; Jirwe et al, 2010; Hoye & Severinsson, 2010b; Hultsjo & Hjelm, 2005), nello stesso gesto di cura (Hoye & Severinsson, 2010b; Manara 2004), o nelle procedure ospedaliere (Hoye & Severinsson, 2010b; Le Breton, 1989).

La terza categoria di cause di conflitti interculturali riguardano i *principi ed i valori morali*. La letteratura descrive alcune classiche situazioni di conflitto quali il rifiuto al trapianto o trasfusione di emocomponenti, le richieste di mutilazioni genitali o ancora le differenti valutazioni di pratiche quali l’interruzione volontaria di gravidanza (Sala, 2004; Sala & Manara, 2001). Più specificatamente, per determinate culture, come ad esempio quella araba, gli infermieri lamentano che non possono comunicare alle pazienti donne in prima persona, ma solo attraverso il capo-famiglia maschio che fa da tramite tra i sanitari e paziente (Hoye & Severinsson, 2010b; Pergert et al., 2007). Per molte autrici infermiere che si riconoscono nel pensiero femminista, questa situazione è inaccettabile (Blackford & Street, 2002; Hoye & Severinsson, 2010b).

### Le competenze culturali dell’infermiere

Con Cross et al. (1989) definiamo le competenze culturali come “un insieme di comportamenti, atteggiamenti e politiche che diventano patrimonio comune di un sistema, di un’agenzia o fra professionisti e che mette in grado quel sistema, quella agenzia o quei professionisti di lavorare efficacemente in un contesto interculturale”.

Tali competenze sono state fortemente rilanciate negli ultimi anni in ambito sanitario, grazie alla *Dichiarazione di Amsterdam* dell’Unione Europea del 2001 per la creazione di ospedali *migrant-friendly* ([www.mfh-eu.net](http://www.mfh-eu.net)), e a seguito delle dichiarazioni di alcune delle più importanti associazioni mediche negli USA (Betancourt, 2004). Infatti, le competenze culturali in sanità hanno chiaramente una componente professionale/interpersonale ma anche una organizzativa (Tabella 1, Chiarenza, 2012).

< Tabella 1 >

Nonostante la letteratura internazionale sia ricca di indicazioni teoriche sulle caratteristiche delle competenze interculturali che l'infermiere deve avere, sono tuttavia rari, specialmente nel contesto italiano, studi che mettano in luce le competenze specifiche necessarie per fronteggiare le più frequenti situazioni di conflitto interculturale.

### **Scopo dello studio**

Esplorare in un contesto italiano i casi di conflitto culturale tra infermieri e utenti portatori di differenti appartenenze culturali, al fine di identificare le principali cause e gli elementi che facilitano od ostacolano la gestione positiva del conflitto.

### **Disegno dello studio**

Indagine qualitativa basata sul metodo fenomenologico-ermeneutico (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) con studio di casi multipli (Morse, 1991; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

### **Campione e contesto**

È stato individuato un campione propositivo di partecipanti, a partire dal contatto con Coordinatori infermieri, i quali hanno indicato operatori che avevano avuto situazioni di conflitto interculturale (*snowballing sampling*) (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In questo modo, sono stati individuati 16 infermieri/studenti del III anno dell'Ospedale Universitario San Raffaele di Milano, che avevano vissuto situazioni di conflitto con pazienti, familiari o caregivers portatori di differenti orizzonti culturali. L'Ospedale San Raffaele di Milano è un grande nosocomio universitario di circa 1.100 posti letto che ricovera ogni anno pazienti provenienti da oltre 120 nazioni differenti. Poiché con le prime 16 interviste si è raggiunta la saturazione dei dati, non sono stati interpellati altri infermieri.

### **Metodi di raccolta dei dati**

Le domande-guida che hanno condotto i ricercatori sono state le seguenti: "Come viene descritto il conflitto con pazienti, familiari o caregivers che hanno una diversa provenienza culturale rispetto a quella dell'infermiere? Quali sono i fattori-chiave che hanno determinato l'esito positivo o negativo del conflitto?"

Tutte le interviste si sono svolte in un setting che ha garantito tranquillità e isolamento per l'intera durata dell'intervista. Le interviste, registrate su file audio, sono state condotte da due laureande in infermieristica appositamente formate e supervisionate.

### **Aspetti etici**

E' stata ottenuta l'autorizzazione del Comitato etico, della Direzione sanitaria e infermieristica dell'Ospedale e dei responsabili medici e infermieristici delle Unità operative interessate. Non sono stati raccolti dati che permettessero la classificazione o il coinvolgimento in alcun modo degli utenti coinvolti. Agli infermieri intervistati è stato garantito anonimato e confidenzialità, ed è stato raccolto il loro consenso informato scritto.

### **Metodo di analisi dei dati**

I dati sono stati analizzati con il metodo fenomenologico-ermeneutico che prevede individuazione di unità di significato, categorie e macrocategorie/temi a partire dalla trascrizione integrale delle

interviste (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Dalla prima lettura delle interviste, il gruppo di ricerca ha mantenuto un diario, con le osservazioni/suggerimenti che emergevano dalle letture delle interviste e dalle discussioni in gruppo (Silverman, 2000).

L'enucleazione delle unità di significato (*labelling*) e le fasi successive di elaborazione dei materiali sono state svolte in cieco, per permettere la triangolazione tra ricercatori. Al termine dell'elaborazione dei risultati le categorie sono state sottoposte a tutti gli infermieri intervistati per il *member checking*.

## Risultati

Sono state condotte complessivamente 16 interviste: 14 donne e 2 uomini, 14 di nazionalità italiana, 1 polacca e 1 spagnola. Fra gli intervistati, 3 erano studenti del III anno del corso di laurea in infermieristica. L'anzianità media degli infermieri è di 19 anni (range 5-35). La durata media delle interviste è stata di 17 minuti (range 7-31).

Tre temi sono emersi dall'analisi dei materiali raccolti.

### A. *Le cause e le conseguenze dei conflitti*

La grande maggioranza degli infermieri intervistati percepisce come raro il *conflitto interculturale*, intendendolo, quando presente, come vero e proprio scontro tra posizioni differenti; sono invece comuni le *incomprensioni* e le tensioni tra infermieri e utenti con background differenti in particolare rispetto al problema della lingua, delle abitudini di vita, dell'educazione dei figli ricoverati e dell'alimentazione. La lingua soprattutto è di per sé un problema ed una fonte di incomprensioni, ma è al tempo stesso una barriera che ostacola la comprensione di tutti i possibili elementi di conflitto, aggravandone o ritardandone il processo di elaborazione.

Alcune intervistate, soprattutto italiane e con poca esperienza professionale, citano come causa di conflitto degli episodi di mancato riconoscimento dell'autorevolezza professionale delle infermiere, in quanto donne da parte di soggetti appartenenti a specifici contesti culturali (arabi, nord-africani). La comunicazione inefficace tra infermieri e utenti può comportare, secondo gli intervistati, conseguenze sulla qualità dell'assistenza infermieristica, che risulta compromessa e impoverita, con successive ricadute cliniche per i pazienti, nonché disagi al personale.

### B. *Modalità ed esiti di una gestione inefficace del conflitto*

Un combinato di fattori organizzativi e personali, relativi a entrambe le parti in gioco, emerge come causa di insuccesso nella gestione del conflitto, impedendo di fatto la ricerca di una soluzione condivisa e portando ad una chiusura del dialogo. I fattori *organizzativi* concernono la mancanza di tempo per comprendere i bisogni di assistenza del paziente o l'impossibilità sul piano lavorativo ed organizzativo di trovare un punto di incontro tra le parti. I fattori *personali* sul versante degli infermieri riguardano le poche conoscenze delle culture e dei contesti sociali di provenienza dei pazienti, in quanto queste influenzano la qualità e l'intensità delle richieste da parte del paziente stesso o dei suoi familiari. Inoltre, gli infermieri riconoscono che avere pregiudizi sui pazienti o sulle loro etnie di provenienza non facilita l'incontro e la gestione del conflitto.

Sul versante dei pazienti/familiari, gli intervistati segnalano come un loro forte senso di appartenenza culturale irrigidisca la loro posizione e non favorisca il dialogo. Così pure, quando i pazienti mostrano atteggiamenti aggressivi o pretenziosi, ciò ostacola la gestione del conflitto e aumenta il rischio di incomprensioni con il personale, soprattutto per gli operatori con meno esperienza.

La relazione con [quel] paziente doveva essere molto controllata: bisognava prenderlo con le pinze per evitare delle reazioni esagerate. Ha avuto rapporti difficili sia con gli operatori che con il vicino di stanza e sua moglie. (5.STUD.81)

Un utilizzo strumentale e/o non pienamente responsabile degli strumenti della mediazione linguistica-culturale è spesso indicato dagli intervistati come causa o concausa di una gestione del

conflitto inefficace. Spesso, secondo gli infermieri, la traduzione risulta inefficace perché resta a livello della traduzione letterale di una frase, senza permettere la costruzione di una relazione interpersonale tra sanitario e paziente.

Una parte consistente degli intervistati, soprattutto gli esperti, afferma di non “fidarsi pienamente” (14.PS) della qualità della traduzione svolta dai familiari. In alcuni casi, pazienti e familiari strumentalizzano le difficoltà linguistiche per “fare quello che vogliono” (2.DHOE) o perché intendono celare alcuni fatti, ad esempio violenze e/o abusi familiari, o ancora non riferiscono aspetti dell’esperienza di malattia a loro dire meno importanti (14.PS; 10.DHEMA).

Alcuni infermieri riferiscono di come il conflitto possa addirittura non manifestarsi a causa della stessa incomprensione linguistica, perché impedisce alle parti di comprendere le posizioni dell’altro potenzialmente conflittuali con le proprie.

In tutti questi casi, la gestione del conflitto risulta inefficace poiché, come dice un’intervistata: “Quando sia gli infermieri che i parenti rimangono nelle proprie convinzioni e manca un ascolto reciproco si può contenere il conflitto, ma non risolverlo” (11.ARITMO). L’obiettivo di ricercare una soluzione condivisa viene meno e il conflitto sfocia nella resa di una delle parti alla soluzione proposta o imposta dall’altro.

I casi di vera e propria chiusura al dialogo sono rari, ma estremamente gravi, e pongono il malato in condizioni di non sicurezza. Viceversa, altre volte è il paziente o il familiare che si adegua o è costretto ad adeguarsi alle regole dell’ospedale o alle indicazioni assistenziali delle infermiere, pur non condividendole. In questi casi, il conflitto, almeno superficialmente, appare risolto, ma la mancata condivisione delle decisioni adottate lascia delle conseguenze.

Per alcuni infermieri, anche stranieri, restare nelle proprie convinzioni e chiudere il dialogo impoverisce il valore dell’assistenza infermieristica, e ne mette a rischio i risultati, spesso aumentandone i costi (indagini diagnostiche/terapie supplementari e inutili). Esistono poi conseguenze negative anche sul vissuto dei pazienti, che in alcuni casi si sentono trascurati, perseguitati o discriminati e arrivano ad accusare il personale di razzismo: “Il paziente ha un comportamento aggressivo perché pensa di essere discriminato [...] in quanto straniero” (4.CCH).

### **C. Modalità ed esiti di una gestione efficace del conflitto**

La maggioranza degli intervistati crede che sia necessario trovare un codice linguistico comune tra infermieri e utenti, in quanto questo facilita la gestione del conflitto. Alcuni segnalano il ricorso alla comunicazione non verbale come una strategia efficace. Sembra indispensabile un atteggiamento reciproco di disponibilità, apertura, ascolto e dialogo.

La reciprocità è tuttavia un aspetto che pochi infermieri segnalano. La maggioranza ritiene che la gestione del conflitto sia interamente nelle mani degli infermieri, della loro capacità di ascolto e di mediazione. Per alcuni infermieri esperti, invece, è chiaro come la gestione efficace del conflitto richieda necessariamente a tutte le parti in gioco una reciproca apertura nei confronti dell’altro, l’uso corretto degli strumenti di traduzione linguistica e una consapevolezza dei propri pregiudizi.

Bisogna essere in una situazione di ascolto, certo viene più semplice quando anche dall’altra parte c’è un ascolto e quindi le istanze dell’uno e dell’altro vengono soppesate tutte in modo importante quindi ci si sente accolti oltre che accogliere ci si sente anche accolti e si istaura facilmente un clima [di] collaborazione. (12.ARITMO)

Anche in presenza di atteggiamenti aggressivi da parte di familiari, parenti o caregivers, gli infermieri si sforzano di evitare il litigio, e cercano una soluzione di compromesso condivisa tra le posizioni in campo, che permetta di risolvere il conflitto. L’accettazione di tali comportamenti provoca disagio nelle infermiere, soprattutto se inesperte. Di fronte a un’incomprensione o a un conflitto, l’obiettivo, come spiega un’infermiera straniera (4.CCH), è di cercare una soluzione tra le regole dell’istituzione e la tradizione culturale del paziente o dei suoi familiari. Non si tratta di modificare le opinioni dell’altro, ma di trovare un accordo, un compromesso valido per entrambi.

Un insieme di elementi che molti intervistati pongono come indispensabili per la buona gestione del conflitto è relativo alla gestione della sfera emotiva e valoriale degli infermieri coinvolti. Soprattutto nei momenti di forte tensione, occorre che gli infermieri abbiano un buon equilibrio emotivo, senso di responsabilità e principi deontologici chiari. Allo stesso modo, nei momenti di

forte conflitto è richiesto anche ai pazienti/familiari la stessa capacità di controllo delle proprie emozioni e un certo grado di fiducia nel personale sanitario.

Alcuni infermieri segnalano che l'accettazione di soluzioni condivise è facilitata quando il paziente e i familiari provengono da contesti sociali non costrittivi e disponibili essi stessi al confronto. Una maggiore conoscenza del background culturale e delle motivazioni che sostengono le richieste dei pazienti e dei familiari è indicata da molte delle infermiere intervistate.

La risoluzione condivisa del conflitto interculturale è gratificante per gli infermieri intervistati. Il personale infermieristico è ripagato dal senso di gratitudine dei pazienti/familiari stranieri e dall'essere riuscito a gestire il conflitto verso una conclusione positiva, mantenendo alti i risultati dell'assistenza infermieristica. La fiducia del paziente/familiare gratifica gli infermieri e valorizza il loro ruolo. Inoltre, secondo un'intervistata (11.ARITMO), la risoluzione positiva del conflitto mette ciascuno in una condizione di serenità e di fiducia e crea nel team una memoria condivisa sulla quale contare nelle esperienze successive.

## Discussione

Sembra che gli infermieri intervistati abbiano una percezione negativa del termine "conflitto (culturale)" e non accettino l'idea di una relazione conflittuale con gli utenti. Come dice un'infermiera straniera "non puoi assolutamente permettere di reagire come magari reagiresti a casa" (4.CCH). In alcune interviste è parso che far emergere il conflitto con gli utenti non fosse un'opzione contemplabile nelle scelte assistenziali o fosse vissuto come un insuccesso dell'assistenza, piuttosto che semplicemente e realisticamente la presa d'atto di una "tensione percepita e/o reale tra valori, aspettative, processi o risultati tra due o più parti" (Ting-Toomey & Gudykunst, 1988).

Il fenomeno del conflitto interculturale è forse sottostimato, anche perché instaura una dinamica relazionale che impoverisce il contenuto della comunicazione. Infermieri e utenti, per motivi diversi, tendono a ridurre il confronto per limitare le occasioni di contrasto. In questo modo, una situazione caratterizzata da un'apparente mancanza di conflitto potrebbe significare una relazione assistenziale superficiale ed un conflitto in realtà silente. Questo fenomeno è già stato descritto da Leininger & McFarland, che hanno parlato, in queste situazioni, di una "cospirazione del silenzio" (2002, 61).

Quanto alle cause del conflitto, i nostri dati confermano molte delle indicazioni già presenti in letteratura, anche per quanto riguarda la visione pregiudiziale dell'infermiera donna da parte di alcuni utenti (Hoye & Severinsson, 2010b).

Tutti gli atteggiamenti e le strategie posti in essere dagli infermieri nella gestione, tanto efficace quanto inefficace, dei conflitti sono riconducibili al concetto di competenza culturale e alle sue categorie interpersonali (Chiarenza, 2012; cfr. Tab. 1). Eppure, la nozione stessa di "competenza culturale" non è mai stata citata nelle interviste, né tantomeno emerge negli infermieri la consapevolezza e la percezione del proprio grado di competenza culturale. Questo dato è in linea con quanto affermato da altri studi su personale infermieristico (Berlin et al., 2010; Sidumo et al., 2010; Dogan et al., 2009).

I pregiudizi risultano presenti e difficili da controllare, tanto negli infermieri quanto nei pazienti e familiari, in accordo con la letteratura (Blackford & Street, 2002; Chiarenza, 2012; Leininger & McFarland, 2002). La loro presenza è tanto più negativa rispetto all'evoluzione condivisa del conflitto quanto più inconsapevole ne è il loro portatore (Good, 1999; Mantovani, 2000).

Dai dati emergono strategie, attenzioni organizzative e strumenti che possono, a diversi livelli, essere facilitanti nella risoluzione positiva del conflitto interculturale in ambito assistenziale. Anzitutto il tema dei servizi di traduzione linguistico-culturale, che devono in qualche modo essere dispensati dall'istituzione sanitaria. L'efficacia del ricorso al canale non verbale indicata dagli intervistati è sostenuta da molti studi (Jirwe et al, 2010), ma può generare anche fraintendimenti (Okougha & Tilki, 2010; Mazzetti, 2003). Il coinvolgimento del gruppo interprofessionale di unità operativa è un'altra strategia che molti intervistati riportano come efficace. E' possibile quindi affermare che l'infermiere utilizza un approccio multi-metodo per impostare la relazione interculturale con il paziente nonostante le difficoltà e le incomprensioni del percorso.

Il rispetto delle credenze, dei valori e delle specifiche concezioni di salute e malattia, la comprensione e l'accoglienza delle richieste assistenziali dei pazienti pongono l'intera relazione tra infermieri e utenti su un piano di apertura e fiducia reciproca. Il tema della reciprocità è stato indicato da una minoranza degli intervistati, mentre il ricorso al dialogo come strumento per la ricerca dell'incontro e della mediazione è un tema trasversale alle interviste, a conferma delle indicazioni della letteratura (Dogan et al, 2009; Leininger, 2001; Manara, 2004; Mazzetti 2003).

Un elemento determinante per entrambi i soggetti coinvolti nel conflitto è tuttavia la capacità di gestire le proprie emozioni. Molti degli intervistati riconoscono in questo una delle condizioni indispensabili per il contenimento e la risoluzione negoziale del conflitto interculturale, in linea con la letteratura (Good, 1999; Mantovani, 2000; Mazzetti, 2003).

La soluzione del conflitto è quindi positiva quando l'accordo mantiene un senso per entrambi, anche se quest'ultimo può variarne ovviamente di significato (Sclavi & Sisskind, 2011). In questo senso, è efficace poiché raggiunge un obiettivo assistenziale riconoscibile e apprezzabile dalle parti. Al contrario, la soluzione è negativa, ovvero inefficace, quando una delle parti è costretta a subire le decisioni dell'altra, senza tuttavia averle elaborate, comprese o accettate. In questo caso il risultato deve ritenersi inefficace anche quando a imporsi è la posizione degli infermieri poiché è lecito chiedersi a quali costi è avvenuta tale imposizione, in termini di fiducia persa, di rafforzamento di pregiudizi e di comportamenti che, una volta lasciato il contesto ospedaliero, torneranno ad essere a rischio. In questo senso, potremmo dire che la prima vera causa del conflitto interculturale non risiede tanto nelle differenze culturali - di lingue, significati o valori -, ma nella loro mancata elaborazione. Conseguentemente, il conflitto può essere inteso come reazione fisiologica, e la sua emersione come un passaggio necessario per entrambi i protagonisti. Senza tale affioramento, e senza una qualche elaborazione dei termini del conflitto, con il loro corollario di tensioni e di difficoltà relazionali, c'è quindi da chiedersi la validità o la solidità del compromesso raggiunto (Manara 2004; Sclavi & Sisskind, 2011).

La finalità stessa della relazione infermieristica interculturale sembra essere cambiata nel corso degli anni. Se nei lavori di Leininger uno degli obiettivi del nursing transculturale era esplicitamente la contenzione degli scontri culturali (1995, 13), oggi le indicazioni della ricerca parrebbero confermare le indicazioni europee sulle competenze culturali (Betancourt, 2004; Chiarenza, 2012), orientando gli obiettivi dell'assistenza non tanto verso il contenimento dei conflitti, quanto verso la loro risoluzione attraverso un confronto costruttivo, grazie ad una negoziazione mirata e all'individuazione di soluzioni condivise.

Ulteriori studi sono certamente necessari per focalizzare le modalità e le strategie per gestire il conflitto interculturale mediante la sua emersione, il suo contenimento e la ricerca di soluzioni condivise anche e soprattutto nel contesto italiano, che ha una storia relativamente "giovane" di assistenza interculturale.

## Limiti

Pur avendo raggiunto la saturazione dei risultati, viene ribadita la non rappresentatività dei dati rispetto alla situazione italiana.

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**Tabella 1: Le competenze culturali interpersonali nelle cure sanitarie (Chiarenza, 2012)**

- Riconoscere e rispettare le credenze, i valori, le concezioni di salute, le preferenze e i bisogni del paziente
- Stabilire un rapporto di fiducia
- Ricercare un terreno comune
- Essere consapevoli dei propri pregiudizi/ assunzioni
- Essere consapevoli delle disparità e delle barriere nei servizi
- Usare in modo efficace i servizi di mediazione interculturale.

## Causes and strategies of management for intercultural conflicts between nurses and clients. An hermeneutic-phenomenological study in an Italian context

Manara Duilio F, Galli Emanuele, Alberti Linda, Nestola Priscilla, Sperlecchi Sara, Zannini Lucia

**Problem:** Nursing literature unanimously point out the need for understanding patients' cultural demands, and avoiding to deliver assistance based on paradigms just built on nurses' cultural backgrounds. However, only a few studies have described strategies that can help nurses to manage conflicts that may arise within inter-culturally characterized care situations.

**Objective:** To explore cultural conflicts between nurses and clients with different cultural backgrounds, in order to identify their causes and the main factors that facilitate or hinder the positive management of those conflicts.

**Research design:** Qualitative study based on phenomenological-hermeneutic method with a purposive sample of nurses. Sixteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with nurses who had experienced conflicts with patients with a different cultural background.

**Results:** Three major themes were identified:

- *Causes of intercultural conflicts:* linguistic incomprehension and different meanings given to lifestyles and caring.
- *Ineffective management of intercultural conflicts.* Reciprocal prejudices, lack of knowledge about patients' culture and misuse of language seem to hinder the resolution of the cultural conflicts. Misunderstandings or conflicts are often unexpressed or restrained, but they are rarely managed; often conflicts are solved by giving up by one of the protagonists.
- *Effective management of intercultural conflicts.* Mutual openness to the other, transparent and accountable use of linguistic and cultural mediation, a good ability to manage emotions and desire to find a common solution are considered the right way for effective management of cultural conflicts. These outcomes are perceived as positive by all the parties involved, and create a positive environment, open to innovative solutions.

**Conclusions:** Cultural conflicts are probably more frequent than it has been documented, and their outcomes are difficult to measure. The first cause of conflict is the lack of elaboration of cultural differences. Nurses need intercultural competence to handle such situations.

**Keywords:** nursing; cultural competences; cultural conflict; phenomenology

## ***'You look like them!': On learning from negotiating difference and power asymmetries in intercultural interviews in the field of counselling.***

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### **Introduction**

We live in a multicultural, multiethnic and multinational world (Lago, 2010; McLeod, 2009). As a consequence for the counselling profession, 'the world (in the shape of client) can come into our room' (Lago, 2011, p. 5). Numerous terms have been used to describe the therapeutic process that takes place between counsellors and clients of diverse cultural backgrounds. Multi/trans/inter and cross-cultural counselling are some of them, often used interchangeably despite their distinct meanings. To avoid confusion, this paper will follow Gudykunst's (2000) use of the term 'intercultural' to refer to communication that takes place between two or more people of different cultural backgrounds.

Over the last decade a noticeable literature has been produced on the topic of intercultural counselling and the interrelated training that it involves, both in N. America and Europe. For example, the volumes of Lago (2011), Ponterotto and colleagues (2009) and Moodley and Palmer (2006) have all offered invaluable insights into this phenomenon. However, when compared to the overall body of literature in the field of counselling and psychotherapy, intercultural counselling is still a significantly under-researched area (Moodley, 2003). Existing literature

on this topic has mainly focused on the perspectives of culturally diverse clients (Moodley, 2007), often overlooking the other half of the therapeutic dyad. While the majority of practitioners are white middle class females (Lago, 2011), culturally diverse practitioners are part of the profession as well. In fact, as the number of international students who train as counsellors in N. America and the UK is constantly rising (Ng, 2012; Pattison & Robson, 2012), so does the need to investigate their experiences of training and practising across languages and cultures.

## The Project

My doctoral project, from which this paper derives, was born out of this necessity and explores the experiences of international trainees who practise in a foreign language and culture. Theoretically, my study is embedded in an interpretivist-phenomenological paradigm. Two groups of international counselling trainees (foreign native and non-native English speakers) were interviewed about their experiences of beginning counselling practice in the UK. Their interviews were then analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). As the recruitment of the sample was based on linguistic criteria, language-use was the main attribute that I was exploring. Participants however were invited to discuss any other aspect of their foreignness (in relation to practice) they wished to. Two of the non-native speaking participants were Asian and one of them –Claire- disclosed that her ethnic identity (and the fact that she was a ‘visible minority’) was very central in her experience of intercultural practice. This paper is based on an extract from Claire’s interview.

Georgiadou Lorena

*‘You look like them!’*

## Focus and Aim of the Paper

I consider culture (and therefore cultural diversity) to be multifaceted, and I agree with the notion that intercultural counselling should not be seen as a particular approach but as a ‘philosophy of practice’ embedded in all approaches (Moodley & Lubin, 2008). I also acknowledge the usefulness of exploring multiple socio-cultural attributes and their intersections instead of focusing only on race and ethnicity (see for example Moodley & Lubin’s discussion on the ‘big 7’ socio-cultural identities). As Lago (2010, p.76) suggested however, focusing on ‘generalized diversity’ can ‘overshadow the specific complexities raised’ in particular settings. This paper wishes to highlight one of those ‘specific complexities’; for this reason, cultural diversity will be examined only through the prism of ethnicity, and in particular, the visible aspect of ethnicity.

It needs to be clear that the paper will not focus on Claire’s experience of being an ‘ethnic minority trainee’. The analysis and discussion will follow how Claire pointed out and used her experience of being an ‘ethnic minority research interviewee’ to better explain her experience of intercultural practice and then focus on my response to this encounter. As we will see, Claire, at some point in her interview discusses the difficulties she experiences in intercultural practice by making a direct comparison between herself and me in terms of (visibility of) ethnicity (*‘you look like them’*). This excerpt will be used to illustrate the usefulness of observing the intercultural interviewing relationship and the interrelated power asymmetries to illuminate phenomena related to intercultural counselling. As I will argue, endorsing a reflexive stance and being aware of cultural difference when conducting intercultural interviews, can

enhance the quality of research in the field of intercultural counselling and beyond.

## **(Intercultural) Counselling and (Intercultural) Research**

### **Interviews**

In my project, I invited foreign trainees to discuss their experiences of *intercultural practice*, by inviting them to engage in another *intercultural communicative task*, namely being interviewed. So my participants were asked to discuss their experiences of communicating across languages and cultures with clients, by communicating across languages and cultures with the interviewer. While this may not have been evident for the participants, observing and analysing how they related to/communicated with me, and the power asymmetries that were involved in this encounter, has enriched my understanding of how participants may have been relating to/communicating with clients and the interrelated power asymmetries in intercultural practice. Put briefly, observation of intercultural research relationships and power dynamics has offered insight into intercultural counselling practice.

Scholars have pointed out parallels between qualitative interviewing and therapeutic sessions, mostly by highlighting the possible beneficial character of interviews for participants (Bondi, 2013). For example Birch and Miller (2000) suggested that as research interviews provide space for reflection and articulation of past experiences, interviewees may ‘experience the action of disclosing as a revelation’ (p.190). A detailed presentation of this literature as well as a discussion of the risks that such parallels might incorporate can be

found in Bondi's recent work (2013). Most of this discussion, however, focuses on the content of what is being discussed between interviewers-interviewees and practitioners-clients. I, on the other hand, wish to focus on the interactional aspect of these practices and the contextual similarities that may inhere: Both the therapeutic and the interviewing setting involve two people who meet in a (private) space in order to engage in a (purposeful) conversation, where one interlocutor is in a listening role and the other in a speaking role. I am aware that depending on the style of interviews held and type of therapy provided, these two contexts may vary significantly. In a hypothetical simplified version however, both settings involve consensual, purposeful one-to-one communication; put simply, in both settings people engage in interpersonal communicative tasks. Now when the phenomenon under investigation is the intercultural character of interpersonal communication (such as intercultural counselling), it suggested here that conducting interviews *interculturally* and paying attention to the power dynamics present in the (intercultural) research encounter, can be particularly useful. Before we move on to the presentation of Claire's case and the reflection upon power asymmetries in our intercultural encounter, it is worth gaining a better understanding of the literature around power dynamics in qualitative interviewing.

## **Power Dynamics and Qualitative Interviewing**

Power dynamics in social science research interviews is a topic that has been widely discussed in the existing literature. Post-modernist epistemological positions view knowledge as being co-produced between participant and researcher (Blaikie, 2010; Bryman, 2004; Mason, 2002). Researchers in these



paradigms criticise hierarchies between them and their participants and aim to 'minimise the distance and separateness of researcher-participant relationships (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009, p. 279). Different research traditions have suggested diverse ways of 'minimising' this 'distance', broadly summarised into two main positions.

To illustrate these positions, I will use a (simplified) example from the feminist research tradition. Researchers in this paradigm initially criticised the 'western and masculine research practice' (Sinding & Aronson, 2003, p. 95) of exploiting research participants. Aiming for equality and empowerment of their participants, feminists suggested a more egalitarian framework (of collaboration, transparency etc) that would eliminate some of the researcher - participant power differences (e.g. Finch, 1984; Oakley, 1981). Nonetheless, some 'feminist researchers have later pointed out the exploitive potentials' of those egalitarian, caring and emancipating interview relationships (Kvale, 2006, p. 482) and reconsidered their positions and practice. Broadly speaking, feminists started recognising the value of being aware of power dynamics in the research process rather than attempting to eliminate it. The latter view reflects a more Foucauldian understanding of research relationships where power cannot be equally 'distributed', simply because it is not 'possessed' and 'exercised' by some on others (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

The paradigm shift in feminist research, mirrors the two main positions towards power relations in qualitative research in general: Researchers either believe that it is possible to bridge the power differences and attempt to do so through egalitarian practices, or they identify and reflect on these gaps and consider

them a source for knowledge (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2013). The first position has been characterised as a rather utopian one, while the latter has been perceived as a more pragmatic view, reflecting the actual reality of research relationships (Ben-Ari and Enosh, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2001).

The present analysis will illustrate how my interview with Claire has made me reconsider my initially egalitarian position towards a more Foucauldian one, and how by starting to recognise, reflect upon, accept and make use of power differences in the interviewing setting has facilitated my understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and enhanced the quality of my work.

## **Presentation of the Case**

Claire is an Asian participant (country of origin concealed for anonymity) who came to the UK to train as a counsellor. At the time of the interview she had been in the UK for 18 months and had been practising as a counsellor in an agency for approximately 8 months. When discussing her experience of practising abroad, Claire appeared to be quite preoccupied by the fact that she was a visible 'ethnic minority'. Her main worry was that she might get stereotyped as '*unprofessional*' and '*naïve*' – attributes that she mentioned as being the 'typical stereotypes' for Asian people in Western societies. The following extract constitutes an illustrative example of Claire's position in relation to her ethnicity in practice:

*I fear that the client might think that how do you understand me, you are from far away, like say that 'you are not Caucasian'...*

This excerpt is quite self-explanatory: Claire is afraid that her clients might doubt her competence and reject her professional efficacy due to the 'visibility' of her

Georgiadou Lorena

*'You look like them!'*

ethnicity (*'you are not Caucasian'*). This position invites further discussion of ethnic minorities' experiences of racism in Western societies (see for example McKenzie-Mavinga, 2005; Watson, 2011) as well as issues of 'internalised racism' or internalised 'oppression' (Alleyne, 2004). While this itself is an interesting topic, as explained, Claire's experiences of discrimination and fear of rejection in her practice will not be examined here. Instead, we will focus on how ethnic difference was present and became prominent in the interviewing setting.

Having expressed her fear, Claire then continues:

*'...it's like even though... like you are from Greece? [l:mhmm] but you are still in... Euro-zone, but for me if I- I'm totally different, like from far away, non-white, kind of... minority background'*

While talking about her experience, she suddenly brings myself into the discussion and makes a direct comparison between us. This indicates that Claire does not see me in terms of sameness but of difference. While we are both foreign (non-native speakers), our 'foreignness' incorporates a differentiating factor, i.e. the visibility of our ethnicity. I am European and white, while she is 'from far away', 'non-white' and from a 'minority background'. This difference between her and me suggests Claire's self-perception of foreignness in the predominantly white, European environment where she practises in. It can be argued that this direct comparison to the interviewer has facilitated Claire's disclosure of her experience of intercultural practice, supporting the notion that paying attention to and using the difference present in the intercultural interviewing encounter, can enhance the researcher's understanding of his/her interviewees' intercultural experiences. Similarly, it exemplifies the appropriateness of using

intercultural qualitative interviews as a research method when investigating intercultural communicative tasks such as intercultural counselling practice.

At a different level, Claire's direct comparison kindled my interest of reflecting upon power dynamics in the interviewing setting. This has subsequently enhanced my reflexive stance and advanced not only data analysis but self-awareness as well. The acknowledgement of difference and the role attribution of 'white majority' came as a surprise to me, as ethnicity was not the cultural aspect that I would identify as salient in my encounter with Claire. Given the centrality of second-language use in the interview theme, the comparative feature that I had pointed out was language. Since we were both non-native English speakers in an English-speaking setting, I experienced us as 'equal' and expected us to face similar difficulties in terms of counselling practice. Intrigued by Claire's acknowledgement of difference, I ask her to elaborate:

*I: so you think that someone like me for example, who I come from Europe and I still have English as a second language would-*

*C: I think that it is easier for you to work...*

*I: to work with clients? [C:mhmm, mhmm...] why?*

Scrutiny of my choice of words here reveals my attempt to deflect the focus of this dialogue from 'me' to 'someone like me' - another European, white, non-native speaking trainee. At a conscious level I did that because I felt uncomfortable assuming a 'practitioner position' as I am not a practising counsellor. Upon reflection however, I realised that I was also attempting to get some distance from the personal turn that this dialogue starting taking, as I was

uncomfortable with the attribution of the ‘white majority’ role. At this point a parallel between counselling practice and (my) interview practice can be particularly helpful. Ryde (2011) has suggested that white practitioners often refuse to take on attributed roles of ‘whiteness’ out of guilt and shame; she also pointed out that the therapist’s whiteness is so common that there is often nothing to discuss about. Similarly, my attitude here (of focusing on language) indicates that I too may have been ashamed or taken for granted my whiteness. My subsequent surprised reaction and my reluctance to understand or perhaps accept what Claire is telling me (*‘why?’*) illustrates what has been described in the relevant literature as ‘race avoidance’, i.e. a naively adopted position of not seeing people in terms of race and ethnicity but as human beings (Thompson & Jenal, 1994). Indeed, to my mind, if both Claire and I are non-native speakers, I do not expect to face fewer difficulties in counselling practice just because I’m white. In reality, this way of thinking reveals my failure to acknowledge my ‘whiteness’ and the evident difference in the intercultural interview relationship.

Her reply to my naïveté was expressed so simply, yet so powerfully:

*C: because you look like them!*

In terms of power dynamics in the interviewing relationship, this statement distances *me* from *her* directly and positions me on ‘the other side’ – among ‘*them*’. This shakes my understanding of our research relationship, which up to this point I saw as rather equal. As explained, I perceived myself as one of ‘us’ (non-native speakers, international students) and not one of ‘them’ (‘white majority’). No matter what *I* think however about our ‘equal’ positions, my interviewee makes explicit that we are not the same because *I ‘look like them’*.

Georgiadou Lorena

*‘You look like them!’*

Even if I am not willing to accept it and I am trying to find a way around it, our visible difference is there, occupying the room. Linking back to the previously discussed positions towards power asymmetries in research relationships, Claire helped me realise that one can never 'equalise' power in an interviewing setting. Moving away from an 'egalitarian' attitude towards a more Foucauldian position in relation to power (explained earlier), I came to understand that a researcher can perhaps approach participants in a respectful way and attempt to balance out some of the unequal parameters, yet it would be utopian to believe that he/she can ensure a perfectly egalitarian environment. Power is a complex concept and will always be present in research, not least because different people perceive it differently. It is by being aware of and reflecting upon power asymmetries in the interviewing relations, that one can strive to appropriately handle them (Gadd, 2004; Holstein & Gubrium, 2004; Roulston, 2010).

What is more, reflexivity and self-awareness can advance interpretations and understanding of the generated data and therefore enhance a (hermeneutic-phenomenological) project's overall quality (Finlay, 2011). In this case, had Claire not made that explicit comparison which made me be more aware of my racial identity and reconsider my positioning in relation to her, I might have overlooked the significance of the visibility of her ethnicity in her experience. By 'confronting' me, Claire found a way to ensure that her real experience, what really mattered to her, would be acknowledged in the project.

To summarise, this very brief extract from Claire's interview has exposed multiple points for discussion and improved my project and my overall attitude as a researcher in many ways. First of all, it revealed the centrality of (the

visibility of) ethnicity in Claire's experience of intercultural practice, promoting my understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Issues of cultural diversity in intercultural counselling practice may be difficult for research participants to pinpoint and discuss explicitly (be it clients, trainees, trainers, supervisors or experienced practitioners). So observing the intercultural research relationship may offer hints or elucidate participants' interrelated experiences. Secondly, this interaction with Claire illuminated some essential differences that may be present in intercultural interviewing, and the complexity of identifying and addressing them adequately. At the same time this passage indicates the potential unpreparedness or reluctance of the 'white' researcher to accept and use her racial identity in the research process, as well as the significance of doing so. As I have discussed, this brief encounter has led me to adopt a more reflexive, culturally aware stance, which in its turn has not only enhanced the quality of this specific project, but also improved my overall attitude as a (intercultural) researcher.

## Challenging Propositions

There are two main points that can be challenging in my suggestion to use the intercultural research relationship to investigate issues of intercultural practice. First of all, in spite of the context-related similarities between the interviewing and counselling setting that I have pointed out in this paper, it needs to be acknowledged that there are plenty of differences between a therapeutic and a research relationship. As a consequence, elements of intercultural interaction in the interviewing setting may not necessarily reflect intercultural counselling

processes, but simply reveal power asymmetries in the research dyad. For example, Claire's direct opposition to me may be an expression of her power 'counter control' (Kvale, 2006) mirroring her nervousness, her reluctance to answer my question, her attempt to contest my authority as an interviewer etc.

Secondly and perhaps more importantly, using the research relationship to explore issues of cultural differences can entail risks for the participants (and arguably for the researcher as well). Depending on individuals' experiences, cultural difference and intercultural experiences can be perceived as a sensitive, emotive topic. Claire's ability to name explicitly our ethnic difference in this intercultural interviewing setting, is somewhat surprising. Not all interviewees will feel comfortable enough (or will have the courage) to address the interviewer in the direct way that Claire did, given the frequently attributed power to the (white) researcher/interviewer role (for a more detailed discussion see for example Kvale 2006). Additionally, in the same way that not all culturally diverse clients will want to explore diversity issues in therapy (Lago, 2010), it is possible that culturally diverse interviewees will not want to address these issues in the interviewing context. Therefore, bringing cultural difference to the 'front line' and addressing differences in the interviewing relationship raises multiple ethical considerations that require adequate handling.

## Conclusion

This paper has drawn empirically on an extract from an intercultural interview, where the interviewee has used the difference in the interviewing relationship to better explain her experience of intercultural counselling practice. It has then



offered a reflexive discussion of the researcher's interrelated thoughts and reactions. The paper has suggested that observing and making use of the intercultural interviewing relationship can be particularly helpful when conducting research in the field of intercultural counselling. Given the risks that may inhere however, it is highlighted that this recommendation is not to be perceived as a suggested 'technique' for researchers to undertake, but as an acknowledgement of the potential value of such practice.

Finally, by pointing out my own unpreparedness to recognise and accept the existing cultural differences brought up by Claire, I intended to stress the challenging character of engaging with intercultural research. Including a reflexive analysis of my own responses to this intercultural encounter, the complexities it involved, and the learning I accumulated, has served the purpose of elucidating the value of reflexivity and cultural awareness when conducting intercultural interviews in the field of counselling and beyond.

Word count: 3.466

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**Bisogni di salute nella relazione interculturale**  
***Uno studio su soggetti migranti che si rivolgono ai Servizi-Socio-Sanitari***

Grimaldi F\*., Wittenberg L., Carlino G.

Forse la storia universale  
 è la storia della diversa intonazione  
 di alcune metafore  
*Jorge Luis Borges*

**Introduzione**

Lo studio si propone di contribuire al dibattito inerente la salute interculturale, attraverso la conoscenza e l'esplorazione dei bisogni di salute delle persone migranti che si rivolgono ai servizi socio-sanitari e la comprensione dei fattori ostacolanti la comunicazione interculturale.

Con il termine salute, all'interno di questo lavoro, facciamo riferimento allo *“stato completo di benessere fisico, psichico e sociale”*, per realizzare il quale *“l'individuo o il gruppo devono essere in grado di identificare e realizzare le proprie aspirazioni, di soddisfare i propri bisogni, di modificare l'ambiente o di adattarvisi. La salute vista, dunque, come risorsa di vita quotidiana, non come obiettivo di vita: un concetto positivo, che insiste sulle risorse sociali e personali, oltre che sulle capacità fisiche”* (WHO – Carta di Ottawa per la promozione della Salute, 1986).

Il progetto nasce come *ricerca euristica*: un'interrogazione rivolta a un'esperienza umana significativa che riflette, in modo esplicito, l'interesse e la curiosità del ricercatore, ma che sottende un interesse sociale di natura “universale” (Moustakas, 1994). Questa ricerca origina dall'esperienza lavorativa maturata all'interno dei Consultori Familiari del Distretto n.1 Area Nord dell'Ulss13, la cui utenza è sempre più un'utenza migrante, e nasce dal nostro incontro con persone provenienti da diversi Paesi del mondo, le cui storie ci hanno profondamente guardato e riguardato (Levinas, 1974). Nel cogliere i loro bisogni di “salute”, ci siamo interrogati rispetto a se e come tali bisogni trovassero spazio e accoglienza all'interno dei servizi pubblici deputati all'assistenza socio-sanitaria.

La problematica della salute degli utenti migranti sottende però, specialmente in questo momento storico-culturale, una questione di interesse sociale. Infatti, la rilevanza non solo della “questione migrante”, così definita, ma della relazione fra migrazioni e salute è sempre più

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

evidente: in Italia, il fenomeno migratorio ha fatto registrare, nell'ambito dei servizi socio-sanitari, l'afflusso di un'utenza sempre più differenziata, che trova spesso gli operatori impreparati e rende necessario e urgente un ripensamento dei metodi e degli strumenti di diagnosi-e-cura comunemente adottati, per ipotizzare la costruzione di pratiche di accoglienza interculturali.

### **Analisi della letteratura**

L'analisi della letteratura (Morrone, 1995; Rosano, Ricci, 2002; Caritas/Migrantes, 2003; Todisco, 2006; Bernadotti, 2006) testimonia la sempre maggiore presenza della popolazione migrante nei contesti socio-sanitari. Gli studi condotti in Italia, a partire dagli anni 90 ad oggi (Carchedi, Picciolini, 1997; Beneduce, 2005), rivelano infatti che:

- difficilmente le persone immigrate, anche con regolare permesso di soggiorno, si rivolgono ai servizi ospedalieri o accettano di usufruire dell'assistenza sanitaria;
- fra le prestazioni richieste, sono rare quelle socio-assistenziali che rimandano a bisogni psicologici di cura. Le persone migranti portano in evidenza la propria richiesta di assistenza prettamente corporea, lasciando in secondo piano gli echi di storie e vicissitudini spesso tragiche, che hanno a che fare con esperienze di sradicamento e di perdita. E' il corpo, per la persona migrante, a essere testimone della propria esistenza, in quanto "gruppo incarnato" (Sayad, 1999);
- quando le persone migranti decidono di rivolgersi a un servizio per "chiedere aiuto", è solo in caso di urgenza o a fronte di sofferenza conclamata e divenuta manifesta;
- gli utenti migranti tendono a ricevere livelli qualitativi di cura inferiori rispetto al resto dei pazienti.

Le ricerche condotte sembrano dunque testimoniare che il riconoscimento di un'"eguaglianza formale" non è sufficiente a garantire un'"eguaglianza sostanziale" nella possibilità di accedere ai Servizi Socio-Sanitari e di ricevere cure.

Gli studi evidenziano, inoltre, l'esistenza di una *domanda di salute*, da parte dei cittadini immigrati, che è specifica e che richiede specifiche modalità d'ascolto e di accoglienza. Una specificità connotata soprattutto a livello linguistico e culturale (Chiarenza, 2005): è la difficoltà di comunicazione, intesa non soltanto in termini linguistici, a essere riscontrata quale ostacolo principale alla relazione di cura. Se è vero, infatti, che il problema linguistico sussiste principalmente per la prima generazione di migranti e in una fase iniziale dell'immigrazione, costituendo comunque un grosso ostacolo nell'accesso ai servizi, gli aspetti di diversità culturale che investono la percezione e l'espressione dei sintomi, il significato attribuito ai concetti di salute e di malattia, le aspettative legate alla cura e ai sistemi di cura di riferimento permangono come

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Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

realtà con cui confrontarsi nella relazione terapeutica. Sono gli stessi operatori a manifestare il bisogno di informazione, di strumenti, di esperienze e di pratiche che preparino a una dimensione di cura interculturale, che essi riconoscono come una risorsa e non come un problema (IRES, 1995). Di fronte alla difficoltà concreta, e non solo teorica, di gestire bisogni di salute e relazioni di cura quando siano presenti importanti differenze culturali, “è inevitabile lo spaesamento e il senso di difficoltà a rispondere a domande impreviste, ad affrontare il limite delle lingue sconosciute e delle forme espressive insolite, a percorrere la via traversa della mediazione, a risolvere questioni prima impensabili” (Armezzani, 2008, p.108). Ancor di più, continua Armezzani “quando la sofferenza coinvolge l’intera presenza, è molto più difficile anticipare i reciproci comportamenti, negoziare un significato condiviso e concordare un percorso di cura”.

La presenza dell’Altro migrante rappresenta, per tali ragioni, una sfida importante: come ripensare i modi dell’accoglienza, della comprensione, della condivisione? Come rileggere le storie, apparentemente lontane, di persone che provengono da culture-altre, alla luce di modelli diagnostici di per sé culturalmente informati, culturalmente costruiti? Come porsi di fronte all’Altro e interagire con lui se la lingua che possediamo non è la stessa? Ad oggi, la parità di accesso al diritto alla salute si staglia come risultato di un processo di assimilazione: un graduale percorso di conoscenza e di “adattamento” al sistema italiano da parte degli utenti migranti, che consente l’accesso ai servizi assistenziali attraverso la riduzione della dissonanza culturale fra essi e il personale sanitario. Così intesa, tale soluzione sembra concepire la cura a partire da una prospettiva etnocentrica.

La ricerca che abbiamo svolto si interroga, al contrario, circa la possibilità di sviluppare processi di salute che possano dirsi interculturali, a partire dal considerare la presenza dell’Altro-migrante, nel suo irrompere come “estraneo” all’interno di ciò che per noi è familiare, usuale, consueto (Waldenfels, 2002), come un’occasione per ripensare i modelli e i metodi di diagnosi-e-cura in uso nei servizi socio-sanitari e per pensare la differenza culturale come matrice per una riflessione critica circa la soglia di “traducibilità” dell’Altro (Nathan, 1990); di ogni incontro con l’Altro (Losi, 2000). Come afferma Nathan (2001, trad. it. p. 92): “è la presenza degli immigrati nell’ambito dei dispositivi di cura che può informarci su noi stessi e sui nostri modi di curare”.

Il concetto di “Cura” assume, in questo lavoro, l’accezione di un “prendersi cura” di heideggeriana memoria (Heidegger, 1927), che implica l’Esserci, come presenza tutt’intera, della persona del medico, dello psicologo, di colui che cura, di fronte alla persona – migrante - anch’egli presenza tutt’intera, il cui sguardo, direbbe Levinas (1974) “mi guarda e mi riguarda” e la cui alterità, in questa relazione di reciprocità in cui mi pongo, in qualche modo “viene prima” .

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

### **Prospettiva teorica di riferimento**

La prospettiva teorica entro cui la ricerca si sviluppa fa esplicito riferimento a una cornice fenomenologica di pensiero, ricerca e comprensione dell'Altro (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Levinas, 1991), ripresa, nello specifico dell'esperienza migratoria, nei lavori di Bernhard Waldenfels (2002), Beneduce (1994) e Coppo (2003). Muoversi all'interno di questo modello significa indirizzarsi espressamente allo studio dei significati nella loro genesi individuale e sociale, ponendo al centro dello studio la persona migrante come persona, nel suo essere corporeità vissuta, in cui le ragioni storiche, economiche, sociali, religiose dell'esperienza migratoria, alla fine, s'incarnano. Significa concepire l'incontro con l'Altro, la persona migrante, come costituito su di un fondo comune d'esperienza e rintracciare, in questa reciproca appartenenza, alcuni significati condivisibili e trasversali alla differenza culturale e, al contempo, lasciare una soglia di opacità nel processo di conoscenza dell'Altro (Butler, 2005), in cui non tutto può essere conosciuto e compreso attraverso le nostre categorie, riconsegnando al rispetto della differenza e dell'ulteriorità dell'Altro ciò che non può essere ridotto alla mia identità nè tradotto nei linguaggi della cura tradizionalmente condivisi. Perché quella minoranza "sconcertata e silente" possa trovare il modo di agire l'accoglienza come alternativa alla mera inclusione dell'Altro, all'interno di un'etica del "pari rispetto per chiunque e di una responsabilità generale e solidale dell'uno verso l'altro" (Habermas, 1996).

La prospettiva interculturale rappresenta, insieme alla fenomenologia, il secondo principale interlocutore epistemologico con cui il presente lavoro si propone di dialogare. Alla radice della sua insorgenza, una concezione della cultura come "insieme di narrazioni condivise, contestate e negoziate" (Benhabib, 2002, trad. it. p.5), matrice di significazione fluida e dinamica che considera le persone come attori sociali. Una visione della cultura come immediatamente plurale, luogo di scambio, costruzione di senso nell'esperienza quotidiana che fonda una visione altrettanto plurale dell'identità, di identità plurali che coesistono, in ciascuno, a seconda dei contesti in cui si trova ad interagire (Sen, 2006). La cultura intesa, quindi, non come confine, ma come territorio che attraversa le frontiere (Bachtin, 1981). Tale prospettiva orienta la ricerca allo studio di problemi comuni, che non contrappongono gruppi di persone fra loro, ma cercano di comprenderne l'esperienza intersoggettiva (Mantovani, 2008).

### **Obiettivi e metodi**

La ricerca si propone di guardare alla salute in un'ottica propriamente interculturale, come un problema comune, che non contrappone gruppi di persone fra loro, ma cerca di comprenderne l'esperienza intersoggettiva. Vogliamo esplorare e comprendere i bisogni di salute delle persone



Convegno Internazionale –International Conference  
**Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World**  
**Educazione e Counselling interculturale nel mondo globale**

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

migranti che si rivolgo ai servizi socio-sanitari, in relazione all'esperienza migratoria da un lato e alla relazione con gli operatori dall'altro, al fine di identificare snodi rilevanti nelle difficoltà di relazione fra utenti e operatori e quindi promuovere strategie di accoglienza e incontro fondate sul reciproco riconoscimento.

L'indagine si propone come ricerca esplorativa, situata e contestuale. Dal punto di vista metodologico, essa fa riferimento ai criteri propri della ricerca qualitativa (Taylor, Bogdan, 1998; Steier, 1995; Armezzani, 2004): la ricerca è orientata alla *ricerca dei significati e dei vissuti*, non di "variabili"; *situatività: contingenza e riflessività*.

All'interno di tale cornice metodologica, la validità della ricerca si connota di una valenza specifica:

- *Validità come incontro di prospettive*: lo studio è considerato valido se aderisce alla "verità d'esperienza", alla verità dei partecipanti (Maxwell, 1992).
- *Validità come utilità*: la conoscenza vuole produrre nuova conoscenza ed essere orientata a obiettivi specifici di trasformazione (Gergen, 1999).
- *Validità come aderenza al contesto*: la generalizzazione non segue un criterio di estensione e ripetibilità dei risultati emersi, ma un criterio in profondità, verso il fondo comune dell'esperienza (Armezzani, 2004).
- *Validità come coerenza*: la ricerca persegue un criterio di congruenza fondamentale fra premesse epistemologiche e scelte metodologiche (Armezzani, 2004).

Lo studio si svolge all'interno del Centro di Salute Mentale e dell'Unità Operativa dei Consulteri Familiari<sup>1</sup> della ULSS n.13. e coinvolge un totale di 30 operatori, dipendenti presso i due Servizi, e 75 utenti migranti. La scelta dei soggetti con cui lavorare ha seguito una modalità di campionamento di tipo "a criterio" (Patton, 1990): si è focalizzata l'attenzione su un numero limitato di soggetti e i soggetti sono stati scelti in base ad un criterio predeterminato da essi soddisfatto.

L'indagine è stata condotta attraverso metodi di tipo etnografico: osservazione partecipante, interviste narrative (Bauer, 1996)., focus group . In particolare, abbiamo scelto l'intervista narrativa quale strumento di elezione poiché centra l'attenzione su un racconto di esperienza, sottolinea la dimensione temporale ed enfatizza il senso etimologico dell'esperire, come "venire da", passare attraverso e giungere al presente. La dimensione temporale del racconto rintraccia e riscrive un percorso, lo sostanzia in un campo di esperienza, per questo è considerata particolarmente indicata quando si vogliono mettere in luce le dimensioni della transizione, consentendo di tenere insieme la dimensione soggettiva con quella dell'attraversamento.

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<sup>1</sup> In particolare, la ricerca ha coinvolto quattro Consulteri Familiari facenti parte del territorio del Distretto n.1 – Area Nord della stessa Ulss 13.

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

I materiali raccolti nel corso delle diverse fasi dell'indagine sono stati trascritti e analizzati attraverso l'ausilio di un software per l'analisi del testo (Atlas.Ti) La lettura e l'interpretazione dei dati fanno esplicito riferimento ai criteri proposti dalla Phenomenological Analysis (Moustakas, 1994).

### **Risultati**

L'analisi dei dati di contesto mostra un incremento esponenziale degli utenti di diversa provenienza, giunti nel 2009 a rappresentare il 25% di tutta la popolazione che accede ai Consultori Familiari.

**Il punto di vista degli utenti migranti:** Le interviste rivelano esperienze di sradicamento, isolamento e solitudine, cui si associano bisogni di salute espressi in termini di relazione, sicurezza e autorealizzazione. Nuclei di significato, questi, attribuiti all'esperienza migratoria e ai bisogni di salute che si sono rivelati eccedenti la mera dimensione "socio-culturale" e trasversali ai diversi Paesi di provenienza. La trama costitutiva del vissuto migratorio, emersa dalle interviste, è la perdita: perdita dei legami di appartenenza e di relazione, ma anche e soprattutto perdita del proprio "senso di sé", della propria identità riconosciuta e specchiata nel Tu, nell'Altro, da cui un bisogno di relazione e riconoscimento. La solitudine narrata dagli utenti intervistati è la perdita della possibilità originaria dell'essere-insieme-nell'amore (Binswanger, 1942). Ad essa si associa un profondo senso di nostalgia, già osservato da De Martino (1975), nostalgia per un eterno ritorno, che molti sanno non realizzarsi mai. Sono vite spezzate, attraversate dalla lontananza, dall'assenza, dalla distanza, dalla mancanza di luogo (Waldenfels, 2006). La nostalgia che si coglie aprendosi all'incontro con l'Altro-migrante è nostalgia di calore umano, di presenza, di vicinanza, di un luogo in cui sentirsi a casa, inteso non nella sua accezione puramente "geografica", ma che risponde a una geografia emotiva. Considerando l'esperienza migratoria come uno dei "passaggi critici dell'esistenza", Ernesto De Martino ne intravedeva, già negli anni 70, quando ancora l'Italia non era meta migratoria ma fucina di emigranti, il rischio dell'isolamento e dell'alienazione. Egli scrive (De Martino, 1975, p.79): "la presenza che si perde è la presenza che si isola, che perde rapporto con i compiti di universalizzazione e di valorizzazione che la fondano come presenza: è il regredire dalla socialità e dalla comunicabilità verso il privato, il cifrato, l'incomunicabile". A tali vissuti, si associano bisogni di salute espressi in termini di relazione, sicurezza, riconoscimento e autorealizzazione. Le interviste rivelano, inoltre, lo stretto legame esistente fra i bisogni di salute e il progetto migratorio: esso risponde, essenzialmente, al bisogno di "stare bene", inteso come possibilità esistenziale di realizzare i propri obiettivi personali e lo sviluppo delle proprie potenzialità, al desiderio di "una vita migliore".

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

Nel concepire la salute, al di là di ogni provenienza o appartenenza “culturale”, non come “assenza di malattia”, ma come esperienza più ampia di benessere “fisico, psichico e sociale”, lo studio avvalorava quanto già messo in luce dagli studi sul benessere soggettivo (SWB) e, in particolare, da quelli che fanno riferimento alla prospettiva eudemonica (Ryan, Deci, 2001). All’interno di questa prospettiva, il benessere è associato a un’esperienza di pieno funzionamento, crescita psicologica, integrità e vitalità (Ryan, Frederick, 1997), autorealizzazione (Ryff, Keys, 1995) e sviluppo personale (Bauer et al., 2005; King, Rospin, 2004).

Nella relazione con gli operatori, l’accento è posto sull’atteggiamento di questi ultimi: vissuti di discriminazione e intolleranza sono all’origine delle difficoltà incontrate durante il percorso di “cura”; l’accoglienza, intesa come disponibilità a comprendere e assenza di giudizio, e la tolleranza, che si esplicita nella “pazienza” e nell’attenzione dedicate, sono i fattori che facilitano la comunicazione e l’incontro. La richiesta mossa agli operatori da parte degli utenti migranti è di rispetto, di “pazienza” e di “professionismo”, quest’ultimo inteso come capacità di prendersi cura e di tenere conto dell’Altro.

**Il punto di vista degli operatori:** Gli operatori denunciano una difficoltà di comunicazione linguistica e una mancanza di “alleanza” e di fiducia reciproca, cui spesso contribuisce la condizione di irregolarità e di “finzione”, che ostacola la *compliance*. Più rilevante è la percezione della differenza culturale, ritenuta barriera alla possibilità di comprendere il significato attribuito dagli utenti alle proprie istanze di salute e malattia e causa del fraintendimento circa la percezione e l’espressione dei sintomi: la differenza culturale viene percepita, dagli operatori partecipanti alla ricerca, all’origine dell’impossibilità di condividere sistemi di significato comuni e, quindi, dell’impossibilità di comprendersi e di “intendersi” con l’Altro migrante. Ciò comporta vissuti di disorientamento, fatica, impotenza, paura.

## Discussione e conclusioni

Ogni vita reale è incontro  
*Martin Buber*

Confrontando il punto di vista dei partecipanti emerge come, all’interno di una relazione di cura interculturale, quello che per gli operatori rappresenta un problema di comunicazione è concepito, dall’Altro.migrante, come un problema di relazione, cioè di accettazione, rispetto e comprensione in senso lato. Paradosso per cui, proprio là dove gli operatori incontrano più difficoltà perché investono più tempo e maggiori energie nel trovare soluzioni comunicative, gli utenti “stanno

Convegno Internazionale –International Conference  
**Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World**  
**Educazione e Counselling interculturale nel mondo globale**

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

meglio”. Come se, nell’incontro interculturale, come in ogni incontro interpersonale, l’intesa possa non dipende tanto dalla pre-conoscenza, ma dalla “*propensione verso*” (Armezzani, 2008).

Se consideriamo l’esperienza migratoria come “centro di decisione e di scelta [...] come possibilità del dispiegarsi di tutte le distinte potenze operative che fanno l’uomo uomo” (De Martino, 1953-54, p 58), una “psicologia culturalmente sensibile” non è quindi sufficiente. Un approccio alla cura che possa dirsi interculturale muove da un principio di *iatreia*, di un prendersi cura tra umani, “che contempla la presa in carico e può contemplare la terapia” (Coppo, 2003, p.207): è un approccio da persona a persona, che considera l’essere umano nella sua singolare universalità, nella sua biografia incarnata, vissuta, che racconta la sua storia e, raccontando la sua storia, parla anche della propria cultura.

E’ un approccio che, prima di essere interculturale, si propone dunque come “centrato sulla persona”. Se assunto fino in fondo, l’ACP (Rogers, 1951) rappresenta così la possibile via per una cura interculturale: la relazione concepita da persona a persona, nel rispetto irriducibile per l’Altro, nella riduzione essenziale all’incontro autentico, diviene occasione di apertura, comprensione, accettazione vissuta e, quindi, per l’Altro-migrante, relazione che cura.

Verona, 15-18 Aprile 2013

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**Documento presentato alla Conferenza Internazionale “Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World”**

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**Confini e sfide nel lavoro con clienti nel campo interculturale**

**L. Jaramillo, L. Soto Cabrera**

**Introduzione**

Nell’esercizio del nostro lavoro con persone di culture diverse, spesso ci interroghiamo sull’efficacia di ciò che stiamo facendo. A volte la diversità culturale - oltre che sociale ed economica- ostacola la nostra capacità di comprendere i nostri clienti e di conseguenza di aiutarli ad affrontare i loro problemi o arginare il loro malessere. Nella prima parte di questo lavoro verranno evidenziati alcuni di questi vincoli, mentre nella seconda parte illustreremo un “ponte-strumento” per aiutarci a superare questi limiti.

**Vincoli, limiti, confini e competenze multiculturali**

Negli ultimi cinquanta anni accademici e professionisti di diversi settori e discipline, hanno studiato e discusso sulle limitazioni che hanno i nostri modelli terapeutici (nati in Occidente) quando si lavora con clienti provenienti da altri mondi socio-culturali. Il risultato è stato quello di invitarci ad avvicinarsi a quei modelli non più come precetti della fede, o religioni, ma come “punto di vista” che devono essere adattati in base agli schemi dei nostri clienti (Dupont-Joshua 2003), o in altre parole, che devono dialogare con i modelli dei nostri clienti.

Ma, come riuscire a farlo? Imparando ad individuare e a gestire i nostri propri vincoli (personali e professionali), quelli dei nostri clienti e quelli del contesto (costrizioni come quelle legali o burocratiche, macro e micro economiche, ecc. che condizionano le opportunità dei nostri clienti nel migliore la qualità della loro vita).

Da dove vengono questi vincoli?

- Dalla complessità del cultura in sé (dalla vasta gamma di credenze, atteggiamenti, valori, sistemi di conoscenza).
- Da problemi di comunicazione legati alla non conoscenza della lingua dell'altro (considerando anche i codici e le convenzioni non verbali di comunicazione).
- Dalla complessità dell’identità sociale.<sup>1</sup>
- Da condizionamenti di varia natura che provocano sofferenza in chi migra e si trova in un contesto diverso da quello in cui è nato. Alcuni di essi sono di natura strutturale (impossibilità di soddisfare i bisogni fondamentali come il cibo o avere un tetto sopra la testa) mentre altri riguardano la dimensione individuale (mancanza di fiducia in sé stessi e senso di appartenenza, il fallimento del progetto di migrazione, ecc.)
- Dalla predominanza della parola come strumenti di comunicazione con il cliente (caratteristica delle discipline come la psicoterapia, il counselling, il coaching, ecc.)

- Le nostre discipline considerano che “l’insight” e “il passaggio all’azione” siano conseguite tramite una ricerca verso l’interno, mentre le persone di altre culture spesso lo fanno con lo sguardo verso l’esterno - attraverso le relazioni che hanno con gli altri: le persone, Dio o gli Dei e la natura.<sup>2</sup>

Tutto questo ci conduce su terreni intricati, verso complesse realtà, in cui è difficile muoversi con efficacia, non solo perché potrebbero esserci più di un percorso appropriato da seguire, ma anche perché potrebbe essere necessario intervenire a diversi livelli (di politiche pubbliche, rispetto ai sistemi di servizi, ai modelli di sostegno individuale e di gruppo, ecc). Questo ci porta alla necessità di 'affrontare la complessità'. Creare una “mappa della complessità” può aiutarci ad acquisire consapevolezza della situazione: chi siamo in questo rapporto, che cosa stiamo facendo, e che cosa possiamo realmente fare insieme.

### La mappa

Questa tabella racchiude alcuni elementi chiave per orientare il nostro lavoro.

<b>Tabella 1 – Elementi per creare una mappa dei vincoli, limiti e restrizioni<sup>2</sup></b>	
	<b>Elementi chiave per identificare limiti, vincoli e restrizioni</b>
<b>Consapevolezza del professionista – Culturale, personale e professionale</b>	(1) Consapevolezza culturale su: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Le proprie credenze, valori, stereotipi e pregiudizi (Sue et.al 1992).</li> <li>• Effetto delle esperienze precedenti con persone del gruppo etnico del cliente (Puukari et. al 2005).</li> </ul>
	(2) Componenti teoriche e strumenti: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulla base della visione del mondo del cliente, la sua capacità di coping, di prendersi cura di sé, ecc.</li> </ul>
	(3) Capacità di comunicare in ambito interculturale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essere in grado di cercare, riconoscere, validare e seguire la raffinatezza di tutte le forme di comunicazione utilizzato dai clienti (Lago 2006).</li> </ul>
<b>La visione del mondo del cliente, la qualità della vita e le sue condizioni di lavoro</b>	(4) La visione del mondo del cliente (Sue et.al 1992): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credenze, valori, stereotipi e pregiudizi (considerando la complessità dell’identità sociale).</li> <li>• Codici verbali e convenzioni della comunicazione non verbale.</li> <li>• Bisogni, desideri, Obiettivi e motivazione in relazione al progetto migratorio.</li> <li>• Approccio alle professioni della cura e le discipline “della parola”, come il coaching, il counselling e la psicoterapia</li> <li>• Conoscenza della lingue locale e agio/disagio nell’esprimersi</li> <li>• Consapevolezza della percezione del cliente di fronte a figure professionali dello stesso gruppo di provenienza come “privilegiati” – espressione della stratificazione sociale e l’ingiustizia.</li> </ul>
	(5) Strategie di sopravvivenza provenienti dalla “cultura della povertà” del contesto di provenienza del cliente.
	(6) Condizioni legali, sociali, economiche e di lavoro e il loro effetto reale sul benessere e la qualità delle persone migranti.

	<p>(7) Esperienze del passato, storia e condizioni globali:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eventi storici (es. Storia di colonizzazione della cultura del professionista in relazione alla cultura del cliente). (Pedersen 1987; Beneduce 2007)</li> <li>• Esperienze precedenti con persone del gruppo etnico del professionista (Puukari et. al 2005).</li> <li>• Predominio della cultura moderna rispetto a quella tradizionale</li> <li>• Relazioni precedenti con altri professionisti della cura nel contesto di accoglienza. (Puukari et al. 2005)</li> </ul>
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## Conclusioni

Quando si lavora con le persone che portano con sé mondi culturali diversi dal proprio - come anche schemi di pensiero diversi -, le difficoltà incontrate, e le limitazioni, possono facilmente portarci ad affrontare un senso di fallimento. La chiave per affrontarli è quella di vederli come un'opportunità; come fonte, punto di partenza per lo sviluppo delle competenze interculturali. La sfida si trova nel mettersi in gioco, nel lavorare e riflettere su chi siamo, ciò che sappiamo (le nostre conoscenze) e ciò che siamo in grado di fare.

Solo dopo questo esercizio, saremo davvero in grado di stabilire un rapporto con il cliente e con la sua diversità. Una diversità che non è solo legata alla cultura del suo gruppo di provenienza, ma anche alla sua storia (collettiva, familiare e personale), nonché alle sue condizioni sociali, economiche e di lavoro. È facile sopravvalutare la cultura, o trattarla superficialmente, portandoci fuori strada e allontanandoci dal cliente. Abbiamo bisogno di sviluppare la capacità di vedere la cultura e l'identità nella sua intera complessità.

Comunicare in modo efficace con i nostri clienti significa anche esplorare diverse forme di linguaggio (come il disegno o la musica), che potrebbero meglio rispondere ai loro modelli di comunicazione. Essere creativi è una necessità.

Il passo successivo, dopo aver considerato e compreso la visione del mondo dei nostri clienti, è quello di sviluppare la capacità di capire quando le nostre competenze e strumenti non sono sufficienti. Per ovviare a questo, si possono essere intrapresi momenti di auto-formazione o partecipare in piccoli gruppi (es. "self-quick-training" e/o "petit comité"). Tuttavia, una visione più strategica può essere considerata: la conoscenza e la possibilità di aiutare i nostri clienti, può non riguardare un singolo professionista, ma un intero gruppo di essi. Ciò significa che una parte significativa della nostra consapevolezza professionale deve essere quella di sviluppare le competenze di dialogare e lavorare in una rete multidisciplinare. Nel fare ciò, abbiamo bisogno di impostare modelli di interazione con altre figure della cura provenienti non solo dalla psicoterapia, l'etnopsichiatria o l'assistenza sociale, ma anche figure che appartengono ai mondi dei nostri clienti, come ad es. sciamani, naturopati, lider religiosi e comunitari ecc.

## Note

1. In riferimento alla definizione che dà l'ILO (International Labour Office) delle condizioni di lavoro. Esse riguardano: i salari (che possono, o no, soddisfare i bisogni); il tempo dedicato al lavoro e la possibilità di conciliare lavoro e famiglia; la sicurezza del lavoro; le condizioni di salute.
2. La complessità dell'identità è data da: a) la sua natura multidimensionale (essa è il risultato della cultura ma anche di ciò che in antropologia vengono definite 'subculture', nonché della storia della persona e della sua famiglia), b) la condizione dinamica dell'identità (legata al processo di integrazione nella società di accoglienza).
3. Come Mulqueeney ci ricorda, citando Duric (2003), le teorie di counselling [e delle altre discipline 'della parola'] partono dal presupposto che "l'insight" si ottiene quando si rivolge lo sguardo verso l'interno. Sondando i ricordi, gli atteggiamenti e i pensieri. Tuttavia, per popoli come i Maori [così come in altre culture] questo si ottiene dirigendo lo sguardo verso l'esterno – osservando le relazioni che si hanno con il whanau, marac, la terra, e la società. Ciò significa che qualsiasi intervento di guarigione deve tener conto dei quattro campi dell'esperienza: fisico, sociale, mentale e spirituale. (Mulqueeney 2012)
4. Lo schema si basa nel lavoro di Sue et.al (1998) "*Basic multicultural competencies*" ripreso da Pedersen (2004), nonché nell'approccio professionale delle competenze.

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**Boundaries and challenges in supporting multicultural clients**

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**Abstract**

When dealing with people from different cultures in our professional practice as counselor and coach, we often ask ourselves about boundaries in our work. Limitations, restraints and constraints may be related to three different spheres: i) the ethno-centered connotation of theoretical constituents of our profession and its instruments; ii) our professional competencies and personal characteristics; and iii) a client’s social, economic, and working conditions<sup>1</sup>, attitude towards /their native culture and the host culture, etc. With this paper, our aim is to illustrate the main challenges to overcome those boundaries we find in our professional practice with foreign clients living in Italy. To conclude, we share some ideas that we believe may help us improve our multicultural professional competencies, and contribute to the well-being of our clients.

**Keywords:** Cultural diversity, dialogue, multicultural competencies, cross-cultural multidisciplinary support networks.

**Full Paper**

**Introduction**

When working with people from different cultures we frequently question ourselves about the effectiveness of what we are doing. Sometimes cultural diversity –as well as social and economic diversity– hinder our ability to understand our clients and help them deal with their problems and distress. In the first part of this paper we intend to highlight some of these restraints, while in the second part we will illustrate a tool to overcome such limitations.

**Boundaries and multicultural competencies**

For the last fifty years academics and practitioners have discussed about the limits of our therapeutic models when working with clients from different cultural backgrounds. They have advised us to approach those models more like points of view to be adapted, rather than religiously adhering to them (Dupont-Joshua 2003). How do we do that? By dealing also with our own restraints (both personal and professional), those of our clients and those that are context-related, (i.e. those limiting our clients opportunities for a better quality of life.)

Where do these boundaries come from?

- The complexity of cultural diversity itself (a broad range of beliefs, attitudes, values, systems of knowledge).
- Communication issues related to not being proficient on each other’s language (also considering non-verbal codes and communication conventions).
- The sheer complexity of social identity.<sup>1</sup>
- Constraints of different nature causing distress in migrants. Some of them are structural (impossibility to meet their basic needs such as food and shelter). Others have an individual dimension (lack of confidence and sense of belonging; difficulties to manage their migration project, etc.).
- Western talking therapies consider that insight and “the step to action” are achieved by looking inward, while people from other cultures do it by looking outward –through their relationships with others, i.e., people, God or Gods and nature.<sup>2</sup>

We find ourselves mumbling in an intricate reality, where moving effectively is difficult not only because there may be more than one appropriate path to follow as support-professionals, but also because the different types of constraints call for interventions at different levels (policies, systems of services, models of individual and group support, etc.). This brings us to the need to ‘face up to complexity’. Devising a map will help us gain awareness of the situation: who we are in this relationship, what we are doing, who is with us, and what we can actually do together.

**The map**

This table includes some key elements to guide our work.

Table 1 – Elements for creating a boundary map <sup>2</sup>	
	Core issues for identifying boundaries
<b>Practitioner’s awareness – Cultural, personal and professional background</b>	(1) Cultural awareness about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unknown belief systems, assumptions, values and biases (Sue et.al 1992).</li> <li>• Previous experiences with other people from the client’s ethnic group (Puukari et. al 2005).</li> </ul>
	(2) Theoretical constituents and tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on a universal view of client needs, worldview, coping capacity, self-care, etc.</li> </ul>
	(3) Communication skills on a multicultural setting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having the ability to look for, recognize, validate, and follow all communication forms used by clients, (Lago 2006).</li> </ul>

<b>Client's worldview, quality of life and working conditions</b>	(4) The worldview of the client (Sue et.al 1992): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belief systems, assumptions, values and biases (considering the complexity of social identity).</li> <li>• Verbal codes and non-verbal communication conventions.</li> <li>• Needs, goals and motivation as regards their “migration project”.</li> <li>• Approach to talking therapies and how comfortable clients are when expressing themselves in the local language.</li> <li>• Clients perceiving “migrant support-professionals” as “privileged migrants” and as representatives of social stratification and injustice.</li> </ul>
	(5) Survival strategies as a result of the culture of poverty of the client's original context.
	(6) Legal, social, economic, and working conditions and their actual effect on the well-being and quality life of migrants.
	(7) Past experiences and global facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical events (e.g. colonization of the host culture as regards the client's culture). (Pedersen 1987; Beneduce 2007)</li> <li>• Previous experiences with other people from the professional's ethnic group (Puukari et. al 2005).</li> <li>• Modern cultural domination vis-a-vis traditional culture.</li> <li>• Relationships with other local support-professionals. (Puukari et al. 2005)</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

When working with people from a different cultural background –and with different structures of thought– boundaries can easily lead us to face a sense of failure. The key is to view challenges as opportunities, for example as an opportunity to develop appropriate multicultural competencies. Such challenges involve thinking about who we are, what we know, and what we are capable of doing. Only then are we truly able to establish a relationship with a client in their diversity. Such diversity not only involves culture –and the culture of the place our client comes from– but also their personal and collective history, as well as their social, economic and working conditions. It is easy to overestimate culture, or to address it superficially, but this just leads us to a trap. We need to develop an ability to see culture and identity in all of their complexity.

Communicating effectively with our clients also means exploring different forms of language (such as drawing or music) which might better respond to their communications models. Hence the need of being creative.

The next step after considering and understanding our client's worldview, is to develop an ability to understand when our current skills are not enough. To overcome this, we may get involved in a quick self-training or other sorts of individual or “petit comité” solutions. However, a more strategic vision may be considered as well: knowledge and opportunities to help our clients might concern not a single

professional, but rather an entire community support professionals. And it means that a main part of increasing our professional awareness is to develop the competence for dialogue and for working in a multidisciplinary network.

In doing so, we need to set interaction models with other kinds of professionals and support or healing figures, as may be found not only in psychotherapy, ethno-psychiatry, or social assistance, but also in shamanism, naturotherapy, community and spiritual leaders, etc.

### Notes

1. We refer to the definition given by ILO (International Labour Office) of working conditions which concerns: wages that may or may not meet people's needs; time devoted to work and reconciling work and family; job security and predictability; dirt and dangerous working conditions.
2. The complexity of identity is given by: a) Its multi-dimensional nature (identity is a result of people's culture, subcultures and history – considering family's history as well); b) the dynamic nature (identity changes through time).
3. As Mulqueeney reminds us quoting Duric (2003), most Western counselling theories presume that insight is achieved by looking inward and probing memories, attitudes, and thoughts, whereas Māori [as well as other cultures] believe that this is achieved by looking outward through our relationships with the whānau, marac, land, and with society at large. It means that any healing intervention must take into account all four fields of experience: physical, social, mental and spiritual. (Mulqueeney 2012)
4. Review based on the *Basic multicultural competencies* described by Sue et.al (1998) and summarized by Pedersen (2004), and the professional competencies approach.

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## Lost in translation:

### *A bilingual therapist process to acknowledge her limitations working in her second language and learning from them...*

*Sophia Kariotaki*

#### **Abstract:**

Working in a second language can be challenging and sometimes difficult, especially for professions such as counselling which very accurately is called a talking therapy. This case study was contacted as an attempt of the researcher to understand better her own linguistic identity and culture and to reflect on the barrier that this may bring in her work with her clients. Using IPR the researcher collected her reflections and thoughts of five sessions with one client and analysed these data using thematic analysis. Three themes were identified 'Wrong Use of English Language', 'Trying to be understood' and 'Inadequacy of making clear-accurate sentences'.

#### **Introduction**

Nowadays more and more individuals live and work in other countries than their origin and they had to learn how to communicate in a language different that their mother tongue. Particularly in professions such as counselling psychology which quite accurately is called talking therapy, the use of language is the primary mediator that allows therapist and client to work together toward the therapeutic process. Therapists use language to build and establish a therapeutic relationship with their client and help them to verbalise and understand their inner world (Javier, 1995). In addition an important role of the therapist is to share the client's language space and to be familiar with the words that they describe their experience (Claus, 1998). However while there have been an extensive literature on the experiences of bilingual clients in therapy (Ramos-Sandchez et al, 1999; Canestr & Reppen,2000; Claus,1998), few studies have addressed therapist's bilingualism in clinical practice (Zulueta,1990; Jiménez,2004).

As a practitioner for whom English is not my mother tongue, I work routinely with English speaking clients. Even though I have been trained in English and I feel confident with my ability to work as a therapist, sometimes I find myself feeling inadequate just because I don't share the same mother tongue with my clients. Am I understood? Am I able to conceive fully my client's story? At times these questions left me wondering the impact that my bilingualism may have on the establishment of an in depth therapeutic alliance with my clients and on my own professional growth.

This case study was contacted as an attempt to understand better my own linguistic identity and culture and to reflect on what the fact of belonging to a different linguistic background from my clients means to me as a therapist. Through this process I will attempt to gain awareness of the implications of my bilingualism in my work, a process that I hope it would be beneficial for my professional growth as a therapist in a different country than my origin. In this attempt I would like first to explore reflectively the relevant literature trying to achieve a better understanding of the characteristics of bilingualism and its implications in therapy.

### **Defining the identity of a bilingual therapist**

According to Alessi (2000) through the process of learning a new language the therapist has the opportunity for a wider identity development by accepting and integrating not only the new language but as well the new culture. Burck (2004) adds that the experience of the bilingual therapist in practicing in different languages enables the development of a more integrated identity. However despite the increased cultural awareness that may bring the bilingual therapists closer to their client's needs, often therapists see the use of a second language as a linguistic barrier. In this talk therapy, bilingual therapists use a tool, the language, that they will never be able to use it in its perfection. Flegenheimer (1989) mentions that therapists who practice in their second language loses the possibility of stylistic choice and metaphor when they interpret the client's material. In addition, Sprowls (2002) points the increased effort that is needed to shift between languages and to try to understand the other's story, concluding that that therapists were finding this work more difficult due to language barrier. Verdinelli (2006) reported in his research that therapists, who felt self-conscious about their language skills when they were practicing in their second language, were expressing feelings of isolation and disconnection. However because of these feelings of inadequacy and the increase self-awareness participants couldn't respond verbally or even non-verbally on their client's needs and therefore they were unable to be empathic and establish a therapeutic relationship. As a result of the therapist's linguistic inadequacy, some therapists may feel discomfort with their own identity. Lijtmaer (1999) argues that therapists may experience feelings of guilt and shame at being asked to repeat interpretations; and anger from having to invest more effort in communicating with clients. Finally Verdinelli and Biever (2009) reported that therapists may feel isolated and disconnected as they try to learn and use two languages in their personal and professional lives. Contrary to Verdinelli's (2006) and Sprowl's(2002) studies, Sella's study (2006) on immigrant therapists working in their second language with children didn't present the language barrier as an obstacle to the establishment of an effective therapeutic relationship. Actually therapists reported feeling confident overall about their linguistic competence and using the language related difficulties as a way to enrich the therapeutic relationship. .

Another aspect that bilingual therapists need to address in therapy quite often is their cultural identity. For the foreign therapist the linguistic and cultural difference is an inevitable aspect of their presence whenever they communicate with someone for first time. Through language the client of the foreign therapist becomes more aware of the therapist culture (Ali, 2004) and their cultural difference. Research shows that linguistic barriers have a negative effect on the client's level of trust and therefore make more difficult the establishment of therapeutic alliance (Myer, 1999; Lijtmaer, 1999). In addition clients may perceive therapists' interpretations or individual characteristics as cultural and in that way they may see them less neutral, a feeling that adds in their difficulty to trust the therapist or feel understood by them (Ticho,1971). Therefore bilingual therapists need to try harder to gain the client's trust and prove that they can understand them despite the language barriers. However in this process to establish a good therapeutic relationship, therapists should be able to tolerate their feelings around their linguistic proficiency (Verdinelli, 2006; Jimenez, 2004). Furthermore the therapist's feeling of linguistic inadequacy may have an impact on how he/she defines their cultural identity and as result their own sense of belonging, authority and integration (Gorkin, 1987). Finally research has shown that therapist may find it difficult to establish a deep therapeutic relationship with

clients whose language or culture is less familiar. As Bowker and Richards (2004) reported, therapists experience difficulty to feel empathise with clients from different cultures.

As a bilingual practitioner myself, I can relate with the experience of many of the participants above. Somehow I feel that every time I communicate verbally with a client, especially for a first time my awareness of my own linguistic inadequacy and incompetence is reactivated in some extend. Acknowledging the 'defective' away that I may use the mainstream language makes me use more effort to prevent confusion and misunderstandings and use some particular techniques when I communicate with my clients. In general I prefer the face to face communications where I have the opportunity to use no verbal ways such as face expression and hand gestures to manifest myself in an effective manner. However even in situations like these I have noticed that at times I use more words and make bigger sentences than a native speaker would do, trying to be sure that what I say is coherently.

In addition similarly to what research has shown when I talk to a client for a first time, on occasions I catch myself having some thoughts of how the client perceive me as a therapist and person. I am afraid that they may perceive my linguistic inadequacy as a barrier to their therapeutic process. 'Is she able to understand what I am saying?', 'Her accent is funny, will I be able to understand her?' There are some of the thoughts that I fear that my clients may have. I am aware that my own discomfort of my linguistic inadequacy may not let me to engage with my clients and therefore we may not be able to establish a deep therapeutic relationship. In addition clients may see the fact that we are coming from different countries and cultures as personal difference and therefore they may feel that they cannot engage with me. Trying to resolve this personal agony during my initial assessment with my clients I bring the fact that English is not my first language, invite them to feel free to let me know if they can't understand what I am saying. In addition, I ask them to let me know if they feel that the language difference doesn't let them feel safe and establish a therapeutic relationship with me, informing them that I will help them to find the appropriate therapist for them. Thus I give them the opportunity to feel safe and that they can trust me, limited in that way the barriers that language may bring in the establishment of trust.

### **Rational and Research Aims**

After reading the literature review and presenting my reflections and thoughts regarding my own identity as a bilingual psychologist, the following themes have been identified: 'Linguistic inadequacy as barrier for the establishment of a therapeutic relationship', 'therapist's self-consciousness about her language skills', 'awareness of cultural difference' and 'use of particular communicate ways due to the language inadequacy'.

In this study, trying to investigate the impact that language barrier actually has on my work as a therapist, I analysed my notes on my reflections during five sessions that I had with a client as they were obtained through an audiotape-assisted interpersonal process recall (IPR) procedure. I listened to the whole audiotape of the sessions and I tried to reflect on the themes that were identified from the literature review and my reflections on that. The data from the IPR procedure were then interpreted and analysed using thematic analysis.

### **The client**

I was seeing this client in a charity setting that I was working as a counsellor. I have worked with this client for five months. He is white, British, on his sixties and he was referred in our service for suffering of depression. Informed consent was obtained from the client and

anonymity was ensured. To maintain confidentiality, all files were password protected. Finally as the focus of the case study is the therapist's work as a bilingual therapist no further information regarding the client's background and therapeutic process is going to be given.

### **The counsellor**

I came to England on September 2008 to do a Master in Counselling Psychology at Keele University and I have been practicing counselling since March 2008. I have worked in different settings, with different client groups such as children, adults and elderly people. During these years I have communicated with the majority of my clients in English (I have had only two Greek clients so far). The majority of my clients have been British (only two of them were using English as their second language).

### **Data generation**

As it mentioned earlier an Interpersonal Process Recall (IPR) was used to collect the data. IPR is a qualitative interview approach which has been designed to access clients and therapist' conscious or unspoken experiences in interpersonal interaction under investigation using audio-assisted recall (Larsen et al., 2007). Trying to attempt an in depth understanding of my process I listened five audio recorded sessions where each of them were 50-60 minutes long. The aim of this process was to focus on the themes that were identified after reading the literature review and reflect my own thoughts about my own identity as a bilingual psychologist. These themes were: Linguistic inadequacy as barrier for the establishment of a therapeutic relationship, therapist's self-consciousness about her language skills, awareness of cultural difference and use of particular communicate ways due to the language inadequacy. In addition I was aware of any other factors that were related to the research topic.

While I was listening on the sessions I had the opportunity to listen to the reflections and interventions that I was making as a therapist, the way that I use the English language and the way that the therapeutic process was going. In addition I had the opportunity to remember specific thoughts, feelings and reactions that I was having regarding the research topic and I stopped the tape whenever an event appears that seemed important. Then I reflected on the event and my interpretations and explore the experience and the impact that these had on me as a therapist, on the client and on the therapeutic process in general. I was trying to stay aware of how I was using the language trying to achieve greater clarity of describing, understanding and internalising specific behaviours (one of the main goals of IPR according to Kagan et al, 1969).

### **Data analysis**

A thematic analysis was considered most appropriate in analysing the IPR data. According to Braun and Clark (2006) using thematic analysis the researcher has the opportunity to identify and analyse themes and patterns of similarity within qualitative research. I used this method trying to speculate the patterns of my practice as a bilingual therapist and investigate their meanings and implications.

For the analysis I started with reading through the literature to get an overview on how therapist's bilingualism is perceived and then I reflected on the literature giving my own perceptions of being a therapist practicing in my second language. Then I went back to the section where I wrote about the literature review and my reflections and read them carefully where a line-by-line coding was done. After the initial coding of the literature and my

reflections, I contacted an IPR on the five audio-recorded sessions that I had, focusing on these initial themes. In addition there was another category called *OTHER* where I put any other new theme that I noticed. Following the Braun and Clarke's guidelines for conducting a thematic analysis (2006) all data were coded, and gathered into more and more abstract codes until they represented a theme or a pattern. At the end, three themes were formed, describing my experience working in my second language.

## Findings and Discussion

Having the three themes that came up from the literature review as my reflective base the following themes were recognised in the analysis: 'Wrong Use of English Language', 'Trying to be understood' and 'Inadequacy of making clear- accurate sentences'. Even though these themes will be present separately it is important to mention their interactive role in the analysis where almost the one was creating the other as it can be seen later and all together constitute my identity as bilingual therapist.

### 1. Wrong Use of English Language

When someone is talking in their second language it is difficult to master it and use it as well as their native language. It is inevitable therefore the bilingual therapist to use at times their second language wrong such as using wrong syntax or grammar, different pronunciation or accent or finally, translating words and expressions directly from their language putting them in a context that they are not used in their second language. As a therapist I have experience similar situations as can be seen from the data.

In the five sessions that were used for this analysis there were occasions where I had to repeat myself as I wasn't understood by the client, probably because my accent.

*In this point the client asked me to repeat the sentence. (First session, reflection on the 29:10)*

*I made a question to the client, he didn't understand and he checked with me what I said... (Fifth session, reflection on the 45:27minute)*

I am aware that as I contacted the analysis on my own maybe the acknowledgement of the grammar or syntax mistakes was limited. However I noticed that I made some grammar mistakes, which didn't seem though that had a big impact on the client's therapeutic process.

*I made a grammar mistake; the client didn't notice it and it didn't have impact on the fluency of the process (Second session, reflection on the 48:00 minute).*

My biggest fear being a bilingual therapist is that due to my linguistic inadequacy, I may not be able to understand fully what my client says and therefore not be able to help him/her to their therapeutic process. Usually in cases that I cannot understand a word, I am able to have a general understanding of what they saying. However sometimes missing some words may have an impact on the therapeutic process... Something similar happened in the fifth session that I had with this client. The client used the word 'blank' to describe his needs to block his feelings but I didn't know this word, so when I reflect back I used the word 'avoid', giving a different meaning to what he was trying to say. For the rest of the session, whenever I was reflecting on this experience I was using the word 'avoid'. This had as a result to miss an important expression of the client and decrease their possibilities of going deeper on their process at this session.

*I paraphrased what he said when he talked about blanking his feelings but now he is using the word avoid to express his action.... Did I take him to a different direction because of my language limitations? (Fifth session, reflection on the 20:30)*

Unfortunately this experience makes me realize that in cases like this it would be better if the bilingual therapist asks the client for clarification of words that he/she doesn't understand rather than letting themselves assuming what the client is saying, as this may have a negative impact on the therapeutic relationship and client's process.

## **2. Trying to be understood**

From the analysis of the data I became more aware that trying to overcome my linguistic limitations in my second language, I was using some specific mechanisms on my interactions with my client. More particularly quite often I used big sentences to describe what I wanted to say where at times I was paraphrasing the words and repeating the same comment, In addition when I wasn't able to contact a sentence, I was pausing trying to find the right word or I was leaving the sentence unfinished and I was starting from the beginning using different words. From the analysis of the five sessions it can be seen that I have followed this pattern eighteen times in total where I paused twice and paraphrase or repeat myself sixteen times.

*...feeling that I am not understood I use more words and bigger sentences hoping that I would be clear; or like in this case I may start saying something, realizing that I am not sure which word I need to use to continue so change the whole sentence and start the reflection again. (First session, reflection on the 10:40 minute)*

It is interesting that even though I was using these patterns as a way of being understood and therefore improve the client's therapeutic process; from the analysis of the data it seems that this attempt had a negative impact on my skills as a therapist and the establishment of the therapeutic relationship.

*I couldn't find the right word to finish my sentence so I had to make a new sentence to describe what I wanting to say. This had as a result to make a bigger question which wasn't very clear and was a bit messy... (first session, reflection on the 10:40 minute)*

The more I was hearing myself repeating this pattern, the more I was realizing the negative impact of it in my counseling skills and abilities...

*Again one very big sentence... I am wondering if my own prejudice or inadequacy that I am not understood has somehow created this pattern of making big sentences and reflections as a way to be sure that I am understood...*

Finally by the end of the IPR I recognized the impact that this 'problematic pattern' may have on the therapeutic relationship and the client's therapeutic process in general.

*Again a very big sentence trying to reflect on what he was saying... listening to the tape and how much I talked I feel like I was preaching to him THIS IS HOW YOU FEEL AND THIS AND THIS AND THIS rather than pointing the feeling and helping him to understand it and move with his process... Like I put him in the corner.... (Fifth session, reflection on the 24:30 minute)*

As a therapist I follow the person centred values where the client is the one who knows what the best is for him and trusting their own power where my role is to provide them the safe place

to do their own process. However when I reflect on their process using so big and tiring sentences it seems that I ended up being the one who has the power in the relationship and this may be a barrier on their therapeutic process.

### 3. Inadequacy of making clear-accurate sentences

As a result of making big sentences on my reflections and responses on client's process, sometimes I may ended up not being clear enough or accurate on the point that I am trying to make. On my counselling training quite often my tutors were emphasising on the importance of making short and accurate reflections which goes direct to the point that the therapist is trying to make and give the client the opportunity for further self-development. However as it was noticed earlier at times my reflections not only weren't short but occasionally they were 'messy' or difficult to be understood.

*In this way again my sentences become longer and not very clear something that may have an impact on the T.P (First session, reflecting on the 30:38 minute)*

In addition sometimes due to my language inadequacy I couldn't find the right words to respond to my client's story and therefore I was starting my sentences again, using different words which as a result had not very clear responses that could be difficult to be understood by the client. Furthermore these 'messy' sentences may have had as a result the client to focus more on how to understand me rather than on their own process and feelings.

*I couldn't find the right word to finish my sentence so I had to make a new sentence to describe what I wanting to say. This had as a result to make a bigger question which wasn't very clear and was a bit messy (first session, reflecting on the 10:40 minute)*

As a result this inadequacy may have an impact on the establishment of a deep therapeutic relationship and on the client's therapeutic process.

*I feel that this sentence doesn't make any sense... Did he understand what I wanted to say? He respond on the reflection but it seems that in that point my inadequacy to make a good clear sentence had as a result to not make a clear point and reflection and so far had an impact on the T.P (Third session, reflection on the 51:21 minute)*

### Conclusion

They said that the only way to get better is to know your strengths and limitations. This case study gave me the opportunity to explore the limitations that I have, practicing therapy in my second language. It represents a small part of my identity as a therapist but at the same time a part that it is important to recognise and work with it. Through this process I discovered and acknowledged three main limitations/themes: 'Wrong Use of English Language', 'Trying to be understood', and 'Inadequacy of making clear-accurate sentences' Along with identifying my own limitations I hope that this process has provided a prototype for other bilingual therapists who wish to discover and recognise their own limitations and has contributed in the literature of bilingual therapists.

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## **Ethnocultural peculiarities of youth's representations about the social-legal activity.**

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### **Abstract**

The paper outlines the results of a socio-psychological research of youth's representations about the social-legal activity. Methodology based on the theory of social representations by S. Moscovici and on the conception of social-legal activity (SLA) by P. Toropov. Researchers are conducting a comparative analysis of representations about SLA by youth from Lithuania and Russia. The results of the investigate showed there are some distinctions in the representation of youth about SLA, which appears as in attitude to SLA as in the main motives.

Keywords: social representation, social-legal activity, ethnocultural features.

### **Introduction**

The question about democracy, person freedom, readiness of people to protect their own rights is important in Russia nowadays. We can see it by activation of protective movement in several Russian cities at spring and summer in 2012. The youth is the most active, progressive and sensitive part of the society and eager to change it. Meanwhile, when it is necessary to stand upon their rights, young people demonstrate the traditional forms of behavior which repeats the patterns of the older generation. However, in different ethnic cultures there are different ideas about human rights behavior. Russia is a poly-cultural state. Also, now there is an active migratory process on the post-soviet area, which can effect to the social-legal activity of the people.

During several last years, especially at 2012, we have noted a growing of protest activity by different age people. For example, 11.12.2010 several thousands of young people were gathered on the Manezhnaya Square in Moscow and were began to chant nationalistic slogans. Demand of police to finish this meeting was ignored. The reason of this meeting was a killing of football fan Egor Sveridov by Aslan Cherkesov from Kabardino-Balkaria. Finally, this illegal meeting was developed to the disorder with damaged physically persons. (BBC, 2011)

Than, a series of protest actions were conduct in the different cities and towns of Russia from December 2011 to March 2012. It was political actions against the dishonest elections. Many young people took part in these events.

The social-legal activity of youth shows in various forms: for example, they take part in the different volunteer organizations. The youth helps to needy people to decide their troubles, including legal protection. For instance, in our University there is a volunteer organization "The Legal Advice", which render legal services to each person who need a juridical advice. There work students of the Faculty of Low. There is no any fee for customers. We have several examples of similar forms of social-legal activity of youth. The social-legal activity of youth in Russia is feebly marked in whole. But it is growing from year to year.

The social-legal activity of youth is not similar in different regions of Russia. The multyethnical, multicultural regions are characterized higher level of the social-legal activity than monocultural regions. (Telyatnik, 2012). The most of scientists, politicians and public figures suggests that the growing of social-legal activity is related with political and economical instability.

## Methodology

In the investigate we are based on the several theoretical positions.

The Social Representations Theory by S. Moscovici (Moscovici, 2000) is the main position. According to the theory, the notion of the social perception is multivalent, comprising various phenomena and processes. Social image is the intermediate stage between the concept and perception. S. Moscovici treated social image as a specific form of social knowledge (Moscovici, 1981). Individuals in social life are constantly facing with an emergence oddities, unusual facts, ideas, but they should keep their internal worldview consistent. To do so, an individual must turn an unusual routine into something usual, i.e. make corresponding adaptive changes in the structure of their knowledge and evaluations. Undergoing the transformation from something unknown, sinister, frightening to something habitual, familiar, common is one of the most important functions of creating any concepts. When the contact with something horrible, unknown and incomprehensible seems unavoidable, we are forced to create its conceptual images.

Social perception is the core element of group consciousness; it represents the attitude of a particular group to an object. Therefore, a social image is not an opinion of an individual but rather an opinion of an individual belonging to a particular group, class, and culture.

The other theoretical position is the conception, which has developed by one of the author, Toropov Pavel. According to his point of view, *the social-legal activity of a person (SLA) is an initiatory behavior which is aimed to an assistance somebody for the observance, use, protection and expansion of rights*. We are emphasizing that we mean exactly an aspect of interaction and help (assistance) smb. in solving legal problems. Also, the social-legal activity could be treat as one side of effective subject-subjective democratic interaction which is necessary for the high education (Toropov, 2008).

The other position, which we use as basal, is G. Triandis's point of view to the cultural differences (Triandis, 2007). Studying correlations between different aspects of social behavior and culture, the scientist focuses our attention on the differences between individualistic and collectivist cultures by such elements as the health, inequality of genders and morality. The most important for understanding of the social-legal activity's cultural differences, is the last. The morality includes values of persons and groups, one of which is the human rights. The human rights could be understanding not similar in the individualistic and collectivist cultures and different behavior could be appearing as a response to the breach of the human rights. We have assumed, that people from the collectivist cultures will show different forms of social-legal activity oftener because the intragroup relations and the group solidarity are very important in this case. A member of group is perceived as its part and a protection of his rights is a care about whole group. At the same time, in the individualistic cultures person more often protects his/her own rights against a care about group and its members' rights.

## Study

Investigating the activity of a person by the protect and forming of rights, we have suggested, that a) youths' representations about such activity has ethnocultural differences and b) representations of young people by different ethnics about several aspects such activity are similar because they have a common history by period of the USSR

### Methods

In the research we have used: 1) the set of techniques for the investigation of social representations on the basis of their three - componential structure (S.Moskovicy – J.-K.Abrick) and 2) the technique MSLAP (Motives of Social-Legal Activity of Person) (Toropov, Ivanova, 2012).

The first technique makes it possible to reveal an attitude (emotional component) and content (cognitive component) of the youth's representation about social-legal activity.

The emotional component was revealed with bipolar scales (semantic differential) with following computation of the average by numeric analogs of the semantic images. We also took

into account a pole of estimate (positive or negative). The technique includes eight scales which permits a range of estimates from -3 to +3.

The cognitive component was studied with the aid of the unfinished sentences. We had been offering to respondents to close each of the sentences by two or three phrases. There were 8 unfinished sentences, which let us to reveal the next components of representations:

- a content of phenomenon,
- a structure,
- the developments,
- the common characteristics (“a look from outside”)
- the usual features (“a look on the inside”)
- the distinctions,
- the connections and implications (for a person and society).

Some of these categories were combined because a main part of conceptions which are connected with SLA are not structured at a reasonably measure in the consciousness of youth. All finishing of sentences were merged within the meaning. We also used a frequency analysis and a procedure of revealing of a kernel and a periphery of representations with the method of J.-K. Abrick.

The second technique was worked up by one of the author Toropov Pavel at 2010 (Toropov, 2008). It was necessary because psychologists in Russia have not similar techniques at present. The main principle of it is an extrapolation the own motives of some person to the supposed motives of the other person. The technique includes a set of situations describing behavior a person, who display a social-legal activity. A task of responder is to assume the motives of such actions. We suggest that predominant motive or a group of motives are peculiar to the oneself responder.

This technique reveals the 8 motives (value orientations) – social, moral, honest, cognitive-emotional, creative, tied with content of activity, material – utilitarian and prestige – and it allows to form a structure of of motives of a person or group. This method got a high correlation links with results of expert valuation and was successfully tested by students by the use of a set of researches.

For the finding differences between the three subsamples (Klajpeda, Kaliningrad, Smolensk) we used the t-criterion of Student (computing program “Statistika”).

The sample of our investigation includes 90 respondents from 23 to 30 years old. The whole sample was divides by three parts: the first part consists of 30 respondents from Klajpeda (Lithuania), the second part includes 30 respondents from Kaliningrad (Russia, exclave region), the third part consists of 30 respondents from Smolensk (Russia).

For a detection of ethnicity we used several questions in the beginning of questionnaire. We asked to our respondents to tick their place of living, citizenship and ethnicity. In the sample had included only those respondents who pointed the full information about himself. All necessary conditions of the research were keep to. The language of questionnaire was Russian and all respondents understood it. We hadn't any troubles.

## **Results**

### **The technique 1**

The research of the attitude (emotional component of representation) to the social-legal activity let us to get data which present in the table 1.

Table 1.

The emotional component of representation  
about social-legal activity of a person (SLA)

№	Part of sample	Simple average	Interpretation	Mode
1	Klajpeda	+ 1,7	Positive, strongly expressed	+1,8
2	Kaliningrad	+ 1,1	Positive, poorly expressed	+1,0
3	Smolensk	+ 0,9	Positive, poorly expressed	+0,8
4	Russia	+1,0	Positive, poorly expressed	+0,9
5	Whole sample	+1,23	Positive, poorly expressed	+1,2

A frequency analysis of unfinished sentences has let us to find following characteristics which more expressed in representation about SLAP of the Lithuanian youth.

The **content** of a concept of SLA, by the opinion of Lithuanian respondents, includes quality of personality, confidence, caring for others. As a structure elements they were called several qualities of personality such as a justice, a perseverance, a confidence, a knowledge of human rights and reliability.

SLA is often **manifested** by the protection of human rights – own and other people -, and others persons in a difficult situation. As the characteristics and properties of SLAP they were signing the high climes to the person, an approval, misunderstanding. According the opinion of the respondents, SLA interlinks with sense of justice, democracy, dissatisfaction by the situation in the group, in economy or society. The **SLA is important** “for equality of human rights”, for “order in society”, for deal with the bureaucracy, for self-respect.

A frequency analysis of unfinished sentences of Russian youth didn't has let us to find any significant differences between answers of the Kaliningradians and the Smolyan. However, there are some distinctions in the **content** of a concept of SLA. The most of respondents means by this a struggle, a protection of private interests, an initiative. But Kaliningrad's dwellers has paid attention to the protection of human rights and freedom more than the protection of private interests. There are two ways of **manifestation** of SLA, by the opinion of the Russians. The first way includes statements, protests, demonstrations. The second one implys some person's streaks such as a perseverance, self-confidence and knowledge of human rights.

As an quantitative analysis (t-criterion Student) shows, three groups of respondents has the reliable ( $\alpha=0,05$ ) differences in the attitude to the SLA. Meanwhile the Lithuanians has strongly expressed positive attitude, the Russians has poorly expressed positive attitude. But the data of Kaliningradians is more high than the data of youth from Smolensk. Probably, these differences could be explained by ethnocultural peculiarities.

A qualitative analysis let us to find us the next features:

1. The Lithuanian youth, which have describing a person with high SLA, are more concrete than the Russian youth, which have describing some actions or necessary professional knowledge. Describing the content of SLA, the Kaliningradians are more prosocial and they accent an attention on the social freedoms instead the personal interest.
2. Characterizing the forms of SLA, the Russians describes the protest movement, including mass actions. The Lithuanians prefers such forms as protection of rights – their own and other people.
3. To the reasons of the SLA the youth of Lithuania attributes social-economy situation and a person's moral traits. The Russians meentions about the person's negative traits and social-political situation. We want to underline that the bond between SLA and politics is minimal for Kaliningrad's youth.
4. The youth of Kaliningrad had paid more attention to the group form of activity and such

variants of SLA as “an evidence, a discussion”, unlike the youth of Smolensk which has chosen an individual forms. Describing the characteristics of SLA, the Russians mentioned a tendency to conflicts , pugnaciousness and possible problems in the course of protection by self or others.

5. The Kaliningradians thinks that SLA is important for a development of democracy and formation of legal state. The habitants of the central Russia consider that SLA can results in the negative consequences for a person or a group and, sometimes, in the private benefits.

So, according the first part our research there are some distinctions between young people of different ethnocultural groups in the content and components of SLA.

### The technique 2

The research of motives of SLA let us to get data which present in the table 2.

Table 2

The cumulative frequency of SPA motives in all subsamples

№	Motive	subsamples		
		I (Klaipeda)	II (Kaliningrad)	III (Smolensk)
1	Social	84	56	48
2	Moral	36	114	105
3	Honest	58	35	42
4	Cognitive-emotional	4	25	39
5	Creative	12	21	33
6	Tied with content of activity	30	45	81
7	Material – utilitarian	38	12	27
8	Prestige	8	10	27
	Total	270	318	402

As we can see in the table, the leading motives in the subsamples are different. In the subsample I (Klaipeda) a social motive is the leading, then moral and honest motives follows.

In the subsample II (Kaliningrad) the moral motive is the leading, then social and “tied with content of activity” motives follows.

In the subsample III (Smolensk) the moral motive is the leading, then “tied with content of activity” honest and cognitive-emotional motives follows.

So, the distinctions between subsamples in the structures of motives are apparent.

The quantitative analysis (t-criterion Student) let us to find reliable ( $\alpha=0,05$ ) differences in representations about the motives of SLA in the subsamples.

The Lithuanians understand the SLA as a wish to promote the social progress by their own activity. They are directed to the high human aims and needs.

The Kaliningradians demonstrates a tendency to the perfecting their moral image and inner life.

The youth of Smolensk links the SLA with their own - personal, material and prestige - development.

There is one interesting detail: the cognitive-emotional motive (a tendency to the perception of new, self-perception and emotional satisfaction.) appeared in the Russian subsample and practically didn't appear in the Lithuanian subsample.

### Conclusion

According the obtaining data of this research and some recent researches (Toropov, Kuznecova, 2012) , there are some distinctions in the representation of youth about social-legal activity, which appears as in attitude to SLA as in the main motives. We suppose the cause

conceals in the ethnocultural peculiarities of each subsample.

The Lithuanians are characterized by such traits as patience, thoroughness in matters, cool, adherence to strict logic in thinking. In their nature is thorough understanding of phenomena, events and facts. They differ by ambition, punctuality, accuracy, diligence, high sense of responsibility. This complex of traits is oriented to the social groups and social norms. In addition, the religion plays a very important role in a life of Lithuanian society, what is explaining a place of the moral and honest values in the structure of SLA motives. A Lithuanian rationality, as one of a main streak, presupposes a direction to the result of work. It explains the place of material – utilitarian values in the structure of SLA motives. Lithuania also is a member of the European Union, where all relations are submitted to the Law which supports and secures the social values.

The Russians are differed by compassion and generosity, inclination to a risk, a certain fatalism. They are characterized by altruism and responsiveness, tolerance in the relations with people of other ethnics. These traits are usually formed on a base of own person's understanding, during their finding of the “own morality”. Perhaps that is why the moral motives are in the first place in the structure of motives. As a rule, the Russians are hard-working, but they are active and effective in a work as long as it is interesting for them. They like in the activity most of all a process not a result. Doing something, they are oriented to the process more than to the result. May be it explained why the motives “tied with content of activity” are so expressed

However we find some distinctions between youth from Kaliningrad and Smolensk. The Kaliningradians has social, and "tied with content of activity" motives on the second and the third places, accordingly. The youth of Smolensk, on the contrary, motives “tied with content of activity” are on the second place and the social motives — on the third place. One of a possible explanation is a proximity the Kaliningrad region to the Europe which influences to the Kaliningradians more than the Smolyan. The youth of Kaliningrad oftener visits the European countries, appropriates the European values and guidelines what become apparent in the cultural features of Russian Kaliningradians.

Just the same, the representations of youth of all sample about some aspects of SLA are similar. Perhaps it could be explained by a common history of development, before a breakup of the Soviet Union.

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Vincenza Malatino – Verona Conference 2013

## LA PRIMAVERA ARABA A LAMPEDUSA: RIFLESSIONE SU UN FENOMENO DI IMMIGRAZIONE DI MASSA

Nella primavera del 2011 Lampedusa si è trovata a far fronte ad una tra le crisi più gravi e cruento della nostra storia recente. A 100 km dalle sue coste, a causa, della rivolta scoppiata in Tunisia, si è consumata una tragedia di proporzioni gigantesche e sconcertanti, dagli esiti devastanti soprattutto sul piano umano oltre che politico ed economico. E ancora alto è il rischio che l'esperienza possa ripetersi, date le attuali condizioni politiche presenti in tutto il bacino del Mediterraneo.

La popolazione di un' isola di 5.000 abitanti è triplicata nel giro di qualche settimana , a causa degli sbarchi improvvisi e massicci, provenienti dalla Tunisia e dalla Libia . Niente a che vedere con i flussi migratori che da sempre Lampedusa è stata in grado di assorbire tramite il Centro di accoglienza che conta circa 700 posti letto.

L'insostenibilità di questo straordinario evento ha prodotto in tutti gli abitanti, immigrati compresi, tensioni e vissuti di estrema conflittualità dovuti alla compresenza di numerosi *stressor* sia ambientali, sia psicologici. Si è raggiunta una soglia di criticità tale che gli abitanti dell'isola da una iniziale fase di solidarietà sono passati, per paura di essere sopraffatti, ad una successiva fase di rifiuto ed aggressività.

Esisteva una condizione oggettiva di impossibilità a condividere risorse e spazi fisici. Nelle prime settimane degli sbarchi, a febbraio, piove a Lampedusa e i profughi non hanno riparo: il Centro di Accoglienza è stato chiuso per disordini avvenuti in precedenza e passano diversi giorni prima che venga riaperto e comunque la capienza certamente è insufficiente a contenere il numero di persone presenti. La gente cerca riparo sotto i camion e in tutti i luoghi possibili, i cittadini di Lampedusa sconcertati cominciano una raccolta di abiti e viveri per provvedere a sostenere questa massa di disperati, tanti i bambini e le donne, molte di loro sono incinte. Intanto continuavano ad arrivare barconi carichi di esseri umani e le in formazioni sulle soluzioni possibili erano scarse e contraddittorie. Si è andata rafforzando, nei lampedusani, man mano che aumentava il numero degli occupanti, l'idea di essere vittime sacrificali di una emergenza politica e umanitaria che nessuno voleva affrontare a casa propria né in Italia, né in Europa con l'effetto di amplificare ancora di più i vissuti di esasperazione, di rifiuto, di impotenza, di paura e di aggressività. Si voleva fare di Lampedusa un centro di identificazione per provvedere ad eventuali espulsioni, L'isola sarebbe così diventata un luogo di confino dove la permanenza minima per le identificazioni sarebbe stata di almeno sei mesi mentre aumentava esponenzialmente la popolazione del territorio. Sembrava un delirio.

Tutti insieme, abitanti e migranti, si sentivano intrappolati in una condizione nella quale non si intravedevano vie d'uscita: vittime e carnefici gli uni degli altri. Ed è in questo clima che prendono il sopravvento i pregiudizi e si affacciano fantasmi di antiche pestilenze: l'altro non invade solo lo spazio fisico ma minaccia anche la salute e la sicurezza. I migranti non possono lavarsi e pertanto sono sporchi, cercano luoghi dove accamparsi occupando la maggior parte del territorio. Si raggruppano in molti su una collinetta di fronte al mare, nel punto dove di solito approdano i barconi, che verrà soprannominata la "collina della vergogna" per le condizioni di degrado in cui versano gli occupanti. Tra i migranti il consumo di alcol è elevato, tanto che viene emanata dal Sindaco, una ordinanza con la quale si vieta la vendita di alcolici. Finite le risorse economiche tanti chiedono l'elemosina, l'isola è diventata una enorme cloaca all'aperto a causa della carenza di servizi igienici. In cerca di un riparo, i migranti forzano le case che sono disabitate e iniziano scontri che finiscono anche con vere aggressioni fisiche. La struttura sanitaria si trova a fare fronte ad una emergenza senza precedenti. Nell'arco di una settimana scoppia anche la rivolta in Libia e a noi medici che settimanalmente prestiamo servizio presso il Poliambulatorio di Lampedusa, arrivando da Palermo per via aerea, giungevano notizie contraddittorie sul fatto che il

nostro aereo fosse scortato da due caccia bombardieri, visto che nel tragitto fino a Lampedusa sorvoliamo uno spazio vicino al territorio libico. Più volte ci capitava dopo l'atterraggio di vedere sfrecciare due caccia aerei, rischiavamo la pelle ma neanche su questo riuscivamo ad avere notizie certe. Gli sbarchi continuano a susseguirsi senza tregua, l'isola scoppia.

Ed è così che, sul piano umano, cominciano a venire meno le condizioni di empatia e riconoscimento dell'altro come persona. L'altro non appartiene più alla specie umana ma è diventato a tutti gli effetti un nemico da combattere, un invasore da espellere. Viene neutralizzata la prima legge generale esistente in natura, iscritta nel codice genetico, secondo la quale non si uccide dentro la stessa specie. Gli abitanti cominciano a temere per l'incolumità di donne e bambini che rimangono chiusi dentro le abitazioni. Si teme il tracollo della stagione turistica e difatti cominciano le disdette delle prenotazioni degli alberghi, e la fonte di reddito fondamentale dell'isola è il turismo. L'atmosfera è surreale, per le strade gente stralunata che chiede cibo, soldi, informazioni sul proprio destino. Qualcuno mostra le foto dei figli lasciati nel proprio Paese, tutti dichiarano che quello che vogliono è solo andarsene per trovare lavoro. In molti ringraziano gli abitanti dell'isola per l'accoglienza. Si creano anche momenti di incontri spontanei, si organizzano partite miste di calcetto, la comunità religiosa cerca di creare momenti di distensione. Ma molti sono i mussulmani e non tutti riconoscono la chiesa come luogo sacro. Tutto si confonde e sembra non finire mai. Si diffondono notizie inquietanti pare che dei migranti affamati abbiano cominciato a nutrirsi di cani. La notizia non verrà confermata ma l'immaginario collettivo si muove verso una inaccettabile dimensione di orrore. L'isola è militarizzata. Arrivano molti giornalisti da tutto il mondo ma le informazioni diffuse non riescono a descrivere fino in fondo il caos che regna a Lampedusa.

In questa atmosfera, dopo circa quattro mesi arriva la notizia che i profughi saranno portati via dall'isola. Una nave da crociera rimane ormeggiata con molti di loro a bordo per circa una settimana. Si susseguono notizie contraddittorie sulla destinazione dei migranti. Il governo italiano decide per il rimpatrio. Loro non vogliono ritornare in Tunisia ed invece accade proprio questo. L'informazione giunge tramite telefoni satellitari e da lì comincia la rivolta dei migranti. Gli animi di tutti sono ancora più esasperati ed in questo clima accade che nelle prime ore del mattino un gruppo di ragazzi dell'isola ubriachi prenda di mira un gruppo di tunisini aggredendoli con insulti e minacce, questi a scopo difensivo si barricano verso il porto dove si trova anche un rifornimento di benzina e uno di loro impossessatosi di una bombola di gas trovata lì accanto, minaccia di far saltare tutto per aria. Cominciano lanci di sassi e gli insulti, sopraggiunge gente armata di catene e spranghe. I lampedusani esasperati danno sfogo alla rabbia repressa per tanto tempo ed è a questo punto che intervengono le forze militari che fino a quel momento si erano limitate solo ad un regime di sorveglianza: ed è il massacro. Molti tunisini rimangono feriti uno è in fin di vita. Dopo pochi giorni l'isola viene sgomberata.

Atti di profonda umanità si sono alternati ad estremi sentimenti di rifiuto e intolleranza fino alla violenza. Durante questo periodo è anche accaduto che una bambina straniera abbia visto la luce sul suolo pelagico, dopo tanti anni che non si registrava la nascita di nessun bambino a Lampedusa, visto che sull'isola non esiste una struttura ospedaliera e le donne partoriscono per lo più a Palermo.

Mi sono chiesta, come, in una situazione del genere, si potesse immaginare un possibile intervento di sostegno psicologico di supporto alle persone coinvolte. Come facilitare l'elaborazione di un evento di tale gravità e complessità nelle persone che ne hanno subito il contraccolpo. Nella mia pratica professionale quale psichiatra, mi è capitato di avere visitato, presso il Poliambulatorio diverse persone colte da stati d'ansia sia durante l'occupazione, sia dopo lo svuotamento dell'isola e tutte risentivano di questa esperienza. In particolare i vissuti espressi e i sintomi manifestati hanno richiesto soprattutto il contenimento della paura a vari livelli. Una donna è stata colta da attacchi di panico per timore che i militari presenti sull'isola potessero occupare la sua casa e requisirla. Un'altra ha manifestato vissuti depressivi relativi ad un sentimento di pena e di preoccupazione per le sorti dei migranti affermando che diecimila anime si erano trovate insieme e adesso che erano andate via lei si sentiva svuotata e non riusciva di smettere di pensare a loro e quest'idea non le

permetteva di dormire da giorni. Diversi giovani hanno manifestato stati d'ansia con insonnia ricorrente. Uno di loro, Gaspare vent'anni, in particolare mi descrive così lo stato d'animo che serpeggiava tra i ragazzi: "ci sentivamo arrabbiati, spaventati ed impotenti e tra di noi, per riuscire a reagire a questi sentimenti, discutevamo della possibilità di picchiare qualche gruppo di tunisini, questo per lanciare loro un avvertimento relativo ai limiti da non oltrepassare. Come a dire: "stai attento a come ti comporti a casa nostra, non permetterti di toccare le nostre donne." Vivevamo tutta questa gente come una massa di delinquenti fuggiti dalle carceri del loro Paese. Al contempo però mi dice anche che, riflettendo a distanza di tempo, si rende conto dell'inevitabilità di abbandonare la propria terra quando le condizioni di vita diventano insostenibili e aggiunge: "anche noi lo abbiamo fatto in passato e continuiamo a farlo ancora adesso." In ogni caso afferma che questa esperienza lo ha fatto crescere e lo ha indotto a porsi domande che nella sua vita non si era mai posto. "Adesso guardo il mondo e le persone con altri occhi", dichiara dopo circa dieci dei nostri incontri. Gli chiedo allora cosa, secondo lui, si sarebbe potuto fare per aiutare le persone nel momento dell'emergenza, mi risponde che non lo sa ma che sicuramente vedere gli altri come persone e non "come bestie" avrebbe potuto aiutare di più. Ancora una volta mi trovo a riflettere sul fatto che il peggiore dei mali nel mondo è l'assenza di "empatia".

Un intervento possibile di supporto alla persone coinvolte in simili vicende, può ricondursi in maniera più specifica ai modelli adottati dalla psicologia dell'emergenza.

L'emergenza si caratterizza, in questi casi, per il disorientamento e la mancanza di riferimenti. L'intervento deve avere la finalità di prevenire e trattare i processi psichici delle emozioni e dei comportamenti che si determinano prima, durante e dopo l'evento critico e deve essere indirizzato sia verso il singolo individuo, sia verso la comunità nel suo complesso al fine di prevenire fenomeni di dispersione, disgregazione, conflittualità non orientate costruttivamente.

L'obiettivo deve tendere verso la promozione di processi di *empowerment* sia individuali, sia collettivi e di resilienza tendenti a dimostrare che il fatto di aver vissuto una emergenza non significa necessariamente esserne danneggiati (Weaver, 1995). A tal fine risulta prioritario arginare i rischi di dissoluzione del tessuto sociale, riattivare le connessioni con il territorio e con tutte le forze che vi operano, orientare costruttivamente le conflittualità e facilitare l'aggregazione ed il senso di appartenenza alla comunità umana. Di fondamentale importanza è sviluppare e rinforzare i legami interni alle reti sociali naturali e facilitare il dialogo con le culture diverse, avendo ben chiaro il ruolo dei mediatori culturali e degli interpreti, sono questi i migliori alleati indispensabili per favorire l'incontro delle diversità culturali. Non ultima la necessità di creare e sostenere le connessioni con i referenti locali e con le culture del soccorso esterno al territorio.

Il raggiungimento di questi obiettivi è sicuramente un intervento complesso e per nulla facile e richiede notevoli sforzi organizzativi. Quello che si può fare ad es. è di indire riunioni di gestione presso la struttura di accoglienza e con i referenti delle associazioni presenti sul territorio al fine di coordinare le attività, creare uno spazio di ascolto aperto in forma permanente.

Una riflessione va posta al fatto che "se una persona si trova in difficoltà il modo migliore di aiutarla non è quello di dirle cosa fare(...) quanto piuttosto quello di aiutarla comprendere la sua situazione e a gestire il problema prendendo pienamente da sola la responsabilità nella soluzione e nelle sue eventuali scelte (Folgheraiter, 1995).

L'efficacia di qualsiasi intervento non può prescindere dalla qualità della formazione degli operatori che è strettamente legata alla qualità umana di cui sono portatori. Bisogna che sappiano, che sappiano fare e che sappiano saper essere.

Gli operatori devono essere in sostanza in grado di facilitare il passaggio di un sentire che possa trasformare i protagonisti dell'evento da vittime della storia a protagonisti della vita in maniera tale che possa avvenire il passaggio dalla passività e dai sentimenti di impotenza, all'apprendimento della speranza ed all'aumento del controllo degli eventi tramite la partecipazione e l'impegno a divenire non più quindi solo parte di un problema, bensì della soluzione del problema stesso.

Un altro obiettivo prioritario è quello di tenere conto dei vissuti dei bambini e a tal riguardo è opportuno inviare degli operatori presso le scuole al fine di favorire nei più piccoli, attraverso interventi di *play-therapy* e disegno processi di simbolizzazione che favoriscano l'elaborazione delle esperienze traumatiche. Per i più grandi sarebbero da favorire gruppi di ascolto e momenti di riflessione atti a confrontarsi sul senso degli accadimenti.

Questo oltre a sviluppare, nei ragazzi, la resilienza avrebbe un valore altamente formativo in grado di avviare la sensibilizzazione verso una cultura della pace, il che implicherebbe una grande rivoluzione che riconcilierrebbe non solo l'uomo alla natura (ed alla sua natura), ma gli uomini egualmente e liberamente (per le loro differenze) fra di loro. Si tratterebbe di un ulteriore passaggio dialettico, ma non mortale, con ciò esaurendo i cicli dialettici concepiti come conflitti cruenti e guerra (Guiducci, 1986).

Gli intensi flussi migratori ci costringono a confrontarci con diverse modalità di percepire. Gli uomini e le donne migranti rappresentano oggi in Italia il 6% della popolazione totale e la cifra è destinata a salire. Non possiamo ignorare la necessità di promuovere processi di sensibilizzazione e conoscenza delle varie culture, che avvino riflessioni di senso sulle motivazioni per le quali migliaia di esseri umani affrontano il rischio della morte per ritrovare, a volte, minime possibilità di vita migliore o di semplice sopravvivenza. E' prioritario avviare un dialogo quotidiano che dia, nella dimensione del mondo globalizzato in cui viviamo, un senso all'altro, e alla cultura storica che permea i vari sistemi culturali.

Favorire lo sviluppo di una cultura della tolleranza può favorire, anche in condizioni di stress ambientali estremi, processi di *empowerment* che spingano gli individui ad accrescere la possibilità di controllare attivamente la propria vita, nel riconoscimento comunque del valore dell'altro come persona umana ridimensionando un percorso che, seppur non privo di conflitti, starebbe fuori dal baratro delle lotte sanguinose e della guerra, ponendo così termine al periodo tragico dei sacrifici umani collettivi.

Per rimanere nell'ambito delle riflessioni su cosa sia possibile fare per evitare di ritrovarsi ad affrontare, impreparati, evenienze di siffatta gravità, su come poter fronteggiare emergenze umanitarie tanto complesse e certamente non obsolete, sarebbe importante organizzare non in tempi di emergenza, attività di formazione di operatori che siano in grado all'occorrenza, di effettuare interventi di rinforzo delle reti sociali, di promozione della cultura della sicurezza, di attivazione delle abilità di *coping* e pronto soccorso delle emozioni durante la fase di impatto. Che siano in grado di sostenere i processi di trasformazione, fronteggiare il carico delle conseguenze e promuovere le riconessioni con il territorio nella fase post impatto. Le competenze da acquisire in un contesto di emergenza, hanno sicuramente a che fare con la consapevolezza che questa è una situazione interattiva caratterizzata dalla presenza di una minaccia, da una richiesta rapida di attivazione e di rapide decisioni, dalla percezione di una sopraffazione improvvisa tra un bisogno (cresciuto per intensità, ampiezza, numerosità e ritmo) e una potenzialità di risposta attivabile dalle risorse immediatamente disponibili e da un clima emotivo congruente (Sbattella, 2009).

Va ricordato che nel 2006 è stata pubblicata una direttiva della Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri che ha cercato di delineare alcuni modelli per integrare gli psicologi dell'emergenza all'interno delle organizzazioni preposte alle situazioni di crisi sposando il *Metodo Augustus* da applicare alla funzione di sanità e assistenza sociale. Le moderne teorie sulla pianificazione delle emergenze coincidono con i principi espressi da Augusto 2000 anni fa: di fronte a situazioni complesse ed estreme occorre rispondere con uno schema operativo semplice e flessibile. Le parole chiave quindi sono: Semplicità e flessibilità. Questi criteri sono già utilizzati nell'ambito delle organizzazioni per la gestione dell'emergenza in un moderno sistema di Protezione Civile. Va tuttavia ulteriormente sottolineata l'attenzione da porre, nella formazione, alla promozione dello sviluppo oltre che delle competenze legate al saper fare, anche dell'aspetto riguardante la capacità profonda di sapersi mettere nei panni dell'altro, di sviluppare in sostanza capacità empatiche e di profonda accettazione, chiunque sia l'altro, senza mai perdere di vista se stessi nella dimensione della propria congruenza. Queste tre condizioni: empatia, accettazione e congruenza, come ha

affermato Carl Rogers stanno alla base della costruzione di ogni relazione funzionante e profondamente vera tra le persone. È necessario essere consapevoli che prima di tutto, in ogni relazione d'aiuto bisogna provare a raccogliere il grido e l'appello che ogni uomo sofferente lancia. Ricordo ancora le parole di una persona, di cui non conoscerò mai il nome, che appena scampato da un naufragio, dopo un viaggio durato "sette soli e sette lune" mi disse dopo avere ascoltato in un gruppo i suoi compagni di viaggio raccontare le loro storie, "io non ho niente da dire la storia di uno è la storia di tutti". E per dirla con Faugeras (2006) perché un grido si trasformi in appello bisogna che ci sia una risposta. Anche se l'appello non sa bene a chi si rivolge e che cosa chiede. Ma facendo del grido un appello, la risposta avvia il gioco infinito del dialogo. Una risposta che non ha niente a che fare con un atteggiamento di compassione, di carità o di umanità, ma è riconducibile ad una scelta esistenziale e ontologica, all'affermazione che l'uomo si costituisce e si determina nella sua umanità a partire dall'altro, con l'altro, nella sua risposta e nel suo appello.

A Lampedusa un'umanità sofferente e bisognosa ha lanciato il suo appello e questo lavoro intende avere anche il valore di una testimonianza.

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## **Il monitoraggio delle attività psicosociali nei Centri di Accoglienza per migranti: la necessità di una efficace supervisione**

**Mattera, A., De Cesare, G., Parisi, M., Diodati, A.**

### **Il progetto Praesidium**

Il progetto Praesidium nasce dall'esigenza del Ministero dell'Interno-Dipartimento per le Libertà Civili e l'Immigrazione di dare piena attuazione ai compiti istituzionali ad esso assegnati che prevedono, tra gli altri compiti, la predisposizione di misure di accoglienza umanitaria e di assistenza nei confronti degli stranieri privi di mezzi di sostentamento ed in condizioni di soggiorno irregolare in arrivo via mare attraverso la frontiera Sud del Paese (c.d. "flussi migratori misti"). Viene previsto altresì il potenziamento dell'accoglienza rispetto ai flussi migratori che interessano l'isola di Lampedusa, la Sicilia, e gli altri luoghi della frontiera marittima dell'Italia meridionale.

I principali beneficiari del progetto sono i migranti volontari, i richiedenti asilo, rifugiati e beneficiari di protezione sussidiaria, minori stranieri in arrivo via mare in Italia, vittime di tratta e sfruttamento lavorativo e gruppi di migranti vulnerabili. Il progetto vede coinvolte l'Organizzazione Internazionale per le Migrazioni (OIM), Save the Children Italia Onlus, Alto Commissariato delle Nazioni Unite per i Rifugiati (UNHCR) e Croce Rossa Italiana (CRI).

La Croce Rossa Italiana svolge la propria attività in favore di migranti in via prioritaria nell'area del Sud del paese, ma anche in quelle Regioni che possano essere interessate da nuovi flussi. Viene promossa un'attività di supporto psicologico sia per gli operatori umanitari, non solo CRI, che per quei soggetti Istituzionali coinvolti nell'affrontare la stessa emergenza al fianco degli operatori Umanitari.

La Croce Rossa Italiana verifica che non ci siano contrazioni negli standard di risposta dell'assistenza sanitaria ai migranti e lavora per il loro incremento, in termini soprattutto di informazione, accessibilità, integrazione e verifica psicologica. La CRI si muove nell'ottica di un rafforzamento della capacità di risposta, coinvolgendo le unità periferiche dell'Associazione come risorse per l'individuazione delle vulnerabilità e per una risposta tempestiva nell'assistenza ai migranti al momento dello sbarco, nella fase della "prima accoglienza", nei vari Centri e nel percorso di integrazione.

Tale progetto rientra in una serie di valutazioni mirate ad osservare l'efficacia, non solo dell'impegno sanitario e operativo della Croce Rossa nei settori della protezione internazionale, dei flussi migratori misti e delle attività di advocacy svolte, ma anche del più ampio mandato di protection che l'intero Movimento di Croce Rossa ha esteso a coloro che sono vittime di dinamiche di migrazione generate da aree di conflitto, macro-catastrofi e povertà.

Destinataria dell'attività è la popolazione migrante, attraverso il monitoraggio dell'assistenza sanitaria offerta sia nei Centri di accoglienza che sul Territorio. L'attività di monitoraggio è resa più efficace lavorando, in sinergia con gli altri partner e con il Ministero dell'Interno, alla individuazione di un metodica condivisa e alla definizione degli standard di riferimento e proponendo interventi di implementazione delle modalità di tutela sanitaria per i migranti ospiti dei diversi Centri di Accoglienza. Questo risultato viene perseguito con la diffusione di buone prassi rilevate e con una azione diretta di educazione e prevenzione sanitaria, mediante la diffusione di materiali dedicati, nonché con una azione di accompagnamento ai servizi sul territorio.

La CRI, per la settima annualità del progetto, nel 2012, ha operato nell'ambito del Progetto Praesidium con quattro team dislocati in Puglia, Calabria, Sicilia Orientale e Sicilia Occidentale. Ogni team è composto da un Field officer e da un Mediatore linguistico-culturale. Il coordinamento a livello centrale è assicurato dal Coordinatore nazionale e dal Facilitatore di progetto, sono inoltre impiegati una psicologa coordinatrice delle attività di supporto psicosociali, una coordinatrice delle attività di comunicazione e recentemente anche una psicologa che si occupa di prevenzione e gestione dello stress degli operatori.

### **L'approccio Biopsicosociale alla salute del migrante**

L'approccio che mira alla promozione della salute del migrante affonda le sue radici nel Modello Biopsicosociale (Engel, 1974), il quale si distingue storicamente dal Modello Meccanicistico-Riduzionista.

La sostanziale differenza tra il paradigma Meccanicistico-Riduzionista e quello Biopsicosociale sta nel potere che essi attribuiscono all'uomo: mentre il primo vede l'uomo come individuo passivo in una visione pessimistica e riduzionista, il secondo dà piena fiducia ad esso e alla sua capacità di autorealizzarsi in un'ottica positiva e ottimistica.

Il paradigma Meccanicistico-Riduzionista nasce dal pensiero di Newton e di Cartesio. Il primo postulava che l'attività dell'universo è regolata dalle leggi della meccanica secondo modalità prevedibili e basate sul principio di causa-effetto e che perciò è possibile isolare, gli uni dagli altri, elementi contigui della realtà, riducendoli alle loro caratteristiche fondamentali. Il secondo affermava l'esistenza di una netta separazione tra mente e corpo. Nella visione meccanicistico-riduzionista l'uomo, e tutta la realtà esterna, funziona come una macchina di cui è possibile capire il funzionamento e riparare le parti guaste. Il modello medico tradizionale si basa su questa visione che tuttora influenza la medicina: nella malattia se abbiamo una causa, ed un relativo effetto, si può agire su di essa per rimuovere efficacemente l'effetto, senza tener conto dell'interazione tra mente e corpo e di eventuali fattori psicologici o sociali che possono influire sulla malattia. Il malato, nella medicina tradizionale occidentale, è visto privo di potere e completamente passivo nei confronti del medico.

Il paradigma Biopsicosociale, invece, tiene conto dell'intero sistema riconducendo le cause della malattia non solo a fattori biologici, ma anche a fattori psicologici e sociali. Il paradigma Biopsicosociale vede inoltre l'uomo impegnato in prima persona per la propria salute e non più in atteggiamento passivo nei confronti del medico. Esso conferisce responsabilità all'individuo e si fonda sulla promozione della salute, dà inoltre importanza all'uomo come persona e non più come parte malata da guarire. Secondo questo paradigma la salute viene costruita socialmente e vede l'uomo come protagonista.

Dagli studi condotti sullo stato di salute dei migranti presenti in Italia, da trenta anni a questa parte, è stato generalmente riscontrato che l'immigrato arriva con un patrimonio di salute pressoché integro e si consideri come forza-lavoro indissolubilmente legata all'integrità fisica: è il cosiddetto "effetto migrante sano" (Geraci S., 2000) che si riferisce a un'autoselezione che precede l'emigrazione, operata cioè nel paese di origine, e per la quale parte chi gode di salute migliore.

Solo in seguito all'esposizione prolungata a fattori di rischio si verifica il cosiddetto "effetto migrante esausto". I fattori di rischio sono per lo più di tipo sociale quali cattive condizioni abitative, scarsa tutela sul lavoro, alimentazione carente, a questi si aggiungono le difficoltà di accesso ai servizi socio-sanitari e fattori di tipo psicologico come il disagio dovuto allo sradicamento culturale.

L'approccio della Croce Rossa Italiana, sul territorio e nei Centri di accoglienza, è improntato sulla valorizzazione delle risorse individuali, sulla crescita delle risorse già presenti sul territorio e sulla creazione di sinergie. Quindi, nell'ambito del progetto, l'aspetto di monitoraggio delle condizioni di assistenza sanitaria nei centri e nelle operazioni di sbarco e di rintraccio, si somma ad una azione diretta di assistenza e di implementazione delle capacità di assistenza presenti sul territorio, diversificando l'azione sulla base delle necessità emerse.

Ad oggi i team CRI hanno effettuato interventi allo sbarco, nei rintracci e nei Centri governativi, intessendo una rete di collaborazione con le realtà istituzionali del territorio, con la sanità locale e con le realtà sociali e di volontariato presenti.

### **Il monitoraggio delle attività socio-sanitarie nei Centri di Accoglienza**

Il Progetto Praesidium si occupa, tra l'altro, del monitoraggio delle attività socio-sanitarie nei centri dedicati all'accoglienza e all'assistenza dei migranti e durante gli sbarchi al fine di supportare e

rafforzare la capacità di gestione di tali attività. In questo lavoro sono stati monitorati un Centro di Accoglienza (CDA), 5 Centri di Accoglienza Richiedenti Asilo (CARA) e 6 Centri di Identificazione ed Espulsione (CIE) nelle Regioni Sicilia, Puglia e Calabria che accolgono complessivamente circa 5200 persone. Nei centri monitorati i field officers operanti nel Progetto hanno effettuato, durante tutto il 2012, una raccolta dati utilizzando delle procedure standardizzate tra le quali una scheda di monitoraggio delle attività psicosociali composta da una raccolta di item oggettivi di cui è possibile effettuare una verifica nel tempo.

L'obiettivo era la verifica dell'organizzazione dell'assistenza psicosociale e le modalità di presa in carico delle vulnerabilità presentate dai migranti ospitati in tali strutture. Nello specifico si è deciso di verificare sia l'esistenza di quanto richiesto dal capitolato di affido della gestione dei centri, ovvero un servizio di ascolto psicologico e di invio ai servizi psichiatrici esterni dove necessario, che l'esistenza di interventi che completano l'offerta di tale supporto.

Le 5 aree esplorate nel monitoraggio riguardano:

- Valutazione e presa in carico dei migranti
- Supporto socio-psicologico a donne e famiglie con bambini, nei centri in cui sono presenti
- Organizzazione degli spazi disponibili nel centro
- Svolgimento di attività di integrazione/socializzazione
- Formazione e supervisione degli operatori

Dall'analisi delle schede somministrate nei 12 centri nei primi 6 mesi del 2012, è emerso che nella totalità dei casi sono presenti equipe di psicologi che svolgono la valutazione del migrante, la presa in carico, la segnalazione e l'avvio a trattamenti psichiatrici, se ritenuto necessario.

Per quanto riguarda il supporto socio-psicologico a donne e famiglie con bambini, si rileva che nella maggior parte dei centri non si svolgono corsi di preparazione al parto e si presta scarsa attenzione a corsi rivolti alla cura e igiene personale, presenti solo in 2 centri su 12, oppure a corsi di igiene e sicurezza alloggiativa. Dei centri in cui è prevista la presenza di minori (5 CARA e 1 CDA) solo uno prevede un corso di igiene per bambini e la presenza di un educatore che possa organizzare attività ludico-ricreative, mentre in 3 centri su 6 si presta attenzione alla loro scolarizzazione ed in 1 centro su 6 si organizza un servizio di doposcuola che possa aiutare i bambini non solo nell'integrazione, ma anche in una più celere acquisizione della lingua italiana. Le donne non accompagnate sono protette solo in 2 centri sui 7 in cui sono presenti le donne.

Per quanto riguarda l'organizzazione del centro, in 10 centri su 12 sono previsti spazi privati in cui l'ospite può parlare con gli operatori, mentre non si garantiscono spazi comuni alle donne, separati da quelli degli uomini; i diritti dei migranti risultano sempre rispettati in 6 centri su 12, è garantita la preparazione all'incontro con la Commissione Territoriale, presente in 10 centri su 12. Si presta attenzione alla qualità del rapporto ospite-operatori in 5 centri su 12.

Per quanto riguarda lo svolgimento di attività di integrazione, sono previste le lezioni di italiano in 7 centri su 12, mentre le lezioni di italiano per sole donne sono previste in 3 centri su 7. Risulta scarsa l'attenzione rivolta allo svolgimento di attività sportive, presenti in 3 centri su 12, di laboratori, presenti in 4 centri su 12 e di corsi professionali, presenti solo in 2 centri su 12. Spazi ludici per bambini sono presenti in 4 centri su 6.

Infine, per quanto riguarda la formazione e la supervisione degli operatori, non sono state rilevate attività regolari di formazione e di aggiornamento, né una supervisione periodica delle loro attività.

### **Verifica dei risultati**

Durante il secondo semestre del 2012 è stata condotta la fase di controllo, tramite l'analisi delle schede di monitoraggio psicosociale compilate da luglio a dicembre 2012, che ha confermato i risultati precedentemente descritti, in particolare il poco coinvolgimento degli ospiti in attività a tutela della salute psicofisica e l'assenza in tutti i centri di attività di formazione e supervisione del lavoro svolto. I dati del secondo semestre hanno messo in luce le difficoltà operative nell'organizzazione delle attività psicosociali, ove proposte, e le problematiche relative all'accesso



al servizio Sanitario Nazionale. L'inserimento nei centri di seconda accoglienza risulta inoltre difficoltoso e con lunghi tempi di attesa.

Non è prevista in nessun centro monitorato una supervisione esterna, supporto psicologico degli operatori né corsi di aggiornamento. Soprattutto per quanto riguarda i CARA, l'alto numero di ospiti pone gli operatori a rischio di burn out e rende necessaria la gestione dello stress lavorativo. Di seguito viene riportata la scheda di rilevazione dati con i risultati riscontrati.

AREE SCHEDA PSICOLOGICA	ITEM CONSIDERATI	TOTALE CENTRI MONITORATI	NUMERO CENTRI		MANCANZA DI INFORMAZIONI SUI CENTRI
			PRESENZA ATTIVITA'	ASSENZA ATTIVITA'	
<b>VALUTAZIONE E PRESA IN CARICO DEI MIGRANTI</b>	Sono presenti psicologi nel centro?	12	12	0	
	Sono previsti invii presso strutture psichiatriche esterne, se necessario?	12	12	0	
<b>SUPPORTO SOCIO-PSICOLOGICO A DONNE E FAMIGLIE</b>	Si svolgono corsi di preparazione al parto?	6	/	6	
	Si svolgono corsi di igiene personale?	12	2	10	
	Si svolgono corsi di igiene per bambini?	6	1	5	
	E' presente un educatore che si occupi di attività per bambini?	6	1	5	
	E' prevista la scolarizzazione dei bambini?	6	3	3	
	E' previsto un corso di doposcuola per bambini?	6	1	5	
	Si svolgono corsi di sicurezza in casa?	9		9	3
	Donne non accompagnate sono protette	7	2	4	1
<b>ORGANIZZAZIONE CENTRO</b>	Ci sono spazi per colloqui privati con il personale?	12	10	2	
	Si garantiscono spazi comuni alle donne, separati da quelli degli uomini?	7	0	6	1
	Diritti dei migranti sempre rispettati	12	6	6	
	E' garantita la preparazione per la commissione territoriale?	12	10	1	1
	Sono distribuite schede telefoniche?	12	11	1	
	Ci sono cabine telefoniche nel centro?	12	6	5	1
	Attenzione alla qualità del rapporto tra il personale e gli ospiti	12	5	7	

<b>SVOLGIMENTO ATTIVITA' DI INTEGRAZIONE</b>	Sono previste lezioni di italiano?	12	7	5	
	Sono previste lezioni di italiano per sole donne?	7	3	3	1
	Si svolgono attività sportive all'interno del centro, organizzate dagli operatori?	12	3	9	
	Si svolgono laboratori all'interno del centro? (es. laboratori di cucina, sartoria, falegnameria, giardinaggio)	12	4	6	2
	Si svolgono corsi professionali?	12	2	10	
	Sono previsti corsi professionali solo per le donne?	7	2	5	
	Esistenza di spazi ludici	6	4	2	
<b>FORMAZIONE E SUPERVISIONE OPERATORI</b>	Sono previsti formazione ed aggiornamento professionale a tutti gli operatori?	12	/	6	6
	E' prevista una supervisione di tutte le attività agli operatori del centro?	12	/	7	5

## Conclusioni

Dai risultati ottenuti, si evidenzia che nei centri monitorati è assicurata la presenza di operatori che si fanno carico della valutazione psicologica del migrante, al suo arrivo, ma manca un percorso strutturato di supporto alle difficoltà nel periodo di permanenza (attività di socializzazione, protezione delle donne, sostegno ai minori) che può portare ad un deterioramento dello stato di salute e solidità psicologica, soprattutto in caso di lunga permanenza nella struttura. In particolare, nei CARA, si rileva una discreta attenzione agli aspetti inerenti il percorso legale per ottenere i documenti, ma questo intervento non si inserisce in un modus operandi strutturato che abbia la finalità di rendere autonomo il migrante nel nuovo Paese e di poter usufruire dei servizi messi a sua disposizione dalle Istituzioni competenti.

Scarsa attenzione viene data anche alle attività sportive, pur essendo queste ultime determinanti sia all'integrazione ed alla socializzazione delle diverse nazionalità nel centro, sia all'integrazione nel Paese ospitante.

Si evidenzia la necessità di supervisione degli psicologi che operano nei contesti di accoglienza per migranti e la necessità di investire nella tutela della salute psicologica degli operatori, prevedendo una formazione continua ed una supervisione periodica del lavoro svolto. Ciò, in un'ottica Biopsicosociale, oltre a promuovere la salute del personale coinvolto in contesti migratori, può determinare un diretto miglioramento dei servizi psicologici e sociali proposti nei centri, ossia delle altre aree esplorate tramite le schede di monitoraggio: una corretta valutazione della vulnerabilità e presa in carico dei migranti, il supporto psicologico e sociale a donne e famiglie con bambini, l'organizzazione degli spazi disponibili nel centro, lo svolgimento di attività di integrazione e socializzazione.

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**School Experiences of Canadian Adolescents with  
Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual-identified Parents**

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## **School Experiences of Canadian Adolescents with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Parents**

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**Keywords** Identity, Narrative, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, School, LGBT Parenting

**Abstract** Although parenting by lesbian, gay, and bisexual-identified (LGB) individuals has attracted increasing research attention over the past few decades, relatively little focus has been given to the personal identity development of adolescents raised in such families. There is scant qualitative data that describes the phenomenon from the viewpoint of Canadian adolescents. This paper presents the findings of an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of Canadian adolescents with LGB-identified parents. Nine Ontario youths (mean age 17.5) were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. Twelve themes emerged which were organized under three overarching domains: family themes, queer identity themes, and school themes. This paper highlights some of the participants' responses related to school themes. Participants shared stories to indicate that they, like their LGB-identified parents, deal with issues related to "coming out." They also spoke of their desire for schools to make greater efforts to expose all students to narratives other than the heterosexual family narrative. Finally, they recounted their own personal experiences to highlight some of the best (and worst) practices they have observed in schools with respect to the treatment of LGB-led families. This paper presents examples of their responses and offers recommendations to educators and counsellors. Additionally, it considers how adolescents create their own identity by orienting their own experiences against the experiences of others and against master narratives such as the master narrative of heteronormativity.

### **Introduction**

The general consensus of reviews of the literature pertaining to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender-led (LGBT) families is that heterosexual-identified parents do not outperform LGBT-identified parents. As Herek (2006, p. 614) points out, "If gay, lesbian, or bisexual parents were inherently less capable than otherwise comparable heterosexual parents, their children would evidence problems regardless of the type of sample. This pattern clearly has not been observed." There is unparalleled unanimity of agreement on the issue from associations of psychologists, psychiatrists, paediatricians, and other child advocacy groups. The Canadian Psychological Association (2006, para. 4) states, "A review of the psychological research into the well-being of children raised by same-sex and opposite-sex parents continues to indicate that there are no reliable differences in their mental health or social adjustment and that lesbian mothers and gay fathers are not less fit as parents than are their heterosexual counterparts." While accurately identifying the number of children with parents who could be described as LGBT is challenging for a variety of reasons, such as fear of stigmatization or discrimination (Tasker & Golombok, 1997; Wainright, Russell, & Patterson, 2004), it has been estimated that between 1 percent and 12 percent of all children ages 19 and under have an LGBT parent (Stacey

& Biblarz, 2001). Regardless of the exact number of Canadian youth with non-heterosexual parents or of the pathway that led these parents to have children, the phenomenon of Canadian youth with LGBT parents is worthy of study for a variety of reasons.

First, relatively few qualitative, phenomenological, non-comparative studies (i.e., studies that do not compare heterosexual-headed families to queer-headed families) have been conducted. Second, most of the current literature refers to U.S. findings that cannot necessarily be extrapolated to Canadian experiences. Third, the definition of “family” is changing; since the proportion of traditional families is declining (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2006), researchers need to be prepared to study all types of families that represent Canadian experiences. Finally, direct access to the perceived needs and experiences of adolescents with LGBT-identified parents has the potential to contribute to the literature, to impact the development of school policies and curricula, and to enrich the quality of life for LGBT families (McNeilly, 2012).

There is historical precedent for a narrative approach to the study of human behaviour and of any human phenomenon. I am aligning the current study with the view held by William James (1902) that it is difficult to understand a phenomenon without knowing what the phenomenon means to those who experience it. Similarly, researchers such as Gordon Allport and, more recently Dan McAdams, have argued for the value of using narrative voice to understand a phenomenon. Allport (1968) believed that stories could be used to broaden our understanding of an individual’s meaning making process if their narratives of personal identity were analyzed with sufficient rigour. McAdams (2008) argued for the need to study narratives of self-meaning making throughout the life cycle of an individual to understand how individuals make sense of their own experiences as they develop a sense of the continuity of the self. The current study aims to investigate the phenomenon of adolescents with queer-identified parents by candidly asking such youth to articulate and reflect upon their own lived experiences.

## **The Current Study**

*Method.* The current study builds upon the narrative tradition described above and employs interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as an inductive approach for investigating how individuals make sense of their experiences (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005). As Reid and her colleagues acknowledge, IPA participants are assumed to be the experts who can offer investigators access to their thoughts and feelings through the narrative process. In the current study, IPA does not set out to test a hypothesis about the experiences of youth with LGB-identified parents or to compare them to youth with heterosexual parents. Instead, its aim is to ask broad research questions which lead to the collection of more expansive data (Smith, 2004). Many IPA researchers (e.g., Smith and Osborn, 2003) contend that semi-structured interviews are the “best” and most common choice for IPA because they allow the researcher and participant to converse in a way that allows the initial questions to be modified, responses to be probed, and topics to be explored that might not been considered prior to the interview. Accordingly, a semi-structured interview schedule was constructed in a manner that made it consistent with some of the precedents set within the field of narrative psychology and with protocols used by other IPA researchers.

*Participants.* The criteria for inclusion in the study required that each participant have at least one parent who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. However, since no participants in the present study had a transgendered parent, the remainder of this paper will more accurately refer to the experiences of adolescents with LGB-identified parents rather than LGBT-identified parents. In an effort to secure a homogenous sample, additional selection criteria required participants to be English-speaking residents of the province of Ontario with anticipated high school graduation dates between 2009-2014. Nine (N=9) participants were interviewed, ranging in age from 13 to 19 years old, with a mean age of 17.5. Further demographic data for the participants is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant demographic information

	Shane	Christie	Owen	Anna	Denise	Nick	Ellie	Julia	Victoria
<b>Participant age</b>	13	16	16	17	17	18	19	19	19
<b>Participant gender</b>	M	F	M	F	F	M	F	F	F
<b>Race</b>	White	White	White	White	South Asian	White	White	White	White
<b>Self-identified SES</b>	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
<b>First language</b>	English	English	English	English	English	English	English	English	English
<b>Parent with whom participant resides</b>	50% mom, 50% dad	50% mom, 50% dad	50% mom, 50% dad	50% mom, 50% dad	House mates	Mom	House mates	Mom	House mates
<b>LGB parent</b>	Mom	Dad	Mom	Mom	Mom Dad	Mom	Mom	Mom	Mom
<b>Age LGB family life began</b>	8-9	12-13	8-10	10-11	6	13	7-8	0	0
<b>Number of full siblings</b>	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	0	1
<b>Number step siblings</b>	2	0	2	2	0	1	1	2	2

*Results.* Using IPA as the vehicle for analyzing interview transcripts, it became clear that the bulk of participants’ responses could be organized into three domains that would deepen an understanding of participants’ emerging identities as children of LGB-identified parents – family themes, queer identity themes, and school themes. The master table of themes (see Table 2 below) illustrates the twelve themes that emerged from an analysis of the responses of the nine participants as a whole. To narrow the focus of this paper, only school-related themes will be discussed. Throughout the paper, a great deal of verbatim evidence will be presented. Presenting evidence in the form of direct quotations from participants is one means of increasing the internal validity of a narrative study (Osborn & Smith, 1998).

Table 2: Master table of themes

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Theme Code</b>	<b>Theme Name</b>
<b>Family Themes</b>	F-1	<i>Parent comes out of the closet</i>
	F-2	<i>Divorce, remarriage, stepparents, &amp; blended families</i>
	F-3	<i>Extended family responses</i>
	F-4	<i>Advantages of having LGB-identified parents</i>
<b>Queer Identity Themes</b>	I-1	<i>Connecting with other “queer spawn”</i>
	I-2	<i>Connecting with &amp; advocating for queer youth</i>
	I-3	<i>Borderlands &amp; high stakes: privileges &amp; pressures living between worlds</i>
	I-4	<i>Canadian law &amp; Canadian society</i>
<b>School Themes</b>	S-1	<i>Disclosure decisions &amp; practices</i>
	S-2	<i>Repercussions of disclosure</i>
	S-3	<i>Education to expose others to alternative family narratives</i>
	S-4	<i>Best (and worst) school practices</i>

### **Discussion: School Experiences of Canadian Youth with LGB-identified Parents**

Some children face the first day of school excited and ready for new experiences, while others are practically pried from their parents’ arms. Regardless of the level of voluntary acceptance of the realities of school institutions, however, when children begin school they are exposed to new faces, new cultures, new rules, new social expectations, and new guidelines for conflict resolution. Children may have developed a fairly complex understanding of how things work at



home and within their extended family, but when they begin school they experience a paradigm shift that requires them to expand their identity configuration beyond the relative safety afforded them at home.

For children with LGB-identified parents and, indeed, for any child, the microcosm of society that their classroom provides will range from hospitable to hostile. When author Abigail Garner learned as a child that her father identified as gay, she quickly deduced that she needed to be careful about whom she told. “From that moment on,” she recalled, “I began a lifetime of seeking out allies and avoiding people I perceived as homophobic and therefore threats to my family” (Garner, 2004, p. 39). In schools, children with queer-identified parents learn to make ongoing decisions about if and when to disclose, whom to trust, and whom to avoid.

Participants in the current study articulated four school-related themes:

*School Theme 1: Disclosure decisions & practices.* Participants were very clear that they had, over time, become very open with their peers about the fact that they had at least one queer-identified parent. Each had learned to choose accepting friends and had developed a tactic of dropping hints about their family configuration to assess whom could or could not be trusted with a window into this aspect of their identity.

*School Theme 2: Repercussions of disclosure.* Upon “coming out” as a member of an LGB-led family, participants identified five main patterns of peer responses that I have labelled as *neutrality, connection, humour, hostility, and curiosity*.

*School Theme 3: Education.* The lived experiences of the nine participants highlighted the important role that education can play. Over and over again, they stated that to ensure our society’s increased acceptance of diverse family configurations, there is one obvious solution: education.

*School Theme 4: Best (and worst) school practices.* The collective experiences of participants can contribute to our understanding of best and worst school practices when it comes to the treatment of LGB-led families. As such, their anecdotes provide valuable lessons for counsellors, teachers, school administrators, and policymakers.

*School Theme 1: Disclosure decisions & practices.* There is a widespread societal assumption, presumably based on a master narrative of heteronormativity, that everyone has heterosexual parents. Several participants hinted that they went through various stages of openness at school regarding how their family identity differed from this societal assumption. Nineteen-year-old Julia’s candid response provided the clearest indication of the various transitions she had experienced:

Julia now would say, “I have a queer family. I have two moms, and suck on that” [laughs]. Elementary school Julia, when I was very young, I’d be like, “I have a mom only.” And then I started to get bullied so I would – I would, when people would ask if my mom was gay, I’d say no. If they’d ask where my father was, I’d make up stories. “Oh, he died,” or “I don’t know,” or whatever. And then when my mom and her partner got together, instead of Patricia she was Patrick. [Then] I got older, and I started making different friends who just didn’t care.

Like Julia, 17-year-old Denise explained that she was eventually able to achieve a level of comfort with outing her parents and, vicariously, with outing herself. At some point during

elementary school, she became more cautious regarding the process of disclosing her parents' sexual identity, but by the end of high school it had once again become relatively simple:

As a “queer spawn,” as we call it, um, I know that there’s always a time that I have to come out to my friends. I have to out my parents to my friends, or now, new people that I meet. And I know that when I started – the, like grade one, maybe grade two – people’s reactions began to change [...]. I remember being, like, uneasy to tell people. Because I knew that they would react in a different way than if someone else had said, “I have a mom and a dad” [...]. Now it’s a lot easier to out my parents.

Sixteen-year-old Christie articulated a view that there is no value in withholding a parent’s LGB identity from one’s friends, and several other participants shared this preference for transparency. Deception was perceived to be a behaviour that threatened the forward momentum of one’s authentic expression of personal identity. Julia, for example, who had admitted to having lied to friends during elementary school, claimed that she did so in response to a friend’s suggestion. “I had a friend who was like, ‘Just lie.’ And I did that. And that was bad advice [...]. I shouldn’t have to lie.” Julia’s assertion that she should not have to lie was a feeling shared by the lesbian-identified mothers in Dundas and Kaufman’s (2000) study, who felt that their children were psychologically healthier when they were able to be truthful about their family identity.

Rather than risk the negative consequences that arise from deceiving others, 16-year-old Owen advocated for an honest approach. “Don’t try to cover it up,” he said when asked for words of advice for other youth with LGB-identified parents. “Just, like, tell the truth ‘cause if you try to hide something, in my opinion it won’t feel nearly as good as if you go and tell the truth to someone.” Owen also revealed that he chose his friends on the basis of their general level of acceptance for diversity. “I wouldn’t have friends that wouldn’t accept gay people,” he stated. This assertion demonstrates that identity as the child of a lesbian-identified mother was not a mere matter of fact for Owen; in a school setting, his story was constructed for a particular purpose, and he actively negotiated between several possible ways of responding to his peers. When asked what advice he would give to other youth with LGB-identified parents, Owen was very clear in his recommendation for how to find true friends amongst peers:

If you can’t tell your friends straight up that you have gay parents ‘cause you think that they’re going to judge you, then you should realize that they’re not actually your friends. If I think that my friends, they don’t accept my family and who my parents are, then I realize that they are not actual friends.

*School Theme 2: Repercussions of disclosure.* With respect to the repercussions of the participants’ decisions to disclose their parents’ sexual identity to others (i.e., being open about this part of their own personal narrative), there appeared to be five patterns of peer responses. I have labelled these as *neutrality*, *connection*, *humour*, *hostility*, and *curiosity*. Brief examples of each are provided below.

*Neutrality* refers to the kind of responses that are almost non-responses. Denise was very clear in describing such reactions as ideal. “The best reaction is just nothing,” she argued. “Because it’s sort of like, okay. That’s it. You know? You’re just as average as the next person, right? So there’s no reason to react.”

Similarly, 18-year-old Nick acknowledged that when he told people about his lesbian-identified mother, he was sometimes greeted with a neutral response. “There’s people that are, like, ‘oh,’ and it’s no big deal,” he said. Denise and Nick appreciated the “no big deal” responses because they themselves view their families as “average” or “normal.” Indeed, many participants used the word “normal” during their interviews.

The participants’ frequent use of the word “normal” reveals some level of their understanding that their situations are atypical and do not smoothly align with the master narrative of heteronormativity. Overall, however, they desire to be regarded as “normal” and want their families to be regarded as such, too. “I hate thinking of us as being different,” remarked 17-year-old Anna. “I just don’t feel any different just because my mom is gay.” Her words demonstrate that she, like Hammack and Windell (2011), hopes for a societal redefining of the concept of “normal.” When she and others receive neutral responses to their disclosures of having LGB-identified parents, this appeals to their desire to be regarded as “normal” in the eyes of society because such responses reassure them that society’s definition of normal is indeed in a state of evolution.

Participants also reported the rather positive response pattern of *connection*. Sometimes, when participants disclosed to others that they had a parent who identified as LGB, peers would acknowledge some kind of personal connection that led to mutual acceptance. “When I told my friend, Bobby, who’s gay,” recalled Anna, “he was pleasantly surprised [...]. We bonded in that way because we could, um, relate to each other through our experiences.” These bonding moments demonstrate that when elements of others’ narratives overlap with elements of one’s own narrative, there can be considerable comfort and affirmation in finding common ground. The connection pattern of narrative overlap was observed even when the person on the receiving end of the disclosure did not personally identify as LGB but had an extended family member who did.

Another pattern of responses from peers involves the use of *humour*. Participants varied in terms of whether or not they found their peers’ use of humour acceptable. Denise felt that the worst reactions were when people made jokes that she deemed to be at the expense of her family:

[The worst reactions are] when people think that they’re being funny. And they make a joke. It’s always hurtful. Because it feels like, um, I’m trying to let you in here, and you are – even if I know this person’s like, a bully or just trying to be funny, and I know you’re just uncomfortable. That’s why you’re making a joke. It still hurts, right? [...]  
Like, this is my family.

Nineteen-year-old Ellie stated that her older brother’s university peers “would laugh at the fact that [our] mom was once straight, like, and then decided to, like, come out being a lesbian.” They would make jokes and ask inappropriate questions, which irritated her. “This is ridiculous, you guys,” she reports saying to her brother’s friends. “I don’t ask if your dad is super hot or if he’s bang-able. Or what your parents do in bed.”

Nick, who seemed slightly more at ease with the use of humour, said that sometimes when he outed his mother to peers, some of his male friends would make sexual jokes. “There are two girls?” he reported them as asking. “Can I come over for a sleepover?” Even though he seemed

amused with such responses, he acknowledged the awkwardness that such humour sometimes created:

I get put into weird situations where [my friends say], “Wow, your mom’s hot.” And then I’m just like, “Yeah, you don’t even know.” And sometimes I don’t say anything, or just stay quiet. Or sometimes I said, “Yeah, well she’s gay” [...]. And they lay off, or make jokes, or whatever.

Unfortunately, another pattern of responses from peers involved *hostility*. This ranged from termination of friendship to persistent bullying. Julia, herself a victim of bullying, expressed a degree of resignation at the pervasiveness of the problem. “I think it would be impossible [to have bully-free schools] right now,” she claimed, adding that when people found out that she had a lesbian-identified mom, some said, “‘Your mom’s weird.’ ‘What’s wrong with your family?’ [...] Literally ‘ha ha’ laughing at me [...]. I’ve also blanked out a lot of it. I can’t remember everything, unfortunately. Well, fortunately and unfortunately.”

Ellie, a heterosexual-identified participant, also fell victim to bullying and changed high schools to escape being targeted by her ex-boyfriend and other members of her school community.

Through tears, Ellie explained what had transpired:

In high school, um, I dated a guy [...]. He was really abusive and, like, it was just hard because like no one else would see it, but I would deal with so much stuff from him [...]. Um, he like would just make such a big deal about like coming over to my house [because my mom was a lesbian], saying it was, like, weird and, like, awkward and, like, how he had to tell his parents, and it was just this awful thing for him to be dealing with [...]. Um, he’s just he was just really awful. Really, like, homophobic. [I didn’t tell my mom what was going on] because I didn’t want to hurt her. [...] It was pretty scary. He was really abusive. And he was abusive in, like, all aspects. Like, I remember, he was physically abusive with me a lot, and I didn’t even really get help from the school with that.

Furthermore, Ellie revealed that her boyfriend and other peers sometimes used the fact that she had a lesbian-identified mother against Ellie as if it were her Achilles’ heel. Ellie’s mother’s lesbianism was used as leverage against Ellie, and even when the dispute had nothing to do with her mother’s lesbianism, that issue became a strategic target.

The final category of responses involves the *curiosity* with which peers may react. Such curiosity arises when peers have not been exposed to alternatives to the traditional family narrative and have not yet imagined how LGB families are created. At times, youth with queer-identified parents may view the questions of others as invasive and/or irritating because of the constant possibility that they will have to articulate their family narrative for those who would otherwise have no access to non-traditional narratives. At other times, peers’ questions may seem like genuine efforts to become educated about family configurations not previously encountered. The question posed to 13-year-old Shane, “How were you born, then?” is an example of what he calls “stupid questions.”

Victoria, too, had often been asked what she now considered a classic question for children of LGB-identified parents. “People always ask me how I was born,” she sighed, “and I’m like,

‘Have you heard of a sperm bank?’” She tried to account for the boldness with which some people approach children from LGB-led families:

People just feel, I guess, ‘cause like when you’re different they feel they can ask all these personal questions about you. So, I guess, try to flip it around to make people think. Like, “Were you born in a bottle?” “Hmm, do you think that’s possible?” Like, I don’t know, just flip it around to make them question their own intelligence.

*School Theme 3: Education to expose others to alternative family narratives.* As previously demonstrated, many participants experienced reactions of curiosity from others following their disclosures of having LGB-identified parents. Victoria said to “always” give peers an answer when they expressed curiosity about how LGB-headed families are formed. Julia and Shane differed in their descriptions of peers’ inquiries; while Julia thought they had “valid” questions, Shane was more inclined to view such inquiries as “stupid.” Regardless of their individual interpretations of the questions from peers, the nine participants expressed a strong view that if their classmates had been educated through more frequent exposure to diverse family configurations, they would be less ignorant in their reactions to queer-identified families. In short, some of the more negative response styles (e.g., hostility, inappropriate humour, and offensively-voiced curiosity) would be replaced with more positive response styles (e.g., neutrality, connection, and supportively-voiced curiosity) if peers had been formally educated in a way that had offered greater exposure to alternatives to the traditional family narrative. Participants described experiences that supported the notion that education can play a role in breaking down the master narrative of normativity in general, and increasing understanding of queer-led family configurations.

Julia made the most direct argument for the role that ignorance played in impeding the understanding of how queer-identified adults could have children. “It’s ignorance,” she stated. “It’s literally all ignorance. It’s because people do not understand. They don’t realize how people that aren’t straight can have families. They don’t realize that they can be totally normal. It’s all – I feel like it always can break down to ignorance.” She went on to encourage other youth with queer-identified parents not to flag in their ongoing efforts to break down societal ignorance:

Fuck the people who judge you. Like, stand up for yourself. Don’t, don’t – it can be very hard, but there are – you’re not alone. There are other people with families like that. Educate them, teach them, show them that your family is just as normal as theirs. Maybe even more normal.

Julia advocated for a sex-education curriculum that would increase all Ontario students’ exposure to alternative family configurations. She referred to the strong opposition that former Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty’s government faced when he proposed changes to sex education curricula:

I think that what needs to be done [...] is what McGuinty tried to put in place. I think there needs to be more education in the school systems, across Canada. ‘Cause, I mean, we can’t do anything outside of Canada. Like, we can’t enforce education in other countries, but um, we can force a Canadian-wide education program or even provincially about safe sex, sexuality, gender, all of that.

Overall, the participants were clear about their desire for schools to become places where sheltered ignorance was replaced with opportunities to be educated, to be exposed to narratives that included diverse family structures, and to gain access to multiple points of view. With these ideals in mind, they were able to articulate some of the best practices they had observed in their schools, as well as some of the worst practices from which they hoped others could learn valuable lessons about what not to allow in Ontario's classrooms.

*School Theme 4: Best (and worst) practices in schools.* “Teachers have a big-ass impact that I don’t really think they understand,” remarked Julia, underscoring the strong influence that teachers’ stories have on the development of their students’ narratives of personal identity. Students feel this impact in both positive and negative ways, and the participants in the present study gave evidence to indicate both positive and negative interactions they had had with school staff and administration. They gave concrete evidence of both the successes and failures of their teachers’ performance.

Findings described in school climate surveys in Canada, the U.S., and Australia (e.g., Taylor et al., 2008; GLSEN, 2009; Ray & Gregory, 2001) indicate that teachers can expect to hear homophobic slurs such as “fag,” “dyke,” or “that’s so gay” almost daily, a fact that underscores the pervasiveness of the master narrative of heteronormativity. The collective experience of the nine participants in the current study provided personal evidence to suggest that these research findings regarding homophobic comments and bullying were mirrored in their own schools as well.

For example, many of the participants referenced their belief that bullying was somewhat inevitable. “I think bullying is always going to be there,” stated Ellie. In her own high school experience, she had received no support, but she seemed to understand that things would have been better if her high school teachers had been able and willing to respond:

I had a pretty bad high school experience [...]. Whenever I was bullied, teachers would never, like, step in or anything. Like, I remember that a girl called – like, she called me a dyke, and it was in the middle of a class, and the teacher was just – all she said to the girl was, like, “Sit down!” Like, okay [laughs]. You just let that slide [chuckles]. [The teacher] probably just didn’t know how to handle it. She’s probably just not well enough educated about the topic to know what to do. So many teachers let bullying slide! Like, it’s so bad.

Victoria agreed that teachers’ inaction was problematic. “I think the biggest thing is that teachers just let it go by,” she stated before advocating for their vigilance. “You know, like, every time someone says, ‘Oh, that’s so gay.’ No! That’s not okay, you know? Or like, if they’re making fun of someone who’s gay [punches fist into opposite palm twice]. Every time you hear it, you need to be vigilant in acknowledging it.”

On the issue of educational staff providing support for queer-identified youth and students with queer-identified parents, there was a range of experiences reported. Julia had experienced bullying by her peers and even by school personnel. One of Julia’s stories was particularly shocking and perhaps tops the list of “worst practices” reported by these participants:

I had a teacher ask me if I was born in a bottle, in front of my whole class [...]. Because I was, like, we were doing family trees in grade two, and I was, like, “What if you don’t have a father?” [My teacher] asked in front of the whole class, “What? Were you born in a bottle?” [Either she didn’t understand] or she’s a bitch. She’s just like, “What? That’s impossible. Were you born in a bottle? Like, how could you not have a father?”

As was the case for Julia, Denise had experienced what she characterized as a problematic response from a teacher during her early elementary years. The issue arose during a lesson involving the creation of a family tree:

The worst thing that I can remember happening at school was on behalf of a teacher. Not the students. So it was a supply teacher so, again, it was good that it wasn’t my actual teacher, but the, sort of, most excluded that I felt was sort of in a staff moment. And, like grade [two or three or four], which is when, uh, classes do family tree exercises. Which also then itself is a very exclusionary kind of thing unless you’re drawing your own. For us, we had a pre-drawn tree, and we’re just filling it out. So that became quite a problem because I wanted to put [my mom’s partner] on it, but I also wanted to put my dad on it. And I was having trouble with that, and the supply teacher, um, yelled at me [...]. And he said something about families can’t have two moms or something, and it was like just not the reality for me so I was kind of scared in that, if families can’t have two moms, why does my family have two moms?

Certainly, the negative experiences of Julia and Denise should serve as a lesson to teachers to find more inclusive ways to discuss “family” within their classrooms so as not to risk introducing mixed messages that complicate their students’ task of developing a sense of personal identity. Denise expressed a view that teachers should be expected to protect their students’ choices regarding how to articulate personal identity, so students have no need to dodge attempts to derail such efforts:

Teachers need to put aside their own opinions. A lot of the time, I feel like teachers are sort of turning a blind eye to what they don’t believe in, and just letting things happen [...]. They’re not standing up for, you know, what you know should be happening, right?

The lack of consistent support at school is a problem addressed in the literature as well as in the responses of the participants in the current study. Walton (2010) highlighted the need for pre-service teachers to be trained in the prevention and management of homophobia through the introduction of required courses on equity and social justice. Victoria mentioned this specifically when she said, “Everyone should have sensitivity training and anti-oppressive training.”

Referring to his teachers and counsellors, Nick said, “I don’t know if they need training or something to be, like, open. To be understanding and just be able to invite [students] into their office and know what to ask them. And know how to respond to their questions.” Nick also brought up the point that, while some school staff attempted to present an image of openness, their efforts were seemingly superficial. “I think some counsellors are very closed off about it,” he said, “even though they have a sticker on their door that has a rainbow on it.”

Rainbow stickers, positive space posters, and other resources were, however, perceived by some participants to be small gestures that sometimes made big differences. “I think that making

students feel comfortable with being who they are, um, is a big step,” explained Denise. “At my high school, I remember seeing those, um, positive space stickers and posters. And they’re very small, and it’s a very small gesture, but it’s actually very nice to see around the school. Because it’s sort of, like, saying, you know, everyone’s welcome.” Denise recalled one experience where a teacher, who she later found out was gay-identified, had put up a positive space poster the day after he had met her female-coupled parents. “I don’t know if it was a coincidence,” she admitted, but she viewed the gesture as “promoting positive space” and as a means of being “supportive in a more subtle way.”

Beyond posters and stickers, there were other types of resources and services that participants viewed as helpful and that could, therefore, be considered as ideal practices for schools, at least from the viewpoint of those from LGB-led families. Some participants felt that youth with LGB-identified parents did not always know where to get help if they needed it. Denise asserted:

[Youth with LGB-identified parents] need to be more actively given the resources that apply to them. There’s a hesitancy to seek out help for ‘queer spawn’ because [...] there’s this feeling of, well, it’s not my issue, it’s my parent’s [...]. People who are in LGBTQ families need to be – need to have access to resources such as guidance counsellors, someone who they can talk to if they don’t have someone who is a role model in their own family.

Of course, sometimes peers prefer to solicit the support of other peers rather than seeking help from an adult (Fleming, 2012). An issue touched on by Victoria, Denise, Owen, and Anna was that of gay-straight alliances, sometimes referred to as queer-straight alliances, and also known by their acronyms GSAs and QSAs. Walton (2010) recommended policy development at all levels of the education system in Ontario. With policies in place, he argued that a framework would allow for student-led initiatives such as GSAs to effectively take root. Experiences varied for participants in the current study with regard to their exposure to GSAs. “There are, like, gay-straight alliance groups in school,” stated Anna, “but no one really knows what they are, or like where they are, or what they even do. So, I mean, they’re, the school has put the effort into making that group, but then no one even utilized it to, to understand.” It is difficult to know the specific reasons why the GSA in Anna’s school was ineffective. She seemed to describe an air of secrecy that would not be conducive to welcoming those who were queer-identified, to those questioning their sexuality, or to those who merely wanted to come as straight allies of queer-identified friends. Anna herself was very much an advocate for the rights of queer-identified students, but the GSA had not in any way drawn her into becoming a member.

Denise stated that a GSA is “very good to have,” but she found that as a heterosexual-identified student with queer-identified parents, it was not always easy to be part of the group. “I want to be there,” she said, “but at the same time there are people who are sort of like [pause] trying to ‘out LGBTQ’ me. They’re trying to be more LGBTQ than me. And so it’s like, in that sense there’s an isolation.” It is interesting to note the tension Denise experienced between the desire to be part of her school’s GSA and the sense of isolation she experienced there. From her point of view, students in the GSA at her school gave the perception of there being varying degrees of queerness. She felt alienated merely because she was heterosexual-identified, unlike the majority in attendance who were queer-identified youth. Her experience reveals that despite her parents’ LGB identities becoming a key part of her own personal narrative, her story still differed



in significant ways from youth who were LGB-identified themselves. Nevertheless, she believed that having GSAs in schools is important.

Fleming (2012) reports that the presence of a GSA is associated with students' reports of higher levels of feeling safe within their schools, as well as with decreased experiences of facing anti-bias harassment. Fleming cited anecdotal reports from one high school to argue that teachers and students notice a change when GSAs are in place and feels that the hard work of social justice clubs yields results in schools. In the U.S., nationwide quantitative data supports Fleming's claims (e.g., GLSEN, 2009). According to the 2009 National School Climate Survey, "GSAs can provide safe, affirming spaces and critical support for LGBT students and also contribute to creating a more welcoming school environment" (GLSEN, 2009, p. xvii).

In Ontario, publicly-funded Catholic schools have argued against terminology such as "gay-straight alliance," claiming they should not be required to allow student-led clubs that violate their religious ideals. The Ontario government, however, has tabled legislation that would compell even Catholic boards to permit such clubs in their schools (National Post, 2012, May 25). Amsterdam and Bruner (2000) speak of "the messiness that results when institutionalized canonicity and imagined possibility are locked in a local dialectic" (p. 229), but they maintain that despite the messiness, all cultures necessarily negotiate compromises between that which is established and that which is imagined. While a growing number of Ontarians are able to imagine the value of a school support system that would protect students from bullying and harassment, it would seem that some institutionalized canons remain in place. Still, having a GSA in each high school appears, from both students' and researchers' points of view, to be a good practice in theory. Strategies for improving the accessibility, efficacy, and inclusiveness of these organizations need to be developed if GSAs are to have their desired impact.

The final category of student responses concerned school curricula. As previously mentioned, Julia had advocated for national programs or province-wide revisions to curricula to allow all students greater access to stories that would provide alternatives to heteronormative ideals. In Canada, education falls within the mandate of provincial governments, and Ontario's current government is indeed in the process of revising its sex education curricula. Julia advocated for change "as young as kindergarten" because she felt that the establishment of best practices at an early age would expose all Ontarians to diverse family configurations, thus increasing the likelihood that society's overall acceptance for diversity would increase. If the experiences of the participants in the current study are an accurate indication, Ontario education is not yet where it needs to be in terms of consistent and widespread support for students with queer-identified parents.

## **Conclusion**

The participants' stories are not presumed to be objective accounts of their experiences; rather, they were subjective and personal accounts of the objects or events (Smith, 1996) that were and art part of their thoughts and beliefs regarding the phenomenon of having queer-identified parents. I make no claims that these experiences represent the masses, but the voices of these nine adolescents are valid nonetheless. The experiences of this group of participants may not

predict the experiences of all children who come from LGB-led families, but the lessons we learn from their experiences may still have broad applicability for members of queer-led families and for those who work with adolescents with LGB-identified parents.

When young children with LGB-identified parents are at home, their realities may be far different from the circumstances they face when they first go to school. The participants in the current study provided evidence that in school environments, they are exposed to new faces, cultures, rules, and social expectations that challenge and expand their emerging narratives of personal identity. They learn to seek allies and to avoid those whom they perceive as a threat (Garner, 2004) to the integration of their parents' narratives of identity as part of their own. Within their classrooms, they develop decision-making skills to determine if and when to disclose, whom to trust, and whom to avoid. Sometimes, they use litmus tests to screen out homophobic individuals before coming out as a member of a queer-identified family. In many ways, their "coming out" processes mirror the establishment of queer individuals' sexual identities. After some questioning of their family's identity and comparison to the families of their peers, they sometimes reach a point of what could be coined "family identity synthesis," a point where they are able to accept and celebrate the unique features of their family configurations.

The experiences of participants in the current study suggest that when some youth with LGB-identified parents initially decide to come out, peer responses to such disclosures include neutrality, connection, humour, hostility, or curiosity. By anticipating the responses experienced by this group of participants, counsellors and educators can help other queer-identified families to strategically prepare for these responses in both emotional and practical ways. In so doing, any possible negative effects of peer responses can be minimized. Even when there are negative effects, however, this does not rule out the possibility that a positive outcome may follow. According to Bruner (2004), trouble is what drives the drama of an individual's narrative; without it, there is no story. If youth with LGB-identified parents have experiences at school that bring their family narrative into conflict with the master narrative of heteronormativity, this could potentially awaken in them the need to tell their stories. Their struggles offer rich resources from which to draw as they seek to establish a personal identity and to share their narrative with others.

Participants in the current study believe strongly in the role that education can play in reducing ignorant responses from peers, in promoting accepting attitudes, and in debunking the stereotypes that serve to propagate the master narrative of heteronormativity. Often, they accept responsibility to answer the questions of their peers, but they welcome the possibility that teachers could assume a greater share of the responsibility to educate Ontario students about diverse family configurations. Mandated changes to sex education curricula would allow for a broader-reaching effort to draw awareness to diverse family structures. As Julia stated, "We can't go into all those parents' houses of those kids, but if those kids have [...] education, they can make their own decisions." Furthermore, it is possible that when children are exposed to narratives that challenge heteronormativity, they may even bring about change in their parents' attitudes. When attitudes within families shift in response to an increased education, a broader societal shift may follow that could serve to challenge our culture's current definition of normality.

Some of the participants in the current study expressed a belief that teachers can have a profound impact on students' lives. Participants provided evidence of both the successes and failures of their teachers' performance, acknowledging that some teachers are more effective than others in maximizing the potential impact they have in exposing students to alternatives to the master narrative of heteronormativity. Participants described both good examples and ineffective teacher practices with respect to responses to bullying and homophobia, the provision of support for queer-identified youth and youth with queer-identified parents, and the utilization of resources including gay-straight alliances. Additionally, some participants in the current study advocated for social justice training for all teachers.

Insofar as the narratives of the current study's participants are instructive about the realities for Canadian youth with LGB-identified parents, their stories and a review of the literature invite counsellors, teachers, administrators, and policymakers to consider how support for such youth can be ameliorated. "Teachers have a big-ass impact that I don't think they really understand," claimed Julia. School officials from classroom teachers to directors of education should make every effort to create safe, inclusive environments that permit a myriad of ways for students to articulate their own identities. Schools should provide all students with access to non-heterosexual narratives via literature, history, law, media, guest speakers, etc., for the stories of others become embodied in one's own narrative. Based upon what the literature and the youth of the current study have told us about the importance of gay-straight alliances, all schools should move to create environments that encourage GSAs that are vibrant, accessible, effective, and inclusive. When such measures are in place and actively supported by school personnel, all students – including the children of LGB-led parents – will feel safer at school and more secure in articulating their personal identity without fear of reprisal.

In Canada and throughout the world, laws that impact LGB-identified individuals and LGB-led families are evolving. Despite the progress, however, the master narrative of heteronormativity has endured. Stories such as those told by the nine participants in the current study are an important part of understanding the experiences of adolescents with LGB-identified parents. Rather than allowing others to control the narrative, their voices need to be part of shaping society's emerging definition of normativity. One can learn a great deal from these participants about the process of meaning making that occurs in the development of personal identity. Personal identity is not formed merely from a collection of facts. It emerges from the way individuals create a story to orient their own experiences against the experiences of others and in contrast to master narratives.

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*Processi che “sostengono la vita” in ospedale.  
Un’esperienza di counseling interculturale secondo il modello integrativo EAIE*

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### **La storia di Giulia.**

Giulia (nome fittizio) è una bella ragazza di 20 anni che è ricoverata per una grave forma di leucemia. Fa parte di una famiglia emigrata in Toscana da una regione balcanica. Hanno trovato lavoro in una zona di monti e di boschi simile a quella di origine in attività agricole di allevamento e forestali. La sua unica possibilità terapeutica è un trapianto di midollo eterologo da parte della sorella maggiore. Viene fatta una riunione per il consenso informato al trattamento a cui partecipa anche la madre vestita in abito tradizionale, il traduttore, alcuni medici e infermieri. Sono stato chiamato anche io come Servizio di psicologia medica di liaison. Siamo seduti tutti in circolo. Il traduttore è in serie difficoltà molte volte a tradurre il documento, in realtà di comprensione molto difficile anche per persone italiane acculturate.

La ragazza parla poco l’italiano, lo capisce un po’ più. Realizza la gravità di quanto viene prospettato e ad un certo momento comincia a piangere. La madre seduta accanto l’abbraccia affettuosamente e la consola nella loro lingua. Il personale è ad un tempo imbarazzato e molto dispiaciuto. Anch’io. Nei giorni immediatamente successivi la ragazza è trasferita in isolamento in una stanza sterile per trapianti con rigorosissime norme igieniche di accesso. L’ambiente, ristretto, di nuova costruzione, in cui sono presenti molte apparecchiature medicali ha solo una piccola finestra alta da cui si vede un po’ di cielo. C’è un televisore che trasmette i programmi della televisione italiana

Mi reco da lei come prassi normale del servizio di liaison che collabora spesso con la clinica. Le chiedo se posso entrare, se desidera che ci incontriamo e stiamo un po’ a parlare di come vanno le cure e la degenza. Lei sorride e accenna di sì. Io sento simpatia per questa ragazza, potrebbe essere una figlia per me. Le frasi che scambiamo sono semplici, il senso è la speranza di guarire e la gratitudine per la sorella.

Le giornate nella piccola stanza sono lunghe, la tv non la capisce quasi ma è una compagnia di suoni e di voci sullo sfondo. Non le piace la stanza perché ha una finestra che non si vede fuori il mondo. Torno quasi tutti i giorni successivi nei momenti liberi dalle procedure di assistenza. A volte sono insieme ad un collega e ad un'infermiera, via via che procede il piano di terapia che prevede dosi molto forti di chemioterapici. Gli scambi di narrazioni continuano. Lei vive in campagna in una grande casa e con grandi spazi intorno. Anche nel suo paese di origine era così. Una grande famiglia che viveva insieme con i ritmi della vita comune e mentre dice questo passa più volte un sorriso al ricordo. Le condizioni generali sono abbastanza buone.

Il personale è diviso nell'atteggiamento verso la ragazza: una parte delle infermiere hanno poco più della sua età e fanno il possibile per starle vicino, altre dicono che non ci si può parlare perché non sa l'italiano e quindi si limitano a comportamenti operativi assistenziali. Una mattina mi racconta che è venuta a trovarla la sorella. E' stata molto contenta. Un sorriso negli occhi accompagna questo racconto. Mi dice che le è venuta l'idea di farle un regalo per l'anno nuovo che comincia fra poche settimane. Così nei giorni successivi quando torno Giulia sta facendo a maglia un paio di calzettoni di lana con fili di rosa salmone intrecciati con fili argentati. Giorno per giorno i calzini crescono, sono molto belli. Le voci, i suoni e la musica della tv sono una presenza che l'accompagna anche senza capire quello che viene detto.

Una mattina nevicava un po' e quando arrivo da lei, che ha un po' di febbre, mi dice che le infermiere le hanno detto che ha nevicato ma lei non l'ha visto dalla finestra feritoia alta. Racconta che nel suo paese l'inverno nevicava moltissimo ed è bello e i ragazzi escono fuori a giocare e le attività di lavoro continuano in casa o vicino casa dove c'è un grande camino col fuoco. Visti i programmi della tv italiana fornita dall'ospedale al collega viene l'idea di portarle cassette con film, video e canzoni nella sua lingua. Si da da fare, le trova in un'altra città, le acquista e le porta in reparto. Risulta però proibito il loro ingresso nella stanza per motivi di sterilizzazione e quindi restano fuori. Intanto Giulia va avanti nel suo lavoro ed i calzettoni sono quasi finiti. Ne ha fatti due paia. Le condizioni di salute via via peggiorano per l'effetto della chemioterapia e di altri farmaci. Giulia affronta con forza e coraggio le molte sequele del trattamento, in particolare gli effetti collaterali dati dalla

chemioterapia come astenia e stomatiti. I genitori vanno tutte le sere a farle visita. Giulia affronta con coraggio le molte sequele del trattamento. Io incontro a volte la madre e il padre in attesa fuori. Ci guardiamo con un senso di vicinanza e scambiamo qualche parola semplice. Il regalo per la sorella è pronto. Le due paia di calzettoni salmone ed argento sono in vista sul comodino insieme ai gomitoli e ai ferri delle calza. Babbo, mamma, sorella, alcune ragazze infermiere, il mio collega, e due colleghi medici ed io siamo l'universo relazionale presente quasi tutti i giorni. La condizione clinica è aperta alle possibilità di evoluzioni positive. Nello stesso periodo ci si incontra con il personale sanitario ed è chiaro come una parte di esso si tenga lontano “perché con questi pazienti non c'è da attaccarsi”, un'altra parte invece ha pensieri e comportamenti di vicinanza relazionale negli atti quotidiani di *caring*. Una mattina in cui Giulia ha febbre e mal di testa ci si incontra brevemente e ci si saluta con un gesto ed un sorriso. Sono stato a casa quella settimana per influenza, non avrei comunque potuto entrare nella stanza per le regole di prevenzione. Tre giorni dopo telefono al collega responsabile di reparto. Mi dice che Giulia è morta la notte prima per l'effetto di un farmaco antirigetto con un rischio dichiarato in letteratura del 2%.

### **La storia di Adana**

Adana (nome fittizio) è una ragazza di 27 anni, proveniente da un paese dell'Est, madre di una bimba di 7 anni, al terzo mese di gravidanza che dopo la diagnosi di carcinoma mammario è stata operata 1 mese fa. E' una paziente esterna di Oncologia e viene due volte alla settimana per controlli. Il problema clinico per i medici è se procedere alla chemioterapia in presenza di una gravidanza. Qualcuno le ha detto che potrebbe abortire legalmente e quindi curarsi. Lei ne ha parlato con un medico e lui si è arrabbiato molto dicendo di essere contro l'aborto

I medici sono divisi. Il primario è per la chemioterapia. Una delle oncologhe dissente fortemente ed è per esplorare la possibilità di far procedere la gravidanza e dopo intervenire con la chemioterapia. La ragazza parla poco l'italiano, lo capisce se si utilizzano frasi semplici. E' molto espressivo il suo linguaggio non verbale che comunica molto



chiaramente i sistemi affettivi di base. Il traduttore è in grossa difficoltà a tradurre termini e ragionamenti medici.

Sono chiamato come servizio di psicologia medica di liaison. Incontriamo Adana insieme io e la collega oncologa che è il suo medico di riferimento. La ragazza è venuta in Toscana presso i cognati che già vi abitano da qualche anno mentre il marito che è un meccanico e la figlia sono rimasti al paese d'origine. Questi parenti le hanno consigliato di venire perché nel suo paese i medici non decidevano e non intervenivano.

Adana ci chiede di essere aiutata a capire cosa succede a seconda delle diverse scelte di terapia. La collega è una ragazza di età poco superiore ad Adana. Siamo aiutati dal traduttore che diverse volte però è in evidenti difficoltà emotive a tradurre parole quali cancro, gravidanza, aborto, morte. Adana è assai più stabile affettivamente di lui e spesso dice con vivacità che ha già capito senza la traduzione. Vuol sapere se una chemioterapia al terzo mese può far male al bambino. Non esiste letteratura documentata al proposito ma viene da pensare che il rischio è molto alto. Vuol sapere cosa può succedere se non fa ora la chemioterapia e la fa dopo la nascita. A questo proposito la letteratura medica è presente ed è concorde nell'indicare un rischio di recidiva molto maggiore. Adana è una ragazza con molta forza affettiva. Sorride quando parla della bambina che le ha detto di portarle un fratellino.. Ciascuna possibilità volta volta emerge e poi è affiancata e sopravanzata da altre. Io e la collega, per cui ho stima e simpatia per la sua competenza e per la sua modalità di partecipazione da donna alla storia di Adana, scambiamo con lei diverse possibilità di significato, lungo percorsi di soluzioni. Ne validiamo i dubbi, le paure, le speranze.

All'ultimo incontro Adana ci dice con forza e serenità che ha deciso: porta avanti la gravidanza, "la vita del bambino" dice toccandosi la pancia, non farà ora la chemioterapia ma dopo la nascita sì. Ha detto al telefono la sua decisione al marito che si è commosso e anche alla bambina che sarebbe arrivato un fratellino. Ci si saluta con affetto.

Due anni dopo, passando per servizio per il corridoio degli ambulatori di pediatria vedo Adana seduta in una zona di attesa con un bimbo in braccio che le parla. Accanto è seduto un uomo. Lei mi riconosce e mi saluta con un sorriso, mi dice che questo è Dazin e questo è

suo marito e che lei sta bene. Sono lì per un controllo per il bimbo. Dice che tutto è deciso da Dio.

### **Riferimenti teorici.**

I processi patologici e gli effetti iatrogeni delle terapie possono alterare i processi automatici di controllo e di previsione positiva per cui le percezioni somatiche e i processi affettivi-cognitivi si ritrovano spesso in zone critiche del *range* di ottimizzazione. E' della più grande importanza che sia preservato al meglio del possibile il funzionamento dei processi integrativi al più alto livello. Recenti ricerche di neuroscienze consilienti con studi clinici portano evidenze a sostegno delle ipotesi che siano le reti del sistema denominato Default Mode Network (DMN) (Buckner *et al.*, 2008; Cahart-Harris *et al.*, 2010) il livello funzionale gerarchico più alto che attraverso fitte interconnessioni plurime cortico-sottocorticali, regola l'affettività, le risorse adattive, la complessità del sistema globale. Esso è caratterizzato da una funzionalità anticorrelata rispetto ai compiti dovuti e alle conseguenze avversive. Procedo con "dialoghi taciti interni" ed opera istante per istante con connessioni fra sistemi funzionali (regolazione affettiva somatica, memoria-aspettative, previsioni). Sono le stesse reti che, a misura della loro integrazione, operano di continuo sulla base dei principi di inferenza per analogie-associazioni-previsioni (Bar, 2009) delle scelte, secondo un *range* affettivo organizzato sulla sicurezza, sulla vitalità e sulla proattività positiva. Il DMN corrisponde anche al livello più elevato di complessità dei sistemi del sé (*agency*, *mineness* e *ownership*) (Cermolacce *et al.*, 2007; Legrand, 2007; Northoff *et al.*, 2006; Vogele, 2010; Vogele *et al.*, 1999). Pur nella complessità delle configurazioni dei sistemi di relazione e di significato delle comunità sociali (Barrett-Lennard, 2007), da tempo è riconosciuto in clinica un nucleo di fattori critici di profonda sofferenza e di rischio per l'integrazione e l'evoluzione del sistema mente-cervello-soma (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011). Essi sono in relazione con le percezioni di: solitudine, non aver vie d'uscita, *helplessness* e *hopelessness*, non poter far nulla di proattivo, violazione delle aspettative e incoerenza dei significati. Essi possono essere regolati da un insieme complesso anticorrelato di processi di riparazione che è alla base della terapeuticità e dei comportamenti di aiuto professionale: avere la percezione affettiva positiva di essere visti,

voluti, capiti, validati (Norcross, 2011), di una “massa critica” di processi si *agency*, *ownership* e *mineness*, di aspettative confermate e di essere aiutati con comportamenti coerenti, proattivi e stabilizzanti. Nel campo specifico del *nursing* da tempo la ricerca ha mostrato i fattori di aiuto (vs di *distress*) percepiti dalle persone ricoverate in ospedale per malattie con gravi rischi per la vita e alta sofferenza (Halldorsdottir & Hamrin, 1997). In particolare:

- che il personale sanitario abbia competenza
- che il personale sanitario abbia desiderio di relazione verso le persone (malate)
- che il personale sanitario risponda almeno in parte alle loro aspettative di aiuto concreto

Alla comprensione di questi processi di *caring* relazionale hanno contribuito in anni recenti le conoscenze derivanti da linee di ricerca sulla costruzione evolutiva dei sistemi adattivi riferibili ad un costrutto teorico-clinico denominato “teoria polivagale” (Porges, 1995, 2003, 2009).

Questo modello è di notevole valore euristico per quanto riguarda le relazioni fra sistemi affettivi interpersonali, di adattamento e di *distress*. Al centro stanno le connessioni bidirezionali fra processi psicofisiologici e processi affettivi che connettono il sistema globale mente-cervello-corpo. Esse sono sempre attive per far fronte alle sfide ambientali della vita e funzionano secondo modalità gerarchiche, prevedibili sulla base della filogenesi del sistema nervoso autonomo. Processi epigenetici guidano la costruzione progressiva di questi sistemi neurali a livello parasimpatico ventrale sulla base di una funzione primaria di *relatedness* orientata al principio della sicurezza della vita. I dati della ricerca clinica indicano una gamma fondamentale di processi integrati che definisce momento per momento le sequenze affettive bidirezionali relative alla percezione di sicurezza-pericolo-rischio di morte. Essa opera con connessioni specifiche con i processi interpersonali e di regolazione affettiva. Il nucleo centrale del sistema adattivo-evolutivo (*social engagement*) è organizzato in relazione ai sistemi affettivi primari, in particolare quelli di *care*, con caratteristiche di presenze “annidate” (*nested*) attraverso i diversi livelli evolutivi (Porges & Furman, 2011). Esso è attivato da interazioni interpersonali positive,

prevalentemente preverbalì nonconscie, in un contesto relazionale percepito sicuro che consente processi di sintonizzazione e riparazione (Schore, 2012).

I sistemi affettivi si tengono vivi l'uno con l'altro con relazioni di dinamiche di cooperazione e competizione ed una struttura associativa eterarchica e frattalica. In particolare i sistemi autopoietici di esplorazione, conferma, *care* e *play* sono alla base della ricerca e dell'incontro con "zone di conforto" (Panksepp, 1998). In definitiva l'adattamento è funzione di una bilancia tra stimoli-sistemi che "portano vita" vs che "portano via vita" (Panksepp, 2005) in relazione alla costruzione filo-ontogenetica di un *range* di costruzioni affettive.

A misura della qualità relazionale di presenza e di aiuto può essere conservato uno spazio di ottimizzazione attraverso processi "accesi" di validazione, rispetto e sostegno nell'affrontare circostanze critiche. Ciò può accadere in un ambiente relazionale professionale in cui vive l'interesse per gli scambi di narrazioni, per le memorie, per le percezioni affettive somatiche. Tutto ciò sostiene processi di motivazione al futuro, proattive e prosociali per sé e per gli altri e tiene sotto controllo i processi di *distress* con forti attivazioni simpatiche e parasimpatiche dorsali.

Da questa e da esperienze consimili derivano alcune evidenze per la formazione del personale socio-sanitario che lavora con persone in condizione di rischio di vita provenienti da contesti socioculturali diversi. L'amministrazione ospedaliera ha mostrato un interesse che si è realizzato in corsi specifici di formazione di gruppo per il personale sanitario che opera in contesti molto rilevanti *quoad vitam*.

Gli obiettivi formativi sono guidati da alcuni principi metodologici (Menoni *et al.*, in press).

- 1) La persona-paziente è protagonista delle relazioni di aiuto (Schiepek, 2009);
- 2) il personale sanitario costruisce le condizioni per le migliori possibilità di adattamento della persona malata (sicurezza, validazione, basso livello di *distress*);
- 3) il personale sanitario garantisce i confini personali dei significati e delle scelte, non "entra" nei sistemi di significato altrui ed è consapevole della relatività dei propri;
- 4) il personale sanitario non è guidato da nozioni psico-diagnostiche categoriali di "patologia" ma dalle risorse delle persona;
- 5) la persona (malata) è validata anche come entità unica nella propria evolutività.

Il modello clinico di riferimento è recente (Egiziano *et al.*, 2011; Menoni, 2011; Menoni e Iannelli, 2011; Ridolfi *et al.*, 2011) e si configura come un modello terapeutico di integrazione teorica (Wampold, 2010). Esso è basato su dati di ricerca afferenti da campi diversi (neuroscienze, teorie dei sistemi adattivi complessi, psicologia e psicopatologia evolutiva, ecc. ) in relazione agli studi sui “processi di vita” (sviluppo, riparazione, differenziazione). Il principio epistemologico è quello della consilienza (incontro-confronto-traduzione-dialogo) fra sistemi di sapere diversi (Damasio *et al.*, 2001; Wilson, 1998).

Studi interdisciplinari portano ad indentificare alla base dei processi di terapeuticità quattro sistemi funzionali interconnessi con un alto grado di dipendenza: Evolutività, Affettività, Intersoggettività ed Esperienzialità (EAIE). Le loro attivazioni sincrone secondo i pattern funzionali dei sistemi adattivi complessi consentono una complessità ottimale e l’adattamento evolutivo. Essi sono quindi integrati a costituire una sola cosa globale (Feynman, 1965). Il principio funzionale di *relatedness* (Panksepp & Northoff, 2009) è alla base del sistema adattivo mente-cervello-soma nelle sue diverse configurazioni di complessità intra e interpersonali.

Dati di ricerca e studi teorici sostengono l’evidenza della natura essenzialmente relazionale interconnessiva di ogni processo di vita in una globalità intersistemica individuo-ambiente sociale-ambiente fisico (Bradshaw, 2013).

“Una persona non può vivere senza un contesto che sostenga la vita (Barrett-Lennard, 2007, p.185).

L’incontro consiliente fra la clinica psicoterapeutica e le teorie dei sistemi complessi (Chamberlain & Butz, 1998; Masterpasqua & Perna, 1997) consente di delineare la persona come un sistema autorganizzato in cui i processi intra e interpersonali sono funzioni emergenti delle interazioni fra sistemi, anzi, le relazioni stesse possono essere viste come sistemi viventi emergenti per loro qualità e non come prodotto della sommatoria delle parti (Barrett-Lennard, 2007).

La relazionalità include lo scambio di sentimenti, idee, storie, significati, simboli, oggetti o altre cose che sono desiderate o valorizzate (Barrett-Lennard, 2005, 2007). Può contribuire a livelli diversi a sistemi più ampi di salute e di riparazione. Studi consilienti di clinica e

neuroscienze mostrano che la connettività continuamente regolata fra sistemi funzionali fondamentali è il processo essenziale del sistema mente-cervello-corpo (Sporns, 2011). La sua autorganizzazione ad un tempo continuamente mutevole e stabilizzante attraversa tutta la vita. I suoi correlati funzionali sono i processi di neuroplasticità a livello delle reti evolutive, di sviluppo e di stabilizzazione (Peled, 2008, 2011, 2012). I processi di vita sono basati sul funzionamento delle reti a grande scala e *small world* di previsioni, percezioni affettive, memorie orientate al futuro anzi chiamate dal futuro (Ingvar, 1985).

Nelle circostanze critiche emerge la necessità e quindi la ricerca di “presenze” stabilizzanti, proattive e coerenti con un livello di concordanza “abbastanza buono” fra quanto atteso e quanto esperito sia a livelli nonconsci che consci. Le presenze in quanto configurazioni percettivo-affettive fanno parte della memoria relazionale biografica dei significati culturali e dell’esperienzialità presente.

La famiglia, l’inverno, la neve, i doni, il lavoro a maglia, la maternità, il bambino ci mostrano la natura *nested* delle storie di Giulia e di Adana.

In sintesi, la tesi fondamentale è che i processi di regolazione, di riparazione e di crescita di complessità, così come i loro fattori di rischio, sono omologhi e universali.

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### **Creating a Community of Empathetic Learners in the Classroom: The Role of Dramatic Play**

**Abstract:** *Embracing the diversity of cultures, religions, abilities, and backgrounds of students in the classroom is no easy task for teachers. Regardless of teachers' best attempts to incorporate equality in the classroom, the pull of a culture of ethnocentrism can often overrule good intentions. How can teachers facilitate a culture in their classroom that fully embraces global diversity? Research has long recognized the role of empathy in fostering intergroup relations. Specifically, individuals who are rated high on empathy are more likely to help others outside their culture and feel compassion towards those perceived as different. In addition, creating empathetic concern has been shown to eliminate previously prejudiced beliefs. These findings suggest that providing teachers with the knowledge and resources to create a community of empathetic learners may contribute to an overall increase in student's celebration of diversity, inside and outside of the classroom. How can teachers foster empathy in students? Research shows that when compared with students who do not, elementary aged children who engage in socio-dramatic activities, like acting, score the highest on empathy measures, even when controlling for age and verbal intelligence. Some studies have also shown that when children were given acting training they experienced an increase in empathy. Incorporating dramatic activities in the classroom has the potential to educate students about diversity while also having the potential to improve their empathetic concern in and beyond the classroom. This presentation will focus on the value of creating a community of empathetic learners that can be used by teacher-researchers in their own classrooms.*

In Canada, the population is steadily increasing (Statistics Canada, 2009). In fact, it was recently identified as the fastest growing country in the G8 (Boswell, 2012). One of the most significant factors of this increase is a rising rate of immigrants into Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011; Boswell, 2012). These changes are, undoubtedly, influencing the levels of diversity in Canada. Specifically, the population of foreign-born people has been increasing steadily since 2006 and is expected to continue to increase until 2031 (Statistics Canada, 2011). As educators, these changes influence the nature of our classrooms, as they become mosaics of students with backgrounds from all over the world. More than ever, we are teaching in classrooms where many of our students are only beginning to understand the language of instruction. Moreover, these children are coming from more diverse family units, too— lone parent households, same-sex parents, and blended families. We have students that practice different religions, customs, and rituals. Within this mosaic, we have students who wear different types of clothing and hold strong

beliefs regarding how to interact with figures of authority, the opposite sex, and the media. Despite these differences, there are many similarities among these students. One especially important similarity for schools to recognize is that all students come to school to learn in a safe environment. One that acknowledges the role they and their families play in making the school a rich and unique environment.

As educators, we are well aware of the diversity in our classrooms. Most schools in Canada plan for “multicultural day”, which is a day of the year where students can bring in a dish of their culture, wear traditional clothing, tell stories, or teach traditional dances. This is considered a celebration of the diversity in the school community. Additionally, many teachers in the classrooms put significant effort into planning activities that display diversity in their classroom. An example of such activities can be found in the Toronto District School Board document entitled, *Building Effective Classrooms* (2013). As one of the most multicultural cities in the world, these resources are valuable for teachers experiencing a shift in their teaching environments and requirements. In this document, several lesson ideas are presented, including one inclusion activity. The lesson involves having students listen to a song selected by the teacher while drawing abstractly their interpretation of the song using colours to convey feeling, beat, tempo and so on. Following this activity, each student would have the opportunity to talk about their drawing to the class. The lesson would close with the teacher highlighting the vast array of perspectives the class can have on the same thing, emphasizing that there is not one student who was more right than another. These drawings would then be displayed in the classroom as a reminder of the diversity in the classroom. Another common approach in the literature to tackling the diversity issue involves highlighting necessary policy changes, suggesting techniques for training pre-service teachers, and outlining ways in which schools can be restructured (Sleeter, 2001; Johnson, 2003; Miramontes et al, 2011)

As this short summary revealed, there are many well-intentioned schools, teachers, resources, and research devoted to coming up with solutions that eradicate previous teaching practices and systems that have traditionally be non-inclusive. Without singling out the examples listed above, this paper argues that while these attempts are forward thinking and in the right direction, they overlook the *experience of the child* in creating a meaningful integration of affirmation of diversity into their schemas that extend beyond the classroom. For instance, although on the surface there is nothing negative about hosting a school-wide “multicultural day” a closer examination of the benefits of multicultural day are evidenced in an online newspaper article documenting Maple Shade School District in New Jersey. The article outlines the courageous speech addressed to grade 5 students by a Holocaust survivor. In this talk, the presenter explains the hardships her and her family barely escaped. According to the article, her main message was “just because you are different, doesn’t mean you are bad”. Moreover, the article stresses that the main theme of the event was “Tolerance for all people”. Students shared what they liked best about the event, one student said she enjoyed the food, and the article highlights one African-American boy who was so bold as to wear a

banner that said “I’m Irish for the Day”.

Exposure to the different features of other cultures is far from negative. However, when carefully analyzed, this relatively standard multicultural day in New Jersey, may be doing more harm than good. Firstly, the student voices portrayed in the article seem to indicate that the overall message of the event may have been overlooked. Specifically, the focus on food or adopting a culture for a day does little to drive home the ways in which various cultures contribute *meaningfully* to the school community. Additionally, the address by the Holocaust survivor, who without a doubt deserves to share her story and the message it holds, is highlighting *differences*. By emphasizing that those who are *different are not bad* she is unintentionally implying that there is a “standard” or type of person that is “normal”. What this emphasizes is that those who are “normal” should be tolerant of those who are “different”, which is far from creating a vision of inclusion. Others have commented on the issues related to this kind of focus when it comes to emphasizing culture in schools:

“The problem that teachers have when trying to implement a ‘culturally relevant or reflective’ curriculum is that they often focus on folkloric elements of a culture such as artifacts, food, and holidays, among others. In other words, teachers often tend to look at culture at the surface level without realizing that other cultural elements such as values, beliefs, and language, among others, help define culture holistically” (Riojas-Cortez, 2001).

On that note, recall the activity described earlier involving displaying artwork in the classroom. The purpose of the activity, as outlined by the Toronto District School Board document, is for the art to serve as a tool for students to *recognize* that there are different perspectives on similar topics. These perspectives are indicative of the diversity of individuals in the room. Again, although it is a well-intentioned and creative activity, it too has its shortcomings. What this activity lacks is an opportunity for this activity to be meaningful for students. Recognizing that individuals have different opinions, and that, presumably, they should be respected, does little to create a community within the classroom that understands what the different perspectives mean, what the significance of these differences indicate, and how to incorporate these different perspectives into a rich and integrative learning environment. There is more value in creating a culture in the classroom that *responds* to variety of perspective than creating a classroom whereby students *recognize* that differences exist when reminded by a stimulus.

As L.S. Johnson (2003) suggests, most school systems are “ill-equipped” to deal with the addressing the needs of the changing population of schools. As such, the value of addressing policy issues, training services for current and future teachers, and suggesting new frameworks for schools as discussed above are not unfounded. The issue here is that these suggestions often overlook the student experience. Specifically, they tend not to discuss what diversity for the student will

mean and how they will absorb a true understanding of diversity that will *extend beyond the classroom*. The mention of the necessity for, for example, policy changes does not typically mention how the policy changes will make student appreciation of diversity salient, or *a part of who they are*. Secondly, policy changes, restructuring of schools, and training of teachers takes time, money, and are sometimes fraught with opposition. The generation of students in school now may be at a disadvantage during these times of transition. What about them?

Lastly, something that is noted in much of the current research and resources is a certain type of language. Common terms used related to diversity issues involve a need to *embrace diversity, tolerate others, accept those who are different, recognize and acknowledge different backgrounds, and value other cultures*. These terms suggest, again, that there is a ‘standard’ or ‘norm’. They also suggest that we should more or less *like, deal with, approve of, understand, and notice* all cultural backgrounds. While none of these are necessarily bad things, they do not involve the *affirmation* of culture or the affirmation of a classroom of learners who are diverse in many ways. In this sense, affirmation refers to integrating into an individual’s disposition of the world that all individuals have value as human beings, rights, and are required to be treated with respect.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the current position approaches to diversity in the classroom and to illustrate what positive and attainable steps forward might involve. Specifically, this paper will highlight an approach that 1) emphasizes similarities, not differences, between all peoples 2) that has the potential to influence students well beyond a lesson, presentation, or the school setting 3) can be implemented by all teachers in classrooms in an approachable, engaging, and immediate way and 4) uses language that truly advocates for diversity and the concept of affirmation.

### The Role of Sociodramatic Play in Child Development

Also known as “character play”, sociodramatic play is “pretend play with characters and their accompanying roles, behaviours, and mental states” (Deunk, Berenst & De Glooper, 2008). It involves children engaged in joint activity, acting out roles that are either assigned or spontaneous, as a means of interacting with their world, and in turn, developing expectations of that world. It is a means through which children can “practice taking on different roles and experience the outcome of various scenarios” (Deunk, Berenst & De Glooper, 2008). This type of play has been well documented as a very valuable marker of children’s natural development of *theory of mind*. The development of theory of mind is the most crucial part of children’s social cognition (Astington & Wilde, 2010). It involves the recognition of one’s own mental states—thoughts and feelings related to desires and intentions—and recognizing other’s mental states as well (Astington & Wilde, 2010). The development of this theory of mind is responsible for children’s ability to make interpretations about other’s behaviours, actions, and responses to themselves and others in social situations, as well as serving as a tool for them to understand their own (Flavel & Hartman, 2004). Without this development, it has been said that “we

would see others as purposeless and insensate physical objects whose movements are unpredictable, possibly even frightening” (Flavel & Hartman, 2004 p. 102). Without a doubt, this development is crucial to our human experience. In fact, it is part of our biological makeup; research has shown that most normally developed brains are equipped with specific centers responsible for establishing theory of mind (Astington & Wilde, 2010). Moreover, this development is not necessarily a lengthy process (Rutherford & Rogers, 2003). On the contrary, the foundation for theory of mind occurs in the early years in conjunction with language development related to constructing verbal narratives. This is related to the fact that most young children engage in significant amounts of *pretend play* with similar aged partners. As such, research has suggested that this may be an early indicator of cognitive competence (Rutherford & Rogers, 2003). In fact, 4-year olds who engage more often in sociodramatic play with similar age peers have been shown to score higher on measures of affective understanding (Youngblade & Dunn, 1995). Another study which looked at children’s social fantasy lives found that, even when controlling for age and verbal intelligence, 4-year old children who scored the highest on fantasy scored the highest on theory of mind tasks (Taylor & Carson, 1997). Lastly, 3-4 year olds who engage more often in pretend play score better on false belief tasks, which is crucial for theory of mind development as it allows children to distinguish between multiple representations (Taylor & Carson, 1997). Although it looks like fun, Lillard (1993) discusses the importance of sociodramatic play as a *zone of proximal development*. In other words, when children engage in pretend play, they operate at a higher cognitive level than they do in non-pretense situations. For example, pretend play requires children to construct stories, thereby honing in on their executive functioning skills (planning, organization, language skills, and sequencing) and contributing to the development of these skills (Rutherford & Rogers, 2003). By operating at these higher cognitive levels through play, children are able to *represent mental representations* (Lillard, 1993). This allows them to act out social roles, taking the perspective of pretend others and using it to influence their reactions, motives, and behaviours. This is directly related to theory of mind and crucial to successful functioning in society. What this suggests is that sociodramatic play appears to be a crucial, yet natural process for most young children that influences their abilities to process and interact with the world around them.

### Sociodramatic Play and Empathy

Although a great bulk of the research focusing on the value of sociodramatic play in children has looked at it in connection with theory of mind, the relationship between theory of mind and empathy has also been documented (Vollm et al, 2005; Goldstein & Winner, 2012). Like theory of mind, empathy involves the ability to attribute or infer the mental states of others (Vollm et al, 2005). Specifically, it requires the ability to infer or share the *emotional* experiences of others (Gallese, 2003). Both are related in the sense that they require individuals to ‘put themselves in another’s shoes’ or use our minds as a tool to mentally predict or imitate the mental processes occurring in another (Vollm et al, 2005). Moreover, not only are

they related in their classification, they are also related by neurological anatomy. Specifically, Vollm et al (2005) implemented a study with the objective of determining whether or not theory of mind and empathy activated similar regions of the brain. After exposing participants to various tasks designed to promote theory of mind or empathy characteristics, they found that this was indeed the case. Specifically, both theory of mind and empathy activated the mPFC, superior temporal lobe and temporal pole. These areas, as the researchers suggest, are the areas of the brain responsible for social perception and “form the basis for making inferences about the mental states of others” (Vollm et al, 2005 p. 98).

The main purpose for drawing these connections is to highlight that although the bulk of the research related to the value of sociodramatic play in childhood has been observed in light of theory of mind development, it is reasonable to assume that based on the similarities between both constructs, there would too be a connection between sociodramatic play and the development of empathy. Some research has shown support for this idea. Specifically, Goldstein and Winner (2010) found that when pre and posttest scores on measures of empathy and theory of mind were analyzed, older children (7-12 years old) who engage in acting pursuits (i.e. acting lessons) score significantly higher on scores of empathy and on scores of theory of mind compared to same aged peers who do not engage in acting (Goldstein & Winner, 2012). Moreover, in the second part of their study, the researchers found that when children were *given* acting training, they experienced an increase in empathy and theory of mind, suggesting plasticity in these related areas.

### Empathy and Diversity

Empathy is an important mechanism that drives our emotions; it allows us to take on different perspectives, relate to others, and understand behaviours. Studies have long recognized the benefits associated with individuals who rate highly on levels of empathetic concern. There is a solid foundation of research that has connected empathetic concern with higher rates of helping others in individuals (Batson, 1991; Davis, 1994; Oswald, 1996; Batson, Sager et al, 1997). A recent example is Pavey et al.’s (2012) study of whether empathetic concern was driven by an internalized set of values and interests, or driven by a set of internalized pressures or a desire to gain positive regard for others. In their three-part study, they found that empathy is a motivator to help that is *not* driven by the latter. Instead, those who choose to help appear to have empathetic concern that is driven by their autonomous interests and values. This may be related to the frequency of exposure an individual has to the experience of autonomously motivated helping. For example, Batson, Polycarpou et al (1997) initiated a study which exposed participants to scenarios which either elicited emotionally driven empathetic concern for suffering individuals, or scenarios that minimized empathetic concern in the same situation. They found that the individuals who were exposed to the empathetic condition had more favourable attitudes toward the individuals in the scenario than those who were not in this condition. Moreover, on a follow-up



session two weeks later, individuals in the empathetic condition retained their favourable attitudes. In another study, individuals who previously held prejudiced beliefs regarding a specific race, when exposed to a scenario that elicited empathetic concern, reversed their previous beliefs (Finlay & Stephen, in press). This supports the notion that empathetic concern is internalized, perhaps through exposure. Penner's (2002) research supports this notion. In his study he notes that individuals who choose to consistently remain involved in volunteerism may do so because of a direct exposure to the experience of autonomously motivated helping. The research notes that this exposure may lead to the absorption of pro-social values and behaviours.

### Fostering Empathy Through Sociodramatic Play in the Classroom

At this point, several connections have been made. First, connections between sociodramatic play and child development of theory of mind, which is distinctly related to their development of empathy, have been noted. As such, a reasonable tool for improving both constructs in children would be to expose them to environments that encourage sociodramatic play. Moreover, we have discussed some current issues related to diversity in schools and the value of promoting school environments that support children developing a concept of affirmation of all peoples. With the idea in mind that empathetic concern can be internalized into an individual's sense of self and result in pro-social behaviours, creating a community of empathetic learners within the classroom may be one attainable solution to some diversity issues. This section will demonstrate support for the notion that involving students in sociodrama is a viable way to achieve this goal.

J.L. Moreno is the developer of Sociodrama as it is defined today (Howie, 2002). Originally in 1943, it was developed by Moreno as a way of coping with a variety of inter-group and intercultural problems that arose in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, following World War I (Moreno, 1943; Sprague, 1997; Howie, 2002). It was a creative means of engaging people in social justice problems:

“Moreno said he initially developed sociodrama as an approach to help people overcome some of their own cultural rigidities and create some collective catharsis to allow room for fresh approaches to responses...Moreno saw sociodrama as a way to engage people in specific dramatic activities in order to evoke discussions, explorations and role-playing of solutions to conflictual issues” (Howie, 2002).

With this in mind, it appears that the notion of using sociodrama as a means to address issues related to diversity is not new. Although at this time, Moreno did not know of the connection between acting training and the development of specific areas of the brain dedicated to making social inferences, he was clearly ahead of his time. His ideas have extended to include the concept of sociodramatic play in children, something that can not only be encouraged in the classroom during free-

time, but additionally, can be incorporated within the curriculum. Some researchers suggest that this may be an essential piece of the classroom. Mari Riojas-Cortez (2001) points out that during spontaneous sociodramatic play, children engage in culturally significant behaviours transmitted to them from their families. The researcher refers to these behaviours and ideas as “funds of knowledge” through which children learn to act appropriately in a way that they view as essential to thriving and succeeding in life. Funds of knowledge influence choices, behaviours and attitudes (Riojas-Cortez, 2001). They have different manifestations in all cultures but their premises are the same. They drive student’s understanding of the world and how they relate to others. Sociodramatic play is a way to address the different funds of knowledge in a safe way, bring them to light in the classroom, and use them to create a community of empathetic learners in the classroom, one where students are affirmative of the value of all members of the community:

“Instead of providing the cultural artifacts for children, teachers need to dedicate time in the classroom’s daily schedule for children to engage in sociodramatic play. Sociodramatic play allows children to exhibit their funds of knowledge. Funds of knowledge tell teachers what children know and what they are capable of doing...such information is crucial for the development of a culturally reflective curriculum” (Riojas-Cortez, 2002 p. 38).

As mentioned, activities involving sociodramatic play allow students to “step into the shoes” of others and take on different perspectives. This gives them opportunities for students to begin to view culture holistically. In the younger years, teachers can encourage this type of play by providing space, props, time and encouragement for students to engage in sociodramatic play. Modeling and discussing what this type of play might look like would also be valuable. Once students are engaged in this type of play in the very early years, it becomes essential for teachers to assess in a non-intrusive way the types of dialogue that is occurring. This dialogue can form the basis for “circle” talks, choices for read-alouds, and various activities. These would address the various diversity topics present in the room to establish awareness for younger children—emphasizing similarities and using language carefully. As children get older, teacher’s can encourage this development in their classrooms by not only emphasizing and encouraging student participation in the dramatic arts, but through looking for opportunities to merge drama with the regular curriculum. For example, during novel study, social studies, or history, asking students to act out how scenarios, character’s emotions, or events related to the subject of study. When conflicts arise in school, the community, or the world using sociodrama to engage in conflict solving is an effective way to have students work out the problem by looking at it from various angles. Students would then have the opportunity to incorporate the funds of knowledge they have been exposed to in reaching conclusions. These opportunities provide students with direct exposure to situations that will allow them to *internalize* empathetic concern. This would make it more likely that this concern would extend beyond the classroom. Additionally, teachers can begin to incorporate this into their classrooms

immediately. As mentioned previously, studies have shown that when exposed to acting pursuits, even older children experienced an increase in scores on empathy measures, suggesting it is never too late to start.

### Conclusion

In Canada, classrooms are becoming more and more diverse. There is increasing pressure on teachers and school boards to incorporate all cultures into classrooms, curriculum, and school policy. This is for good reason – all students deserve to see how their culture, beliefs, and abilities interact to make their school environments a unique and safe place. This paper highlights some difficulties with some common approaches to addressing diversity in schools, and emphasizes the need for students to develop an affirmation of diversity that extends beyond the classroom. With the understanding that individuals who score higher on levels of empathetic concern tend to hold less prejudiced beliefs, hold more pro-social attitudes, and are more likely to help others, this paper discusses the value of creating a community of empathetic learners. One method of establishing this climate in the classroom is through utilizing opportunities for sociodramatic play to be directed toward addressing diversity issues. Sociodramatic play impacts child development socially, emotionally, and neurobiologically by impacting the social centres of their brain--specifically, influencing the development of theory of mind and empathy. As such, the more often students engage in this type of play, the more exposure they will have to situations which allow them to internalize their empathetic concern. This internalization of empathetic concern has the power to extend far beyond the classroom, influencing students in all walks of life.

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Relazione

**Il counselling interculturale di gruppo in una comunità per l'infanzia:  
un'esperienza basata su un modello clinico integrativo**

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Il presente lavoro illustra la declinazione di un modello integrativo di psicoterapia in un contesto di gruppo, nello specifico una supervisione all'équipe educativa di una struttura residenziale per bambini (0 e 6 anni), con un tempo medio di permanenza all'interno della struttura di 1-2 anni. I bambini sono di varia etnia (italiana, nord-africana e asiatica) e diversa estrazione socio-culturale e provengono da reparti di maternità, sono in stato di abbandono, al centro di contenziosi giudiziari e in temporaneo o permanente allontanamento dalla famiglia. Il gruppo operativo denunciava inizialmente una situazione di globale demotivazione, burnout e modalità comunicative inefficaci. Per quanto riguarda i bambini, l'équipe si trovava a gestire una varietà di situazioni di rischio clinico, legate a condizioni di distress relazionale e affettivo: scarsa selettività dei legami di attaccamento (attaccamento multiplo), disarmonie e ritardi nello sviluppo affettivo, cognitivo e sociale, isolamento relazionale e congelamento emotivo, conseguenze psicologiche di abbandoni, famiglie abusanti e maltrattanti, problemi specifici (addormentamento, nutrizione, socializzazione), scarsa articolazione della funzione del gioco.

Si è proceduto a rivisitare l'approccio al servizio residenziale, con il passaggio da una comunità fondata sulla trasmissione di modelli di comportamento ad una comunità orientata ad una globale comprensione dell'utente (Barbanotti & Iacobino, 1998). In una prospettiva teorica integrativa, ciò si è basato sull'implementare e sul mettere in dialogo il bagaglio di competenza esplicite (sapere teorico esplicito) e implicite (sapere teorico implicito e biografico) del gruppo operativo. Abbiamo perciò fornito due aspetti interagenti e sinergici, profondamente connessi agli elementi del modello EAIE (Evolutività – Affettività – Intersoggettività – Esperienzialità): a) contenuti espliciti relativi alla psicologia/psicopatologia dello sviluppo e b) contenuti impliciti della relazione educatore-bambino. Il focus dell'intervento di supervisione è stata la co-regolazione affettiva tra supervisore e partecipanti, con l'obiettivo di favorire la crescita della complessità,

l'utilizzazione adattiva delle motivazioni e delle emozioni, la proattività e la resilienza (Fosha, 2006; Menoni, 2010; Menoni & Iannelli, 2010, 2011).

Prendendo in considerazione il primo elemento del nostro modello, l'Evolutività, la supervisione ha fornito contenuti espliciti riferiti ai sistemi motivazionali (*play, care, panic*, ecc.), al concetto di regolazione affettiva all'interno di una finestra individuale di tolleranza, di *social engagement* e di modulazione emozionale (Damasio, 2000; Fosha, 2000; Panksepp, 1998; Porges, 2003). I contenuti espliciti si sono rivelati profondamente embricati a quelli impliciti, emersi nell'interazione supervisore-educatore, rivelando la profonda interrelazione tra sapere teorico esplicito e sapere biografico e teorico implicito. Il supervisore, in tal senso, si muove in una direzione volta a validare l'esperienza del singolo educatore e a far emergere aspetti inizialmente non consci che possono sostenere e guidare l'educatore nella relazione con il bambino.

Passando al secondo elemento, l'Affettività, la nostra attenzione si è concentrata su: a) movimenti di sintonizzazione, rottura e riparazione in un ambiente caratterizzato da affettività positiva e sicurezza (Stern, 1985, 2004) e b) consapevolezza dei vari aspetti del Sé e costruzione di una sufficiente resilienza, attivazione di reti affettive non cosce e connessione tra emozione e azione (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011). Particolare enfasi è stata posta sulla sincronizzazione delle sequenze interattive e sulla responsività ai comportamenti di attaccamento (Liotti & Farina, 2011; Stern, 1985). A livello implicito, ciò è stato possibile attraverso il focus posto sulle risorse della persona, sul fornire un contesto nel quale attivare sequenze interattive fondate su una comunicazione congruente e a tonalità positiva (Bromberg, 2012; Menoni & Iannelli, 2011).

Il terzo elemento, l'Intersoggettività, si caratterizza per l'importanza di processi chiave quali sintonizzazione, reciprocità e co-costruzione di narrazioni (Schore, 2003; Schore & Schore, 2008). I processi di condivisione promuovono valore e auto-efficacia (valorizzazione del Sé), individuazione e socializzazione (riconoscimento del Sé e dell'Altro), appartenenza ad un contesto (una base sicura ambientale e sociale), auto-affermazione. A tale livello, sono state fornite conoscenze teoriche circa il ruolo svolto dalla condivisione di esperienze di piacere in condizioni di sicurezza. A livello implicito, la supervisione si è centrata sull'esperienza e la consapevolezza delle sequenze di sintonizzazione-rottura-riparazione nella relazione supervisore-educatore e educatore-bambino (Siegel, 2003, 2007).

Infine, l'elemento dell'Esperienzialità, cardine per l'attivazione di connessioni integrative e per trasmettere all'educatore il valore di "sentire" nel qui e ora in condizioni di sicurezza relazionale. A livello esplicito, l'educatore ha appreso elementi teorici relativi alla connessione adattiva emozione-azione (Siegel, 2009), al ruolo dei vissuti personali nel *hic et nunc* e alla centralità del



riconoscimento e della validazione del bambino, in un processo che porta a riconoscere, riconoscersi e essere riconosciuti (Stern, 2004). A livello implicito, abbiamo lavorato sulla consapevolezza momento-per-momento nelle sequenze interattive.

I risultati dell'intervento, ottenuti attraverso un'analisi qualitativa di interviste in profondità, hanno permesso di rilevare a) aumento dei vissuti di connessione e reciprocità nel rapporto tra educatori, caratterizzati da maggiore responsabilità, aduttà, accettazione e consapevolezza della funzione di sostegno del gruppo; b) percezione di maggiore competenza educativa e c) maggiore soddisfazione nello svolgimento della propria attività lavorativa, con una contemporanea valorizzazione del Sé e dell'Altro.

I risultati sono coerenti con una linea teorica che pone al centro dell'intervento clinico a) la sinergia fra le quattro dimensioni sopracitate, considerata dalla ricerca sui processi di sviluppo umani come portatrice di un alto potenziale di cambiamento che promuove un'integrazione nella persona, b) la centralità del sistema complesso adulto-bambino e delle risorse disponibili e c) l'esperienza di non essere solo e di poter esistere in ogni aspetto del Sé (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011; Schore, 2003; Siegel, 2003).

Tale intervento sostiene una terapeuticità che muove contemporaneamente sia in direzione nomotetica, di sostegno a processi universali (specie-specifici), sia in direzione idiografica, intesa come valorizzazione e accoglienza dell'antropologica unicità della persona in rapporto alla propria biografia affettiva e alla personale appartenenza socio-culturale. Tali conoscenze ci portano a valorizzare un approccio fenomenologico e dialogico centrato sulla regolazione diadica e una teoria del cambiamento basata sul presupposto della neuroplasticità funzionale esperienza-dipendente (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011; Panksepp, 1998), possibile lungo tutto l'arco della vita.

Il cambiamento è possibile qualora la relazione preveda al suo interno la necessaria attenzione agli aspetti evolutivi e alla mobilitazione degli affetti vitali e delle emozioni, all'accettazione dei sistemi motivazionali storici di ogni persona. Un'ottica trasformativa basata sull'imprescindibile costruzione di una cooperativa alleanza di lavoro, sulla validazione, sulla valorizzazione e sul riconoscimento. Ciò grazie alla connessione tra emozione e azione in chiave adattiva, alla coregolazione fondata sul rispetto e sulla possibilità di sintonizzazione e riparazione in ottica intersoggettiva, all'attivazione esperienziale di connessioni integrative e di una narrazione condivisa e coerente nel suo significato. La terapeuticità di un intervento risiede nella possibilità di favorire la creazione di processi di sintonizzazione intrapersonale come aspetto che riassume in sé elementi evolutivi, esperienziali, intersoggettivi e affettivi. Non un elemento monolitico, ma

una capacità costantemente modulabile e potenzialmente sempre più complessa di stare nei processi di vita e di promuovere un'integrazione nella persona (Siegel, 1999, 2003).

Per illustrare il lavoro svolto ci serviremo di un frammento di storia clinica che ha per protagonisti un bambino, che chiameremo Samir, le educatrici della struttura e il supervisore. Samir ha 4 anni e proviene da una famiglia di origine tunisina, ed è affidato dai servizi sociali in seguito alla carcerazione della zia e della nonna per il reato di spaccio di stupefacenti. La madre di Samir aveva in precedenza lasciato la famiglia, tornando a vivere in Tunisia, mentre il padre si trovava in carcere, sempre per reati inerenti la detenzione e lo spaccio. Samir si trova quindi a vivere una situazione di ripetuti abbandoni, in ordine il padre, la madre ed infine la zia e la nonna; i servizi informeranno la comunità della possibilità che il bambino abbia subito maltrattamenti fisici e abusi anche di natura sessuale. All'ingresso nella comunità Samir ha 4 anni. La supervisione all'équipe ha inizio in un periodo successivo al suo ingresso. Samir presentava alcuni elementi quali la sessualizzazione della relazione con le educatrici, l'utilizzo di un linguaggio adultomorfo e fortemente caratterizzato per l'uso di termini riconducibili all'ambito sessuale, l'assunzione di atteggiamenti oppositivi nei confronti delle regole sociali, comportamenti aggressivi verso gli altri bambini, mancata conoscenza di norme igienico-sanitarie, carenza di fiducia nell'adulto, scarsa o assente richiesta esplicita di co-regolazione affettiva, diffidenza rispetto al contatto fisico, sterilizzazione e ridotta consapevolezza emotiva, scarse competenze sociali e attaccamento disorganizzato, modalità controllanti punitive, tendenza all'iperattivismo, rabbia esplosiva, ansia di separazione.

All'interno degli incontri di supervisione, le educatrici proporranno il racconto di un bambino ostile, prepotente, arrogante, intransigente, irrispettoso delle regole sociali. Ciò corredato ad una lunga serie di esempi tratti dalla vita quotidiana in struttura e fuori della stessa. Samir, al risveglio, insiste per essere il primo ad essere vestito e pretende totale attenzione durante la colazione, interrompendo eventuali altre interazioni in corso. Al momento di essere accompagnato alla scuola per l'infanzia vuole sedersi accanto al guidatore, manifestando comportamenti disturbanti in caso di opposizione per ragioni di sicurezza. All'asilo Samir mette in atto comportamenti analoghi, disturbando il corso dei giochi, aggredendo gli altri bambini e inserendosi nelle interazioni in corso. In ragione di ciò, anche le maestre, nei colloqui con le educatrici, tratteggiano l'immagine di un bambino intransigente, che esaurisce le energie, incontenibile; da parte loro, i coetanei avrebbero iniziato a isolarlo e a evitare di coinvolgerlo nei giochi.

Al ritorno in struttura, Samir ripeterà la medesima routine, fatta di interruzioni, richieste inappropriate di attenzione, aggressività verso i coetanei. Durante il pomeriggio, durante le

attività ludiche con altri bambini, mostra la tendenza a prevaricare, a ricercare il conflitto e a aggredire fisicamente. Ciò si associa ad una continua attività di vigilanza delle educatrici, che si dichiarano sfinite. Infine, poco dopo essere stato messo a letto, Samir usa le proprie feci per sporcare i muri e il letto. In tali occasioni viene fortemente ripreso dalle educatrici, che a turno lo rimproverano per tale comportamento.

Rimanendo all'interno del nostro modello teorico, la prima complessità con la quale il supervisore ha dovuto fare i conti è stata, ineludibilmente, la propria. Quali vissuti si associano a tale racconto? Qual è l'immagine del bambino che si presenta in rapporto alla personale sensibilità e alla formazione del supervisore? E, soprattutto, in che modo può essere "terapeutico" nei confronti delle educatrici, e per loro tramite nei confronti di Samir? Sicuramente, di fronte a tale pressante richiesta di aiuto rivolta dal gruppo nella sua interezza, il supervisore ha avvertito la necessità iniziale di rifugiarsi in teorie, citazioni, atteggiamenti pseudo-pedagogici e normativi, lontani da una reale crescita in termini di complessità personale. Un'iniziale fuga dalla percezione di inadeguatezza in rapporto ad una situazione presentata come ingestibile, irrisolvibile, insostenibile. In tale processo, l'attenzione del supervisore era indirizzata a proprie risonanze interiori, a una parte del suo Sé che si riconosceva in quel bambino e che esperiva un bisogno di riconoscimento, di validazione, di comprensione profonda. Certamente, ciò ha inizialmente costituito un momento di perdita di sintonizzazione con le educatrici, ma è stato essenziale, per il supervisore, poter accogliere internamente le emozioni sperimentate, darsi il tempo e lo spazio per poter esistere, in modo da poterlo concedere anche all'altro.

Se il primo passaggio è stato quello dell'accoglienza, della cittadinanza alle emozioni sperimentate, il secondo è stato quello di potersi appoggiare sulle personali risorse di resilienza, in termini di capacità riflessiva, di messa in prospettiva, di sostegno interiore e in una capacità conquistata di potersi dare sicurezza, fiducia e piacere di incontrare l'altro. Non è una capacità magica, ma è una conquista, un approdo necessario per poter svolgere il lavoro di supervisione in modo sufficientemente buono. Il supervisore ha bisogno di porsi nella condizione di sentirsi coerente con sé e con le varie parti di cui è composto, nell'arco delle singole sessioni di lavoro e dell'intero intervento. Il supervisore è chiamato ad essere consapevole di quanto sta accadendo nel processo in atto, in particolare degli stati emozionali presenti nella matrice relazionale. Quindi, il supervisore ha la possibilità di accedere a più livelli di codificazione dei processi in atto e ai diversi livelli di coscienza che convivono nel medesimo istante, osservare le sequenze interattive e connettere significati (Stern, 2004).

A partire da ciò, si è cercato di promuovere il medesimo movimento anche nelle educatrici, consentendo loro di sviluppare consapevolezza circa le personali modalità interattive e le risonanze affettive associate al rapporto con Samir, permettendo così di modulare gli stati emozionali e sostenere le risorse di resilienza, creando le condizioni perché trovassero nuove strategie di adattamento. In linea con il nostro modello, che al “fare con” antepone l’”essere con”, alle educatrici è stato chiesto come stavano quando erano con Samir, che cosa provavano e quali erano i loro vissuti in relazione ai ripetuti fallimenti educativi. In un intervento di tipo integrativo il supervisore deve primariamente attivare processi di validazione, riconoscimento e accettazione, consentendo ai partecipanti di avere il tempo di modulare gli stati emozionali e poterli “pensare/mentalizzare” al fine di creare le condizioni per realizzare strategie alternative di adattamento. In tal senso, al centro del processo viene situata, come protagonista, la singola educatrice, cercando di massimizzarne le risorse.

Ciò ha consentito alle educatrici di aumentare la propria complessità, con un progressivo ampliamento dei gradi di libertà in termini di consapevolezza e possibili tendenze all’azione associate all’emergere di affetti ulteriori rispetto a quelli iniziali. Le educatrici poterono permettersi di sperimentare e condividere, oltre alla rabbia e alla fatica, i propri vissuti di impotenza, solitudine e isolamento, in risposta ai fallimenti relazionali e educativi nel rapporto con Samir. Tali vissuti erano inizialmente gestiti attraverso l’assunzione di atteggiamenti ipernormativi, intransigenti e aggressivamente reattivi. Nelle parole di una delle educatrici, esse stesse erano diventate “cattive” educatrici. Cattive nel senso etimologico di imprigionate, costrette in una modalità di relazione coattiva. Cattive, impotenti, incapaci di gestire la situazione, impossibilitate ad agire, poiché ogni direzione sperimentata costituiva un ulteriore fallimento.

Prendiamo ad esempio il momento dell’addormentamento. Le educatrici si resero progressivamente consapevoli che i suddetti episodi nei quali Samir si imbrattava con le feci erano successivi al cambio turno (che avveniva alle ore 21.00), nel quale le educatrici in turno lasciavano il posto di lavoro, sostituite da un’unica educatrice che svolgeva il turno di notte. Le stesse iniziarono ad attivare le loro personali risorse in termini di sistemi motivazionali alternativi, in particolare relativi all’attaccamento, al gioco e alla cooperazione. Come emerse anche in supervisione, a livello di sapere esplicito, bambini che provengono da situazioni familiari caratterizzate da aggressività fisica e verbale, maltrattamenti psicologici e abusi sessuali, abbandoni precoci e estrema imprevedibilità del contesto, possono manifestare tipologie di attaccamento definibili come disorganizzate, che possono accompagnarsi a strategie di controllo di tipo accudente, punitivo e/o sessualizzato. Tali bambini, in risposta alla discontinuità e

disorganizzazione del sistema familiare, trovano la possibilità di conservare un grado minimo di coesione, congruenza interna e relazione con il caregiver attraverso la messa in atto di strategie di controllo volte a mantenere, oltre alla suddetta coesione interna, la vicinanza alle figure di attaccamento. Inoltre, e questo ricorre con frequenza nelle situazioni comunitarie, si rischia di perdere la consapevolezza che il bambino, ogni bambino, non ha bisogno di infinite figure di attaccamento, ma di esperienza ripetute, sicure, con alcune figure di riferimento. Le educatrici scelsero così di modificare l'organizzazione oraria, prevedendo una personalizzazione dell'intervento; in altre parole, due di loro si dichiararono disposte a rimanere in turno fino al momento dell'addormentamento, alternandosi in modo da garantire a Samir il mantenimento di due relazioni preferenziali con due figure adulte, accompagnandolo ad addormentarsi e ricorrendo a letture di favole e racconti adeguati alla sua età. Le educatrici, inoltre, regalarono a Samir, in maniera indipendente, due piccoli pupazzi, che lo stesso teneva nel proprio letto. Tale intervento, in un tempo anche relativamente breve, consentì a Samir di non aver più la necessità di utilizzare le proprie feci per manifestare i propri bisogni affettivi e la richiesta di vicinanza e visibilità, poiché aveva trovato qualcuno che era realmente disponibile, attento e accudente nei suoi confronti. In tali momenti, il bambino "cattivo" poteva lasciare spazio al bambino "normalmente buono", che manifestava la sua curiosità, il suo bisogno di affetto e relazioni selettive, la sua necessità di rassicurazione (*"domani sera cosa mi leggi?"*, *"poi continuiamo domani?"*, *"domani ci sei?"*). E le educatrici poterono fare esperienza di essere "buone" educatrici, capaci, proattive e competenti.

Sulla scorta di quanto appreso esperienzialmente, le educatrici hanno posto in essere differenti modalità di relazione, basandosi ad esempio su una formulazione cooperativa delle regole sociali, sulla diminuzione del monte orario di frequentazione della scuola per l'infanzia, sulla necessità di fornire un contesto riflessivo piuttosto che agito, nel quale poter comprendere i processi emozionali di Samir, attraverso un processo di sintonizzazione emozionale e riparazione, piuttosto che di inasprimento del conflitto.

In tale percorso vi è stato un tentativo costante, da parte del supervisore, di aumentare la complessità del sistema "gruppo educativo" attraverso il sostegno a processi di consapevolezza, di sintonizzazione momento-per-momento e di implementazione delle competenze educative, sia attraverso esplicite conoscenze riferibili a sistemi cognitivi "alti", sia attraverso la co-regolazione affettiva "implicita" nel processo relazionale, afferente a sistemi affettivi non-consoci (Plutchik, 1994; Siegel, 1999). La speranza di terapeuticità dell'intervento si è snodata lungo un percorso esperienziale di sviluppo delle capacità della persona di consapevolezza emotiva, di costruzione di

significati e di scelte responsabili dei comportamenti, attraverso una sintonizzazione tra “cervelli destri” momento-per-momento, l’elaborazione di significato e l’espressione delle tendenze all’azione insite negli affetti vitali (Greenberg, 2002; Menoni & Iannelli, 2010, 2011; Romoli, 2011). In tal senso, una terapeuticità integrativa, e quindi complessa (Guerra, 1997), è per sua natura altamente personalizzata in ragione dei bisogni, delle risorse e delle specificità della persona.

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# Non dimentichiamole

Servizio di sostegno alle famiglie di persone detenute nella C.C. di Prato "Maliseti"

di Mario Ruocco\* e Aurora Vestri\*\*

## **Introduzione**

Il mondo penitenziario è sovente percepito come un contesto completamente separato dalla società. Le mura, alte e spesse, giustificano l'immaginario di un carcere visto come un non-luogo freddo e vuoto. A partire dalla comunicazione che spesso osserviamo nei media, il carcere è rappresentato come una magica soluzione a tutti i problemi sociali, la meta segnata da confini invalicabili alla società civile, la cui soglia delimita una collettività che si arroga del diritto di rifiutare il mostro in prima pagina. Al di qua c'è un intero mondo, che al di là del portone penitenziario sembra finire. Il nulla: fantasmi o marionette immobili, congelate, dimenticate. Già, perché gli esseri umani che finiscono in carcere possono essere dimenticati persino dai parenti più cari: non dimenticheremo mai quell'uomo di mezza età che deceduto improvvisamente in carcere per complicanze cardiovascolari è rimasto in obitorio per intere settimane perché le istituzioni non trovavano un parente a cui consegnare la salma.

Il presente lavoro vuole descrivere una realtà totalmente diversa dall'immaginario collettivo: il carcere è popolato da una moltitudine di persone che soffrono, sperano, maturano, muoiono, mangiano, guardano la televisione. A differenza di quanto pensi il cittadino comune, al di là delle mura sono esperite emozioni. Per un detenuto spesso l'emozione più intensa è legata al pensiero dei propri familiari, specie se al di là delle sbarre lascia moglie e figli.

D'altra parte, se all'interno del carcere sono garantiti una serie di servizi (psicologo, medico generico, visite specialistiche, lavoro, ecc. ecc.) chi pensa ai familiari dei detenuti? Chi si preoccupa per esempio di dare sostegno ai bambini figli dei detenuti? Come aiutare le madri a tollerare il vuoto della casa a fronte delle numerose responsabilità genitoriali nei confronti dei figli? Chi si fa carico dell'integrazione dei nuclei familiari separati dalle sbarre?

## **Famiglie e detenuti**

La popolazione carceraria, a partire dagli anni novanta, è aumentata sensibilmente nei Paesi di tutto il mondo.

I dati del Centro Internazionale per gli Studi Carcerari indicano che gli Stati Uniti hanno il tasso di incarcerazione maggiore, 762 prigionieri ogni 100.000 persone. Al secondo posto si colloca la Federazione Russa, con 635 detenuti ogni 100.000 persone.

Per quanto concerne l'Italia, i dati forniti dall'Amministrazione penitenziaria al 31 gennaio 2013 indicano 65.900 presenze negli istituti penitenziari italiani, pertanto in rapporto all'intera popolazione nazionale possiamo stimare 110 detenuti ogni 100.000 persone.

Il presente lavoro vuole concentrarsi sugli effetti che il carcere provoca sui familiari dei detenuti, con una particolare attenzione per i figli dei detenuti stessi.

Se spostiamo l'attenzione dal detenuto ai suoi familiari, apprendiamo che negli Stati Uniti è stato stimato che 1 minore su 45 ha avuto nel corso della vita un genitore in carcere. Tale stima rappresenta un tasso pari a circa il 2% di tutti i minori statunitensi. Il dato aumenta se concentriamo l'attenzione sulle fasce di popolazione più disagiate: infatti la percentuale dei minori che ha avuto un genitore in carcere sale dal 2% al 7% se dall'intera popolazione americana estraiamo i minori afro-americani (Mumola, 2000).

Il dato dimostra che nelle fasce sociali emarginate, i minori hanno una maggiore probabilità di avere un genitore intrappolato nel sistema della giustizia. Da questo punto di vista, sappiamo che l'intero sistema



giudiziario internazionale ha una particolare prerogativa per le fasce sociali più deboli. Il nostro interesse si rivolge a loro nella convinzione che in una società civile tutti i cittadini dovrebbero avere eguali opportunità di accedere alle risorse necessarie per realizzarsi senza subire discriminazioni.

Nel caso dei minorenni, in particolare, la nostra attenzione nei loro confronti è motivata dalla consapevolezza che l'individuo in età evolutiva è esposto ad una maggiore fonte di criticità legate alla maturazione psicofisica ancora in fieri, pertanto caratterizzato da una struttura di personalità labile e dinamica. La fragilità del processo maturativo richiama la società civile ad una maggiore cura e attenzione nei loro riguardi.

### **La devianza dei figli dei detenuti**

L'istituzione penitenziaria coinvolge soprattutto persone emarginate e la carcerazione finisce per incrementare le difficoltà economiche dei nuclei familiari di riferimento. Sovente viene infatti arrestata la persona che costituisce l'unica fonte di reddito della famiglia (Mumola, 2002).

In questo modo viene a mancare l'approvvigionamento delle risorse necessarie per far fronte all'acquisto dei beni di prima necessità. Inoltre vengono meno le risorse impiegabili in percorsi di esperienziali da poter affiancare all'esperienza scolastica: in assenza di sufficienti soldi, il bambino non potrà frequentare corsi ludico-sportivi-culturali che sono invece molto importanti nella integrazione del minore, con conseguente esposizione a frequentazioni amicali emarginate suscettibili allo sviluppo di valori sottoculturali devianti.

La popolazione dei detenuti è principalmente costituita da uomini appartenenti a minoranze etniche e di basso stato sociale. Il numero di madri detenute in carcere, però, è notevolmente cresciuto negli ultimi dieci anni, aumentando negli States dell'87% tra il 1991 e il 2000. Il 55% degli uomini detenuti è padre di uno o più figli di età inferiore ai 18 anni, per un totale di circa 1,2 milioni di minori, mentre il 65% della popolazione carceraria femminile è madre di bambini di età inferiore ai 18 anni, per un totale di circa 115.500 minori (Mumola, 2000).

Estrapolando un campione di detenuti Italiani in occasione di una ricerca ancora in corso, possiamo anticipare la stima secondo la quale circa un detenuto su tre ha figli minorenni.

La detenzione di milioni di individui e l'interruzione delle loro relazioni familiari provoca un notevole indebolimento del ruolo che le famiglie svolgono nel promuovere il benessere sociale. Sappiamo che la famiglia gioca un ruolo importante nella prevenzione di comportamenti antisociali. Confrontandosi con i propri genitori, il bambino ha l'opportunità di introiettare modalità comportamentali e valori etici trasmessi di generazione in generazione attraverso l'esempio della condotta. L'esempio è una fonte di apprendimento ben più pregnante delle spiegazioni teoriche. Da questo punto di vista i bambini provenienti da famiglie coinvolte nel circuito penitenziario sono svantaggiati perché esposti a stili di vita devianti e quindi a modelli comportamentali difficilmente integrabili con la così detta comunità civile. In questi casi la famiglia rischia di perdere il ruolo di controllo sociale, perché la vigilanza dei genitori sui figli viene meno, col pericolo di essere destinati ad una marginalità sociale, che li espone alla probabilità di intraprendere vere e proprie carriere criminali attraverso l'adesione a sottoculture devianti. Quando, invece, la famiglia conserva i ruoli di protezione e accudimento dei figli, questi hanno l'opportunità di confrontarsi con modelli di vita che facilitano la loro integrazione sociale e che li porta a frequentazioni estranee a valori antisociali

Appare evidente che una società interessata alla mera reclusione dell'autore di reato e disinteressata all'intero nucleo familiare del detenuto, finisce per aggravare condizioni di vita già disagiate di bambini provenienti da nuclei familiari problematici. Da questo punto di vista, la detenzione di un genitore provoca un possibile depauperamento del controllo sociale esercitato dalla famiglia. Di conseguenza, nelle famiglie che sono negativamente colpite dal sistema penitenziario è più probabile che i figli mettano in atto comportamenti devianti.

### **Le relazioni affettive e i ruoli genitoriali**

L'ingresso in carcere del genitore implica un'automatica ristrutturazione dell'intero nucleo familiare e dei ruoli esercitati all'interno delle mura domestiche. La famiglia è senza dubbio il primo e più importante luogo in cui il bambino riceve affetto e supporto. Come insegna Carl Rogers (1951), attraverso la qualità della relazione che si instaura tra il genitore e il bambino quando quest'ultimo è amato e stimato incondizionatamente, lo sviluppo della personalità segue percorsi aderenti alla corretta percezione e soddisfazione dei propri bisogni. In questo modo il bambino può nel corso del tempo liberamente realizzare le proprie potenzialità, senza sentirsi minacciato da aspettative genitoriali, che diventano invece un ostacolo quando la relazione genitore-figlio è vincolata dalla richiesta di soddisfare bisogni estranei al bambino stesso.

Con l'ingresso in carcere di uno dei componenti della famiglia, il genitore che rimane a casa col figlio deve necessariamente compensare alle carenze delle risorse precedentemente disponibili per ricoprire ogni responsabilità domestica e lavorativa. La carcerazione introduce una complessa rivoluzione infrafamiliare, che può a sua volta favorire un drastico cambiamento del modello genitoriale proposto, sovente nella direzione di una maggiore rigidità e ambivalenza. Quindi il bambino deve confrontarsi non solo con l'assenza improvvisa del genitore ormai recluso, ma anche con nuove regole e strategie educative, che possono veicolare messaggi impliciti di improvviso disinteresse nei suoi riguardi. Con il sopraggiungere delle difficoltà del nucleo familiare, il bambino rischia di non comprendere correttamente le ragioni della carenza affettiva a cui è esposto e andare così incontro a problemi emotivi e comportamentali, che possono ostacolare un suo corretto sviluppo psicologico. In assenza di un adeguato supporto emotivo da parte dei genitori, c'è il pericolo che il bambino si senta solo e abbandonato. In queste condizioni possono sorgere percezioni di inadeguatezza che favoriscono un depauperamento della percezione dell'identità personale, fino a sentirsi il bambino indegno di affetto: rimane vittima incolpevole di un complesso percorso di stigmatizzazione che lo costringe, violentemente ad assumere strategie di coping tese alla introversione sociale oppure alla ribellione motivata dalla difficoltà a contenere l'ansia e la rabbia per l'abbandono subito. Laddove la famiglia non riesca a rispondere con sufficiente plasticità alla nuova condizione esistenziale, possono subentrare figure professionali di riferimento (educatori e assistenti sociali) che inevitabilmente costituiscono un ulteriore elemento di stigmatizzazione percepita, anche attraverso il confronto con i pari (più fortunati), che possono vivere serenamente con i propri genitori.

### **La qualità comunicativa tra genitore e figlio**

A causa della valenza morale che contraddistingue il contatto col sistema di giustizia in generale, il genitore che affronta l'esperienza detentiva si trova nella comprensibile difficoltà di comunicare al figlio la causa della propria assenza. La menzogna propinata più di frequente chiama in causa improbabili impegni lavorativi del babbo o della mamma. Il babbo non torna a casa perché è costretto a rimanere giorno e notte in un posto di lavoro lontano. Tale spiegazione è infelice per una serie di ragioni. Innanzitutto comunica al bambino che il lavoro del babbo è più importante di lui, venendogli implicitamente comunicato che il babbo preferisce lavorare, piuttosto che tornare a casa. Inoltre il bambino è costretto a confrontarsi con una serie di contraddizioni implicite, senza avere la possibilità di confrontarsi con una figura adulta di riferimento, che possa supportarlo nel comprendere chiaramente cosa stia accadendo. Come mai improvvisamente il babbo ha cambiato tempi e modalità di lavoro? Come mai oltre a non tornare a casa, non può neanche telefonare, né può ricevere telefonate, persino nei giorni festivi? E ancora: come mai se il babbo lavora così tanto, la mamma ha tutte queste difficoltà economiche che prima non c'erano? La falsità della comunicazione contrasta con una serie di evidenze che il bambino non può fare a meno di raccogliere, con la conseguente dissonanza di informazioni a fronte delle quali il bambino si sente solo e abbandonato.

Alcuni detenuti continuano a dire ai figli di trovarsi al lavoro persino nel corso dei colloqui di visita riservati ai parenti all'interno dell'istituto penitenziario. In questi casi le discrepanze di informazioni

diventano ancora più evidenti, perché il bambino non trova le motivazioni per spiegarsi come mai lui e la sua mamma sono sottoposti alla perquisizione prima di poter accedere ai locali dei colloqui. Inoltre la presenza di personale di polizia è del tutto contrastante con la realtà a lui propinata di andare a visitare il babbo in un normale luogo di lavoro. Per non dire dei toni con cui il personale di polizia può talvolta rivolgersi al genitore, impartendo ordini e comandi decisamente contrastanti col ruolo autorevole che il genitore dovrebbe conservare nei confronti dei figli. In tutti questi casi il bambino deve discernere l'ambivalenza tra l'autorevolezza del babbo e l'umiliazione che questo riceve quando gli sono rivolti ordini da parte del personale di polizia penitenziaria, a sua volta autorevole a causa della divisa che indossa.

Quand'anche il genitore riesca a comunicare al bambino che si trova in carcere, possono insorgere nel babbo delle difficoltà a spiegare i motivi per i quali è sottoposto a limitazione della libertà. Invece di ammettere di aver sbagliato e di dover rispondere dei propri errori, molti detenuti assumono posizioni ambivalenti, lasciando ancora una volta il bambino solo e indifeso di fronte la contraddizione dei messaggi. Una delle spiegazioni formulate dai detenuti richiama la sfortunata coincidenza di essersi trovati al posto sbagliato nel momento sbagliato, oppure di essere rimasto vittima di una serie di circostanze che hanno incastrato il babbo portandolo ingiustamente in carcere. In entrambi le spiegazioni il bambino deve confrontarsi con la possibilità di potersi trovare un giorno nella medesima circostanza, dovendosi quindi confrontare con un nuovo senso di paura e terrore di poter essere a sua volta ingiustamente arrestato.

La comunicazione che è proposta ai bambini può contenere anche messaggi diseducativi, quando la versione dei fatti è formulata incolpando i giudici e le forze dell'ordine. In questi casi c'è una completa rivoluzione delle responsabilità dei fatti, che può legittimare lo sviluppo di un pensiero antisociale.

### **La relazione discontinua tra i detenuti e i loro figli**

L'ingresso in carcere del detenuto comporta una serie di difficoltà a mantenere una costante relazione figlio-genitore. Negli Stati Uniti il 62% dei detenuti viene inserito in carceri che distano circa 160 km dal loro luogo di residenza (Mumola, 2000) e, poiché le strutture detentive per le donne sono meno numerose di quelle per uomini, la distanza aumenta fino a circa 260 km se il genitore incarcerato è la madre (Hagan & Coleman, 2001). La lontananza influenza negativamente la frequenza delle visite familiari e impone un onere finanziario supplementare a famiglie che hanno già gravi difficoltà economiche.

Nonostante le difficoltà, le madri detenute hanno maggiori contatti con i propri figli di quanti non ne abbiano i padri. Secondo il Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) quasi l'80% delle madri detenute ha contatti mensili con i propri figli e il 60% ha almeno un contatto settimanale. I padri, invece, hanno un contatto mensile nel 60% dei casi e solo il 40% ha un contatto settimanale con i propri figli (Mumola, 2000). Nella maggioranza dei casi il contatto avviene tramite telefono o lettere. Le visite in carcere sono scarse e più della metà di tutte le madri e il 57% di tutti i padri non ricevono mai una visita personale dai loro figli mentre sono in carcere.

La frequenza dei contatti diminuisce all'aumentare della lunghezza della pena e ciò causa un indebolimento dei legami familiari, che rende la successiva riunificazione ancora più complessa.

A causa della burocrazia, per i familiari può risultare molto complicato far fronte alle richieste da parte dell'amministrazione penitenziaria per poter accedere ai colloqui. La rigidità delle regole delle carceri spesso ostacolano gli sforzi compiuti al fine di mantenere i legami familiari. Per i familiari può essere difficile ottenere le informazioni sulle procedure di visita, che sono spesso lunghe e umilianti, e viene posta scarsa attenzione sull'impatto che tali procedure possono avere sui bambini che stanno andando a incontrare il proprio genitore. Inoltre, gli ostacoli ad accedere alle visite possono derivare dalle regole circa chi è autorizzato a incontrare un detenuto, infatti gli incontri sono consentiti solo ad alcuni selezionati membri della famiglia e non ad altri.

Anche i contatti telefonici sono sovente ostacolati dalla burocrazia e dai regolamenti delle carceri. Per esempio, quando un detenuto è trasferito da un carcere all'altro, l'istituto di accoglienza può effettuare nuove verifiche sulle telefonate da poter effettuare. In questi passaggi possono passare intere settimane, nel corso delle quali il detenuto deve produrre documenti che potrebbe anche non possedere, come per esempio lo stato di famiglia, oppure il contratto dell'utenza telefonica che intende contattare.

Un'altra limitazione nelle relazioni con i propri familiari è costituita dal numero limitato di telefonate a sua disposizione, secondo regolamenti studiati più per esigenze di sicurezza, che per la necessità di tenere i familiari in contatto.

Infine tutt'altro che marginale è anche in questo caso il tema delle risorse economiche disponibili al nucleo familiare. Infatti i costi telefonici vanno ad aggravare la già precaria situazione economica delle famiglie che si trovano nella difficile posizione di dover scegliere se limitare o interrompere le telefonate, indebolendo quindi il legame con il detenuto (Travis, 2005).

### **La manifestazione del disagio da parte dei figli dei detenuti**

Nei figli di detenuti si osservano sentimenti di rabbia, tristezza, depressione, ansia, stili di attaccamento insicuro e ambivalente e decremento del rendimento scolastico (Fritsch e Burkhead 1981).

Le ricerche evidenziano che il disagio scatenato dalla separazione dai genitori detenuti è paragonabile a ai sintomi del disturbo post-traumatico da stress (Ruchkin et al., 2007).

I bambini di detenuti sono stati spesso paragonati a minori che hanno subito la separazione dai genitori per diverse cause (morte, divorzio o allontanamento richiesto dai servizi sociali) in quanto la perdita dei genitori, benché per motivi diversi, può causare lo stesso tipo di effetti sui minori. I figli di detenuti riportano storie diverse da coloro che hanno perso un genitore per altre ragioni e questo probabilmente influenza in modo unico gli effetti dovuti all'assenza del familiare.

Se osserviamo le storie di vita di questi ragazzi e in particolare i traumi da loro vissuti, la ricerca evidenzia che i figli di detenuti hanno vissuto situazioni traumatiche prima dell'incarcerazione, a causa del comportamento antisociale messo in atto dal genitore, a cui successivamente si va ad aggiungere il trauma dovuto alla mancanza del genitore e, a volte, alcuni minori esperiscono un'ulteriore trauma in quanto sono stati testimoni involontari dell'arresto. Nella maggioranza dei casi, il minore si trova ad affrontare tale situazione di stress senza un adeguato supporto emotivo (Beckerman 1998).

Bocknek e Sanderson (2009) hanno effettuato una ricerca nel tentativo di evidenziare un'associazione tra l'assenza di un genitore a seguito della detenzione in carcere e la successiva manifestazione da parte dei figli di sintomi di disturbo post-traumatico da stress.

Lo studio ha fatto riferimento al quadro teorico della "Teoria della perdita ambigua", al fine di ottenere una valutazione più adeguata circa il tema complesso dell'incarcerazione di un genitore.

La "teoria della perdita ambigua" è un quadro teorico che può fornire un'utile spiegazione circa la complessa natura della detenzione genitoriale, quando l'ambiguità dei legami familiari portano i membri della famiglia ad una percezione incerta chi sia dentro o fuori la famiglia, oltre che di chi stia svolgendo ruoli e compiti all'interno del sistema familiare.

Dai risultati di questo studio è emerso che i bambini del campione hanno sperimentato alti livelli di stress e traumi, derivati dall'ambiente in cui sono vissuti e dalla separazione dal genitore detenuto. I bambini intervistati hanno riferito di sentirsi isolati e diversi dagli altri e, a causa di ciò, hanno riportato di sentirsi obbligati a non condividere le loro difficoltà con gli altri. Inoltre, hanno maggiori probabilità di sviluppare un comportamento di introversione sociale nelle situazioni fonte di stress, a causa della carenza del sostegno sociale necessario ad affrontare le proprie difficoltà e sofferenze (Boss, 2007).

Queste evidenze sono coerenti con i risultati ottenuti da altre ricerche, che hanno dimostrato che la relazione tra il trauma e il successivo decremento del funzionamento mentale del bambino può essere mediato dallo stress di tipo post-traumatico (E. L. Bocknek et al., 2009).

### **Conclusioni e istituzione di un Councelling Center per le famiglie dei detenuti**

Nel presente lavoro abbiamo evidenziato le criticità che caratterizzano le famiglie dei detenuti: a seguito della reclusione di un genitore insorgono 1) problemi economici con conseguenti difficoltà nell'acquisto di beni di prima necessità oltre che nell'accesso a percorsi formativi.-ducativi-ricreativi; 2) difficoltà di ristrutturazione delle relazioni infrafamiliari e della conseguente riformulazione dei ruoli genitoriali, con possibili depauperamento della del modello educativo proposto; 3) ambivalenza nella qualità comunicativa impiegata per giustificare l'assenza del padre; 4) disagio psicologico nei bambini con manifestazione di sintomi di ansia e ritiro sociale.

L'esperienza professionale ci consente di confrontarci quotidianamente con servizi deputati ora all'assistenza al detenuto, ora al sostegno territoriale offerto alle famiglie svantaggiate. Sembra che i servizi socio-sanitari conservino una visione scotomizzata della società, dimenticando che l'istituzione penitenziaria è parte integrante di una collettività non solo perché ospita persone destinate ad affrontare un percorso di integrazione sociale, ma anche perché la persona detenuta ha legami familiari che necessitano la necessaria attenzione.

Preme sottolineare che la cura dei legami familiari assume la duplice funzione di aiutare sia la persona sottoposta alla limitazione della libertà personale, sia il nucleo familiare che rimane fuori dal carcere. Infatti i detenuti che dispongono di una famiglia, manifestano la minore probabilità di commettere nuovi reati quando potranno finalmente tornare in possesso della libertà personale. D'altra parte, il sostegno alle famiglie può attenuare i disagi evidenziati nel presente studio.

Alla luce di tutte queste considerazioni abbiamo strutturato un servizio di sostegno psicologico orientato alle famiglie dei detenuti. Una psicologa ha dato la disponibilità ad accogliere i familiari in una stanza messa a disposizione dal Comune di Prato in orari prestabiliti, divulgati per mezzo della stampa locale. Tutti gli operatori penitenziari della Casa Circondariale di Prato sono stati informati dell'iniziativa, in modo da divulgare il servizio all'intera popolazione ospitata in carcere.

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Preme sottolineare che la cura dei legami familiari assume la duplice funzione di aiutare sia la persona sottoposta alla limitazione della libertà personale, sia il nucleo familiare che rimane fuori dal carcere. Infatti i detenuti che dispongono di una famiglia, manifestano la minore probabilità di commettere nuovi reati quando potranno finalmente tornare in possesso della libertà personale. D'altra parte, il sostegno alle famiglie può attenuare i disagi evidenziati nel presente studio.

Alla luce di tutte queste considerazioni abbiamo strutturato un servizio di sostegno psicologico orientato alle famiglie dei detenuti ospitati nella Casa Circondariale di Prato. Una psicologa ha dato la disponibilità ad accogliere i familiari in una stanza messa a disposizione dal Comune di Prato in orari prestabiliti, divulgati per mezzo della stampa locale. Tutti gli operatori penitenziari della Casa

Circondariale di Prato sono stati informati dell'iniziativa, in modo da divulgare il servizio all'intera popolazione ospitata in carcere. Il servizio ha l'obiettivo di accogliere le famiglie dei detenuti. Svolto un primo colloquio di analisi della domanda, il professionista valuta quali interventi possono essere più idonei per aiutare il nucleo familiare. Qualora siano necessari interventi o percorsi formativi offerti dal privato-sociale, saranno opportunamente indicate le risorse a cui la famiglia potrà liberamente accedere. "Non dimentichiamole" si trova volutamente in un edificio in cui convergono molte delle iniziative promosse dal privato e dalle istituzioni sociali presenti sul territorio pratese. Tale struttura si addice sia allo specifico progetto che ci vede coinvolti, sia alle altre numerose iniziative gratuite di promozione sociale e culturale che vogliono integrare quelle fasce di persone considerate più emarginate.

Oltre all'ambiente estremamente confortevole che facilita l'utente, nella sede di "Non Dimentichiamole" sono abbandonate quelle pratiche burocratiche a cui spesso il cittadino straniero o precario deve sottoporsi. Qui si cerca di dare ascolto e spazio alla Persona, intesa nella sua pienezza. Molte donne straniere hanno l'opportunità di esprimere la loro cultura senza sentirsi diverse, libere dai pregiudizi, attraverso corsi di lingua e intercultura. Vi sono associazioni che offrono corsi di informatica, di inglese e altre che organizzano pro-bono seminari manuali (cucito, pittura, giardinaggio ecc..) per incentivare l'integrazione lavorativa a chi ne ha più bisogno. Ogni attività tiene conto degli orari più idonei per parteciparvi ed è sensibile alle diverse esigenze, culture, religioni. Viene dato ampio spazio ai bambini, sia con attività contemporanee ai corsi frequentati dai genitori sia attraverso l'assistenza gratuita "Baby sitting" durante i colloqui per le madri. Tale assistenza verso i minori risulta particolarmente efficace se il nucleo familiare, e nel nostro caso le moglie dei detenuti, manifestano l'esigenza di un percorso psicologico che il servizio "Non dimentichiamole" si presta ad offrire gratuitamente attraverso un ciclo di incontri.

Poiché il progetto "Non Dimentichiamole" ha avuto esordio solo un mese fa (1 febbraio 2012), non abbiamo ancora dati disponibili sull'attività. Su un piano puramente qualitativo possiamo dire che la risposta da parte della comunità presente sul territorio al servizio "Non Dimentichiamole" è stata immediata. Possiamo infatti evidenziare che alcune persone si sono avvicinate al nostro servizio confermando le difficoltà già descritte da parte di famiglie i cui membri sono costretti in carcere. Ci siamo accorti che le donne hanno gradito la possibilità di essere ascoltate in un setting privo di minacce, perchè la qualità dell'ascolto empatico è tesa a garantire l'assenza di un giudizio o di un consiglio che corre il rischio di svalutare i vissuti soggettivi. Il supporto del professionista affiancato agli altri servizi presenti sul territorio facilita l'integrazione della persona attraverso un vero e proprio circuito di iniziative a disposizione del cittadino. Ci riserviamo di pubblicare prossimamente dati più articolati sull'iniziativa "Non dimentichiamole"

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## Mamme in attesa, una costruzione condivisa

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### Introduzione

Negli ultimi decenni una sempre maggiore e specifica attenzione è stata posta su quel tempo nella vita di una donna che precede e segue il parto; tuttavia, quest'attenzione ha in genere riguardato aspetti prevalentemente medici e/o inerenti il cambiamento fisico. Abbondano, ad esempio, i corsi pre-parto, condotti da personale medico e spesso organizzati all'interno delle stesse strutture ospedaliere. L'obiettivo degli interventi è, nella maggior parte dei casi, quello di dare informazioni sui disturbi tipici della gravidanza - come mal di schiena, gonfiore alle gambe e aumento eccessivo di peso - e preparare le future mamme al travaglio, al "dolore" fisico. Eppure, la nascita non determina soltanto cambiamenti fisici, ma comporta una modifica soggettiva dei processi cognitivi ed emozionali che riguardano la percezione del sé di una donna. Spesso queste modifiche sono accompagnate da malesseri o disagi più o meno gravi: dai momenti di scoraggiamento e di demoralizzazione, a veri e propri disturbi depressivi maggiori, cui almeno una donna su dieci va incontro dopo il parto (Milgrom et al., 2003). Elementi contestuali di vario tipo possono rappresentare motivi per non chiedere aiuto; pensiamo alle aspettative sociali e familiari sul ruolo materno, alla specifica condizione socio-culturale, al clima di coppia, alla disponibilità emotiva della donna, ma anche alla disinformazione o alla mancanza di una rete di supporto sociale. Quali conseguenze per il nascituro e la creazione della relazione mamma-bambino?

### Cornice Teorica

È un dato ormai noto che le vicende occorse durante le prime relazioni significative nella vita di un essere umano contribuiscono a costituire un determinato stile di attaccamento, per cui la qualità dell'esperienza vissuta definisce la sicurezza o meno dell'attaccamento in base alla sensibilità e disponibilità del caregiver (Bowlby, 1976); crescendo, lo stile di attaccamento diviene un aspetto della personalità e un modello relazionale per i futuri rapporti. La stessa qualità della regolazione affettiva (Tronick, 2008) è legata alle relazioni umane che intessiamo nei primi tempi della nostra vita; infatti, la capacità del bambino di riconoscere le proprie emozioni, fondamentale per l'istituzione di un'adeguata "comunicazione intrapsichica" con i propri affetti, appare, secondo Bowlby (1988), profondamente influenzata dal tipo di "accessibilità" emotiva sperimentata nei confronti del caregiver durante la prima infanzia. Già Spitz (1960) segnalava come l'impossibilità di accedere alla madre e alla sua disponibilità emotiva potesse attivare nel bambino comportamenti di tipo difensivo, determinando la struttura del suo carattere individuale. Cassidy (1988) articola queste tesi, concependo i pattern di attaccamento come specifici stili di comunicazione e regolazione emotiva che il bambino costruisce in relazione alle figure di attaccamento, adattandosi alla disponibilità emotiva dimostrata da queste ultime. In questa prospettiva, l'attaccamento sicuro



corrisponde alla capacità del bambino di comunicare apertamente ogni emozione, positiva e negativa, a un caregiver percepito come emotivamente disponibile, mentre gli altri tipi di attaccamento implicano una restrizione di tale capacità, in modi differenti e specifici, fino al caso dell'attaccamento disorganizzato, in cui sono presenti comportamenti contraddittori, stereotipie, movimenti asimmetrici, congelamento o immobilità nella riunione col caregiver.

Appare quindi evidente, per il benessere psicologico del bambino, la cruciale importanza della qualità della relazione con la madre sin dai primissimi tempi di vita. Tuttavia, nella gravidanza e nella successiva maternità, non si gioca unicamente la relazione di interdipendenza reciproca tra mamma e bambino. In questo periodo, infatti, un'altra relazione – meno visibile - è in atto: quella della neo-mamma con la propria madre. Nella gravidanza e nella sua esperienza di madre, la donna rivive le proprie esperienze infantili, riportando in scena la sua figura materna attraverso la drammatizzazione di incontri, confronti o scontri. L'eredità ricevuta dalla propria madre nel suo primo legame con lei influisce sullo stesso stile di accudimento che realizzerà con il suo bambino (Ainsworth *et al.*, 1978). Descrivere e comprendere le complesse dinamiche interpersonali che gravitano attorno alla gravidanza è possibile, quindi, soltanto tenendo in considerazione anche le dinamiche intrapsichiche e il dialogo interiore della futura mamma. L'Analisi Transazionale (Berne, 1971) offre un quadro teorico e un sistema di interventi utili ad elaborare una risposta a questa complessità, attraverso una teoria della personalità basata sui concetti di "Stati dell'io" e di "Copione", per cui i primi forniscono un quadro di come la persona è strutturata e il secondo descrive come gli attuali modelli di comportamento si originino nell'infanzia. Proprio partendo dal quadro interpretativo degli Stati dell'io di Berne, si pone qui l'accento sul dialogo interno tra Bambino e Genitore, e su quello esterno tra madre e genitore storico da un lato, madre e bambino immaginato - poi reale -, dall'altro. L' "attesa dell'attesa" può diventare, se adeguatamente supportato, un percorso di rivisitazione del proprio dialogo interiore e del proprio ruolo di figlia e futura mamma. La capacità di ricostruire e ampliare le modalità di questi dialoghi, infatti, prelude la riconciliazione tra le parti di sé, oltre che una nascita vissuta in modo autentico e libera da auto-inganni, portatrice di esperienze e sentimenti vivificanti sia per la neo-mamma che per il bambino.

Ciascun percorso può essere progettato seguendo molteplici traiettorie di realizzazione, in base agli obiettivi e al contesto. In questo caso si è scelto di privilegiare un percorso di gruppo ispirato al principio dell'*integrazione*: integrazione tra strumenti, tecniche e culture differenti, con l'obiettivo di far leva sulla diversità come specchio delle soggettività in gioco e come fonte di arricchimento reciproco. In particolar modo, la scelta di integrare gli incontri di persona con l'uso delle tecnologie segue una duplice riflessione:

- l'uso delle tecnologie nei contesti educativi non costituisce più una novità, ma, anzi, poggia su una tradizione sufficientemente lunga e consolidata. In particolare, nel panorama dei differenti modelli pedagogici, l'approccio socio-costruttivista sembra essere, attualmente, quello che meglio coniuga tecnologie e contesti educativi (Salmon, 2000; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2003). L'obiettivo è quello di promuovere il ruolo attivo di tutti i membri del gruppo, ispirandosi sia alla metafora della "partecipazione" (Sfard, 1998) – per cui si apprende partecipando ad un gruppo, un'attività, una comunità – che a quella della "costruzione" – per cui la conoscenza non è data a priori, ma costruita nell'interazione -. In

questo quadro, le tecnologie rappresentano artefatti che, proprio come i libri, i banchi e le penne, arricchiscono l'ambiente didattico, e permettono nuove esperienze di apprendimento;

- uno degli sviluppi più significativi e recenti della riflessione sull'interculturalità si lega proprio al rapporto tra identità e tecnologie in rete. La nozione di identità, così centrale nella riflessione filosofica e interculturale, subisce ora numerose sollecitazioni. Anche l'organizzazione delle comunità e delle reti è da ripensare in seguito al passaggio alle nuove forme di interazione del Web 2.0. La stessa antropologia (Van Binsbergen, 2003) mostra come l'incidenza dei nuovi media sulle identità, aperte al globale e riarticolate nel locale, non sia una peculiarità delle sole economie avanzate, ma rappresenti un punto di particolare mobilitazione di realtà come quelle africane o asiatiche.

## Il percorso

Il counselling educativo a indirizzo Analitico Transazionale

*Mamme in attesa, una costruzione condivisa* è un percorso di counselling educativo per mamme in attesa ad indirizzo Analitico Transazionale; come tale, si svolge all'interno di una relazione contrattuale che ha l'obiettivo di far *“sviluppare consapevolezza, opzioni e capacità di gestione dei problemi e dello sviluppo personale nella vita quotidiana, attraverso l'accrescere dei propri punti di forza e risorse”* (EATA, 1995). In queste parole vediamo riassunte le fondamenta dell'Analisi Transazionale: reciprocità, concretezza, okness, cambiamento. Partendo da queste, il counsellor agisce per valorizzare le risorse e al contempo offrire un modello funzionale di Adulto, Bambino e Genitore al cliente o gruppo di clienti. Dotato di un atteggiamento *“Io sono OK-Tu sei OK”*, l'educatore AT:

- instaura una relazione di rispetto reciproco che modella il prendersi cura, l'empatia, la congruenza, il calore e l'apertura, e che promuove il potenziamento delle risorse e l'autonomia;
- si comporta in maniera rispettosa verso se stesso e gli altri, mostrando sensibilità per i diversi quadri di riferimento, le culture e norme sociali;
- offre un ascolto attento e aperto, che sa cogliere il contenuto psicologico della comunicazione (il cosiddetto pensiero marziano), ma anche un dialogo che sa alternare parole e silenzi, veicolando permessi e protezioni capaci di liberare energie e intuizioni;
- attiva tutti gli Stati dell'Io in modo fluido e dinamico: un Adulto che osserva, un Bambino empatico ed intuitivo, un Genitore che modella attraverso norme e protezione. In questo senso, la consapevolezza e l'esserci nel *qui e ora* sono tanto importanti quanto le tecniche.

Obiettivi e destinatari

Il percorso qui descritto nasce come occasione di prevenzione, ma soprattutto di promozione del benessere psicologico delle future mamme e, indirettamente, di supporto all'instaurarsi di un legame di attaccamento sicuro. Si tratta di un cammino condiviso nel gruppo, alla scoperta della

gravidanza intesa come possibilità di esplorare e riconoscere i propri sentimenti, con specifica attenzione al Genitore interiore e al genitore che si sta per diventare.

Gli obiettivi specifici del percorso sono:

- facilitare l'esplorazione condivisa di sentimenti, comportamenti e pensieri riguardanti la gravidanza, stimolando il riconoscimento dei propri bisogni e l'espressione delle proprie emozioni mentre si 'guadagna' consapevolezza (Bowlby, 1988) rispetto alla provenienza dei contenuti (pensieri, sentimenti e azioni) erroneamente ritenuti Adulti;
- favorire la riconciliazione con se stesse e i propri sentimenti, rendendosi disponibili al cambiamento – non solo corporeo – in atto.

Le destinatarie del percorso sono mamme italiane e straniere residenti nella Provincia di Roma che aderiscono al percorso volontariamente. Nel corso degli incontri, infatti, particolare attenzione verrà dedicata al tema dell'integrazione multiculturale come possibilità di uno spazio condiviso e allargato in cui costruire e realizzare la propria maternità.

### Modalità

Il percorso è strutturato in due fasi:

- la gravidanza;
- la maternità.

Ogni fase prevede 10 incontri di gruppo con cadenza mensile della durata di 4 ore. Tra un incontro e l'altro, le partecipanti potranno accedere liberamente ad un forum online riservato alle mamme del progetto in cui prendere parte a discussioni strutturate e monitorate dal counsellor. In questo modo, ogni mamma potrà gestire i tempi di collegamento in base ai propri bisogni specifici.

### Metodologia

Attraverso una modalità che integra momenti teorici con momenti applicativi, le future mamme da un lato riceveranno informazioni rispetto al momento vissuto e legate al tema dei cambiamenti in corso, delle fantasie nutrite, del riconoscimento dei propri sentimenti; dall'altro, avranno a disposizione uno spazio protetto in cui poter esprimere le proprie paure e i propri bisogni, rileggendo il dialogo interiore alla luce del confronto col gruppo.

Esercitazioni e momenti formativi in gruppo contribuiranno alla costruzione di una rete di supporto in cui ciascuna donna, nel rispetto e nella ricchezza offerta dalle diverse culture d'origine, potrà scoprire e costruire la propria maternità.

I forum di discussione online saranno articolati attorno ad attività di feedback reciproco e interventi di rilettura delle transazioni, finalizzate a promuovere nuovi apprendimenti e la consapevolezza sui propri schemi ripetitivi. La comunicazione mediata dal computer, infatti, si presta in modo favorevole ad una riflessione condivisa sul modo in cui parole ed espressioni vengono usate per portare avanti modalità comportamentali antiche anche quando non sono più funzionali. Allo stesso modo, attraverso le sue risposte, il counsellor potrà offrire esempi "sani" di feedback, basati su accoglienza, riconoscimento e paritarietà, invitando implicitamente le partecipanti a rispecchiare quella modalità di comunicazione, sia nel forum che nei propri dialoghi intrapsichici ed interpersonali.

Nella circolarità del gruppo si favoriranno apprendimenti di nuovi comportamenti che produrranno cambiamenti concreti e, viceversa, ogni cambiamento favorirà successivi apprendimenti (Montuschi, 1988).

Le tecniche

Di seguito si riportano alcune delle principali tecniche utilizzate durante il percorso. Ciascuna tecnica verrà utilizzata dopo una fase di introduzione teorica sui temi ad essa connessi e sarà seguita da una discussione di restituzione finale.

- a) L'egogramma di Dusay (1977) è uno strumento particolarmente adatto nei primissimi incontri di conoscenza del gruppo e, contemporaneamente, delle teorie AT. Infatti, con estrema chiarezza e semplicità, esso permette di osservare i propri Stati dell'Io da un punto di vista funzionale e di dichiarare e dichiararsi quali cambiamenti si vogliono apportare. Ad esempio, una mamma potrà rendersi conto di usare molto spesso parole e atteggiamenti del suo Genitore Critico e decidere, invece, di voler energizzare un Genitore Protettivo che usa parole di incoraggiamento e cura autentiche. L'egogramma è un modo intuitivo di comprendere come muoviamo la nostra energia interiore e dove eventualmente la blocchiamo; si presta, inoltre, molto bene ad esercizi in gruppo basati sul feedback e l'osservazione reciproca, come tale andando a supportare senso di comunità e appartenenza (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).
- b) Per la comprensione dei pattern di comportamento ripetitivi e disfunzionali, risulta molto utile l'uso dei diagrammi degli Stati dell'Io con cui è possibile visualizzare in modo immediato le transazioni e da lì individuare, ad esempio i giochi. L'analisi dei giochi può essere effettuata anche attraverso il Triangolo Drammatico o Triangolo di Karpman (Karpman, 1968), uno strumento semplice e potente. I ruoli rappresentati (Vittima, Persecutore e Salvatore) permettono di evidenziare come i comportamenti agiti nel presente siano risposte al *lì e allora* piuttosto che al *qui e ora*; in quanto tali essi ripropongono vecchie decisioni di copione. Il triangolo illustra chiaramente la dinamica relazionale del gioco e descrive come, ogni volta che una persona gioca, essa parte da uno dei 3 ruoli per poi passare ad un altro nel momento dello Scambio dei ruoli nel gioco (Berne, 1964).
- c) L'intervento principale in un percorso di counselling Analitico Transazionale - che molto spesso coincide anche con l'obiettivo - è la decontaminazione dell'Adulto (A2) (Berne, 1966) dai contenuti e processi inconsapevoli del Genitore e del Bambino; il risultato è che la persona si riappropria delle sue decisioni, riconoscendo come non congruenti e non utili per la situazione presente comportamenti, pensieri e sentimenti che provengono dal *lì e allora* e non sono pertanto funzionali nel *qui e ora*. Proprio per questo, molto spesso la decontaminazione svela antichi conflitti irrisolti tra gli Stati dell'Io, tecnicamente definiti *impasse*, ovvero, secondo la definizione dei Goulding (1983), "*un punto in cui si incontrano due o più forze opposte, un blocco*". In tutti i casi, si tratta di un conflitto derivato dalle decisioni di sopravvivenza prese dall'A1 in epoca arcaica e che oggi non sono più congruenti coi bisogni e le risorse del presente. Molteplici tecniche possono essere utilizzate per favorire la decontaminazione; tra queste, in un setting di counselling gruppale, si rivela utile la tecnica delle sedie, efficace nel separare

pensieri, sentimenti e comportamenti del cliente da quelli altrui; le sedie gestaltiche possono essere due (Perls, 1969) o più (Stunz, 1973), a seconda dei casi.

- d) In tema di passività e ripetitività copionale, si farà ricorso alla matrice di Svalutazione (Schiff, 1975), ovvero una matrice che concretamente si compone di colonne e righe; nelle colonne troviamo Stimoli, Problemi, Opzioni, e nelle righe Esistenza, Importanza, Possibilità di cambiamento, Capacità personali. Procedendo secondo un ordine prestabilito dagli Schiff, quindi a partire dall'Esistenza degli Stimoli, si può scoprire in quale area avviene la Svalutazione. Una volta individuata, si lavora per rimuoverla. Per esempio, la casella Esistenza degli Stimoli si compila descrivendo ciò che si prova: tristezza, colpa, rabbia, rancore, eccetera; una mamma potrà scoprire di provare rabbia per la sua gravidanza, ma di svalutare il modo in cui il suo corpo la vive. Dalla consapevolezza dello stimolo, allora, si passerà ad identificare l'Importanza dello stesso e il modo in cui viene vissuto o sentito, lavorando così anche sulla conoscenza e consapevolezza del proprio corpo.
- e) Tecniche specifiche verranno impiegate per intervenire sul Sistema Ricatto, ovvero quel *“sistema distorto che si autorinforza, di sentimenti, pensieri ed azioni, mantenuto da individui che vivono all'interno del copione”* (Erskine & Zalckman, 1979), ovvero un *“sistema unitario in cui le parti interagiscono e si rinforzano reciprocamente”* (Montuschi, 1984). Secondo Montuschi, proprio perché tale, il sistema può essere impiegato come rappresentazione grafica e reale della situazione su cui lavorare concretamente, osservando dall'esterno i 3 blocchi. *“La riflessione logica”* infatti *“produce una forte reazione emotiva che può essere utilizzata per ‘disinnescare l’elastico’ al sentimento copione”*. A conclusione dell'intervento, dopo aver *“smascherato”* il sistema ricatto, ecco che il cliente può procedere a costruire il suo personale *“sistema non-ricatto”*, impiegando questa volta le sue energie in modo costruttivo, piuttosto che ripetitivo-copionale.
- f) L'uso delle fantasie guidate viene inserito all'interno del percorso con l'obiettivo di favorire l'esplorazione di sentimenti limitanti o vissuti con senso di colpa e vergogna. A titolo esemplificativo, si riportano alcuni stimoli per lo svolgimento di esercizi in gruppo con le relative finalità:
- *“Immaginate la nascita del vostro bambino e il momento in cui lo vedete: che cosa dite, che cosa sentite”*. Obiettivo: esplorazione delle fantasie rispetto al bambino immaginato e dei sentimenti rispetto al bambino reale
  - *“Immaginate di parlare con voi stesse da bambine e poi coi vostri genitori della vostra gravidanza: cosa dite”*. Obiettivo: stimolare la consapevolezza del dialogo interno e come questo poi influenzi il dialogo esterno
- g) Il role playing analogamente alla tecnica della sedia, favorisce l'immedesimazione col punto di vista altrui, empatia e ascolto, oltre che una diversa prospettiva da cui guardare se stessi e il proprio *“problema”*, stimolando problem solving e creatività. In particolar modo, nel percorso verranno proposte attività di role playing, o role taking online (Sansone, 2010, 2011). Il role taking nei contesti didattici implica l'assunzione da parte dei partecipanti di una funzione o

compito precisi. A fronte di questa assunzione, le ricerche mostrano come sia possibile supportare un'effettiva presa di responsabilità, il conseguimento di un'impresa condivisa (Wenger, 1998) e, infine, la partecipazione attiva al proprio processo di apprendimento. I discenti che sperimentano un ruolo sono coinvolti sia emotivamente che cognitivamente, in quanto comprendono che le loro azioni non chiamano in causa mere abilità, ma anche la rappresentazione del proprio Sé e il modo in cui verranno percepiti dall'altro. Questo processo li stimola a mettersi in discussione e a comportarsi in modi differenti da come farebbero normalmente; l'impatto del role taking può essere perciò osservato anche a livello di nuovi posizionamenti identitari (Hermans, 2004). Infine, il role taking nei web-forum, essendo caratterizzato dall'asincronia degli interventi, ovvero da una dilazione temporale tra il messaggio emesso e la risposta, permette l'elaborazione cognitiva e sociale delle informazioni derivanti dall'assunzione del ruolo (Fannon, 2005).

Nei forum di discussione online, inoltre, verranno presentati periodicamente spunti di discussione monitorati dal counsellor che rileggerà le transazioni e offrirà feedback di chiarificazione e restituzione delle dinamiche in atto. Di seguito alcuni esempi di stimoli:

- Durante la gravidanza, quali cose dite a vostro marito e quali invece tenete per voi? Obiettivo: esplorazione delle aree di condivisione e/o competizione.
- Che cosa avete provato quando avete saputo di essere incinta? Obiettivo: riconoscimento e accettazione dei sentimenti, verifica della loro congruenza.

A corredo di queste tecniche e contenuti specifici, il counsellor adotterà strategie e metodi che prevedono:

- contratti con il gruppo per sostenere il processo di apprendimento, includendo l'accordo o la negoziazione delle regole di base;
- l'integrazione e l'utilizzo dei concetti AT nella pratica per potenziare negli studenti la comprensione del proprio comportamento;
- carezze, cooperazione e rispetto dei membri del gruppo, con lo scopo di rafforzare motivazione e creatività nella promozione della salute e dell'autonomia;
- riconoscimento e risposta appropriata a giochi, svalutazioni, transazioni incrociate e ulteriori, inviti alla simbiosi;
- consapevolezza del copione culturale e identificazione di come esso possa influenzare il contenuto e il processo dell'insegnamento e dell'apprendimento.

## Conclusioni

Il lavoro qui presentato illustra e descrive obiettivi, struttura e metodi di un percorso di counselling educativo a indirizzo Analitico Transazionale destinato a mamme in attesa, italiane e straniere. Il percorso mira a promuovere il benessere psicologico della coppia mamma-bambino attraverso un cammino di gruppo strutturato in incontri di persona intervallati da discussioni online. Attraverso l'uso di specifiche tecniche Analitico Transazionali, le mamme verranno affiancate nell'esplorazione

dei propri sentimenti, bisogni e comportamenti legati al momento che vivono, al fine di promuovere un dialogo interiore sereno e relazioni esterne soddisfacenti, fino a quella col bambino in arrivo.

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## MINORI MIGRANTI: PRIMA RACCOLTA DATI E RIFLESSIONI OPERATIVE

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### INTRODUZIONE

L'Unità Operativa Complessa Materno Infantile Età Evolutiva e Famiglia, Neuropsichiatria Infantile D1 dell'Azienda ULSS20 di Verona (in seguito UOC) si rivolge a pazienti d'età compresa tra 0 e 18 anni che presentano disagi e/o patologie di tipo neurologico, psichiatrico, psicologico e cognitivo.

L'UOC è una struttura sovradistrettuale, quindi opera sui 4 distretti socio sanitari (in seguito distretti) dell'ULSS20; al suo interno svolgono la loro attività equipe multiprofessionali secondo un modello clinico assistenziale per aree di competenza.

Il territorio dell'ULSS 20 (comprendente 36 comuni e diviso in 4 distretti) si estende su un'area di 1110,665 km quadrati, la più vasta della Regione Veneto, e accoglie una popolazione di 474150 unità di cui 80758 minori (dati istat a gennaio 2011). La fisionomia del territorio e della popolazione appare caratterizzata da diversi fenomeni:

- profonda diversità geografica del territorio complessivamente inteso, che si snoda dalla pianura fino alle zone montane e che incide significativamente nei distretti sociosanitari n.3 e n.4;
- intensa urbanizzazione dei distretti n.1 e n.2 dovuta principalmente alla presenza di Verona Comune capoluogo di provincia e dei comuni limitrofi in forte espansione;
- generale crescita demografica della popolazione residente, soprattutto nel distretto n.3.

Tale contesto negli ultimi dieci anni ha inoltre subito una forte immigrazione caratterizzata dalla presenza di una popolazione eterogenea per aree di provenienza, background culturale, status socioeconomico e caratteristiche del processo migratorio.

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L'insieme di questi fattori ha portato ad un'importante variabilità clinica e sociale dell'utenza afferente al Servizio.

Ci troviamo così, in particolar modo nei confronti della popolazione migrante, a rispondere ad una domanda di cura di difficile codificazione che richiede una riflessione sull'evento migratorio e sulle caratteristiche culturali del migrante facendo luce sulla natura e sulle entità oggettive e soggettive del suo disagio.

Dal 2005 al 2011 è stata attivata, all'interno dell'UOC, un'equipe multiprofessionale rivolta a minori e famiglie migranti con particolare attenzione a quelle che presentavano un'evidente problematica relativa all'immigrazione (trauma migratorio).

Dal gennaio 2012 si è costituito un *Gruppo di lavoro sulle tematiche migratorie* il cui obiettivo generale è quello di rispondere in modo efficace ai bisogni di cura dei minori migranti e delle loro famiglie che si rivolgono al Servizio, ricercando tecniche di valutazione e strumenti di intervento idonei a favorire la corretta diagnosi e cura.

Al fine di definire oggettivamente e confermare la necessità di occuparsi in maniera specifica della popolazione migrante si è condotta una prima raccolta dati di accesso al Servizio dei minori migranti per gli anni 2010-2011 analizzando alcune caratteristiche specifiche di tale popolazione.

Il presente studio si propone di presentare alcune riflessioni e modalità operative sviluppate a partire dalla nostra esperienza con le famiglie migranti anche nell'ottica di un confronto con altri servizi ed istituzioni che si trovano ad affrontare situazioni analoghe e con le quali potrebbero nascere modalità operative comuni.

## **METODI**

Lo studio consiste in un'indagine osservazionale trasversale retrospettiva relativa agli anni 2010 e 2011.

Si prendono in considerazione il numero di primi accessi al Servizio di minori migranti rispetto al numero totale di nuove visite; i dati sono raccolti mediante sistema di rilevazione informatica dell'UOC ed intervista diretta ai neuropsichiatri e agli psicologi in servizio negli anni indicati. Non sono stati calcolati i primi colloqui per cambio operatore (falsi primi utenti) e gli utenti che hanno già avuto un primo accesso nel corso dei tre anni precedenti. Inoltre non sono conteggiati i minori migranti che si rivolgono per un primo accesso al Centro Diagnosi, Cura Ricerca Autismo, struttura che fa parte dell'UOC.

I dati si riferiscono alle afferenze dell'intera UOC, servizio sovradistrettuale dell'ULSS20 che si articola nei distretti socio sanitari 1 – 2 – 3 - 4.

Abbiamo scelto di analizzare i dati relativi ai distretti 1, 2, 3 separatamente da quelli del distretto 4 per le diversità relative alle caratteristiche geografiche e socio-culturali dei due territori e per la presenza nel distretto 4 dell'ospedale ULSS di S.

Bonifacio che comporta un maggior afflusso alla nostra UOC di bambini in età neonatale.

Ci sembra inoltre importante evidenziare che nel territorio dell'ULSS20 operano altri Servizi rivolti a minori con problematiche neuropsichiatriche (l'U.O. di Neuropsichiatria Infantile dell'Azienda Ospedaliera Integrata di Verona, il Centro Polifunzionale Don Calabria, il Centro Regionale Specializzato per i Disturbi Apprendimento).

Di ogni utente migrante (si arruolano minori di entrambi e/o un genitore migrante, nati o meno in Italia e bambini di adozione internazionale), si sono valutati:

- età
- provenienza (divisa in macroaree geografiche: Europa, America, Africa, Asia)
- motivo dell'accesso/diagnosi

Si è quindi cercato di analizzare alcune caratteristiche specifiche della popolazione migrante afferente.

Le analisi statistiche utilizzate per l'interpretazione dei dati sono puramente di tipo descrittivo.

## **RISULTATI**

Nell'anno 2010, prendendo in considerazione le nuove richieste effettuate nelle sedi dell'UOC dei distretti 1, 2, 3, 4, si sono rivolti per la prima volta al Servizio 895 minori di cui 202 migranti pari al 22,6% dei nuovi accessi.

Nel 2011 i primi accessi sono stati 916 di cui 237 minori migranti pari al 25,8% del totale.

### **Distretti 1,2,3**

Nell'anno 2010, per quanto riguarda i Distretti 1,2,3 l'UOC ha seguito per la prima volta 504 utenti corrispondenti allo 0,88% della popolazione di minori presenti nel territorio di competenza (56768 unità a gennaio 2010).

I minori stranieri presenti nei distretti 1,2,3 nel 2010 erano 9201 corrispondenti al 16,2% della popolazione target dell'UOC.

I minori stranieri visti per la prima volta presso l'UOC nell'anno 2010 sono stati 115 che corrispondono al 22,8% dei nuovi accessi. Risulta quindi evidente come tra gli utenti della nostra struttura i migranti rappresentino una percentuale maggiore rispetto alla loro prevalenza nella popolazione dei minori nei distretti 1, 2, 3.

Similmente nel 2011, l'UOC ha seguito per la prima volta nel territorio dei distretti 1, 2, 3, 476 utenti corrispondenti allo 0.83% della popolazione di minori (57062 unità a gennaio 2011).

I minori stranieri presenti nei distretti 1,2,3 erano 9612 che corrispondevano al 16,8% della popolazione target dell'UOC; di questi i minori stranieri visti per la prima volta all'UOC sono stati 123 corrispondenti al 25,8% del totale. E' quindi evidente come i migranti afferenti al Servizio rappresentino una percentuale maggiore rispetto alla loro prevalenza all'interno della popolazione dei minori nei tre distretti e come vi sia stato un aumento percentuale di nuovi accessi di questa popolazione al Servizio rispetto all'anno precedente.

I dati relativi all'età al momento della richiesta di primo colloquio, all'area di provenienza ed al motivo di invio negli anni 2010 e 2011 sono così rappresentati:

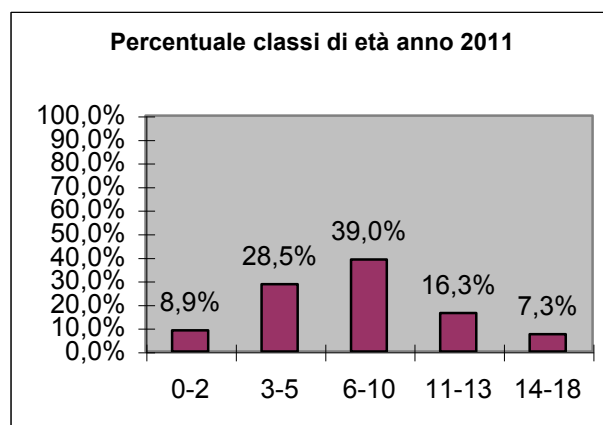
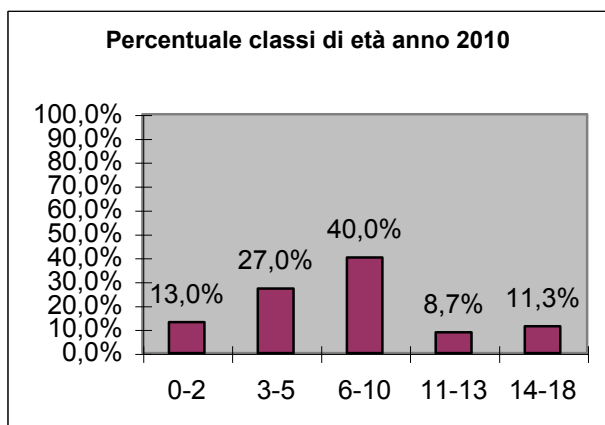
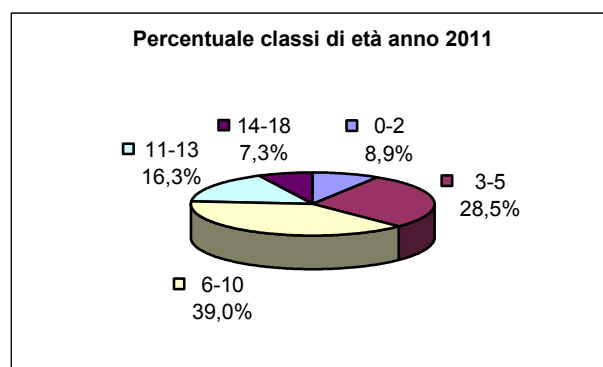
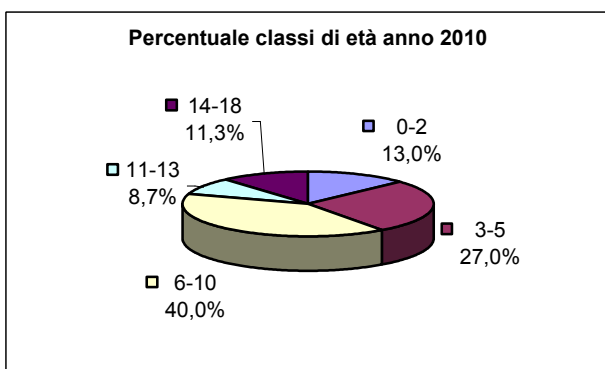
Età di accesso

anno 2010

- 0 – 2 anni (15 pz pari 13,0%)
- 3 - 5 anni (31 pz pari 27,0%)
- 6 – 10 anni (46 pz pari 40,0%)
- 11 – 13 anni (10 pz pari 8,7%)
- 14 – 18 anni (13 pz pari 11,3%)

anno 2011

- 0 – 2 anni (11 pz pari 8,9%)
- 3 - 5 anni (35 pz pari 28,5%)
- 6 – 10 anni (48 pz pari 39,0%)
- 11 – 13 anni (20 pz pari 16,3%)
- 14 – 18 anni (9 pz pari 7,3%)



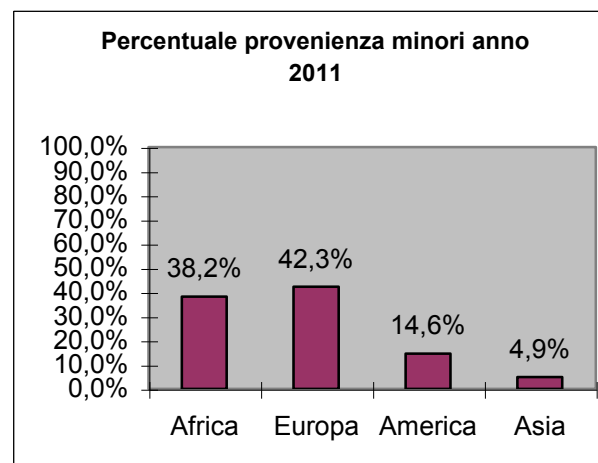
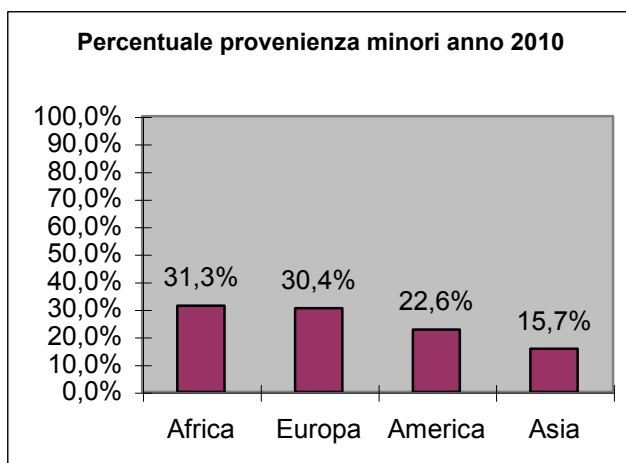
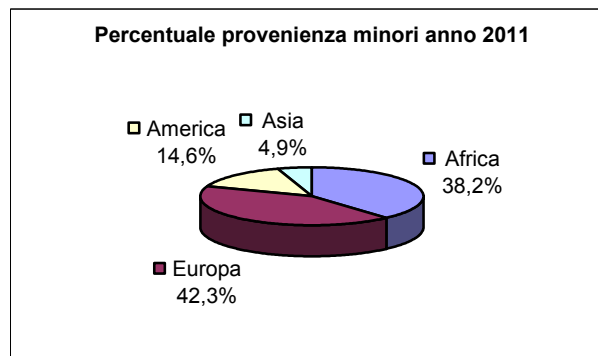
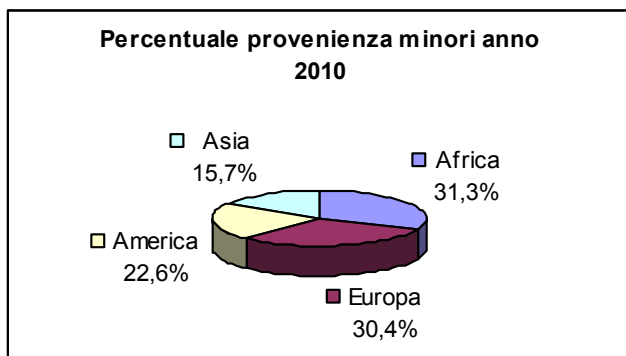
## Area di provenienza

anno 2010

Europa (35 pz pari 30,4%),  
 America (26 pz pari 22,6%)  
 Africa (36 pz pari 31,3%)  
 Asia (18 pz pari 15,7%)

anno 2011

Europa (52 pz pari 42,3%)  
 America (18 pz pari 14,6%)  
 Africa (47 pz pari 38,2%)  
 Asia (6 pz pari al 4,9%)

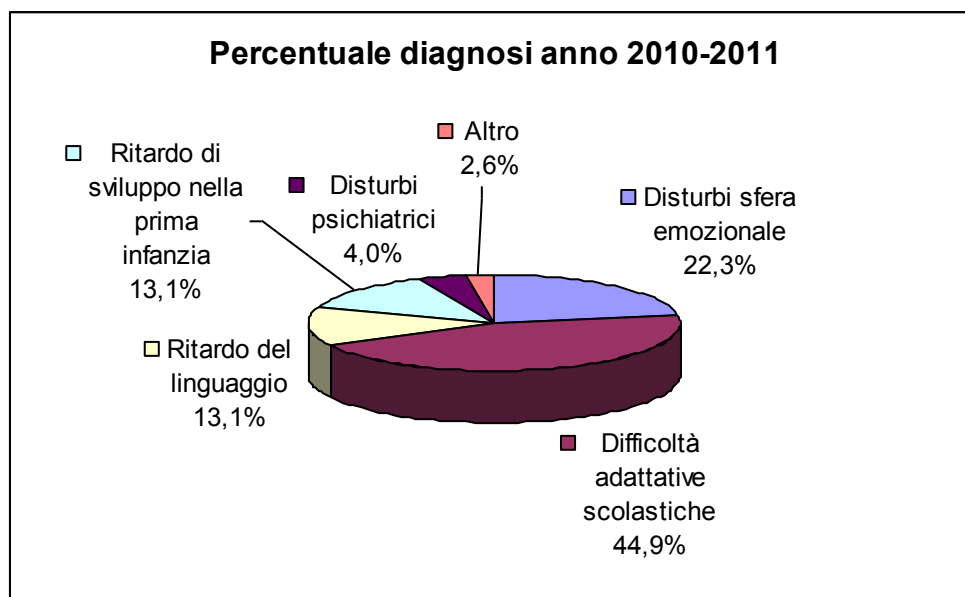


## Motivo dell'invio/diagnosi

I dati 2010 – 2011 sono stati accorpati perché sovrapponibili.

- Disturbi della sfera emozionale 22.3%, rappresentato equamente nella fascia d'età prescolare, scolare ed adolescenziale.
- Difficoltà adattative scolastiche 44.9% (Disturbi d'apprendimento 12%, Ritardo mentale 18%, disturbo del comportamento ed iperattività 14.9%) rappresentati prevalentemente in età scolare ed in minor misura in età prescolare
- Ritardo di linguaggio 13.1% in età prescolare
- Ritardo di sviluppo nella prima infanzia 13.1% (Ritardo psicomotorio 10.3%, Disturbo generalizzato di sviluppo 2.9%)

- Disturbi psichiatrici, sostanzialmente presenti in adolescenza 4%
- Altre in percentuali meno rilevanti 2,6%



#### **Distretto 4**

Per quanto riguarda il distretto 4 nell'anno 2010 l'UOC ha seguito per la prima volta 391 utenti corrispondenti allo 1,6% della popolazione di minori (23376 unità a gennaio 2010) presenti nel territorio di competenza.

I minori stranieri presenti nel distretto 4 nel 2010 erano 4227 pari al 18% della popolazione target dell'UOC. Di questi quelli visti per la prima volta presso l'UOC nello stesso anno sono stati 87 corrispondenti al 22,2% del totale. Da ciò si deduce che, similmente a quanto emerso per i distretti 1, 2, 3 i migranti rappresentavano una percentuale maggiore rispetto alla loro prevalenza all'interno della popolazione dei minori del distretto di appartenenza.

Nell'anno 2011 l'UOC ha seguito per la prima volta 440 utenti corrispondenti allo 1,8% della popolazione di minori (23696 unità a gennaio 2011) presenti nel territorio del distretto 4.

I minori stranieri presenti nel 2011 erano 4428 corrispondenti al 18,7% della popolazione target dell'UOC; di questi i primi accessi all'UOC nell'anno 2011 sono stati 114 pari al 25,9% del totale. Risulta pertanto che, i migranti afferenti al Servizio rappresentavano una percentuale maggiore rispetto alla loro prevalenza all'interno della popolazione dei minori nel distretto e che vi è stato un aumento percentuale dei primi accessi rispetto all'anno precedente.

I dati relativi all'età al momento della richiesta di primo colloquio, all'area di provenienza ed al motivo di invio negli anni 2010 e 2011 sono così rappresentati:

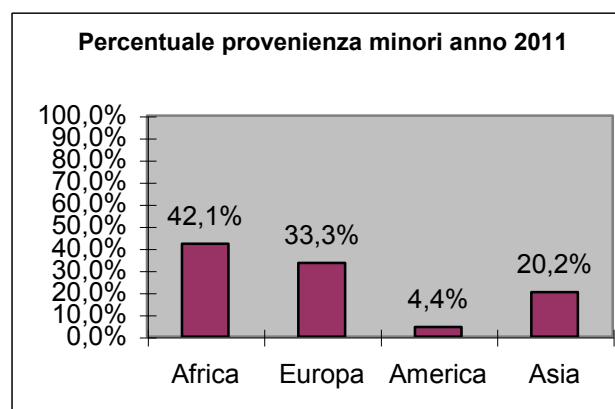
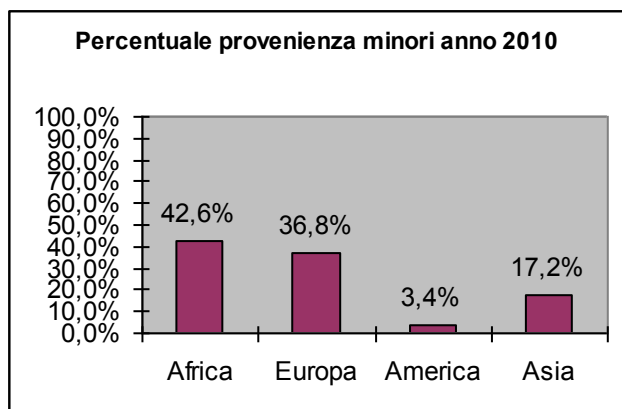
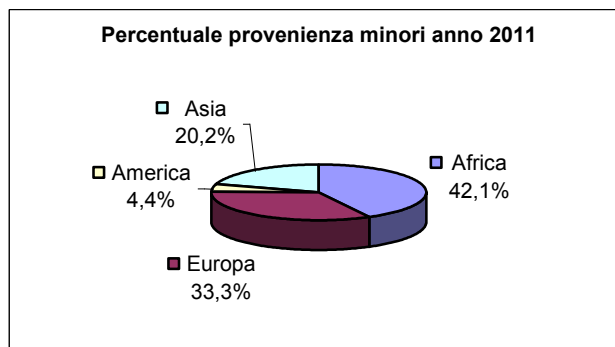
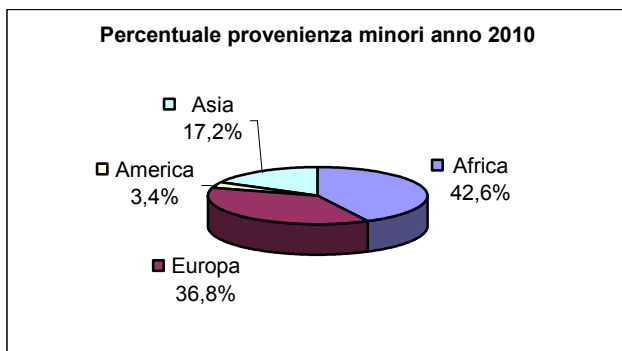
Area di provenienza

anno 2010

Europa (32 pz pari 36,8%),  
 America (3 pz pari 3,4%)  
 Africa (37 pz pari 42,6%)  
 Asia (15 pz pari 17,2%)

anno 2011

Europa (38 pz pari 33,3%)  
 America (5 pz pari 4,4%)  
 Africa (48 pz pari 42,1%)  
 Asia (23 pz pari al 20,2%)



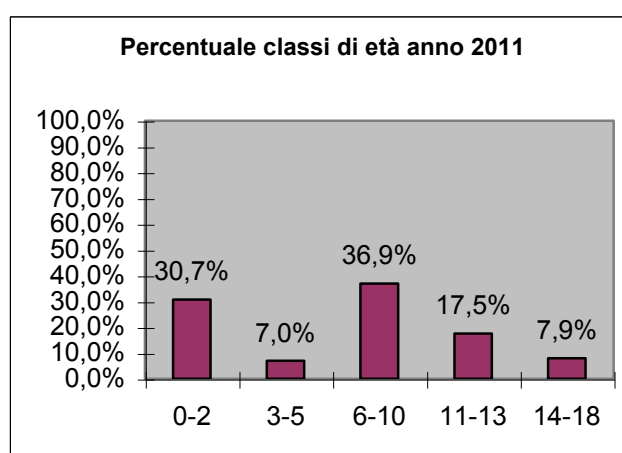
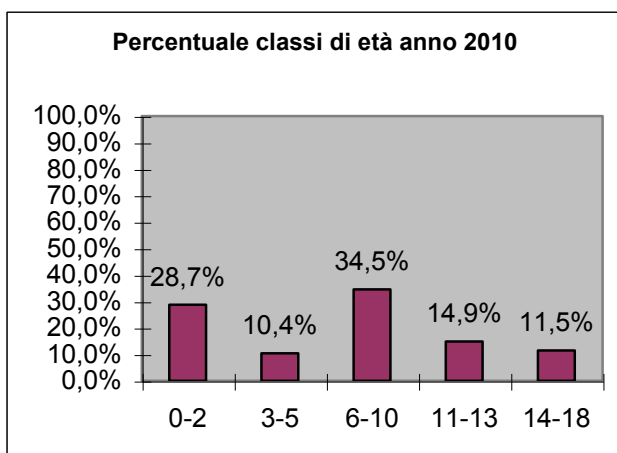
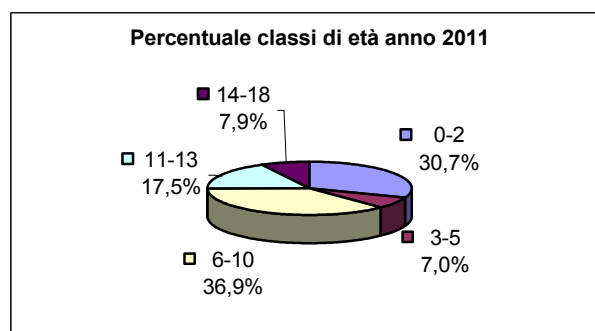
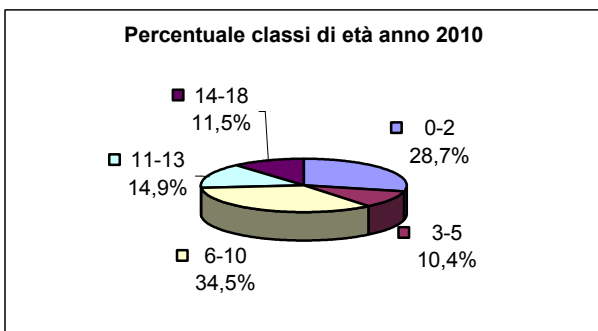
Età di accesso

anno 2010:

0 – 2 anni (29 pz pari 28,7%)  
 3 - 5 anni (9 pz pari 10,4%)  
 6 – 10 anni (30 pz pari 34,5%)  
 11 – 13 anni (13 pz pari 14,9%)  
 14 – 18 anni (10 pz pari 11,5%)

anno 2011

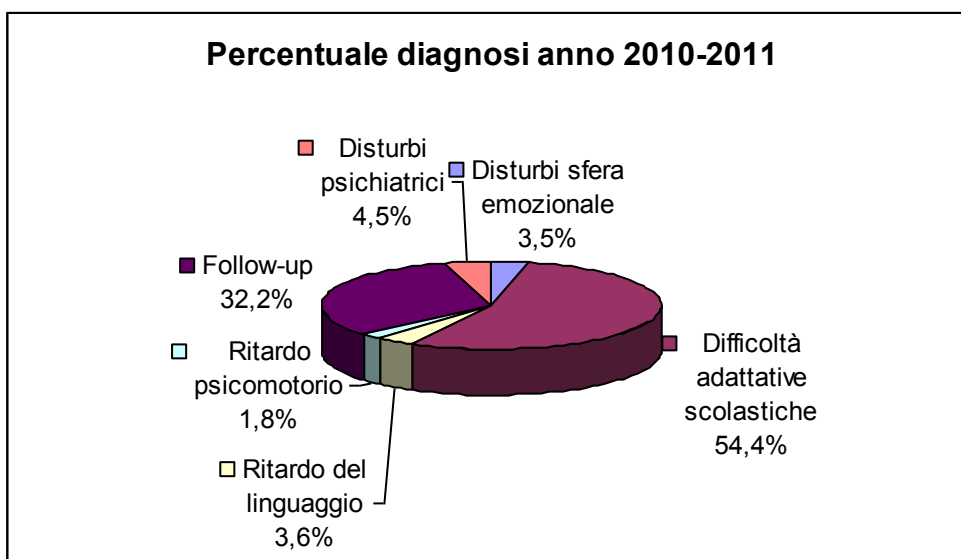
0 – 2 anni (35 pz pari 30,7%)  
 3 - 5 anni (8 pz pari 7,0%)  
 6 – 10 anni (42 pz pari 36,9%)  
 11 – 13 anni (20 pz pari 17,5%)  
 14 – 18 anni (9 pz pari 7,9%)



### Motivo dell'invio/diagnosi

I dati 2010 – 2011 sono stati accorpati perché sovrapponibili.

- Disturbi della sfera emozionale 3.5%
- Difficoltà adattative scolastiche 54.4% (di cui, Disturbi d'apprendimento 40.4%, Ritardo Mentale 5.7%, Disturbo del comportamento ed iperattività 8.9%) rappresentati in gran prevalenza in età scolare
- Ritardo del linguaggio 3.6% prevalente in età prescolare
- Ritardo psicomotorio 1.8%
- Follow up 32.2%
- Disturbi psichiatrici, in adolescenza 4.5%



## DISCUSSIONE

La nostra raccolta dati ci ha permesso alcune interessanti riflessioni personali ed altre che hanno confermato quanto sta accadendo all'interno dei Servizi di Neuropsichiatria infantile relativamente all'afferenza della popolazione migrante.

L'aumento demografico dei migranti ha portato infatti ad un progressivo incremento delle richieste di presa in carico.

Tale incremento anche dai nostri dati risulta significativo ed in continua evoluzione, sia in termini assoluti (aumento dal 2010 al 2011 del 3% nei distretti 1, 2, 3 e del 3,7 % nel distretto 4), sia rispetto alla crescita demografica della popolazione generale di minori stranieri .

Dobbiamo inoltre sottolineare che, rispetto ad una prima immigrazione, in questi ultimi anni si è assistito ad una progressiva stabilizzazione della popolazione migrante (passaggio da una situazione di domicilio transitorio ad una stanziale) che ha reso pertanto possibile una sua integrazione ed un conseguente incremento di accesso al Servizio.

Se poi consideriamo che nel quinquennio 2006 - 2011 la crescita demografica dei minori nella provincia di Verona è rappresentata prevalentemente da minori immigrati e/o figli di migranti (elaborazione Cestim su dati istat), risulta necessaria una rivisitazione delle procedure di accoglienza e presa in carico nel Servizio dei minori con modalità che tengano conto della dimensione culturale del problema.



L'accesso al Servizio da parte dei minori migranti presenta specifiche peculiarità per quanto riguarda le modalità di invio che risentono ancora fortemente del processo di integrazione (inserimento nel mondo della scuola, ricoveri ospedalieri, rapporto con altre istituzioni, ecc...) ed è quindi favorito dalla realizzazione di reti tra le agenzie che a vario titolo si occupano di minori migranti sempre più funzionanti e tra loro interconnesse.

Abbiamo analizzato le diverse caratteristiche di accesso nei distretti 1.2.3 rispetto al distretto 4. I due territori, per quanto riguarda i servizi socio sanitari, sono infatti molto diversi in quanto condizionati da vari fattori tra cui: la presenza di una struttura ospedaliera ULSS all'interno del distretto 4 (Ospedale "G. Fracastoro" di San Bonifacio) dotata di un punto nascite alla quale viene fornita da parte nostra una consulenza come Neuropsichiatria Infantile e la presenza nel comune di Verona (il capoluogo di provincia insiste sul distretto 1 e in parte dei distretti 2 e 3) capoluogo della sede del Centro Regionale Specializzato per i Disturbi d'Apprendimento e dell'Azienda Ospedaliera Integrata di Verona (con reparto ospedaliero di Neuropsichiatria Infantile) che intercettano rispettivamente la maggioranza dei disturbi di apprendimento e delle patologie neurologiche.

Il lavoro di rete al quale partecipano scuola, servizi sociali e sanitari, associazioni di volontariato, privato sociale ecc. comporta una minore dispersione di risorse e favorisce non solo la tempestività del primo accesso al Servizio ma anche una migliore compliance degli utenti alla proposta terapeutica.

Una riflessione particolare merita il dato emerso dalla nostra ricerca relativamente alla maggioranza delle richieste di aiuto per difficoltà di adattamento scolastico nei bambini figli di genitori migranti, dato che sembra peraltro seguire un trend in aumento.

Esiste una maggior vulnerabilità intrinseca di tale popolazione di minori sostenuta almeno in parte dalla fragile identità, prima di tutto culturale, che caratterizza questi bambini all'ingresso alla scuola dell'infanzia prima e poi alla scuola dell'obbligo dove si confrontano con una realtà spesso nuova anche ai loro genitori.

Vi sono tuttavia altri fattori che facilitano l'accesso al Servizio dei bambini di questa fascia d'età.

Tra questi la progressiva, e talora "eccessiva", sensibilizzazione alla problematica da parte dei soggetti invianti, la scarsa conoscenza delle varie culture e la mancanza di adeguati strumenti valutativi negli enti di accoglienza. Ciò ha portato da parte delle istituzioni scolastiche anche a numerosi invii impropri relativi ad una proposta di

certificazione per insegnamento individualizzato e con sostegno ai sensi della Legge 104/92.

Anche dal punto di vista diagnostico vi è stata da parte dei nostri operatori una tendenza a sovrastimare alcune diagnosi quali, per esempio, quella di Ritardo Mentale (nei distretti 1,2,3) e di Disturbi di apprendimento (nel distretto 4) come conseguenza della mancanza di adeguati strumenti valutativi e di un corretto dispositivo diagnostico in ottica transculturale. L'inadeguatezza e la mancata standardizzazione degli strumenti valutativi favorisce infatti la soggettività interpretativa dell'operatore portando a diagnosi poco sovrapponibili e talvolta, purtroppo, anche poco attendibili.

Ci siamo quindi attivati come Servizio per mettere a punto un più adeguato sistema valutativo mediante l'utilizzo di strumenti di diagnosi idonei e standardizzati e mediante l'avvio di una stretta collaborazione con l'Ufficio di mediazione linguistico interculturale dell'ULSS20. Tale approccio valutativo dovrebbe comportare la definizione di una diagnosi più accurata in questa popolazione di utenti.

Non solo l'accesso, ma soprattutto la "tenuta" del percorso diagnostico-terapeutico è infatti facilitata dalla presenza di una figura (individuata in quella del mediatore culturale) che possa rendere comprensibile ai genitori la patologia evidenziata, in particolare se questa comporta una disabilità, e possa aiutare gli operatori sanitari nella comprensione della dimensione culturale della problematica individuata. Una rappresentazione comune della patologia e/o della disabilità del minore (seppur con interpretazioni culturali diverse) pone le basi per condividere il percorso terapeutico e per rendere significativo il lavoro di rete; questo consente anche di attenuare la diffidenza reciproca nei confronti delle Istituzioni dovuta alla scarsa conoscenza dei relativi codici sociali.

Un altro dato emerso dal nostro lavoro che merita una particolare attenzione è la richiesta di consulenza per follow up clinico nei neonati a rischio (nel distretto 4). Infatti, come sottolineato in altri lavori, anche nella nostra raccolta dati emerge una prevalenza di complicanze neonatali (spesso per prematurità grave e/o basso peso alla nascita) nei neonati da madre migrante, anche a parità di assistenza dopo il parto (Cacciani et al). Ciò presumibilmente a causa di una minore adeguatezza di cure, di una ridotta accessibilità a visite di controllo e di attenzioni durante la gravidanza a causa di bassi redditi economici, di poche garanzie sul posto di lavoro ecc., indice di quanto lavoro debba ancora essere fatto nel processo di integrazione, perlomeno a livello sanitario (ricognizione disuguaglianze in salute ULSS20).

Infine riflettiamo in merito al dato significativo rappresentato dall'elevata segnalazione al Servizio per Ritardo di linguaggio, analogamente a quanto accade nella popolazione target dell'UOC. Il Ritardo del linguaggio mostra tuttavia nei bambini migranti alcune peculiarità clinico-culturali. Si osserva spesso in questi bambini una difficoltà di linguaggio anziché un buon bilinguismo additivo. L'esposizione dei bambini migranti alla lingua italiana è fornita in ambiente scolastico principalmente dai coetanei che possiedono, vista l'età, un linguaggio naturalmente povero soprattutto dal punto di vista lessicale, o, a domicilio, da genitori che si impegnano (magari malconsigliati dai vari educatori e specialisti) a parlare ai loro figli una lingua italiana spesso scorretta, povera e priva di sfumature e contenuti affettivi che solo la lingua d'origine può offrire.

Il nostro gruppo sta sperimentando un lavoro sullo sviluppo del linguaggio in minori migranti partendo dal sostegno della comunicazione precoce madre bambino. Fin dai primi giorni di vita le madri devono infatti, spesso in solitudine e senza rete sociale di supporto, mediare e facilitare la comunicazione tra mondo interno ed esterno del bambino (Moro et al, 2010). Esistono differenze nell'utilizzo dei diversi canali sensoriali e comunicativi, codificati in base al sistema culturale di appartenenza la cui perdita porta ad un impoverimento generale del sistema linguistico (Moro et al, 2004).

## CONCLUSIONI

Lo studio da noi condotto, seppur ancora parziale, ci ha fornito una fotografia dell'attuale incidenza della popolazione migrante afferente al Servizio, paragonabile a quanto sta avvenendo nel panorama italiano.

Ciò in contrapposizione a quanto documentato in altri studi (Montecchi et al).

La significativa presenza della popolazione migrante richiede anche al nostro Servizio riflessioni sui bisogni assistenziali di tale popolazione e ci induce a modificare operativamente il nostro iter diagnostico-terapeutico.

Tra gli elementi di trasformazione più significativi abbiamo identificato:

- La necessità di valutazioni in un ottica transculturale
- L'importanza della presenza del mediatore culturale nell'equipe diagnostica
- L'adeguatezza e la standardizzazione del materiale diagnostico
- Il lavoro di rete non come un semplice invio-risposta ma come scambio e perfezionamento continui.
- La necessità di individuare degli indicatori specifici di trauma migratorio che potrebbero essere condivisi con altri servizi al fine di istituire anche nel territorio veronese un Centro di secondo livello per la presa in carico psicologica dei minori migranti e delle loro famiglie in un'ottica etnopsichiatrica secondo il modello

francese. Allo stato attuale, i nostri dati non permettono di individuare, all'interno della popolazione migrante, specificità psicopatologiche ma soltanto loro variabili secondarie al percorso di integrazione e neppure una chiara prevalenza di disturbi rispetto a quanto presente nella popolazione italiana. Questo potrebbe fornire lo spunto per successivi lavori.

- I dati osservazionali di questo lavoro ci forniscono inoltre lo spunto per approfondire come la distribuzione sul territorio delle popolazioni migranti con le loro diversità e specificità socio-culturali (caratteristiche socio-ambientali, religiose, sanitarie del paese di origine, organizzazione o meno in comunità sul nostro territorio, ecc...) possa essere correlata allo sviluppo ed all'evoluzione delle problematiche socio-sanitarie dei minori migranti.

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Hanno collaborato

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Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World  
Verona, 15-18 April 2013

**Proposed Contribution**

Title:	<b>Cutting Edge Practices to Teach Multicultural Competencies in Counseling, Psychology, and Education: Teaching Abroad or on Campus?</b>
Strand 5:	Intercultural and Multicultural Education
Strand 6:	Intercultural competencies
Kind of proposed contribution:	Workshop
Audience:	College instructors in counseling, psychology and education, Multicultural counseling and education researchers, Practitioners in counseling, psychology and education
Lead presenter:	<b>Roberto Swazo, Ph.D</b> Associate Professor of Counselor Education Program Director of Counseling and Human Services Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, U.S.A.
Additional presenter:	<b>Dorota Celinska, Ph.D</b> Associate Professor of Special Education Roosevelt University, U.S.A.

**Outline of the contribution:**

1. Introduction: Teaching multicultural competencies in counseling, psychology and education: Importance of these in these disciplines
2. The current study on teaching multicultural competencies in counseling, psychology and education: Analyzing the effects of teaching modes (explicit-implicit) and course formats (study abroad-on campus).
3. Practical guidelines for teaching multicultural competencies: The presenters' experiences and recommendations for course design, pedagogy, and implementation
4. Interactive exchange of strategies for teaching multicultural competencies: A question and answer session and group discussions.

## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

At the end of this workshop, the participants will:

1. Gain an understanding of the impact of expanding multicultural competencies on the counselor/educator role and effectiveness in serving diverse clientele
2. Become familiar with the critical components of teaching multicultural competencies in counseling, psychology, and education
3. Acquire hands-on practical knowledge of course design and teaching methodologies to increase student learning of multicultural competencies
4. Recommendations to the counseling, psychology, and education disciplines in terms of successful strategies to improve multicultural teaching.



Running head: CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

Cutting Edge Practices to Teach Multicultural Competencies in Counseling, Psychology, and  
Education: Teaching Abroad or on Campus?

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## **Cutting Edge Practices to teach Multicultural Competencies in Counseling, Psychology, and Education: Teaching abroad or on Campus?**

Since the inception of multiculturalism in the fields of counseling, psychology, and education, scholars and practitioners agree that it is instrumental for those in training to learn, practice, and incorporate these principles in their lives in order to be more skilled professionals. Some scholars have referred to multicultural counseling as “the fourth force,” implying that it has taken precedence after the creation of psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and humanism (Essandoh, 1996; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). As a result of the rapid change in demographics in the United States, there has been a request to expand the body knowledge via research studies, especially in the areas of delivery of multicultural counseling competencies and program evaluation (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). As of 2012 most of the divisions of the American Counseling Association (ACA) have endorsed the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (MCC) created by the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD, Sue & Sue, 1999). The phenomenon of rapid demographic change is not exclusive to the United States of America but it is also occurring in many areas of the European continent as a result of relaxation of travel, work, and residency at the advent of the European Union. This issue has been exacerbated by illegal immigration from the Caucasus, North African (Arabic) and Central African nations.

### **Multicultural Training Models in Counseling**

Historically, counseling programs have addressed the issue of training and delivery of multicultural principles in different ways. These are the traditional models: (a) the stand-alone multicultural course (Constantine, Ladany, Inman, & Ponterotto, 1996), (b) the infusion of

## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

multicultural principles into other courses of the curriculum (D' Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991), (c) the combination of the stand-alone course and the infusion of multicultural principles, that is, the combination or hybrid, and (d) international service learning activities. According to Dinsmore and England (1996) most CACREP accredited program opt for the combination or hybrid principles in which there is a basic multicultural course and a somewhat infusion of multicultural principles in other courses of the curriculum. The level of effectiveness of any of these approaches is unclear; therefore, most programs utilize the methodology of delivery that best fits them. On the other hand, Arrendondo and Arcienaga (2001) emphasized the importance of programs in engaging in systematic self-reflection evaluation processes in order to determine if their existing practices are effective.

### **Teaching Strategies to Impart Multicultural Knowledge**

The authors of this research concur with Arrendondo and Arcienaga (2001) in terms that a stand-alone multicultural course may not be sufficient to effectively train professional counselors to be culturally skilled and competent. The ultimate goal of any training program regardless of the specific discipline (i.e., counseling, psychology, education) is to increase the levels of cultural self-awareness, multicultural knowledge and skills. The challenge is to find the most appropriate pedagogical vehicles to promote the aforementioned and produce more culturally competent professionals.

**Cross-cultural contact experiences or incidents.** One of the ultimate goals of cross-cultural contact experience projects is to reduce prejudice and discriminative perceptions. One way of achieving this can be achieved by bringing invited speakers representing a specific group to a multicultural course and provoking a high degree of cognitive and emotional awareness by

## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

listening to their stories. Another strategy has been to set up a series of one-on-one meetings between a trainee (i.e., counseling, psychology, education) and a person from an underrepresented ethnic group or an international country (Mio, 1989). These conversations are intended to demystify previously held ideas and bring awareness of the humanity of other people regardless of their country of origin or ethnic background. A similar tactic has been to insert the trainee in a cultural enclave by attending ethnic restaurants, places of worship, stores, and participating in cultural events. The principle for all this activities is the same as normalization of cultures is sought (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001).

**Service Learning Activities (SLA).** These can be defined as an integration between the theory espoused in the classroom by means of traditional instruction with the community service in order to enhance the total learning experience (Burnett, Hamel, & Long, 2004). The idea is to infuse a culturally focused-community service-learning model into the multicultural counseling content of the course. This model moves away from the “missionary ideology” (working for the community) and emphasizes a more integrative involvement of the students as they are more involved with social, political, cultural, environmental, and other critical elements of the community (working with the community) (Weah, Simmons, & Hall, 2000).

**International Service Learning Activities.** Like community-based service learning activities, international service activities add the component of traveling abroad. The idea is to provide transformative learning experiences that influence and assist changing the lives of the students-in-training (Kottler, 1997). One of the drawbacks of this approach is that it has been seen as “working for” the community with a heavy missionary emphasis. Of course, the idea is that by default participants can enhance their level of empathy and understanding as they serve

international communities. Unfortunately, for such a serious endeavor, frequently students embark in these international service learning activities without a firm base in multiculturalism. It is not atypical for students to work on these projects without previously completing a multicultural course at home.

## **Method**

### **Purpose and Procedures**

The current study is designed to explore how specific factors in teaching of multicultural competencies impact student learning of these competencies. Specifically, the study examines two factors in teaching multicultural competencies: (1) the format of course delivery: abroad versus on campus and (2) the mode of teaching: explicit versus implicit. The multicultural course taught by Lead Presenter, Dr. Roberto Swazo, was delivered either in the traditional on campus format or the international study abroad format. The study abroad format combined in-class activities (equivalent to the on campus format) with direct interactions with the foreign unfamiliar communities and service learning projects. The multicultural course, regardless of the delivery format (abroad – on campus), is taught through the explicit teaching mode that entails the extensive interactive lectures and discussions related to multicultural concepts, multiple assignments designed to practice multicultural understandings and skills, and guided reflections on personal multicultural growth. In contrast, in the implicit teaching mode, multicultural competencies are taught incidentally through embedding multicultural perspectives and concepts into courses designed to teach content other than multicultural competencies.

## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

In this study multicultural competencies are comprised of the following components: (1) understanding and embracing human diversity, (2) personal growth in unbiased understanding of own culture and unfamiliar cultures, (3) extrapolation of multicultural knowledge and skills across contexts and populations, (4) commitment and ability to interact with unfamiliar cultures within global social justice agenda, and (5) integrating theoretical multicultural concepts and direct multicultural experience. Student learning of the above competencies is expected to increase their effectiveness in using counseling skills with diverse clients, inclusive of, but not limited to, the ability to establish rapport and understand the client's reality, the competence in the application of micro skills, the ability to evaluate/assess in a non-biased manner, and the capacity to use culturally appropriate interventions.

### **Participants**

The participants were seventy seven graduate students in counseling, psychology and teacher education (only two participants) programs at a mid-size private university located in a metropolitan area in Midwest region of the United States. All participants were recruited on voluntary basis from students enrolled in graduate counseling courses taught by the Lead Presenter, Dr. Roberto Swazo. Although the participants were diverse in terms of age, ethnicity and cultural backgrounds, the majority were females from suburban communities.

### **Measures**

The multicultural learning outcomes were measured through self-report and permanent product analysis using the following instruments:

## 1. **Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS).**

The Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) is a 45 items, 6-point Likert self-report rating scale designed to assess counselors' general openness and comfort level towards clients from diverse backgrounds (Fuertes, et al, 2000; Krentzman & Townsend, 2008). The scale is based on the Universal-Diverse Orientation model which purports that the ability to tolerate similarities and differences between one self and another and the level of tolerance of human differences constitute the critical foundation for acquiring intercultural competence and the effectiveness in intercultural endeavors. The scale's validity and reliability was established at acceptable levels.

## 2. **Rubric for Reaction Journal**

The purpose of Reaction Journal is to provide a medium for students to communicate with the course instructor in regards to their reactions toward the content of the lectures, readings, class presentations and discussions, as well as personal struggles to incorporate new knowledge into their personal lives and clinical approaches. Through a series of discussions, the authors designed a rubric to capture three levels of performance on the five components of journal writing: (1) personal multicultural growth, (2) intellectual multicultural growth, (3) extrapolation of newly acquired multicultural knowledge, (4) commitment to multicultural agenda, diversity and social justice, and (5) reflection on class discussions and readings in the context of local experience. Twenty five percent of all journals collected for the study were used to establish the inter-rater agreement between the authors at the 87% level.

### **3. Rubric for Cultural Activity Paper.**

The Cultural Activity Paper is framed as a reflection and analysis of the students' direct interactions within a cultural setting distinctively different from their own. The students are expected to represent the worldview of an unfamiliar culture in an unbiased manner, followed by an analysis of the discrepancies between this culture and their own culture. The paper concludes with an explanation of how the student would work with a member of the discussed cultural group. Through a series of discussions, the authors designed a rubric to capture three levels of performance on the five components of the paper: (1) personal growth as a result of interaction with an unfamiliar culture, (2) ability to take multiple perspective in addition to own pre-conceptions, (3) interest in interacting with an unfamiliar culture, (4) motivation to explore unfamiliar cultures, and (5) linking class concepts to field experiences. Twenty percent of all papers collected for the study was used to establish the inter-rater agreement between the authors at the 85% level.

### **4. Post-trip Reflection and Evaluation Questionnaire.**

The Post-trip Reflection and Evaluation Questionnaire was designed by the authors to provide a semi structured instrument to allow the participants to analyze the relative importance of the course components on their learning of multicultural competencies. In particular, the questionnaire required the students to rank order and describe the impact of each class assignment and activities on the course multicultural learning outcomes.



## Results

### Mode of Teaching: Explicit versus Implicit

The Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) was administered at the conclusion of the course to analyze the effects of the mode of teaching (explicit versus implicit) on the student multicultural learning. The results for the courses taught in the implicit mode were compared to the results of the courses taught in the explicit mode, separately for the abroad and on campus formats. The preliminary results indicated no significant differences between the students in the implicit mode (n=10) and the students in the explicit mode delivered through the on campus format (n=10) on either the overall openness/comfort level towards clients from diverse backgrounds (M-GUDS total score) or any of its components (M-GUDS items). In contrast, the students in the implicit mode (n=10) differed significantly from the students in the explicit mode delivered through the abroad format (n=9) relative to specific components of (M-GUDS items) but not the overall (M-GUDS total score) openness/comfort level towards clients from diverse backgrounds. Specifically, the students in the explicit mode taught abroad, compared to peers in the implicit mode, were more in agreement that getting to know persons from diverse backgrounds increases their self-knowledge and that knowledge of both self and others require an analysis of human similarities and differences. Further, the former group indicated more willingness to seek opportunities to meet diverse populations through joining organizations and travel to foreign countries.

### **Format of Course Delivery: Abroad versus on Campus (explicit mode of teaching)**

The Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) was administered at the conclusion of the course to analyze the effects of the course format (abroad versus on campus) on the student multicultural learning for the course taught in the explicit mode. The preliminary results revealed that the students enrolled in the abroad format (n=9) and the students in the on campus format (n=10) did not differ in terms of their overall openness/comfort level towards clients from diverse backgrounds (M-GUDS total score). However, there were significant differences between the two groups relative to some specific components of the openness/comfort levels (M-GUDS items). Specifically, the students in the abroad format reported more willingness to interact with persons from diverse backgrounds by attending events that offered opportunities to meet racially diverse populations, as well as de-emphasized the importance of similarities in friendship.

Further, the participants enrolled in the abroad format (n=15), as compared to their peers in the on-campus format (n=14), scored higher on almost several components of multicultural competency assessed by the Reaction Journal and Cultural Activity Paper rubrics. The differences between the two groups were mostly evident in terms of their personal multicultural growth that comprises gaining multicultural empathy and viewpoints along with self-knowledge of own culture and biases. The responses of the students in the abroad format to the Post-trip Reflection and Evaluation Questionnaire indicate that they attribute their growth in multicultural competencies to the opportunities to interact with members of the local unfamiliar communities and to engage in service learning activities in these communities.

### **Conclusions**

The preliminary study results offer several initial insights into the potential effects of the mode of teaching (explicit versus implicit) and the course format (abroad versus on campus) on student learning of multicultural competencies. First, it appears that teaching multicultural competencies in the traditional on campus format may not be sufficient to increase student openness and comfort level towards diverse clientele even when the explicit mode of teaching is used exclusively. On the other hand, the results suggest that when multicultural competencies are taught explicitly in the abroad format, students report elevated levels of such openness and comfort. In particular, students report more willingness to interact with unfamiliar cultures and deeper understanding of the relationship between self-knowledge and knowledge of diversity.

Secondly, this study shows that the course format (abroad versus on campus) for explicit teaching of multicultural competencies may be associated with student increased learning outcomes, as evidenced by both the self-report data and permanent product analyses. Compared to peers in the on campus course, students taught abroad reported more interest in interacting with diverse populations in the public and private domains. The analyses of their reflective journal and cultural activity papers further evidenced more growth relative to empathy towards diverse populations and deeper understanding of both different cultural viewpoints and own cultural biases.

### **Recommendations and Implications for Counseling, Psychology, and Education Programs**

The following is a list of recommendations based on both the empirical results of this study and the deficiencies observed in the professional literature:

## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

1. It is necessary to eradicate the outdated pedagogical paradigm in which counselors, psychologists and teachers-in-training are educated utilizing the objective/expert model that emphasizes unidirectional knowledge from the top. That is, scholars and professors know the “truth” and can evaluate cultures and determine their differences and implicit deficiencies. In order to have an egalitarian process, trainees must be engaged first in a self-exploratory process of understanding who they are as ethnic beings. The instructor must debunk the idea that “ethnic individuals” are those of non-European extraction; and therefore, professors must normalize the concept that by virtue of being a human being, every individual is ethnic.
  
2. Although the results of the study reflect the superiority of a teaching abroad course model over the on campus traditional format, it cannot be assumed that a professor without previous international training (i.e., linguistic, cultural, ethnic) can lead these kind of groups abroad. The faculty must undergo some formal training by being exposed to the host country and by shadowing various times a seasoned professor with the expertise.
  
3. Faculty must have a strategic plan and model of implementation that takes into account the diversity of its own students, previous ethnic/racial experiences by the participants, and the challenges of integrating theory and practice abroad.
  
4. It is advised that many pre-trip sessions are held before leaving the country as well debriefing sessions after completing activities in the host country. These activities include: (a) lectures, (b) group activities, (c) interaction with locals, (d) tours, (e) lectures by local professionals and members of the community, and (e) service learning activities.

## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

5. As a precursor to the experience abroad, it is necessary that students have a clear understanding of the purpose of traveling and that the ultimate intent is to target the multicultural competencies in three main areas: (a) awareness of their assumptions, values, and biases, (b) understating the worldview of the culturally different, and (c) ultimately developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques.
  
6. Prior to engaging in any study abroad/international activity with students, it is recommended that faculty consult closely with administrators and the office of international services to rule any impediments of the implementation of this type of course. The destination or host country must be conducive to the activities that the program has devised.
  
7. In order to increase the levels of self-awareness, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural competencies and skills, graduate programs in counseling, psychology, and education should implement a study abroad course as part of the core curriculum. This course should not be an ancillary part of the curriculum but an essential part of the educational philosophy of the program.

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## CUTTING EDGE PRACTICES TO TEACH

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Titolo: "NUOVE FAMIGLIE..... BISOGNI DIVERSI".

## UNA FOTOGRAFIA DELLE FAMIGLIE MISTE

La frequenza dei matrimoni misti, conosciuti anche come interetnici o interculturali, nel corso degli ultimi anni è aumentata significativamente in Italia. Per alcune coppie è proprio la diversità tra le due persone a costituire l'attrazione dell'uno per l'altra; in altri si registra invece essere una reazione ed un rifiuto del sistema di valori e regole familiari di provenienza a contribuire in maniera determinante alla costruzione di queste coppie.

*"La società non è una semplice somma di individui; al contrario, il sistema formato dalla loro associazione rappresenta una realtà specifica dotata di caratteri propri. Indubbiamente nulla di collettivo può prodursi se non sono date le coscienze particolari: ma questa condizione necessaria non è sufficiente. Occorre pure che queste coscienze siano associate e combinate in una certa maniera; da questa combinazione risulta la vita sociale, e di conseguenza è questa che la spiega. Aggregandosi, penetrandosi, fondendosi, le anime individuali danno vita ad un essere (psichico, se vogliamo) che però costituisce un'individualità psichica di nuovo genere".<sup>1</sup>*

I dati Istat nel 2010 registrano che l'8% dei matrimoni celebrati in Italia contava uno dei due sposi di nazionalità diversa da quella italiana.

In "Amori possibili. Le coppie miste nella provincia italiana" G. Peruzzi<sup>2</sup> ci restituisce un importante contributo sul fenomeno emergente delle relazioni anche dei matrimoni misti (in Italia conta circa 300.000 coppie regolarmente unite in matrimonio negli ultimi anni). Sebbene queste coppie siano state da subito assurte a simbolo di integrazione e fusione dei popoli, sono tuttavia state trascurate dalle indagini sociologiche, forse fermate da un "pudore scientifico", ad entrare nelle dinamiche più intime della famiglia lasciando un velo di scarso approfondimento su questo cruciale ambito dei fenomeni sociali contemporanei.

Anche articoli come "la coppia è mista" di repubblica<sup>3</sup> offrono una fotografia delle dimensioni del fenomeno "... sono le coppie miste in Italia, 29.000 nel 2010, 6.000 in più ogni anno. Una rivoluzione culturale che parte all'altezza del cuore e si traduce in più di 25.000 bambini multietnici: tanti sono i figli di genitori "mescolati" nati solo nel 2009 nel nostro Paese."

Questi dati sono destinati ad aumentare nel prossimo futuro, per questo non possiamo non tenerne conto e prepararci ad affrontare fenomeni correlati. Nel panorama sociale del futuro si vedono nuove etnie figlie di coppie di nazionalità diverse che iniziano ad accedere ai servizi anche di psicologia con aspettative, costrutti, richieste, dubbi, bisogni nuovi.

Ed i figli frutto di queste coppie? Per la sua significatività sociale riteniamo quindi assistere ad un fenomeno di cui non dobbiamo solo prendere atto, ma anche interrogarci, prepararci ed essere efficienti nell'affrontare la presa in carico di nuovi bisogni già presenti.

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<sup>1</sup> Emile Durkheim Le regole del metodo sociologico, V, p. 102

<sup>2</sup> G. Peruzzi "Amori possibili. Le coppie miste nella provincia italiana", Franco Angeli

<sup>3</sup> <http://d.repubblica.it> "la coppia mista" (17 aprile 2012),



## BISOGNI DIVERSI ... SERVIZI DIVERSI

Uno dei fiori all'occhiello della Provincia Autonoma di Trento è la capacità di aver sviluppato negli anni un ruolo etico e socio-politico del settore non-profit e in particolare del volontariato e del privato sociale.

La Riforma del Welfare State promuove anche lo sviluppo delle politiche solidaristiche della comunità civile. I protagonisti dei servizi di volontariato assumono così un ruolo sociale sempre più importante e delicato. E' quindi per dare risposte ai bisogni e per costruire azioni guidate e operatività sociale che si rivela la necessità di pensare in modo nuovo ( integrando le conoscenze e gli strumenti in scienza e coscienza).

Purtroppo le dichiarazioni della Carta di Ottawa dell'OMS, e per affermazione degli stessi operatori, rivelano come alle forti motivazioni ideologiche ed etiche nella volontà di promozione della salute in senso olistico spesso non si riscontra un'adeguata preparazione formativa ed educativa, psicologico - sociale ed organizzativa.

Per costruire il processo di Welfare care (come indicato dagli indirizzi politici più moderni) mi sembra necessario partire dall'indagine e da corrette analisi del contesto comunitario e territoriale dei bisogni e delle aspettative delle persone e delle comunità. Inoltre è necessario disporre di capacità manageriali di orientamento psico-sociali per progettare e implementare servizi nuovi e flessibili. Ritengo infatti essere necessario promuovere servizi che sappiano essere "innovativi" caratterizzati da un'esigenza di efficienza e nel contempo da una capacità di contenimento di nuovi bisogni emergenti proprio in ragione delle difficoltà economiche e finanziarie, oltre che delle spinte migratorie e cambiamento dei valori condivisi che pone degli interrogativi cui è doveroso fornire puntuale risposta.

Per offrire salute, nel futuro dovremo essere sempre più in grado di rispondere con servizi che utilizzino modelli e strumenti in grado di rispondere ai bisogni in continuo mutamento senza rinunciare alle conquiste dei diritti acquisiti. È da un lavoro di network e costruzione di solidarietà sociale nelle comunità, partendo dalle persone, che si offre la possibilità di un incisivo contributo al mutamento dei rapporti fra le persone, i servizi, le istituzioni, secondo un'ottica di "ecologia sociale". Limitarsi ad un progetto di pura ingegneria istituzionale non sembra infatti efficace per mutare la qualità della vita e promuovere la solidarietà. Credo serva qualcosa in più. E' importante costruire realtà nuove in grado di fornire un supporto psico-sociale ai fenomeni contemporanei (sociali e personali) ed ai bisogni sviluppatasi dai nuovi soggetti sociali che costruiscono il Terzo Sistema. Molti responsabili di organizzazioni del terzo settore (cooperazione sociale, associazionismo, fondazioni, volontariato, movimenti di opinione, patronati) ritengono oggi che l'obiettivo del prossimo decennio sia costruire processi formativi dei cittadini, capaci di cittadinanza attiva e di una socialità prosociale che promuova e generi nuovo senso civico e di comunità fra le diverse convivenze e culture, migliorando le relazioni sul territorio.

Occupandoci di persone, noi operatori delle professioni di aiuto, sappiamo bene come il "problema" portato dalla persona in realtà non sia che una stella di una costellazione ben più complessa fatta di comorbidità, esperienze, emozioni, percezioni, credenze... Quando le persone arrivano ai servizi di "psicoqualcosa"( psichiatria, psicologia clinica, consultori ...) nella maggior parte dei casi lo fanno su invio di altri specialisti della salute o quando sentono il peso del loro malessere quasi insopportabile. Questo perché, fino ad ora, nello sviluppo di queste professioni le attività specializzate nella cura e nella prevenzione di patologie/problemi di vita è stato difficile pensare ad un servizio in grado di porsi nella giusta posizione tra servizi sociale e sanitario (F. Folgheraiter, 2012<sup>4</sup>). Però i tempi cambiano ed i bisogni delle persone con loro. Per questo anche i servizi devono essere in grado di rispondere. Dall'integrazione di conoscenze e metodologie nuove che fondino gli strumenti e le conoscenze (psicologia, sociologia, pedagogia...) è nato un nuovo servizio denominato "A TU PER TU- Psicologo di Base" ideato da me (psicologo e sociologo) poi migliorato ulteriormente negli anni.

Ragionando nell'ambito della prevenzione e della salute dei cittadini, nella progettazione del servizio, ho voluto tenere presente aree di innovazione che si concentrassero principalmente sulla creazione di un servizio in grado di prendere in carico la persona nella sua complessità attraverso la costruzione di uno spazio specialistico psico-sociale di primo livello in cui:

<sup>4</sup> F. Folgheraiter, Teoria e metodologia del servizio sociale, Franco Angeli

- a. sono state ridefinite le fasi di accoglienza, ascolto, decodifica della domanda e riformulazione del bisogno portato oltre alla ridefinizione degli obiettivi di vita;
- b. aperto il trattamento in riferimento alle diverse classi di appartenenza: giovani, adulti, anziani...
- c. potenziato il sistema d'offerta dei servizi di aiuto alle persone;
- d. reso più accessibili attraverso nuovi meccanismi e ripensamento degli spazi i servizi di affiancamento alla persona;
- e. promosso, in relazione a queste ed altre azioni innovative, il dialogo con le istituzioni e servizi sociali e sanitari del territorio

## UN NUOVO SERVIZIO

Per realizzare tutto questo nel 2008 ho ideato un nuovo servizio che ho chiamato "A TU PER TU-psicologo di base". Prima di tutto, sottolineo un triplo obiettivo a cui è stato votato il servizio: primo cogliere, su un versante, i nuovi bisogni nella loro fase di prima emersione, se non addirittura anticipandoli, secondo costruire un modello di intervento psico-sociale non medicalizzato che offrisse alle persone un supporto all'educazione e all'attivazione della resilienza personale di se stessi e degli altri, terzo rispondere all'esigenza di contenere la spesa sociale senza per questo abbassare il grado di efficacia dell'intervento.

A TU PER TU- psicologo di base si propone come Servizio in grado di allinearsi bene a questa triplice direttrice, vediamo perchè. Da un lato, infatti, la bassa soglia di accesso, la garanzia dell'anonimato, le modalità di intervento "morbide" ma non per questo meno efficaci e le tematiche e le esigenze di cui i fruitori sono latori, lo pongono fuori dai confini dei Servizi già esistenti. Se è vero che, anche per le conseguenze ben note portate dalla crisi, i Centri di salute mentale sono loro malgrado costretti a discernere e selezionare i casi di competenza anche in base al loro grado di gravità - spesso il confine per l'accesso è costituito dalla patologia - è altrettanto vero che le esigenze di programmazione e di pianificazione pongono dei confini ai Servizi stessi, ma l'incastro fra un Servizio e l'altro non può essere perfettamente combaciante: inevitabilmente la maglia non può essere talmente stretta da non lasciare passare alcuna fattispecie.

Ecco quindi che la collocazione del nostro Servizio trova spazio negli interstizi di questi confini, ponendosi per definizione al di fuori di interventi già previsti, collaudati ed in grado di portare risultati improntati all'efficacia e all'efficienza perché determinato da una visione organica e strutturata non declinata per singola categoria di utenti.

Le professioni cliniche (come la psicologia clinica) si concentrano sulle patologie costituite che individuano e affrontano secondo il classico " modello medico" declinato nelle fasi della diagnosi e del trattamento.

Le professioni sociali (come il servizio sociale) svolgono il loro compito nell'ambito del sistema organizzato delle risorse sociali. "L'assistente sociale è un operatore sociale che, agendo secondo i principi, le conoscenze e i metodi specifici della professione, svolge la propria attività nell'ambito del sistema organizzato delle risorse messe a disposizione dalla comunità, a favore di individui, gruppi e famiglie, per prevenire e risolvere situazioni di bisogno, aiutando l'utenza nell'uso personale e sociale di tali risorse, organizzando e promuovendo prestazioni e servizi per una maggiore rispondenza degli stessi alle particolari situazioni di bisogno e alle esigenze di autonomia e responsabilità delle persone, valorizzando e questo scopo aiuta le risorse della comunità." (Ministero dell'Interno-Divisione generale dei Servizi Civili<sup>5</sup>). Lo psicologo di base,

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<sup>5</sup> Ministero dell'Interno-Divisione generale dei Servizi Civili- "Gli operatori sociali- Urgenza di una normativa, Roma 1984

così concepito risulta essere un professionista che dispone di un orientamento teorico allargato e di strumenti che attingono a diversi ambiti della psicologia da me integrati . Questo si rende necessario per essere in grado di comprendere l'ampissimo spettro del disagio potenzialmente portato dalle persone che si rivolgono ad un servizio non specialistico. Significa quindi che lo psicologo di base dovrà avere nozioni circa i diversi modelli e strumenti psicologici (umanistico, dinamico, transculturale...), ma anche sociologici (conoscere e aggiornarsi circa i macro fenomeni socio-culturali, economici ...) e saper anche conoscere modelli pedagogici. Questo non in una logica di onniscienza, ma di accettazione, condivisione e rielaborazione delle problematiche portate dalle persone per un riadattamento della persona.

L'azione dello psicologo di base da me ideata non si rivolge alla ricerca di cause di una patologia, ma all'analisi di una situazione che costituisce un problema. La consulenza è orientata alla ricostruzione e interpretazione del presente per promuovere un'azione migliorativa per il soggetto stesso e di riflesso per il suo ambiente (famigliari, amici, colleghi...)

Rivolgendoci ad un "pubblico" nuovo è stato necessario studiare un nuovo metodo di approccio di aiuto ed empowerment delle persone che ho elaborato e perfezionato negli anni. Il metodo infatti ha dovuto realizzarsi in un modello psico-sociale che non avesse attinenze con le modalità della psicologia clinica, ma neppure della conduzione di colloqui di natura meramente socio assistenziale. (Rimando ad altra sede ulteriori approfondimenti).

## IL LAVORO CON LE FAMIGLIE MISTE

La diversa tipologia di persone che si sono rivolte alla sperimentazione biennale ( su tre comuni diversi) ci ha confermato che nelle aree dei meccanismi di produzione sociale: conciliazione familiare, lavoro, famiglie miste, il welfare è ancora scarsamente attivo lasciando così alla società l'onere di cercare di costruire percorsi autonomi non sempre sufficienti né efficienti. Al servizio s'è rivolta anche una rappresentanza di famiglie miste su cui vogliamo focalizzarci qui. Queste ultime hanno riportato fatiche riconducibili all'integrazione, le separazioni, le delusioni e gli insuccessi vissuti come un carico spesso troppo pesante da sopportare per le famiglie contemporanee non miste e che nel caso di quelle interetniche spesso si vedono acuitizzate. Si evince quindi l'importanza di riuscire a fornire interventi di sostegno o supporto emotivo che realizzino il superamento di una situazione esistenziale difficile. Si tratta quindi di avere un focus allargato ed un orizzonte privilegiato di osservazione che comprendono, come già insegna la visione umanistica, il mondo interno delle persone, ma anche quello esterno ed i fenomeni sociali come le consuetudini. Relazionarsi con un atteggiamento consolidato percepito magari al limite può essere facilmente scambiato per patologia o devianza e produrre relazioni difficili. Così l'identità e l'integrità personale possono essere sentite in pericolo o sollecitate da atteggiamenti altrui percepiti e codificati con lenti differenti. Spesso i modi di fare di persone con costrutti diversi possono essere irriconoscibili o incomprensibili da un altro e questo influenza in maniera determinante le relazioni informali ed ancor più quelle significative come tra coniugi di etnie diverse. (F. Folgheraiter, 2012).

A questo spesso si sommano le difficoltà culturali che possono emergere sotto forma di costrutti educativi diversi frutto di retaggi culturali non in sintonia che influenzano la percezione spesso anche del quotidiano e della visione del mondo (come sostiene il modello umanistico rogersiano) . Ciò si traduce in una capacità di essere resilienti e spesso trovare soluzioni alle problematiche quotidiane in modo anche molto differente che può mettere assai alla prova partner di etnie diverse. Così per le famiglie miste si profila ancor più necessario un

quadro di realtà informativo chiaro e soprattutto accessibile e condivisibile. Appare quindi particolarmente utile l'opportunità di confronto di costrutti e modelli comportamentali, strumenti di sollievo per comprendere l'altro accompagnando i coniugi in un processo di costruzione dei loro spazi personali e familiari.

Del resto, oltre alle evidenti potenzialità che questo tipo di famiglie offre come l'arricchimento interculturale e la diffusione della solidarietà interetnica, esse evidenziano anche numerose criticità che richiedono un "lavoro matrimoniale" che richiede "mediazioni per gestire le differenze interne (linguistiche, valoriali, religiose...)"<sup>6</sup>. Le relazioni interetniche tra autoctoni e immigrati richiama da incomprensioni quotidiane fino a fatti di intolleranza balzati alla cronaca anche locale trentina.

*"TRENTO. Per amore della sua ragazza marocchina si era convertito all'Islam. Aveva anche cambiato nome e si faceva chiamare Karim. L'aveva sposata con rito islamico e le aveva anche comprato un appartamento dove la giovane aveva organizzato uno studio estetico. Diceva di essere innamorato perso. Peccato, però, che secondo la ragazza avesse attenzioni morbose e fosse eccessivamente geloso. Per questo motivo, un trentino di 41 anni è finito sotto processo con accuse da far tremare i polsi: sequestro di persona, maltrattamenti, estorsione e danneggiamento. Alla fine, grazie alla difesa dell'avvocato Giuliano Valer, l'uomo è stato assolto dalle accuse più gravi, ovvero, sequestro di persona e estorsione, ma è stato condannato a dieci mesi di reclusione per danneggiamenti"*<sup>7</sup>.

Per evitare anche il rischio di scadere in stereotipi e luoghi comuni della coppia mista come irrimediabilmente problematica ("mogli e buoi dei paesi tuoi") possiamo osservare che nella storia familiare spesso la nascita di figli meticci determina un incontro/scontro tra culture diverse, ma non sia una variabile indipendente. È evidente come un ruolo fondamentale si giochi nel rapporto dei due partner con la rispettiva famiglia di origine come la diversa flessibilità alle regole (quando sono condivise), tradizioni, valori culturali e sociali. Nel caso in cui l'incontro tra questi ceppi di valori e costrutti acquisiti una connotazione positiva sarà possibile attenderci una crescita armonica della coppia, altrimenti il livello di rischio di conflittualità e separazione potrà essere superiore rispetto alle coppie che condividono gli stessi valori culturali<sup>8</sup>.

#### TRA BISOGNI E VALORI NELLE COPPIE MISTE RILEVATI

*La necessità quindi di costruire nuovi strumenti, servizi e modalità di fare prevenzione (e anche clinica) psicologica passa anche dal prendere atto che esistono nuove popolazioni di soggetti che per essere compresi e trattati (anche clinicamente) c'è bisogno di conoscenze allargate, aggiuntive che spaziano nel campo della sociologia. La conoscenza approfondita e scientifica dei fenomeni migratori, delle condizioni etniche degli immigrati, delle trasformazioni economico - sociali che determinano la nuova società sono chiavi di volta per comprendere il fenomeno contemporaneo delle famiglie multietniche per porsi nella condizione di intervenire. Del resto non possiamo negare il processo di etnicizzazione che stiamo vivendo e questo deve coinvolgere anche i servizi di psicologia.*

#### PROBLEMATICHE

<sup>6</sup> Le famiglie miste. Laboratori culturali nella società trentina. *InfoSOCIALE 2004*

<sup>7</sup> <http://trentinocorrierealpi.gelocal.it/cronaca/2012/11/22/>

<sup>8</sup> Patrizia Fenaroli, Chiara Panari "Famiglie «miste» e identità culturali", Carocci

Tutte le unioni presentano delle criticità, in particolare, nelle coppie miste si deve tener conto di attribuzione di valori diversi. Bisogna essere pronti a mettersi in gioco e ad una continua negoziazione di modelli culturali diversi che ci fanno leggere la realtà in modo differenziato sapendo cogliere le mille sfumature come in un caleidoscopio.

Criticità rilevate che hanno portato le coppie miste ad entrare in relazione con il servizio "A TU PER TU-psicologo di base"

*A problemi legati alla genitorialità*

- conflitti rispetto all'educazione religiosa
- divergenze educative della coppia
- disagio tra i figli in età adolescenziale
- problemi di separazione ed economici

*B problemi legati alla dimensione familiare*

- affettivi (ci si sente soli)
- comunicativi
- gestione dei rapporti con i parenti
- aspettative nei ruoli di coppia
- difficoltà di mediazione

Dall'incontro con delle lavoratrici straniere, soprattutto Polacche e Rumene che lavorano come assistenti domiciliari in una cooperativa sociale di Trento è emerso che dopo un po' di anni di lavoro, dopo essersi sistemate con la casa, spesso chiedono il ricongiungimento di figli e coniuge che però non dà gli esiti sperati e attesi per tanto tempo.

I famigliari non sempre riescono a capire il cambiamento inevitabile della moglie che ha assunto modalità di vita diverse da quelle nel loro paese e che ora destabilizza la coppia. Questo è un caso di coppia in cui uno dei coniugi si è integrato ed adattato al nuovo contesto socio culturale. Spesso in queste coppie si osservano i fenomeni d'incongruenza e difficoltà di relazione tipici delle coppie miste.

Da qui la necessità di nuovi servizi che si occupino di nuovi bisogni in un'ottica multi disciplinare.

**APPROCCIO FENOMENOLOGICO E BIO-PSICO-SOCIALE PER LA RIDEFINIZIONE DEL SETTING**

Voler comprendere fenomeni complessi, spesso inesplorati e generatori anche di costrutti ibridi e certamente originali, apre la strada ad un necessario bagaglio tecnico di un professionista delle relazioni che sappia usare tecniche in grado di implementare e realizzare congruenza nel qui ed ora nelle persone. Per questo la possibilità di comprendere costrutti del tutto diversi, valori molto distanti dai nostri, significati di relazioni talvolta opposti, stili di adattamento e tensioni autorealizzative talvolta ambigue per noi, non può che passare attraverso una forte autodisciplina all'accettazione dell'altro. La relazione empatica è sicuramente una delle condizione fondamentale per riuscire ad entrare in relazione con universi di funzionamento che possono essere molto lontani dai nostri più conosciuti. Per questo la padronanza delle tecniche e degli strumenti della psicologia umanistica, credo sia importantissima per lavorare con queste richieste di aiuto. Certamente la globalizzazione è un fenomeno anche sociale oggi che in un passo diventa anche transculturale. Per questo gli strumenti della psicologia transculturale possono essere un ottimo strumento che aiutano e sostengono quelli della psicologia umanistica per comprendere come coppie miste riescano a integrare, più spesso a guidare, il loro comportamento nei confronti del coniuge e di una cultura adottiva.

## OBIETTIVI

Tra gli obiettivi c'è la ricerca della verità che spesso è mediana rispetto due (o più) verità mediate dalle culture dei rispettivi gruppi di appartenenza originari. Nella gestione delle esperienze critiche il focus è diretto al potenziamento del "conoscere se stessi" nell'ottica della congruenza tra "chi si è e chi si fa per essere" attraverso le incongruenze culturali e di costrutti interni. Sviluppare la capacità di cogliere le funzioni di rispecchiamento, validazione, e conferma di sé anche in schemi sociali differenti. Il miglioramento delle relazioni interpersonali è un obiettivo che può portare ad una maggiore comprensione delle proprie rappresentazioni interne di sé e degli altri; questo può essere un potente mezzo per il raggiungimento della congruenza emotiva che aiuti il processo di adattamento per le sue interazioni interpersonali e con il mondo esterno. Ogni intervento di prevenzione con gli immigrati deve tener presente della cultura esterna (quella di provenienza) ed interna (quella del nuovo paese).

PER A.P.B.P.S.  
ASSOCIAZIONE PSICOLOGIDI BASE E  
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## NEW FAMILIES ..... DIFFERENT NEEDS

### A PHOTOGRAPH OF MIXED FAMILIES

The frequency of mixed marriages, also known as interethnic, intercultural, over the last few years has increased significantly in Italy. For some couples it is the difference between the two people to be the attraction of one for the other, in others it is rather to be a reaction and a rejection of the system of values and family rules of origin to make a decisive contribution to construction of these couples.

"The company is not a simple sum of individuals, on the contrary, the system formed by their association represents a specific reality with its own characteristics. Certainly nothing collective may occur if they are not given the particular consciousnesses, but this necessary condition is not sufficient . It should be, too, that these consciousnesses are associated and combined in a certain way, this combination is the social life, and consequently it is this that explains it. Joining, penetrating, merging, individual souls give life to a being (mental, if we want) but is psychic individuality of a new kind. "

Istat data in 2010 showed that 8% of marriages in Italy had one of the spouses of different nationalities from the Italian one.

In "Flirting possible. Mixed couples in the Italian province "G. Peruzzi gives us an important contribution to the emerging phenomenon of relations also of mixed marriages (in Italy about 300,000 pairs regularly united in marriage in recent years). Although these couples were immediately risen to a symbol of integration and fusion of peoples, have however been neglected by sociological research, perhaps stopped by a "scientific modesty," to enter into the most intimate dynamics of family leaving a veil of little discussion of this crucial area of contemporary social phenomena.

Even articles such as "the couple is mixed" republic offer a snapshot of the extent of the problem "... are mixed couples in Italy, 29,000 in 2010, 6,000 more each year. A cultural revolution that the level of the heart and results in more than 25,000 multi-ethnic children: many are the children of "mixed" only born in 2009 in our country. "

These figures are expected to increase in the near future, so we can not take this into account and be prepared to deal with related issues. In the social landscape of the future will see new ethnic groups daughters of couples of different nationalities that begin to access services even psychology with expectations, constructs, requests, concerns, new needs.



And children, the fruit of these couples? For its social significance we then witness a phenomenon that we must not only acknowledge, but also ask ourselves, prepare ourselves and be already efficient in taking charge of new needs.

#### OTHER SERVICES OTHER NEEDS ...

One of the highlights of the Autonomous Province of Trento is the ability to have developed over the years an ethical and socio-political role of the non-profit sector and in particular the voluntary and private social services.

The Reform of the Welfare State also promotes the development of policies solidarity of the civil community. The protagonists of voluntary services thus assume an increasingly important role in society and delicate. It is therefore, to give answers to the needs and

actions to build social tours and operation that reveals the need to think in a new way (integrating the knowledge and tools in science and consciousness).

Unfortunately, the statements of the WHO Ottawa Charter, and affirmation of the operators themselves, to reveal how strong ideological motivations and ethical in their desire to promote health in a holistic sense often is not found adequate educational preparation and educational, psychological - social and organization.

To build the process of welfare care (as indicated by the latest policy guidance) seems to me necessary to start the investigation and proper analysis of the community and territorial needs and expectations of people and communities. You must also have the management skills of psychosocial orientation to design and implement new services and flexible. I believe it to be necessary to promote services, that know how to be "innovative" characterized by the need for efficiency and at the same time, a storage capacity of new emerging needs precisely, because of the economic and financial difficulties, as well as the push factors and changes in the value-shared that poses questions to which we must provide timely response.

To provide health, in the future we will be more able to respond with services that use models and tools that can respond to changing needs without sacrificing the achievements of acquired rights. It is a work of the network and the construction of social solidarity in the community, starting with the people, which offers the possibility of an incisive contribution to the change in relationships between people, services, institutions, according to a perspective of "social ecology". Limited to a pure institutional engineering project does not seem effective in changing the quality of life and promote solidarity. I think I need something more. It 's important to build new realities that can provide psycho-social support to contemporary phenomena (social and personal) and needs that developed the new social construct that the Third System.

Many managers of the third sector organizations (social cooperation, associations, foundations, voluntary movements of opinion, charitable) now believe that the goal of the next decade is to build training processes of citizens, capable of active citizenship and a socialization that promotes prosocial and generate new civic and community partnerships and between different cultures, improving relations in the area.

Taking care of people, we, the operators of the helping professions, know how the "problem" brought by the person actually is a star in a constellation made up of much more complex comorbidities, experiences,

emotions, perceptions, beliefs ... When people arrive services "psicoqualcosa" (psychiatry, clinical psychology, counseling ...) in most cases they do on sending other health specialists or when they feel the burden of their illness almost unbearable. This is because, until now, the development of these professions specialized activities in the treatment and prevention of diseases / problems of life was hard to think of a service that is able to stand in the right position between health and social services (F. Folgheraiter, 2012) . But times change and the needs of people with them. This is also the services must be able to respond. Integration of knowledge and new methodologies that seat with the tools and knowledge (psychology, sociology, pedagogy ...) has created a new service called "FACE TO FACE-Psychologist Base" designed by me (psychologist and sociologist) then further improved over the years.

Reasoning in prevention and public health, in the design of the service, I wanted to keep this area of innovation that would focus mainly on the creation of a service that can take charge of the person in all its complexity through the construction of a space specialized psycho-social level in which:

- a. were redefined stages of acceptance, listening, decoding the demand and need of reformulation brought over to redefine the aims of life;
  - b. open treatment in relation to different classes of membership: young people, adults, the elderly ...
  - c. enhanced system of supply of services to help people;
  - d. made more accessible through new mechanisms and rethinking of space services alongside the person;
- and. promoted in relation to these and other innovative actions, the dialogue with the institutions and social and health services of the area

## A NEW SERVICE

To achieve this in 2008 I created a new service that I called "FACE TO FACE-base psychologist." First of all, I emphasize a triple goal that was voted the service: the first take, on one side, the new needs in their early emergence of the first, if not anticipating, according to a model of psychosocial intervention that unmedicated offered personal support to education and to the activation of personal resilience of themselves and others, the third response to the need to contain social spending without reducing the degree of effectiveness.

FACE TO FACE-psychologist is proposed as a basic service can rank well in this triple director, we see why. On the one hand, the low-threshold, the anonymity, the means of intervention "soft" but no less effective, and the issues and requirements of the users are bearers, place him outside the boundaries of existing services. If it is true that, even for the well-known consequences brought by the crisis, mental health centers are forced against their will to discern and select cases of jurisdiction according to their degree of severity - often the border for access is made the disease - it is equally true that the needs of programming and planning put boundaries to the services themselves, but the fit between a service and the other can not be perfectly mating: inevitably, the jersey may not be so narrow as to leave no pass any case.

Here, therefore, that the location of our service space located in the interstices of these boundaries, placing itself by definition outside of interventions already provided, tested and able to bring results marked effectiveness and efficiency because it is determined by an organic vision and structured uninflected for each category of users.

The clinical professions (such as clinical psychology) focus on diseases that consist identify and address problems in a classic "medical model" declined in the early stages of diagnosis and treatment.

Social professions (such as social services) carry out their duties as part of an organized system of social resources. "The social worker is a social worker who, acting in accordance with the principles, knowledge and methods specific to the profession, carries out its activities within the organized system of resources made available by the community, for the benefit of individuals, groups and families to prevent and resolve situations of need, helping the user in the use of such personal and social resources, organizing and promoting benefits and services to a wider response of the same to the particular situations of need and the needs of autonomy and responsibility of individuals, and enhancing this purpose helps the community's resources." (Ministry of the Interior Division of General Civil Services) . Psychologist basic, so it is designed to be a professional that has a broader theoretical guidance and tools that draw on different areas psychology built by me. This is necessary to be able to understand the very broad spectrum of potential discomfort brought by people who turn to a non-specialist service. means then that the psychologist should have basic knowledge about the different models and psychological tools (humanistic, dynamic, cross-cultural ...), but also sociological (and update knowledge about macro phenomena socio-cultural, economic, ...) and be able to also learn about pedagogical models. This is not a logical omniscience, but acceptance, sharing and reworking of the problems presented by the people for a readjustment of the

person. The psychologist base, so it is designed to be a professional that has a broader theoretical guidance and tools that draw on different areas of psychology that I built. This is necessary to be able to understand the very broad spectrum of potential discomfort brought by people who turn to a non-specialist service. Therefore means that the psychologist should have basic knowledge about the different models and psychological tools (humanistic, dynamic, cross-cultural ...), but also sociological (and update knowledge about macro phenomena socio-cultural, economic, ...) and be able to also learn about pedagogical models . This is not a logical omniscience, but acceptance, sharing and re-elaboration of the problems brought by the people for a readjustment of the person.

The action of the psychologist base, conceived by me, is not directed to the search for causes of a disease, but analysis of a situation that constitutes a problem. The advice is geared to the reconstruction and interpretation of this to promote ameliorative action to the subject and consequently to its environment (family, friends, colleagues ...)

Turning to a "public" again, it was necessary to study a new method of approach to help and empowerment of the people that I have developed and perfected over the years. The method has in fact been realized in a psycho-social model that did not have connections with the manner of clinical psychology, nor the conduct of interviews purely social welfare. (Reference to another location further details).

WORK WITH FAMILIES MIXED

The different types of people who have turned to the two-year experiment (out of three different municipalities) has confirmed that in the areas of mechanisms of social production: reconciling family, work, mixed families, welfare is poorly active leaving the company 's burden of trying to build pathways are not always self-sufficient nor efficient. To the service is also a representation of mixed families where we want to focus here. These efforts have reported related to integration, separations, disappointments and failures experienced as a burden often too much to bear for contemporary families and not mixed in the case of those ethnic often seen sharpened. It is clear therefore important to be able to provide support interventions or emotional support that realize the passing of a difficult life situation. It is therefore to have a focus and a broader horizon privileged observation including, as taught by the humanistic view, the inner world of people, but also external and social phenomena such as customs. Relate to a perceived attitude consolidation maybe the limit can easily be mistaken for pathology or deviance and producing reports difficult. So the identity and personal integrity can be felt in danger or stressed by attitudes of others perceived and encoded with different lenses. Often the ways of people with different constructs may be unintelligible or incomprehensible to another and this influence in a decisive way the informal relationships and even more significant as those between spouses of different ethnic groups. (F. Folgheraiter, 2012).

In this often compounded by cultural difficulties that may arise as a result of different educational constructs cultural legacies not in tune that often influence the perception of everyday life and world view (as claimed by the humanistic model Rogers). This translates into an ability to be resilient and often find solutions to everyday problems so very different that can bring much to the test partners of different ethnic groups. So for mixed families looms even more necessary to a clear picture of reality informative and above all accessible and shareable. It therefore seems useful opportunity of confrontation constructs and behavioral models, instruments of relief to understand the other accompanying spouses in a process of building their personal space and family.

Furthermore, in addition to the obvious potential that this type of offers families such as cultural enrichment and the spread of ethnic solidarity, they also highlight a number of critical issues that require a "double work" that requires "mediation to manage internal differences (language, values , religious ...). "Inter-ethnic relations between natives and immigrants drawn up by misunderstanding daily facts of intolerance jumped to chronicle local thirty. TRENT. "For the sake of his Moroccan girl had converted to Islam. He also changed his name and called himself Karim. He had married with Islamic rites and had also purchased an apartment where the girl had organized a beauty salon. He said he was in love lost. Too bad, though, that the second girl had morbid attention and was excessively jealous. For this reason, a Trentino of 41 years ended on trial on charges to shake the wrists kidnapping, harassment, extortion and corruption. In the end, thanks to the defense lawyer Julian Valer, man has been acquitted of the most serious allegations, namely, kidnapping and extortion, but was sentenced to ten months' imprisonment for damage"

To avoid the risk of falling into stereotypes and clichés of the mixed couple as hopelessly problematic ("wives and oxen from yours") we can observe in the family history often have children mestizos determines a meeting / clash between different cultures, but is not an independent variable. It is clear that we play a vital role in the relationship of the two partners with their family of origin, such as different flexibility to the rules (when they are

shared), traditions, cultural and social values. In the event that the meeting between these strains of the acquired values and constructs a positive connotation, you can expect a harmonious growth of the couple, or the level of risk of conflict and separation may be greater than couples who share the same cultural values .

#### BETWEEN NEEDS AND VALUES IN MIXED PAIRS DETECTED

Hence the need to build new tools, services and ways of doing prevention (and clinical) psychology also passes by noting that there are new populations of subjects to be understood and treated (including clinical) need to spread knowledge, additional ranging in the field of sociology. The knowledge and scientific migration, ethnic conditions of immigrants, economic transformations - social aspects that determine the new company are keys to understanding the contemporary phenomenon of multi-ethnic families to place himself in a position to intervene. Besides, we can not deny the process of ethnicization in which we live, and this must also involve psychological services.

#### PROBLEMS

All unions are critical issues, in particular, in the mixed pairs must be taken into account for the allocation of different values. Be ready to get involved and constant negotiation of different cultural models that make us see reality in a different way

knowing seize the many shades like a kaleidoscope.

Critical issues that led to mixed couples to enter into a relationship with the "FACE TO FACE-base psychologist"

A parenting issues

- conflicts over religious education
- educational differences torque
- discomfort among the children in adolescence
- separation problems and economic

B issues related to family size

- affective (it feels only)
- communicative
- management of relations with relatives
- expectations of the roles of torque
- the difficulties of mediation

The encounter with the foreign workers, mainly Polish and Romanian working as carers in a social cooperative Trento showed that after a bit 'of years of work, having arranged with the house, often ask the reunification of spouses and children but does not give the

desired results and expected for a long time.

The families do not always understand the inevitable change of the wife who has assumed way of life different from those in their home country and are now destabilizing the couple. This is a case of a couple where one of the spouses is integrated and adapted to the new socio-cultural context. Often these couples are observed the phenomena of inconsistency and relationship difficulties typical of mixed couples.

Hence the need for new services that deal with new needs in a multi disciplinary.

#### PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH AND BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIAL FOR THE DEFINITION OF SETTING

If we want to understand complex phenomena, often unexplored and even generators of hybrid constructs and certainly original, paves the way for the necessary technical skills of a professional relationship that knows how to use techniques to implement and achieve consistency in the here and now in people. This is

the ability to understand all of the different constructs, a very distant from our own, sometimes opposite meanings of relationships, styles of adaptation and tensions self realization sometimes ambiguous to us, can only pass through a strong self-regulatory acceptance of others. The empathic relationship is definitely one of the fundamental condition for being able to get in touch with universes operation may be very far from our most popular. For this reason mastery of the techniques and tools of humanistic psychology, I think it is important to work with these requests for help. Of course, globalization is a social phenomenon even today that in one step becomes transcultural (George Devereux, Thobie Nathan, Marie Rose Moro). For this reason the tools of cross-cultural psychology can be a great tool to help and support those of humanistic psychology to understand how mixed couples are able to integrate, more often to drive, their behavior towards the spouse and foster a culture.

## OBJECTIVES

Among the objectives is the search for truth that is often compared median two (or more) truth-mediated cultures of their membership groups originating. In the management of critical experiences, the focus is directed to the development of "know thyself" in the context of congruence between "who you are and whom you do to be" through the cultural inconsistencies and internal constructs. Develop the ability to understand the functions of mirroring, validation, and confirmation of self in different social patterns. The improvement of interpersonal relationships is a goal that can lead to a greater understanding of their internal representations of self and others, and this can be a powerful means for the attainment of emotional congruence to help the process of adaptation to its interpersonal interactions and the outside world. Any prevention intervention with immigrants must take into account the external culture (the original one) and internal (that of the new country).

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## Famiglia come, integrazione multiculturale: un'esperienza di comunità concreta

Con L' Istituto Comprensivo di scuola elementare e media Vigolo Vattaro ( in provincia di Trento) è stato presentato, entro il piano giovani di zona dell'altipiano della Vigolana 2011<sup>1</sup> della provincia di Trento, il progetto dal titolo "Famiglia come".

Rilevante nel progetto sono stati lo sforzo e la volontà realizzare un intervento innovativo con azioni multidisciplinari integrate che mirassero a rispondere ai bisogni giovanili e delle famiglie, rilevati sul territorio. In particolare il focus progettuale è stato concentrato sul supporto alla genitorialità e all'adozione, alla multiculturalità e al dialogo inter-generazionale. Si è voluto inoltre coinvolgere i nuclei d'identità locale e gli enti territoriali impegnati in prima fila nell'assistenza e promozione della salute. L'intenzione è stata quella di sviluppare una progettualità locale differente e localmente interessante attraverso il coinvolgimento diretto del pubblico ( bambini, genitori e adulti della comunità), ma anche di costruire una risposta formativa/informativa dei servizi ed enti territoriali in un'ottica interdisciplinare integrata.

Il progetto è stato inserito all'interno di una logica di miglioramento dei livelli di inclusione sociale e territoriale dei ragazzi e delle loro famiglie. Si è voluta dare particolare attenzione alle problematiche: dell'adozione, delle nuove famiglie ( che vivono le separazioni e le ricomposizioni in nuove famiglie allargate) e della multiculturalità. Trovandoci a confronto ed in presenza di dinamiche sociali/famigliari differenti rispetto al passato, ci siamo proposti di riconoscere e conoscere meglio la realtà della famiglia nel contesto odierno e locale. Domandandoci perché, di fronte alle caratteristiche del mondo liquido contemporaneo, molti giovani sentano la tendenza ad agire comportamenti violenti o a ritirarsi dalla comunità ( in droghe, alcol, internet... )<sup>2</sup> proponendoci di far emergere le problematiche più frequenti, di confrontarsi ed insieme cercare di dare i significati, gli strumenti e/o risposte più efficaci per migliorare le logiche di convivenza transgenerazionali e transculturali di comunità.

"Famiglia come" è stato ideato seguendo criteri di responsabilità sociale, efficienza e razionalità, secondo un orientamento volto alla collaborazione tra gli enti territoriali. Il progetto è stato ideato cercando anche di raccogliere l'invito a formulare e concretizzare nuove idee per un nuovo welfare lanciato durante il Meeting di Rimini del 2011 da Lorenzo Malagola, Capo della Segreteria Tecnica del Ministro del Lavoro. In particolare abbiamo condiviso l'importanza di occuparci di sociale tenendo bene in considerazione i più moderni orientamenti di welfare che intendono il futuro delle politiche sociali passare dal modello assistenziale (cioè passivo) alla sussidiarietà (partecipazione attiva della persona). Così abbiamo tratto nuova motivazione e slancio per raccogliere la sfida e non farci trovare impreparati ai nuovi bisogni delle persone anche sul piano dell'integrazione multiculturale. Per questo i protagonisti del progetto hanno tenuto ben presente l'importanza di costruire nuove forme di solidarietà e coesione sociale partendo da chiavi prettamente culturali delle persone e delle comunità cercando anche di offrire risposte concrete alle famiglie del territorio partendo dai bisogni dei singoli in una logica di prevenzione del disagio sociale. Certi che la famiglia sia "... luogo naturale primo e privilegiato dell'educazione delle persone, del loro sviluppo e del loro inserimento nella società"<sup>3</sup>

Nella fase progettuale, i risultati attesi erano quelli di informare, conoscere, capire i fenomeni sociali dell'intercultura e delle relazioni familiari e di comunità dei quali ancora c'era poca conoscenza sul territorio oltre ad approfondire le dinamiche dei cambiamenti della nostra epoca. Tra gli obiettivi, aumentare consapevolezza sulla mutata realtà sociale dell'Altopiano e favorire un confronto tra la nostra realtà e quella di altre parti del mondo.

La scelta di affrontare argomenti stimolanti il dibattito ed il confronto intergenerazionale ed interculturale intreccia l'idea di attivare sinergicamente due percorsi separati. L'intento si rivolge a costruire empowerment sociale sugli

<sup>1</sup> il Piano Giovani di Zona (PGZ). Rappresenta una libera iniziativa delle autonomie locali di una zona le cui dimensioni dovranno essere comprese fra le 3.000 e le 45.000 unità che vogliono attuare azioni di sensibilizzazione dei giovani della comunità tra gli 11 e i 29 anni.

<sup>2</sup> Bauman Zygmunt; Mazzeo Riccardo "Conversazioni sull'educazione" Centro Studi Erickson 2011

<sup>3</sup> Agostino Portera "Educazione interculturale in famiglia" La Scuola, 2004

argomenti proposti contemporaneamente alla comunità adulta ed alla comunità giovanile ( con le modalità debitamente differenti), con l'intenzione di favorire un dialogo all'interno delle stesse famiglie, mettendo a confronto genitori che partecipano agli eventi informativi serali e figli che partecipano ai laboratori dentro la scuola.

Il processo di progettazione si è composto di diverse tappe decisionali in cui si sono elaborati<sup>4</sup>:

- Gli obiettivi educativi che si volevano raggiungere;
- Gli argomenti da trattare ( con i bambini e con gli adulti);
- L'articolazione degli eventi in moduli;
- Le tecniche formative/informative da impegnare;
- L'ordine in cui porre le varie parti;
- Gli spazi e la composizione dei gruppi

Il percorso è stato strutturato su due piani d'azione entro un arco temporale di un anno:

- A. Laboratori esperienziali;
- B. Formativo di confronto

#### A. LABORATORI ESPERIENZIALI:

Le attività psicopedagogiche-esperienziali sono state progettate, ideate e condotte dai professionisti di A.P.B.P.S. Psicologi di Base. Vista la complessità delle azioni e la numerosità dei partecipanti è stata prevista la copresenza di due professionisti: uno psicologo e una pedagoga esperti in comunicazione e gestione dei gruppi.

La loro realizzazione ha visto la suddivisione in tre momenti distinti:

- I. Incontro con i rappresentanti del corpo docenti
- II. Laboratori esperienziali in aula con i bambini
- III. Feedback al corpo docente

##### *I. Incontro con i rappresentanti del corpo docenti*

L'incontro con i rappresentanti del corpo docente ha impegnato un briefing di un'ora e mezza sia per condividere gli obiettivi ( micro e macro) del progetto, sia per acquisire, da parte dei professionisti di A.P.B.P.S. Psicologi di Base, importanti informazioni circa le percezioni del corpo docente sulle unità di classe e sui diversi bambini che avrebbero poi partecipato alle attività. Tra le richieste specifiche raccolte, menzioniamo quella di poter evincere l'esistenza di possibili problematiche di isolamento vissute da una studentessa di una classe e di poter dare delle indicazioni in merito.

##### *II. Laboratori esperienziali in aula*

Le attività sono state condotte con le due classi prime di scuola secondaria di primo grado dell'istituto. Il ciclo di incontri è stato programmato tra i mesi di ottobre e novembre 2011. Ciascuna classe contava la presenza di circa 25 bambini per un totale di circa 50 ( il numero ha potuto variare nel corso degli interventi a causa di assenze da scuola per malattia). Ogni esperienza è stata strutturata in giornate esperienziali di due ore ciascuna e per ogni classe.

In particolare tutte le attività sono state costruite dando massima attenzione a:

- ❖ Le indicazioni fornite dagli insegnanti circa i bambini partecipanti, gli obiettivi;
- ❖ La disponibilità degli spazi;
- ❖ Le aspettative intorno al progetto

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<sup>4</sup> M.Castagna "Progettare la formazione. Guida metodologica per la progettazione del lavoro in aula". Franco Angeli 2002

Per le i bambini sono stati divisi in sottogruppi di 6 (7 quando il numero totale lo rendesse necessario) che hanno lavorato su consegne specifiche date dai professionisti dell'associazione A.P.B.P.S. "Psicologi di Base" responsabili del progetto.

Il percorso formativo e di confronto, dedicato alle famiglie, era aperto a tutta la comunità infatti a conclusione delle attività è stata tenuta presso l'auditorium una serata di discussione e confronto durante la quale si è potuto rispondere dai quesiti psico-pedagogici portati dai genitori intervenuti anche quanto emerso dai laboratori stessi.

Le ore sono state organizzate seguendo un calendario che prevedesse la somministrazione di giochi formativi creativi su tematiche specifiche e simulazioni in particolare:

#### *Giochi formativi*

*“Provare a sentirsi esclusi dagli altri”*

Obiettivo: proporre gli effetti dell'emarginazione di un bambino dal gruppo dei pari, esaminando ed approfondendo le percezioni, emozioni e sentimenti quando ci si sente rifiutati e quando invece ci sentiamo parte di un gruppo.

*“Sperimentare la derisione altrui”*

Obiettivo: sperimentare e riflettere sulle conseguenze del sentirsi derisi e presi in giro dagli altri. Sviluppare empatia e riconoscimento per gli altri che possono trovarsi in questa situazione.

*“Entrare in un gruppo e codici comunicativi”*

Obiettivo: apprendere che nei gruppi ci possono essere codici comunicativi differenti. La comprensione, l'utilizzo e la condivisione di questi codici verbali e comportamentali possono garantire l'inclusione di un soggetto all'interno di un gruppo. Diversamente possono portare all'esclusione ed al rifiuto.

#### *Simulazioni*

Obiettivo: recitare la parte di qualcun altro come ad esempio di un bambino che viene da un'altra scuola, un alunno straniero, un insegnante che deve gestire casi specifici. Ha permesso ai partecipanti di simulare le percezioni e le emozioni che possono essere vissute dai diversi protagonisti oltre a cogliere, il rispecchiarsi, anche comportamenti di cui prima non era consapevole.

Essendo evidente che nel campo dell'educazione e dell'intercultura (anche per i motivi sopra) richiedono competenze integrate di sociologia, psicologia e pedagogia per rispondere con progetti coerenti alle evidenze etiche e di condivisione di nuove azioni educative le metodologie relazionali studiate e utilizzate da A.P.B.P.S. Psicologi di Base sono state riconosciute efficaci sebbene innovative applicate alla scuola.

#### *III. Feedback*

Dopo aver analizzato il percorso pedagogico sono state presentate le evidenze esperienziali raccolte durante il processo formativo/educativo esperienziale. Sono inoltre state condivise alcune inferenze di natura relazionale sistemica dei gruppi classe. I professionisti di A.P.B.P.S. Psicologi di Base hanno risposto alle domande e curiosità formulate dai docenti.

## **B. FORMATIVO E DI CONFRONTO :**

In particolare la metodologia della gestione della serata (di tipo conferenziale ma gestita secondo canoni comunicativi di partecipazione attiva) ha permesso di costruire un percorso innovativo avendo come obiettivo la solidarietà. Attraverso gli stimoli proposti dai conduttori e raccolti dai partecipanti è stato possibile spaziare dai significati dell'emigrazione, all'intercultura, all'educazione, all'integrazione anche quotidiana del diverso. E' stato così possibile stimolare, oltre alla discussione, anche la curiosità e la partecipazione permettendo l'affiorare delle incertezze, delle paure e dei bisogni delle persone direttamente coinvolte in una logica di risposta e raccolta dei bisogni della gente del territorio. La promozione di queste attività è stata voluta con l'auspicio di innescare un processo di educazione alla "reciprocità" e potenziare la valorizzazione alla solidarietà di comunità. Attraverso percorsi strutturati (esperienziali e di significato) tesi ad insegnare ai giovani ed ai loro caregivers a considerarsi come uno tra gli altri e gli altri come

riferimenti e specchi di se stessi, si è cercato di spiegare che educare alla pace non significa negare la guerra o il conflitto, ma interiorizzare e promuovere il rispetto reciproco, l'accettazione delle differenze e più in generale l'educazione alla condivisione dei valori della comunità e del nostro prossimo.

Gli incontri con le famiglie (partendo dall' introduzione delle tematiche sopra menzionate) hanno permesso di raggiungere un triplice obiettivo:

1. Acquisire, attraverso l'interazione diretta coi partecipanti, una vasta gamma di bisogni percepiti dagli intervenuti;
2. cogliere il tema "l'educazione alla complessità e dell'intercultura".
3. Informare le persone

Per affrontare al meglio l'ampio ventaglio di proposte sono state realizzate quattro differenti serate a tema in cui si sono alternati attori diversi.

Nello specifico sono intervenuti :

- uno psicologo ha parlato di "nuove famiglie...vecchi bisogni",
- due assistenti sociali del servizio socio assistenziale della Comunità di Valle hanno parlato di "riflessioni sulla genitorialità adottiva e sull'inserimento dei minori nella realtà sociale",
- il presidente dell'associazione Cuam medici con l'Africa Trentino ha parlato di "La famiglia immigrata. La domanda di salute del bambino e dell'adolescente",
- il presidente e la vicepresidente - di A.P.B.P.S. Psicologi di Base hanno presentato "il valore della cultura in famiglia"

#### MODALITÀ DI SOCIALIZZAZIONE DEL PROGETTO E DELLE SUE ATTIVITÀ

Si è scelto di pubblicizzare il progetto soprattutto attraverso i canali informali del passa parola con un supporto di un numero limitato di locandine pubblicate su web e inviate come informativa via e-mails ai contatti delle organizzazioni coinvolte in prima linea.

#### STRUMENTI DI VALUTAZIONE

Sono stati somministrati questionari di soddisfazione ai partecipanti.

È stata valutata la partecipazione della comunità come indicatore dell'interesse.

I professionisti di A.P.B.P.S. Psicologi di base hanno inoltre condotto un'osservazione partecipata che ha permesso una ricerca qualitativa basata sul paradigma interpretativo ( P. Corbetta 2003<sup>5</sup>). Prendendo parte attiva alle attività svolte con i bambini, gli osservatori hanno potuto porsi in una posizione privilegiata per poter evincere le dinamiche di socializzazione e relazione nei gruppi classe. L'interazione ha permesso così di svolgere una ricerca caratterizzata dall'empatia e l'identificazione ( resa possibile dalla specifica preparazione dei professionisti) che ha rivelato tratti prima poco chiari finanche nascosti.

PER ASSOCIAZIONE A.P.B.P.S.  
ASSOCIAZIONE PSICOLOGI DI BASE  
E PROFESSIONISTI DELLA SALLUTE  
PRESIDENTE  
dr. Richard Eugen Unterrichter

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<sup>5</sup> P. Corbetta "Laricerca sociale: metodologia e tecniche" il Mulino 2003

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ENGLISH VERSION

**FAMILY AS: PSYCHO-SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF INTERCULTURAL IN THE PROVINCE OF TRENTO.**

With the Comprehensive School of Elementary and Middle school Vigolo Vattaro (province of Trento) was presented within the plan area of the plateau of young Vigolana 2011 in the Province of Trento, the project entitled "Family as".

Relevant to the project were the effort and will make an intervention with innovative integrated multidisciplinary actions that were designed to meet the needs of youth and families, found in the area. In particular, the project focus was concentrated on support for parents and adoption, multicultural and intergenerational dialogue. It also wanted to involve the groups of local identity and local entities involved in the first row in the care and health promotion. The intention was to develop a local, different and interesting plan through the direct involvement of the public (children, parents and adults in the community), but also to build a response training / information services and local authorities in an interdisciplinary integrated.

The project was included within the logic of improving the levels of social and territorial inclusion of children and their families. We wanted to give special attention to the problems: adoption new families (living separations and new shifts in extended families) and multiculturalism. Finding a comparison in the presence of dynamic social / family different than in the past, we proposed to recognize and learn more about the reality of the family in today's context and local levels. Wondering why, when faced with the characteristics of the liquid contemporary world, many young people feel a tendency to act violent behavior or withdraw from the community (drugs, alcohol, internet ...) proposing to bring out the most common problems, to deal with and try to give meanings, tools and / or more effective responses to improve the logic of coexistence transgenerational and transcultural community.

"Family as" is designed according to criteria of social responsibility, efficiency and rationality, according to an orientation aimed at co-operation between local authorities. The project was conceived by trying to respond to the invitation to formulate and implement new ideas for a new welfare launched during the Meeting in Rimini in 2011 by Lorenzo Malagola, Chief Technical Advisor of the Minister of Labour. In particular, we shared the importance of taking care of the social good into account the latest guidelines of welfare which means the future of social policy shift from welfare (ie passive) subsidiarity (active participation of the person). So we have drawn new motivation and enthusiasm for the challenge and not find us unprepared for the new needs of the people also in terms of multicultural integration. For the protagonists of this project have kept in mind the importance of building new forms of solidarity and social cohesion keys starting from purely cultural people and communities also trying to provide concrete answers to the families of the area starting from the needs of individuals in a logic prevention of social problems. Convinced that the family is "... natural place first and privileged education of the people, their development and their integration into society"

In the design phase, the expected results were to inform, to know, to understand social phenomena intercultural and family relationships and community of which still had little knowledge of the area as well

as investigate the dynamics of changes of our time. One of the objectives to increase awareness of the changed social reality Plateau and facilitate a comparison between our reality and that of other parts of the world.

The choice of topics addressing the stimulating debate and discussion intergenerational and intercultural weaves the idea of synergistically activate two separate paths. The intent is aimed at building social empowerment topics proposed simultaneously with the adult community and the youth community (in the manner duly different), with the intention of promoting a dialogue within the same families, comparing parents who participate in information events and evening children participating laboratories in the school.

The design process consists of several stages of decision-making in which they are processed:

- The educational objectives they wanted to achieve;
- The topics to be covered (with children and with adults);
- The organization of events in modules;
- The technical training / information to be committed;
- The order in which to place the various parts;
- Spaces and composition of the groups

The course has been structured on two action plans within a period of one year:

- A. Experiential workshops;
- B. Formation of comparison

#### A. EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP:

Pedagogical and experiential activities are designed, planned and carried out by professionals APBPS Psychologists Base. Given the complexity of the actions and the large number of participants was expected to co-presence of two professionals: a psychologist and an educator experts in communication and group management.

Their implementation has seen the division into three distinct phases:

- I. Meeting with representatives of the faculty
- II. Experiential workshops in the classroom with children
- III. Feedback to faculty

## I. Meeting with representatives of the faculty

The meeting with the representatives of the teaching staff committed a briefing an hour and a half for both share the objectives (micro and macro) of the project is to acquire, by professionals APBPS Psychologists Base, important information about the perceptions of teachers on class unity and several children who would later participate in the activities. Among the specific requirements collected, we mention that it can be inferred that there may be problems of isolation experienced by a student of a class and can give indications about.

## II. Experiential workshops in the classroom

The activities were conducted with the two first classes of secondary school degree institution. The cycle of meetings has been scheduled between the months of October and November 2011. Each class counted the presence of about 25 children for a total of about 50 (the number could vary over the course of interventions because of absence from school for disease). Every experience has been structured experiential days of two hours each and every class.

In particular, all activities have been built, giving as much attention to:

- The guidance provided by teachers about children participants, objectives;
- The availability of spaces;
- The expectations around the project

For the children were divided into subgroups of 6 (7 when the total number makes this necessary) who worked on specific dates deliveries by professional association APBPS "Psychologists Base" project managers.

The training and discussion, devoted to family, was open to the entire community in fact, at the conclusion of the activity, was held at the auditorium an evening discussion and debate during which it was possible to answer questions from the psycho-pedagogical brought by parents and also from what emerged in the laboratories themselves.

The hours have been organized according to a schedule providing for the administration of educational games and creative simulations on specific issues in particular:



## Educational games

"Try to feel excluded by others"

Objective: To propose effects of exclusion of a child from the peer group, examining and deepening perceptions, emotions and feelings when you feel rejected and when we feel part of a group.

"Experience the derision of others"

Objective: to experience and reflect on the consequences of feeling mocked and teased by others. Develop empathy and recognition for others who may find themselves in this situation.

"Joining a group and codes of communication"

Objective: To learn that there may be groups in different communication codes. Understanding, use and sharing of these verbal and behavioral codes can ensure the inclusion of a subject within a group. Otherwise may lead to the exclusion and rejection.

## Simulations

Objective: To play the part of someone else such as a child coming from another school, a foreign student, a teacher should handle specific cases. It allowed participants to simulate the perceptions and emotions that may be experienced by different actors to take over, the reflected, even behaviors which was not previously aware.

It is clear that in the field of education and intercultural (for the reasons above) require integrated skills of sociology, psychology and pedagogy to meet with projects that are consistent with the evidence and ethical sharing of new shares educational methodologies relational studied and used by APBPS Base psychologists have been recognized although effective innovative applied to the school.

## III. Feedback

After analyzing the educational approach were presented experiential evidence gathered during the training / experiential training. They were also shared some inferences relational nature of systemic class groups. Professionals A.P.B.P.S. Psychologists Basic answered questions and curiosities made by teachers.

## B. TRAINING AND COMPARISON:

In particular, the methodology of management of the evening ( conferencing type but managed according to the canons of active communication) has helped to build an innovative path with the objective solidarity. Through the incitement offered by the conductors and collected by the participants was possible meanings range from migration, intercultural, education, the integration of everyday also different. It was thus possible to stimulate, in addition to the discussion, the curiosity and participation allowing the emergence of the uncertainties, fears and needs of people directly involved in a logical response and collection needs of the people of the territory. The promotion of these activities has been wanted in the hope of triggering a process of education for "reciprocity" and increase the value to the solidarity of the community. Through structured pathways (experiential and meaning) designed to teach young people and their caregivers to be considered as one among others, and others as references and mirrors of ourselves, we tried to explain that educating for peace is not to deny the war or conflict, but internalize and promote mutual respect, acceptance of differences and, more generally, the education share the values of the community and our neighbours.

The family meetings (starting from 'introduction of the issues mentioned above) have enabled us to achieve three main goals:

1. Acquire, through direct interaction with participants, a wide range of needs perceived by the participants;
2. grasp the theme "education and intercultural complexity."
3. Inform people

To better address the wide range of proposals have been made four different themed nights where you are alternating different actors.

The components are present:

- A psychologist spoke of "new families ... the old wants,

- Two social service social welfare of the Community of Valle spoke of "reflections on parenting adoptive children and entering into society,"
  
- The president of Cuam Doctors with Africa Trentino spoke of "the immigrant family. The demand for health of children and adolescents "
  
- The president and vice president - of APBPS Psychologists Basic presented  
 "The value of culture in the family"

#### WAYS OF SOCIALIZATION OF THE PROJECT AND ITS ACTIVITIES

You have chosen to publicize the project mainly through informal channels of word of mouth to support a limited number of posters published on the web and send out information via e-mails to the contacts of the organizations involved in the front line.

#### ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Satisfaction questionnaires were administered to the participants.

We assessed the participation of the community as an indicator of interest.

Professionals A.P.B.P.S. Psychologists base also conducted participatory observation which allowed a qualitative research based on the interpretive paradigm (P. Corbetta 2003). Taking an active part in activities with the children, the observers were able to be in a position to be able to infer the dynamics of socialization and relationship in class groups. The interaction has enabled it to carry out a research characterized by empathy and identification (made possible by specially trained professionals) who revealed first unclear whether even hidden.

ASSOCIATION FOR A.P.B.P.S.

PSYCHOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION OF BASE

And POFESSIONISTS OF HEALTH

PRESIDENT

dr. Richard Eugen Unterrichter

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## ***Per una Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile***

*Di Matteo Zapparoli*

### ***Il tempo passato***

Il periodo che va dagli anni '50 agli anni'80, è stato un momento storico di importante sviluppo sociale, industriale e culturale. Erano gli anni successivi a grandi conflitti bellici, che hanno caratterizzato la prima metà del ventesimo secolo, prima e seconda guerra mondiale.

In Italia e nel mondo si assiste ad una ricostruzione, che corrisponde anche con la costruzione di una nuova modernità. Lo stato si fa garante dei diritti sociali del cittadino; accesso alla scuola, diritti del lavoro, accesso alla sanità. Sono importanti anni anche per le grandi conquiste culturali e sociali del nostro paese, che in pochi anni si spoglia del passato e, fiducioso di una sua maggiore sicurezza (Zapparoli, 2011), si lancia verso l'integrazione di nuovi possibili modi di essere (ruolo della donna, legge sul divorzio, interruzione di gravidanza, legge Basaglia).

In Italia, la legge Basaglia vieta l'esistenza di Istituzioni Totali per persone con disagio psichico. Noi siamo l'unico paese al mondo ad avere percorso la strada che restituisce il diritto alla persona di non essere incarcerato, spesso anche a vita, per motivazioni sanitarie.

Nascono i Centri di Salute Mentale, per passare dal potere istituzionale della medicina, metaforicamente rappresentata dal palazzo (manicomio), al potere restituito alla persona (il territorio), in cui esisteva anche il servizio di Psicoterapia, che si andava ad integrare con tutte le altre figure, sanitarie e non, che operavano da rete istituzionale, per permettere alla persona, nel momento di crisi, di non cadere nel vuoto, ma grazie all'intervento complesso e diversificato, di riuscire a rientrare nel contesto sociale. A quei tempi vi erano le risorse economiche e culturali per pensare a questo tipo di futuro.

### ***Il tempo presente***

L'assenza di una volontà politica chiara in temi strutturalmente importanti

come la “cura per la salute”, la degenerazione culturale e politica dell'ultimo trentennio, ci hanno portato alla realtà odierna dove, la risposta specialistica che riceviamo nelle pubbliche istituzioni, è ormai dirottata in maniera quasi prevalente verso un riduzionismo biomedico del farmaco (Fasolo 2009, Sparvoli, Di Massimo, 2008, Fasolo, Ambrosiani, Cordioli, 2005, Michelini, Grasseau, 2003, Illich, 1976), dimenticando il dovere deontologico sanitario di erogare un appropriato intervento che comprenda anche la psicoterapia, come per legge i servizi sono tenuti a fare, dal momento che la psicoterapia è riconosciuta dai LEA, Livelli Essenziali di Assistenza, con decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri del 2008 (Piperno, 2009 p.143).

Le istituzioni sanitarie sono indietreggiate ad un livello precedente di una quasi totale farmacologizzazione delle relazioni con gli utenti. Il riduzionismo biomedico accentuato sempre più da una ricerca infinita verso la specializzazione, ha incrementato le conoscenze e migliorato sinceramente la “cura”, ma questo ha paradossalmente incrementato la distanza dal “prendersi cura” (Piperno, Stancati, 2009). Gli psichiatri sono automaticamente (noi crediamo ingiustamente, vista l'assenza formativa evidente) riconosciuti come psicoterapeuti, ma non esistono i tempi per permettere loro di operare in maniera congruente alla costruzione di un setting psicoterapeutico con i clienti. Gli psicoterapeuti, là dove esistono, lavorano con bacini di utenza che rendono statisticamente insignificante il loro impatto nella presa in carico delle persone (nel territorio di Mantova, per esempio, per un bacino di utenza pubblica di 50.000 persone, esistono due Psicologi nel consultorio familiare ed uno nel Dipartimento di Salute Mentale, ASL MN e Azienda Ospedaliera Carlo Poma di Mantova), ovviamente questo dato non coinvolge i tirocinanti, che spesso sono i reali Psicoterapeuti dei Servizi (Piperno, 2009, Fasolo, 2009). Il servizio di Neuro-Psichiatria Infantile, per il medesimo territorio, dispone di due psicoterapeuti, da cui “le liste d’attesa per i servizi di tipo psicologico e psicoterapeutico pubblici variano da 30 giorni a 6 mesi a seconda delle strutture” (Ordine Psicologi Lombardia, 2013).

Nel Servizio Sanitario Nazionale in Lombardia, salvo rare eccezioni, è possibile usufruire solo di percorsi psicoterapici brevi, di durata non superiore a qualche mese/un anno, mentre una presa in carico psicoterapeutica di maggiore durata non è più prevista. Ciò comporta che chi necessita di una psicoterapia e non ha la possibilità economica di rivolgersi ad un professionista privato, non ha di fatto nessun servizio a disposizione. Una situazione di questo tipo impedisce, tra l'altro, una presa in carico tempestiva e preventiva di soggetti o famiglie, che vanno così incontro a una possibile cronicizzazione del disturbo, con il rischio, talvolta, di esiti anche drammatici o comunque invalidanti per la persona (Ordine degli Psicologi della Lombardia, 2013).

### ***I servizi di salute mentale soffrono***

Il problema della salute è oggi, alla luce dei continui scandali che accadono, una evidenza innegabile. I Servizi di Salute Mentale lavorano con risorse decrescenti, polarizzate eccessivamente sul paradigma biomedico farmacologico, nell'illusione del risparmio di risorse (Fasolo, 2009, Piperno, 2009, Fasolo, Ambrosiani, Cordioli, 2005, Micheline Grasseau, 2003), in una quasi totale assenza operativa di risorse psicoterapeutiche, come se fosse un lusso non concesso, o ancora peggio di scarsa rilevanza e di dubbia efficacia. “Gli studi di efficacia hanno permesso di dimostrare che per molti disturbi psichiatrici alcune forme di psicoterapia hanno effetti paragonabili sul piano sintomatologico a quello dei farmaci” (Fava, Masserini, 2002 p. 32).

I dati offrono un panorama di evidenze scientifiche in totale controtendenza rispetto alla presunzione di efficacia adottata dalla sanità pubblica, la sola polarizzazione farmacologica infatti non riduce ma incrementa la cronicità (Fasolo, 2009, Piperno, 2009, Sparvoli, Di Massimo, 2008), che si trasforma in incremento del costo sociale della persona sofferente, con aumento del numero dei ricoveri e conseguenti spese diagnostiche. Si assiste, sempre più frequentemente, al fenomeno che Fasolo ha definito “delle porte girevoli”, dove le persone rimangono imprigionate in routine

istituzionali che si auto-riproducono.

Migone definisce la psichiatria di oggi, antiscientifica, in quanto prevalentemente concentrata sulla somministrazione di farmaci, con una conseguente trascuratezza della relazione interpersonale (Migone, 2009). La scusa per cui non viene erogata psicoterapia è l'insostenibilità, (Fasolo, 2009, Piperno, 2009, Sparvoli, Di Massimo, 2008), poiché avere psicoterapeuti in organico è eccessivamente costoso.

Diverse ricerche dimostrano il grande risparmio economico della psicoterapia in termini di costi-benefici, per la diminuzione della spese sanitarie, nei dei disturbi di personalità se paragonata alla terapia di routine (Migone, 2009, Migone, 2003, Migone, Semerari, 2006, Gabbard 1997, 2000). Investire negli interventi di psicoterapia può sembrare molto costoso nel presente, ma i dati dimostrano che sono più efficaci nel tempo ed anche meno dispendiosi in termini di risorse economiche (Migone, 2009, Fasolo, 2009, Piperno, 2009, Fava, Masserini, 2002).

Non si riesce, non si è disposti a contemplare la risposta ai bisogni delle persone come ad un investimento in percorsi che facilitino le persone a consapevolizzare il loro modo distorto di costruire il presente, ed accompagnarle verso modalità maggiormente funzionali di costruire il loro destino (Fontò, 2011).

Negli ultimi anni nei Centri di salute mentale, è sempre più in aumento il numero di persone di nazionalità e culture diverse mentre la risposta istituzionale non si è adeguata alle nuove esigenze. La complessità crescente della nostra società, soggetta a costanti integrazioni con modelli culturali differenti, imporrebbe l'esistenza di un Servizio Pubblico capace di affrontare il nuovo tema dell'interculturalità. Fare questo richiede una apertura costante alla valutazione dell'inefficacia non come mera condanna e rinuncia, ma come apprendimento per evolvere (Rogers, 1961).

L'incontro con l'altro, portatore delle sue differenze, ma anche di somiglianze, ci richiede sempre di più, soprattutto per chi lavora nelle relazioni di aiuto, una riflessione consapevole su noi stessi, sull'accettazione di quanto il nostro modo di pensare ed agire sia condizionato dalla nostra appartenenza culturale (Mucchi Faina, 2006). Tutto questo comporta che i percorsi terapeutici offerti, conducono spesso ad



una cronicizzazione del disagio più che ad una risoluzione con conseguente aumento della povertà e del disagio sociale, producendo importanti effetti iatrogeni (Illich, 1976).

### ***Il privato antico conservatore***

Abbiamo avuto la fortuna ed anche il merito di formarci in una scuola che ci ha trasmesso l'importanza dell'essere professionista in scienza e coscienza di valori a cui fare sempre riferimento e non tradire. La pratica e la trasmissione di questi valori è sempre più oggi un dovere deontologico di appartenenza, ed è sempre più nostra responsabilità esserne consapevoli e di conseguenza responsabili. “Il carattere rappresentativo dei valori, esempi di vita vissuta e il dialogo sostenuto da argomentazioni sono in realtà il veicolo di una formazione personale e di ogni comunità di persone” (Portera, Bohm, Secco, 2007, p. 52).

In Italia l'attività privata è idealizzata attorno a costrutti antichi, che fanno riferimento ad un tipo di pratica dal quale con fatica ci si riesce a discostare. La pratica clinica normale è intesa nel senso comune come uno o più appuntamenti settimanali per un costo orario che va dai cinquanta euro in su. La soglia di accesso del privato è sproporzionata se paragonata alla soglia del pubblico dove, con una cifra al di sotto dei quaranta euro, la dove è possibile, si ottengono dai tre agli otto colloqui con uno psicoterapeuta (ASL Mantova). Davanti a questa specifica condizione bio-psico-sociale in cui ci troviamo ad operare è, secondo noi necessario chiedersi, quale è la nostra posizione deontologica come professionisti della Salute Mentale e di quali doveri e valori siamo scientificamente responsabili.

L'articolo 3 del codice deontologico degli psicologici ci ricorda che “Lo psicologo considera suo dovere accrescere le conoscenze sul comportamento umano ed utilizzarle per promuovere il benessere psicologico dell'individuo, del gruppo e della comunità. [...]”(Codice Deontologico della Professione di Psicologo).

E' nostra responsabilità interrogarci in scienza e coscienza, circa il nostro modo di operare al meglio, per la tutela della salute dell'individuo del gruppo e della

comunità.

Mai negli ultimi decenni ci siamo trovati in una situazione tanto particolare caratterizzata da un'importante condizione di crisi che potremmo definire globale, di mutamenti di paradigmi sociali, circa le tematiche della salute, del lavoro, della immigrazione. Questa situazione di crisi, benché possa essere considerata un'importante opportunità di riflessione e cambiamento (Portera, Dusi, Guidetti, 2010, Portera, 2006, Capra, 1982), c'impone però anche di essere consapevoli della fragilità sociale e dei bisogni inevasi a cui questo specifico momento storico ci espone. “La sfida consiste nell'accettare il reale cambiamento rispondendo in maniera preparata: senza chiudersi acriticamente nel passato” (Portera, 2006, p. 55). Se una delle responsabilità del pubblico è quella di aver progressivamente diminuito l'offerta di psicoterapia nei servizi pubblici, nel privato la responsabilità più evidente è quella di erogare una offerta inaccessibile alla maggioranza di chi ne ha bisogno, che soprattutto oggi si tinge dei colori dell'interculturalità.

### ***Le conseguenze del silenzio***

Il nostro paese manca di un senso di appartenenza religioso, nel senso etimologico del termine “religio”, cioè legame, principio unificatore dei singoli e vive un momento di fortissima concentrazione del singolo sul possesso privato, indifferente al contesto, incapace di essere legato responsabilmente alla società (Mancuso, 2012, Portera, 2006).

Il senso di appartenenza facilita il singolo ad impegnarsi per qualche cosa che è più importante del suo individuale e specifico interesse, questa forma di religione “civile” di cui parla Mancuso, c'introduce al tema dei valori e ci riporta alle nostre specifiche responsabilità di persone che hanno scelto di promuovere il benessere del singolo, del gruppo e della comunità.

Principalmente noi, è qui il caso di dire, saremmo portatori di sintomi nevrotici se non riuscissimo a contemplare le nostre responsabilità etiche e scientifiche di professare buone pratiche, vittime noi stessi di questo vuoto di appartenenza, che ci

porta ad una dismissione silenziosa dall'essere parte di una comunità, mai come ora in difficoltà, per concentrarci solo sui nostri interessi privati (Mancuso, 2012, Portera, 2006). Un'altra responsabilità, con cui sentiamo doverci confrontare, è quella di applicare modelli antichi ad un presente sempre più complesso ed incompatibile con tali modelli. Il tempo presente profondamente connotato per il suo arricchirsi di culture umane differenti, ci offre l'opportunità attraverso l'avvio di politiche educative interculturali, di ampliare i confini dei nostri paradigmi, per arricchire la mappa degli antichi modelli di erogazione di servizi, offrendoci l'opportunità di avvicinarci ai bisogni sempre più complessi delle nostre comunità. “Il pensiero che alimenta la guerra è il pensiero obbediente, sottomesso ai voleri e ai poteri altrui, che non si interroga e che non fa domande, che teme l'incertezza e il dubbio, che si fonda sulla normatività e sulla necessità piuttosto che sulla possibilità e l'imprevedibilità; un pensiero disgiuntivo e assiomatico, che divide anziché congiungere” (Pinto Minerva, 2002, p. 124).

L'astensione dall'assumerci queste responsabilità, sia nell'ambito pubblico che in quello privato, ci rende responsabili di una silenziosa compartecipazione ad una crescente emarginazione dei bisogni primari (Maslow, 1954) del singolo, con conseguente crescita dell'esclusione sociale. Ognuno di noi è responsabile del processo di costruzione sociale (Berger, Luckman, 1966) del nostro essere persone e terapeuti con i relativi setting, pubblici e privati, ma siamo altrettanto responsabili della costruzione della cultura a cui apparteniamo e della ricerca di buone pratiche, il più possibile congruenti con il processo del nostro tempo.

La bussola del professionista (Zucconi, 2006) risulta essere un utile strumento per riflettere in scienza e coscienza sul nostro essere professionisti efficaci. Per esserlo, però, dobbiamo essere consapevoli sia del processo del cliente che del nostro come terapeuti, del paradigma di riferimento e dei valori deontologici che accogliamo, e in aggiunta anche del momento storico in cui operiamo.

Questo strumento può servire per renderci maggiormente consapevoli oggi di un vuoto che sentiamo il dovere di colmare, uscendo dal vecchio modello che ci

porterebbe solo a guardare ai nostri interessi privati e auto-referenziali, miopi del contesto a cui dobbiamo forse non direttamente, forse nemmeno in scienza, ma sicuramente in coscienza rispondere.

Dalle stime risulta che circa un quinto della popolazione italiana ha sofferto di almeno un disturbo mentale nella propria vita: il più comune risulta la depressione maggiore (9,9%), seguita da fobia specifica (5,4%) e disturbo di panico (1,5%). I disturbi d'ansia, nel complesso, risultano i più frequenti tra i disturbi mentali (11%) (Ordine degli Psicologi Lombardia 2013).

### ***Per una Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile***

Quattro anni fa nella città di Roma è iniziata un'esperienza pilota, patrocinata dall'Opera Don Calabria, un Ambulatorio di Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile. Lo scopo di questo ambulatorio è quello di garantire una assistenza psicoterapica di qualità a prezzi calmierati, per persone che rimarrebbero escluse da queste opportunità terapeutiche, a causa di una sostanziale carenza di offerta nel pubblico e una inaccessibilità nel privato.

Fare questo implica trovare risorse professionali flessibili e disposte a ridimensionare la soglia di compenso economico richiesta, che deve essere tutelata e garantita, oltre che incontrare un partner istituzionale che condivida i valori comunitari insiti nel progetto. Il Don Calabria di Roma offre i locali e le spese di gestione di questi ultimi, senza richiedere un compenso economico.

Il compenso orario del professionista è fissato dall'ambulatorio che si preoccupa di garantire il pagamento della cifra concordata, che nello specifico di Roma è di venti euro netti. La cifra oraria che il cliente corrisponde per la prestazione sanitaria è libera, viene concordata con il singolo, in una contrattazione, che prevede soprattutto la spiegazione del significato del progetto, invitandolo a comprendere il valore della sua partecipazione, con l'obiettivo di motivarlo a partecipare per il suo massimo possibile, perché la motivazione del cliente, è il principale carburante per un buon esito della terapia (Miller et al., 1997, Duncan, Miller, 2000, Wampold, 2001).

L'avvio del percorso psicoterapico dunque, comprende un invito alla corresponsabilità totale e consapevole delle due persone principalmente coinvolte nel processo (Rogers, Kinget 1965), fondato anche, in questo caso, sul valore della volontaria partecipazione responsabile per il bene comune delle persone più fragili, che vivono in condizioni di forte rischi di emarginazione sociale. Azione e responsabilità delle proprie azioni per un valore personale ma anche per un valore altro, più ampio e coinvolgente, il bene comune, il diritto alla salute per tutti coloro che ne hanno bisogno.

Questo ampliamento paradigmatico ai nostri occhi è un valore cardine del nostro progetto, che permette alle persone, già nel solo atto di iniziare un percorso psicoterapico, di decentrarsi dal solo utilitarismo individuale, e di essere partecipi e protagonisti di una impresa comune, dagli orizzonti collettivi e comunitari.

La pedagogia interculturale si offre come risorsa, come opportunità di arricchimento (Portera, 2006), in società complesse come le attuali, caratterizzate dalla compresenza di diverse culture, che necessariamente devono influenzare le politiche di erogazione dei servizi e ci costringono ad un incontro aiutandoci ad “imparare ad interagire in maniera opportuna” (Portera, 2006, p.91).

Troppo spesso il mondo del pubblico attraverso politiche di accessibilità scontata, ha creato nei “pazienti” dipendenza e cronicità (Pinto Minerva, 2002), senza stimolare l'assunzione di responsabilità, il welfare-state garantista è responsabile di potenti effetti iatrogeni (Fasolo, 2009, Illich, 1976), offrendo servizi gratuiti, senza una approfondita valutazione delle motivazioni e dei bisogni, in setting pubblici in cui spesso non veniva rispettato il valore della persona e dell'incontro. Il pagamento dei servizi rappresenta infatti, un simbolico impegno con la propria motivazione e la propria responsabilità, restituendo alla persona il potere personale di essere lui e solo lui il principale agente responsabile di cambiamento della propria esistenza.

Questa inversione paradigmatica è costruita attorno ad un altro valore importante ai nostri occhi, la fiducia nella natura umana, e nell'incontro tra diverse culture umane, come processo tendente alla vita ed alla ricerca di modalità di convivenza sociale

sempre più dai tratti interculturali e maggiormente adattive. “L'obiettivo ultimo dell'educazione dovrebbe essere l'integrazione nella società e lo sviluppo di una solidarietà organica. In tal senso, educazione equivale a socializzazione e chi non si integra opportunamente nella società sarà maggiormente a rischio di suicidio” (Portera, Bohm, Secco, 2007, p. 83)

### ***Psicoterapia attenta al sociale***

L'ambulatorio di Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile risponde secondo noi anche ad un'altra esigenza fondamentale, quella di rompere l'isolamento in cui lo psicoterapeuta privato può rischiare di operare, inserendolo in un contesto che gli permetta il confronto con altri professionisti e altri modelli, attraverso la formazione e la supervisione, inserendolo inoltre all'interno di una rete sociale e professionale, che faciliti l'utilizzo di tutte le risorse presenti nel territorio per rispondere ai bisogni delle persone.

Come affermano Piperno e Stancati. ”Dobbiamo immaginare una psicoterapia che si svolge in una “istituzione” come luogo identitario, storico e relazione che si costruisce attraverso la cultura dei singoli partecipanti ma li travalichi. Un luogo che sia, per mandato, teso e attento al sociale, alle regole dei contesti di provenienza delle persone. Un luogo dove possono incontrarsi e dialogare professionisti formati da scuole diverse, e dov'è possibile costruire un modello di psicoterapia in grado di adeguarsi ai bisogni molteplici e differenziati delle persone che chiedono aiuto e che cambiano da circostanza a circostanza” (Piperno, Stancati, 2009, p. 98).

L'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona, fondato negli anni cinquanta da Carl Rogers era antesignano di una rivoluzione nelle relazioni di aiuto, che si orientava verso la riduzione del divario di potere esistente tra cliente e terapeuta, al fine di innescare da subito un clima facilitante l'empowerment, l'autonomia e la libertà della persona di essere se stessa.

Per restituire potere alle persone è sempre più necessario essere disposti a cederne noi per primi, “professionisti”, e crediamo che essere disposti a ridefinire il nostro

modo di operare, sia un messaggio di una intenzionalità autentica all'esserci nella relazione con l'altro, condizione paradigmatica questa, la congruenza, fondamentale per l'avvio del processo terapeutico (Rogers, 1957).

Questo messaggio è oggi di straordinaria importanza nella condizione sociale complessa e multietnica in cui ci troviamo ad operare. E' sempre più doveroso riflettere insieme, per ri-disegnare luoghi di incontro che siano il più possibile aderenti alla realtà in cui siamo tutti immersi. La pedagogia interculturale ci offre una rilevante opportunità di stravolgere i paradigmi con cui siamo stati abituati ad osservare i fenomeni sociali, motivandoci ad ampliare lo sguardo verso nuove forme di attivazione di politiche di aiuto per le persone, che mai come oggi devono farsi carico anche della valenza culturale. “La pedagogia interculturale, in tal modo, rifiuta espressamente la staticità e la gerarchizzazione, e può essere intesa nel senso di possibilità di dialogo, di confronto paritetico, senza la costrizione per i soggetti coinvolti di dover rinunciare a priori a parti significative della propria identità culturale” (Portera, 2006 p. 75).

### *Umano tra gli umani*

“Siamo esseri umani e la sofferenza di altre persone non ci lascia indifferenti. Si devono trovare spazi per sentire, condividere, elaborare le proprie emozioni.[..] E perché la cicatrice diventi ricamo abbiamo bisogno di qualcuno che ascolti il nostro dolore di curanti e ci sostenga nel trovare un senso” (Anfossi, Verlato e Zucconi, 2008, p.177, p.187).

I Centri di salute mentali e i reparti psichiatrici, per come oggi sono organizzati, portano a un esaurimento degli operatori, che troppo spesso vedono le persone cronicizzarsi invece che migliorare, sprovvisti come sono di adeguati spazi di confronto e supervisione.

La mancanza di attenzione al valore della persona, si ritorce necessariamente anche verso gli stessi professionisti. Creare luoghi che permettano scambio e accoglienza anche del vissuto del professionista, può aiutare a prevenire il burn-out, sindrome

caratterizzata da esaurimento emotivo, senso profondo di sconforto che portano poi ad una minore efficacia sul lavoro.

Molti studi hanno dimostrato che circa il 25-30% degli operatori della salute sviluppano la sindrome del burn-out e gli operatori che si occupano di malati psichiatrici e terminali sono fra le categorie più esposte (Grassi, Magnani, 2009).

“La collaborazione fra colleghi rappresenta un’ulteriore risorsa se, accanto alla condivisione di mansioni tecniche e comunicative, si creano spazi di dialogo e confronto profondo nel quale potersi raccontare le proprie fatiche quotidiane... Raccontare le proprie fatiche di battaglia ad altri ed essere ascoltati in profondità ha un effetto liberante e favorisce la riflessione. In più sentirsi accanto ad altri che combattono sullo stesso fronte riduce la solitudine” (Anfossi, Verlatto e Zucconi, 2008, p.166).

La supervisione è per noi “La più grande garanzia di professionalità, sia per il paziente che per il terapeuta” (Fontò, Greggio, Maioli e Dazzi, 2010, p.69).

Uno spazio dove si pone l’attenzione sul setting interno del terapeuta che, mentre ripercorre l’esperienza che sta vivendo con il proprio paziente, tocca parti della sua propria esperienza, diventando sempre più consapevole del suo modo di significare l’esistenza e le relazioni in cui è immerso. L’obiettivo della supervisione è quindi, per l’operatore, quella di migliorare l’efficacia del suo intervento con il proprio cliente, diventando sempre più consapevole di sé in relazione a quest’ultimo. Supervisione e confronto diventano allora strumento di prevenzione del burn-out e allo stesso tempo garanzia di professionalità.

### ***Conclusioni***

L'ambulatorio di psicoterapia socialmente sostenibile è, ai nostri occhi, una modalità di erogazione dei servizi che permette la restituzione di valore, responsabilità e libertà a tutti, chiamando gli utenti ad impegnarsi per qualcosa di importante nella propria vita, scegliendolo responsabilmente e con il significativo riconoscimento del valore culturale dell'appartenenza al bene comune e garantendo allo stesso tempo, la



qualità dei servizi offerti, attraverso una struttura attenta alla formazione continua e alla supervisione di chi vi opera. Noi crediamo che “il confronto e la condivisione che riusciremo a realizzare ci consentirà di allargare sempre di più l’orizzonte del nostro sapere teorico e di arricchire il nostro fare psicoterapia, rendendo così il nostro lavoro sempre più trasparente e “scientificamente” legittimato” (Fontò, Greggio, Maioli e Dazzi, 2010, p.72).

Il momento presente è opportunità di rinnovamento che ci coinvolge direttamente nel nostro ruolo professionale, civile, etico, di promozione del cambiamento della persona e mai come oggi anche del suo contesto sociale, innescando inoltre un processo di educazione interculturale alla cittadinanza (Portera, Dusi, Guidetti, 2010), mai come oggi indispensabile nella costruzione di comunità democratiche centrate sulla persona.

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## ABSTRACTS

**Giorgio ALBERTINI**

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### **Neuroscientific foundation of Cooperative Learning**

Neuroscience have shown in the last decades that the most important characteristic of the brain is plasticity. The brain is genetically programmed for plasticity and according to this important concept many studies and research has been promoted in the area of early and continuous education and habilitation for children with Developmental Disabilities and in general for childhood education. There is a great interest to study the interaction among gene, brain development, behaviour and the environment. Most of the recent publications have shown the importance of the environment and of the different context to permit to a person to "function" in the direction of interaction and participation. The International Classification of Functioning is the most important instrument to promote the culture that consider disabilities not only as the result of an impairment but also of a limitation of participation to the life of the community. Vigotski has been one of the most important author that described the area of proximal development as the area of learning who is possible to reach through the role of the teacher or of a person who mediate between the child / the person and the environment. Edelman and his theory of neuronal network support the idea that anatomical connectivity in the brain occur via selective mechanochemical events that take place epigenetically during development. Once structural diversity is established anatomically, a second selective process occurs during postnatal behavioral experience through epigenetic modifications in the strength of synaptic connections between neuronal groups. Reentrant signaling between neuronal groups allows for spatiotemporal continuity in response to real-world interaction. Eccles studies have shown that mental world is in addition to the physical world and the two interact and he has identified that synaptic spines are the biological basis of learning and memory, dendritic spines that may be influenced by the environment. In this perspective the studies of Edgar Morin (and his model of social intelligence) and Gardner (theory of multiple intelligence) within the the studies of Goleman (emotional, social and ecological intelligence) have shown the importance of the social aspects of the environment. In this perspective Cooperative Learning appears as a model who is particularly responsive to the functioning of the brain and may accompany the child in an environment in which he learn social competencies that permit to him / her to develop intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects of the intelligence and to develop at the same time explicit and implicit learning, in an context of positive interdependency that promote the growth of self through the growth of the group. In conclusion if we look at the environment as a resource to promote the child development we have to consider very important the attention that Cooperative Learning put not only on academic but also on social competencies as an important tool for individual and social development of the child / person and of the society.

**Elena ALEKSANDROVA**

*Moscow State University, Russia*

### **Culture and Self. Religion and Tradition in Modern World and Modern Russia.**

This paper applies to interreligious dialog in modern Russia. The main object is the possibility and necessity of this kind of dialog based on humanity, mutual respect and knowledge. In light of this approach the very problem of human being is leading. Human performed as the part of different civilizations and cultural complexes. As empiric part the example of Kalmykia is given.

**Summary.** The philosophical problem of Human in historical perspective is the frame of **First division**. The idea of personality and idea of being Human was in progress for centuries. East and West chose different ways to view Human. If West is searching how to unite, to combine Human, East is searching the way to show primordial unity. The living substance of Life is complicate and bright, one cannot reduce its fullness to even very multilevel scheme. So we can find a lot of points of contact in this field, a lot of analogous thoughts. In order to find such points, author is going through different epochs and countries and study how did philosophers, poets, artists were thinking about Human. **Second division** is dedicated to the polyphony of XX century. We study modern theories of Self, compare these theories with Buddhist approach to the Human. Conditions of Tradition translation is the frame of **Division Three**. Modern industrial society is build on personal choice, on self actualization for each and everyone. This gives us a phenomenon of creed selection. During inner work, Pearson ranks a few questions, which have an influence on further spiritual evolution. Using "wide search" and all possibilities of receiving information, people chose philosophical system that matches "given parameters". Together with philosophical system, people sometimes chose religion. This is what I call "secondary enculturation", because you have to absorb new paradigm with norms, rules, ethic, morality and rituals. We can see both rational and irrational principles in this process. As empiric part the example of Kalmykia is given. In **Conclusion** we argue that interdisciplinary approach with synchronous and diachronous perspective will help to see full picture of how people in different cultures see themselves and others.

**Giuditta ALESSANDRINI**

*Università degli Studi Roma TRE, Italy*

### **Verso una possibile fioritura umana: “agentività” e sviluppo secondo Martha Nussbaum**

Nell’ambito delle scienze economico-sociali è emerso negli ultimi anni un significativo spostamento di asse da un approccio allo sviluppo meramente orientato alla crescita quantitativa come imperativo verso un approccio centrato sulla dimensione qualitativa della vita umana e sui beni immateriali come la qualità della relazione interpersonale, il benessere, la felicità.

La diversità è fonte di valore e di nuove significazioni: tra queste i processi di inclusione e di benessere. Quest’ultimo è soprattutto possibilità di esprimersi e di partecipare alla società. Mi riferisco in particolare al pensiero di economisti come Amartya Sen, Jean Paul Fitoussi, filosofi come Martha Nussbaum ed altri.

Lo sviluppo umano, dunque, può essere interpretato in diversi modi e secondo diverse prospettive che non si esauriscono nella dimensione quantitativa (e, quindi, secondo un approccio meramente funzionale alla crescita economica) ma implicano ambiti connessi alla vita sociale nella sua complessità.

Il concetto di sviluppo umano può indubbiamente offrire un nuovo criterio di interpretazione e di valutazione della vita concreta delle persone, che riguarda le varie dimensioni della vita umana di uomini e donne.

L’approccio alle capacità di Nussbaum – ambito su cui si focalizza il contributo – offre un dispositivo teorico rigoroso non solo per una lettura dell’ineguaglianza di opportunità per le donne a livello mondiale ma soprattutto per individuare le condizioni che le politiche pubbliche devono adottare per rendere possibile la “fioritura” delle donne, in quanto sviluppo del potenziale in esse presente e garanzia di salvaguardia di una vita dignitosa.

Il contributo si correla alla tematica della formazione alla gestione della diversità con particolare riguardo ai temi relativi alla gender equality in quanto il pensiero di Nussbaum ha posto le basi per una lettura critica fondamentale di tali temi nell’ambito di una riflessione più ampia su equità e democrazia.

**Alean AL-KRENAWI**

*Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel*

### **Psychosocial and familial functioning of children from polygynous and monogamous families**

A sample of 352 Bedouin Arab children -174 from monogamous and 178 from polygynous families participated in this study. The authors used self-reported standardized measures to assess the participants' level of self-esteem, mental health, social functioning, father-child relationships, mother-child relationships, and family functioning. The findings revealed that children from polygynous families reported more mental health and social difficulties as well as poorer school achievement and poorer relationships with their fathers than did their counterparts from monogamous families. In addition, the children from polygynous families rated their families' functioning and economic status as poorer than did those of monogamous families. Thus, the authors suggest that a polygynous family structure negatively affects the family's socioeconomic status and interpersonal relationships and impairs the children's psychological and social functioning. The authors discuss implications for [centro.interculturale@ateneo.univr.it](mailto:centro.interculturale@ateneo.univr.it) practice and policy.

**Sofia Marisa ALVES BERGANO**

*Professor, Escola Superior de Educação do Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Spain*

### **Education and training of adults for the promotion of gender equality**

In this article, education and training of adults for the promotion of gender equality, is assumed as a central area in which we intend to give a small contribution. According to the perspective that defines adult education in the broadest sense, we intend to understand, through the analysis of the discourse of adult women, how the issues related to gender learning traverse their lives, participating in (re)building their identity(ies) as women and justify the choices and opportunities that they had along their lives. The use of a qualitative research strategy is justified by the objective understanding how the interviewees define what is being and becoming a woman. Thus, in the planning of our empirical research, the study of multiple cases appeared as a methodological approach that respects the theoretical and epistemological assumptions that guides us in this interpretation of meanings. The choice of three different families, from an economic and socio-cultural standpoint and the selection of three women of different generations in each of these families allowed us to interview directly and for a prolonged time, nine women of distinct ages. With this research design we wanted to see how the particularities of the historical, economic and

socio-cultural contexts may have eventually influenced the interpretation that the participants made of themselves as women, and how they influenced the possibilities and opportunities underlying the decisions concerning the management of their lives. Regarding the main conclusions of our study, it seems to us important to note that belonging to different generations and to distinct socio-cultural and economic groups appear both to differentiate our participants, on the motivations to work outside the home, the division of housework, the interpretation of differences between men and women and the feelings associated with these differences. However, there doesn't seem to exist many intergenerational differences related to social belonging in what concerns the appreciation of motherhood, which is defined by all participants as the most important role in their lives as women. There are also similarities in discourses of the participants in relation to the attribution to women related to the responsibilities of domestic chores including caring for the children. Following these findings, we believe that adult education and training should be assumed as a key strategy for promoting gender equality and for the elimination of all forms of discrimination that are still experienced by women and men in different spheres of life.

**Paolo BALLARIN**

*psicologo psicoterapeuta Cooperativa Lai-momo, Italy*

### **Dinamiche psicosociali e assistenza terapeutica ai rifugiati e richiedenti asilo: l'importanza del lavoro di gruppo con gli operatori**

Da maggio 2011 la Società Cooperativa Lai-momo è impegnata in provincia di Bologna nel **Programma d'Accoglienza per Richiedenti protezione internazionale** provenienti dalle aree del Nord Africa (**Emergenza Nord Africa**), attraverso una complessa serie di interventi.

Nell'insieme, il progetto è caratterizzato da quattro pilastri teorico-pratici, che si iscrivono in un **approccio interculturale**, basato cioè sulla apertura alla relazione, all'interazione, allo scambio:

1. il concetto di **processo e progetto migratorio**: i rifugiati sono prima di tutto persone migranti, che hanno quindi vissuto e stanno vivendo un processo di trasformazione del proprio senso di identità. La migrazione è infatti un processo complesso, che espone la persona ad una ridefinizione di sé nelle dimensioni di identità e appartenenze.
2. il concetto di **trauma**: l'esperienza migratoria, specialmente se forzata, si presta ad essere letta come di per se stessa traumatica, in quanto espone a vissuti che mettono a repentaglio la propria integrità. La conoscenza dei meccanismi caratteristici dei vissuti traumatici è di fondamentale importanza per il lavoro di assistenza ai rifugiati. Al contempo sarebbe totalmente fuorviante e inefficace costruire una corrispondenza tra trauma e condizione patologica, ignorandone le potenzialità costruttive.
3. i rifugiati sono accomunati dall'aver perso "**casa**", intesa non solo come elemento tangibile e concreto, ma soprattutto come intangibile quanto potente insieme di elementi psicologici di sicurezza, legami affettivi e appartenenza.  
Questa condizione espone quindi in modo particolarmente significativo al rischio di perdita della propria integrità.
4. il valore fondamentale del **gruppo**, sia come esperienze offerte agli assistiti, sia come lavoro con gli operatori: per gli assistiti le esperienze di gruppo possono rappresentare un importante elemento catalizzatore di processi riparativi; a loro volta gli operatori necessitano di contesti di gruppo, dedicati alla progettazione, al coordinamento, alla supervisione, che li facilitino a: costruire un senso di appartenenza (una "casa"), che li aiuti a non essere risucchiati nel vortice della disgregazione a cui possono essere esposti; vedere e arginare i propri "fantasmi"; acquisire elementi utili a placare ansie di fronte a sintomi psichici e/o fisici e al tempo stesso a valutare se e come intervenire; leggere il contesto istituzionale, politico, sociale, culturale e il suo impatto sulla vita degli assistiti e sul lavoro di assistenza; rimanere saldi ("sicuri") pur nella estrema incertezza dei loro interventi e del contesto in cui si attuano; mantenere aperto uno sguardo plurale sulla realtà; alimentare una necessaria quanto impegnativa disponibilità a mettersi in gioco in una relazione "da persona a persona".

**Claire BARNES**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Religiosity and Self-Regulation in an Adolescent Sample**

Religiosity has long been associated with a variety of positive psychological and health outcomes. Recently, researchers have speculated that self-regulation may be the underlying mechanism that mediates the relation between religion and these positive outcomes. Most religions emphasize self-regulation and self-discipline through daily practices, such as meditation, prayer and food preparation. Moreover, some of the behaviours and cognitions required by these practices involve forms of self-regulation including attentional control and inhibition of arousal. In particular, evidence suggests that religious practices enhance emotion regulation, or mechanisms individuals use to manage their internal emotional state. Typically these studies have focused on adult populations, with only a handful examining the relation be-

tween religion and self-regulation in children. The purpose of the present study was to fill the gap within this literature by examining whether growing up in a religious household is associated with emotion regulation. We hypothesized that children raised in religious families will internalize self-regulatory mechanisms through their participation in religious practices with their parents and display better emotion regulation than non-religious children. Furthermore, children from religious families will experience less depression and anxiety, and this relation will be mediated by emotion regulation. A sample of 105 early adolescents (10-12 years) was assessed in schools using questionnaire-based measures. Findings failed to reveal the expected significant association between religious participation and depressed affect, therefore, it was concluded that emotion regulation does not seem to mediate this relation. The implications of this finding will be explored.

**Barbara BASCHIERA**

*Università Cà Foscari Venezia, Italy*

**Fiorino TESSARO**

*Università Cà Foscari Venezia, Italy*

“Lo spirito di iniziativa e l’imprenditorialità”. La formazione di una competenza interculturale nei preadolescenti. Negli ultimi anni ha trovato sempre più posto nella riflessione pedagogica italiana e nelle politiche formative europee ed internazionali il tema dell’insegnamento e dell’apprendimento per competenze. L’agire educativo per competenze rappresenta una formidabile opportunità di integrazione interculturale.

In Italia, come in molti altri Paesi europei, le indicazioni e le linee guida per i curricoli scolastici, definendo i profili formativi in uscita e articolando i traguardi di competenza da raggiungere nelle tappe intermedie e finali dei percorsi, hanno promosso una revisione profonda e paradigmatica della concezione stessa di scuola e della sua offerta formativa, dei processi di apprendimento degli studenti e della qualità professionale dei docenti.

L’educazione interculturale nella scuola postula metodologie didattiche operative e laboratoriali, esperienziali e situazionali, che promuovano nuovi modi di costruire e di condividere la conoscenza a partire dalla pluralità dei vissuti esistenziali e dalla varietà dei modelli culturali degli allievi. La ricchezza interculturale proattiva, con il riconoscimento del valore delle differenze e delle diversità, ma anche con la ricerca di ciò che accomuna, emerge quando gli allievi operano insieme per trovare soluzioni nuove e creative a problemi reali, progettando e pianificando le attività, dando scopo, senso e significato a ciò che fanno e che sanno fare.

In questo si specifica la competenza "spirito di iniziativa e di imprenditorialità" che, tra le otto competenze-chiave europee, è senza alcun dubbio la meno perseguita nella scuola secondaria di primo grado, poco sviluppata nei ragazzi italiani, senz’altro meno rispetto ai coetanei immigrati.

“Lo spirito di iniziativa e l’imprenditorialità concernono la capacità di una persona di tradurre le idee in azione. In ciò rientrano la creatività, l’innovazione e l’assunzione dei rischi, come anche la capacità di pianificare e di gestire progetti per raggiungere obiettivi”. Il concetto di imprenditorialità, che per molti insegnanti risulta connotato ideologicamente, potrebbe essere opportunamente sostituito con intrapresa o intraprendenza.

La nostra ricerca si rivolge a tre classi di allievi preadolescenti, con una consistente presenza di allievi immigrati, organizzati in gruppi di lavoro, composti in modo eterogeneo, con metodologie cooperative e collaborative, chiamati ad affrontare situazioni-problema di realtà, compiti autentici e prove esperte. L’ipotesi chiave è che il lavoro in gruppo di apprendimento cooperativo interculturale, per compiti di realtà, migliora e incrementa i processi nei sei indicatori della competenza (traduzione idea-azione, creatività, innovazione, assunzione di rischio, pianificazione, gestione di progetti), sia negli studenti italiani che in quelli non italofofoni.

**Leslie BASH**

*Leo Baeck College, London, United Kingdom*

**The globalisation of fear and the construction of the intercultural imagination**

Intercultural education has a profound meaning for me. It concerns the destruction of boundaries between people and their replacement by what Jurgen Habermas has called communicative action. It is a difficult task beset by obstacles of the mind framed within sets of taken-for-granted assumptions about the world, often as a consequence of deeply held, existential fears, from a consciousness of individual mortality through to communal insecurity. Modern industrialised warfare ensured a coalescence of fears, concentrated in a collective anxiety, around fifty years ago, that the imminent destruction of the world as a result of thermo-nuclear conflagration was a distinct possibility.

More lately, fear has centred upon threats to ‘civilisation’ from those apparently bent upon the infliction of a world order designed to undermine modernity, democracy and liberty. Elsewhere, fear is manifested in



the mutuality of distrust existing between peoples whose lives have been shaped by competition, war, domination and imperialism. The institutionalisation of fear on a global scale brings a kind of comfort to the fearful, but less so to the feared, since it can justify political positioning and posturing as well as the conservation of ethnocentrism and the erection of cultural and national walls and fences. Globalised fear enters into national discourses with common cause against immigration, cultural pluralism, religious tolerance, multilingualism, and so on.

In order to confront this globalisation of fear, to engage with ourselves as well as with others, demands the construction of what we might term the intercultural imagination. John Lennon's song may be thought unduly naïve and romantic but nonetheless, despite a more realistic view of human relations than that which captured the minds and hearts of many young people in the West during the late 1960s, was a protest against cynicism. Intercultural education must therefore embrace hope and the imagination, but in association with reason, understanding and knowledge. It is grounded in a capacity for critical pragmatism, an appreciation for an educational project based on a global concern for equity and justice and for the establishment of the basis of unfettered, rational communication between peoples. The construction of the intercultural imagination is an ongoing process which we might find in diverse educational settings in various countries, in many primary and secondary school classrooms as well as in progressive initial teacher education programmes. It is a process which demands more than the attainment of the usual pedagogical competences; it requires an engagement both with hope and with fear.

**Glória BASTOS**

*Universidade Aberta, Portugal / CEMRI*

**Maria da CONCEIÇÃO TOMÉ**

*CEMRI*

**Find the Other through books: Children's literature and intercultural education (Workshop)**

The societal transformations occurred in the last decades, particularly the contemporary migrations movements, rise questions related to the concepts of nation, identity and citizenship. Portugal, particularly since the end of the 20th century, becomes the destination of several immigration fluxes, turning the Portuguese society into a plural one. Portugal is also known by their relevant inclusive policies, comparing with other countries, but in the daily life things are different and we find xenophobe attitudes in Portuguese society.

The aim of this paper is to examine the role of children's literature in the context of intercultural education and the promotion of a cosmopolitan citizenship. In fact, children's literature is, on one side, a privileged setting for the encounter of the youngest (children and adolescents) with cultural diversity, supporting, for instance, the development of intercultural competences. On the other side, children's literature may constitute a kind of "shelter" for young immigrants when they find in those literary works positive representations of their culture and ways of life, by also giving them an opportunity to affirm their identities. Children's perceptions of other cultures are formed, at least in part, by the books they read. Through the contact with the social and cultural portraits of the Other in children's literature, young readers internalise important values, by creating personal predisposition for an effective intercultural dialogue.

We analyse three children's books written by Portuguese authors, examining the images of the immigrant and of otherness presented in these narratives. We take particularly in consideration language and its relation with power relations and social positions constructed in texts, and question at which point these tales, published in this new millennium can contribute to intercultural dialogue and to intercultural education.

**Zygmunt BAUMAN**

*Prof. Emerytus of Sociology*

**Liquid modern challenges to education**

We live in a liquid, nowist and hurried society. In it, the meaning of time is subjected to a heavy re-negotiation; it is neither cyclical nor linear, but it is broken up into a multitude of separate points: it's pointillist. The past and future are threatened by the tyranny of the moment (power of pre-empting the future and of disempowering the past), with consequences on the meaning and value of freedom and identity. Identity is no more something to design and build over time, but to assemble and disassemble continuously: bodies that are modified by lifting, work changed, lives and roles redefined according to the temporary wishes. Irony of fate, in the age of instant and effortless connectivity and the promise of be constantly 'in-touch', the communication between the experience of the present and all that may precede or follow, is irreparably broken. The solution cannot be found in consumer products and services offered by the mar-

ket, which need to be constantly replaced and renewed, but only in life-long education, learning to learn and in a liquid-knowledge.

**Elena BELKOVA**

*Udmurt State University, Russia*

**Pedagogical conditions of a forimirovaniye of cross-cultural education**

Ability of people it is productive to interact with people of different nationalities, religions and cultures is a very important condition for life and developments in the modern many-sided, polycultural world. Post-cross-cultural education.

**Milton J. BENNETT**

*Intercultural Development Research Institute (Europa & USA) and University of Milano Bicocca, Italy*

**“A Constructivist & Developmental Approach to Intercultural Communication Competence”**

In societies that are increasingly interconnected and multicultural, the primary goal of intercultural education and counseling is to create competence in dealing with cultural diversity. This skill, which is generally referred to as *intercultural communication competence*, is not a natural part of socialization like other social skills. Therefore, educational efforts must include the generation of new cognitive infrastructure and perceptual strategies. These efforts are best informed by constructivist psychological and sociological theory and by developmental pedagogy. In this presentation, Dr. Bennett will discuss the paradigmatic base of intercultural communication and his Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity that describes how the new competence is acquired. Examples are drawn from international education, diversity training, critical inquiry, and multicultural counseling.

cation, diversity training, critical inquiry, and multicultural counseling.

**Lucia BERDONDINI**

*University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, United Kingdom*

**Sandra GRIEVE**

*University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, United Kingdom*

**Ali KAVEH**

**Intercultural Counselling in Afghanistan: the experience of INSPIRE (Workshop)**

This workshop presents a 3 year project funded by the British Council under the scheme called INSPIRE. The project is run in collaboration between the Counselling Unit, University of Strathclyde, UK and the University of Herat, Afghanistan. Currently the course is at its second year. Each year a group of Afghan practitioners, medical doctors, nurses, lecturers and counsellors have received a training course in counselling for a total amount of 120 hours of teaching contact. The training course is experiential and based on humanistic approach. The first year the group of participants was composed of 8 people, 4 men and 4 women. The second year of the project BC has increased the budget and funded facilities for a group composed of 14 persons (7 men and 7 women), from both Herat and Kabul. The course was co-constructed between tutors and participants, in order to create a training that could be meaningful to the students and respectful of gender, cultural and religious values. A lot of space was dedicated to the development of practice groups where real sessions of therapy and counselling, often focused on trauma and the reality of living in a country in war, have been experienced by participants alternating roles of counsellors, clients and observers. The sessions were video-recorded and used for sessions of live group supervision.

During the training, several creative ways to work with emotional issues have been explored in order to respect fundamental aspects of the Afghan culture, where, for example, the explicit content of the issue wouldn't be overtly disclosed, even within the therapeutic room. Alternative ways of working with clients have been then explored, through the use of art materials, metaphors, psychodrama and Gestalt techniques, highlighting how focusing on the process, rather than the content, can be powerfully therapeutic. Other aspects related to the Afghan culture have been taken into consideration when discussing areas like the ethical framework of practice, confidentiality, etc.

This workshop will focus on the trainers' experience of the strengths and the challenges of a multicultural and intercultural training course in counseling and on what we can learn from them in order to replicate similar projects in contexts related to countries in war and post conflict.

**Jessica BERTOLANI**  
*Università di Verona, Italy*

### **Eccomi Pronto Curriculum: un programma di counseling scolastico per lo sviluppo dell'apprendimento auto-diretto**

Negli Stati Uniti la professione school counseling si è sviluppata come specializzazione piuttosto complessa e propone un approccio che si rifà ad un modello globale, che costituisce un'interessante risposta alle necessità emergenti nelle scuole italiane. In Italia, nonostante siano molte le iniziative intraprese, come l'apertura in continua crescita dei Centri d'ascolto, il ruolo del counselor scolastico non è ancora ben definito e manca di una precisa identità. Allo scopo di promuovere, valutare e diffondere pratiche efficaci di counseling scolastico, è nato il progetto Eccomi Pronto, uno school counseling curriculum preventivo/evolutive e research-based frutto della collaborazione tra il Dipartimento di Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia (Università di Verona) e l'University of Massachusetts. Il curriculum si basa sui principi della self-direction theory, della psicologia positiva e del counseling narrativo, è destinato agli alunni delle scuole primarie e si fonda sull'assunto per cui sviluppo accademico e personale sono strettamente connessi. È un curriculum basato sulla narrazione di storie appositamente create sui principi considerati essenziali al fine di sviluppare le abilità necessarie degli studenti per diventare self-directed learners. Ogni storia è radicata in un'area della psicologia positiva e insegna agli studenti modalità per comprendere se stessi e dirigere e motivare il proprio comportamento. Eccomi Pronto aiuta inoltre gli insegnanti a capire il mondo interiore dei propri allievi, a sviluppare con loro una relazione più profonda e significativa e ad acquisire le abilità utili al processo di gruppo per promuovere lo sviluppo personale e sociale in classe. Il progetto, finanziato dalla Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Trento e Rovereto per l'anno scolastico 2011-2012, è stato attuato nelle scuole elementari del Trentino e ha coinvolto 300 bambini dalla classe prima alla terza, compresa una L2. La valutazione è stata fatta con strumenti quantitativi e qualitativi e ha coinvolto insegnanti, bambini e genitori. Il progetto è tutt'ora in corso per l'anno scolastico 2012-2013 per una seconda sperimentazione e valutazione. Durante la presentazione sarà fornita una descrizione del curriculum e delle metodologie utilizzate per il suo sviluppo, attuazione e valutazione. Verranno inoltre presentati i risultati emersi dall'analisi quantitativa e qualitativa e le future direzioni di ricerca.

### **Eccomi Pronto: a preventative-developmental curriculum to promote self-directed learning in Italian primary schools**

Counseling in the United States is a mature profession with established professional norms and comprehensive models for practice in a wide range of settings, which is an interesting response to the emerging needs in Italian schools. In Italy, counseling is a developing profession and its model of operation is still evolving. A partnership between the University of Verona and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has been established to support the collaboration to develop, evaluate and disseminate effective school counseling practices. Eccomi Pronto is the first product of this partnership. It is a preventative-developmental curriculum based on the principles of self-direction theory, structural cognitive development theory, positive psychology, and narrative therapy, and it is inspired by the intercultural principle according to which the promotion of cooperative learning methods and inclusive attitudes is intended not only towards foreigners but also toward special needs or different learning styles (Portera, 2011). Eccomi Pronto is based on the fundamental assumption that students' academic development and personal development are inextricably bound together and it is intended to start students down the path towards self-directed learning. It is a story-based curriculum designed to be delivered by primary school teachers supported by school counselors. The curriculum helps students develop preliteracy skills and begin to construct their own stories about themselves. Each story is grounded in an area of positive psychology and teaches students positive ways to understand themselves and useful ways to direct and motivate their own behavior. The narrative itself is an intercultural action, because every story that we build or invent is a mix of other stories (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992). Eccomi Pronto is also designed to help teachers understand the inner lives of their students, develop nurturing relationships with them, and develop skills in using group process to promote personal-social and academic development simultaneously in their classrooms.

The project, funded by Fondazione Caritro for the 2011-2012 school year, was implemented in Trentino primary schools and involved 300 children from the first grade to the third. The evaluation was done with quantitative and qualitative instruments and involved teachers, children and parents. The project is still in progress for the school year 2012-2013 for a second testing and evaluation. This presentation will describe Eccomi Pronto and methods used in its development and evaluation. It will also present the results of quantitative and qualitative analysis and future research directions.

**Rita BETRO**  
*OISE University of Toronto, Canada*

## **The Implications of Multicultural and Intercultural Education for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Two Spirited Intersex, Queer and Questioning (LGBTTIQ) People in Ontario**

Even though gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people have existed in society for centuries, from an historical perspective the gay civil rights timeline is fairly recent, with significant changes seen in the last decade in Canada. Internationally, Denmark recognized same-sex partnerships in 1989, but only from 2005 to 2010 did Spain, Canada, New Zealand and California follow suit. Unfortunately only as recently as 2009, and still being revisited, a private member propose a Bill to hang homosexuals in Uganda. This timeline is significant to help us understand why there is only recent, within the last twenty years, scholarly literature that specifically pertains to LGBTTIQ. There is a global and greater need to understand and share strategies that may have a perceived positive impact in overcoming barriers in LGBTTIQ education to create a culture of inclusion and a true democratic society where all voices can participate and be heard. From the perspective of an educator and administrator, this presentation will tackle the following question:

*Given some of the challenges that Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Two Spirited, Intersex, Queer and Questioning (LGBTTIQ) students, teacher and administrators encounter, to what extent, if any, does Multicultural and Intercultural Education provide opportunity for their inclusion in Ontario, Canada?*

Multicultural Education and Intercultural Education are two distinct concepts which interrelate as a mechanism to respond to the interdependence of growing diverse populations. Multicultural Education, introduced in North America shortly after the Human Declaration of Rights has not, on its own, from the evidence noted in literature, been successful in promoting the inclusion of LGBTTIQ. Intercultural Education, a concept more recently introduced in Europe, purports to promote a collaboration amongst diverse groups. The presentation will explore some of the tenets of Multicultural Education and Intercultural Education; both the possibilities and limitations, in promoting the inclusion of LGBTQQ in the current educational system in Ontario. It is only by exploring these concepts and shedding light on issues of LGBTTIQ, that we begin the dialogue on how to maximise the participation of LGBTTIQ in our society and thereby promote a democratic society. This presentation would be of interest to counsellors, teachers or academics interested in the application of concepts to the context of LGBTTIQ in schools.

**Maurizio BETTI**

*Psicoterapeuta IACP, Italy*

### **Lesbiche e gay in psicoterapia: le caratteristiche dell'approccio rogersiano, partendo da alcune riflessioni su stereotipi, gruppi sociali e strumenti di popotere**

Questo lavoro si propone di esaminare dapprima, in una cornice estesa, il rapporto fra la diversità e il potere. Quale ruolo viene esercitato dagli stereotipi, dalle esigenze dei vari gruppi sociali, dalle etichette preconfezionate, dai "discorsi" delle scienze, dal riferirsi al concetto di "natura" per mantenere una struttura che spesso trasforma le differenze in diseguaglianze. Cerca pertanto di offrire un contributo rispetto alle dinamiche implicate nella costruzione sociale del ruolo del "diverso", nel suo etichettamento e nel suo inserimento all'interno di un sistema di valori e di potere.

Il lavoro si propone di esaminare il ruolo delle scienze, dei poteri forti, dei paradigmi psicologici nel mantenimento, spesso inconsapevole, di uno status quo e di come quindi anche il "cambiamento" possa venire ricondotto all'interno del "vecchio" contesto culturale di riferimento. Spesso il presunto "cambiamento" risponde a richieste di conformismo sociale, senza scalfire i livelli emotivi più profondi che sono condizionati dalla propria storia di vita e da quanto è stato interiorizzato rispetto alla propria cultura di appartenenza. In ultima analisi, di conseguenza, rispetto al rischio che il "vecchio schema" tenda a inglobare il "nuovo" senza modificarsi.

Infine ci si propone di offrire contributi rispetto ai principali approcci e paradigmi psicologici al fine di definire se alcune teorie, quali quelle riparative, non rischino di essere maggiormente parte del problema anziché della soluzione. E' un tentativo di rappresentare il *vulnus* dei vari approcci psicologici e psicoterapici, in contrapposizione al ruolo dell'esperienza come fattore qualificante dell'accettazione di Sè. Vengono infine illustrate le caratteristiche dell'approccio della "Terapia centrata sul cliente", ovvero il ruolo dell'empatia, dell'accettazione positiva incondizionata e della congruenza nella costruzione del benessere dell'individuo. L'ottica è quella di una psicologia che possa essere utilizzata per "rivelare l'uomo a se stesso", in modo che egli sia libero di riconoscere i propri reali bisogni e di soddisfarli. Lo scopo è quello di contribuire a realizzare l'ambizioso obiettivo che è il concetto di salute, come inteso dall'OMS, ovvero uno stato di "completo benessere fisico, psichico e sociale e non semplice assenza di malattia".

### **Lesbians and gays men in psychotherapy: the features of the Rogers's approach, starting with some thoughts on stereotypes, social groups and power tools**

This work aims to examine, in a wide context, the relationship between gender preferences and authori-

ty. What role is exercised by the stereotypes, by the needs of a variety of social groups, by prejudices, as also by "scientific" opinions, invoking the concept of "natural" as a way to support a social structure which often tends to transform differences into inequalities. It therefore seeks to describe the social dynamics involved in the construction of the role of the homosexual as a "different", its labeling and its integration within a system of values and power. The paper aims at examining the role of sciences, ruling powers and psychological paradigms in the maintenance of a status quo. This can be shown to permit, often unknowingly, to bring back the change into the old cultural frame. Often the alleged "Change" responds to a social demand for conformity, without impacting with the deepest emotional levels. These in fact are biased by the personal life history and by what have been internalized, compared to the personal culture of origin. Thus ultimately compared to the risk that the "old way" tends to embrace the new one without changing itself. Moreover we propose to make contributions with respect to the main psychological approaches and paradigms in order to determine whether some theories, such as the reparative ones, are more likely to be part of the problem rather than the solution. It is an attempt to represent the weak point of the various psychological and psychotherapeutic approaches, as opposed to the role of experience as a qualifying factor of the acceptance of the self. Finally the characteristics of the client-centered approach are described: the role of empathy, the unconditional positive acceptance, the congruence in the construction of well-being of the individual. The idea is about a psychology that can be used to "Reveal the man to himself", So that he is free to recognize his real needs and to satisfy them. The purpose is to help to achieve the ambitious goal which is the concept of health, as understood by the WHO: a full state of physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease.

### **Beatrice BIANCHINI**

*Formatrice C.S.F. Enaip Veneto, Italy*

#### **Vorrei tornassero le rose**

#### **Condivisione con insegnanti e counselor di un laboratorio sulle storie di vita di adolescenti stranieri**

Da una decina d'anni lavoro come formatrice presso il C.S.F. Enaip Veneto di Verona. Tale ente, negli ultimi anni, ha accolto ragazzi di molte nazionalità, per cui ogni giorno ho l'opportunità di vivere a stretto contatto con culture e mondi diversi. Per questo quando sento il termine intercultura non mi vengono in mente solo teorie ma visi, persone e storie.

All'interno di un progetto sulla cittadinanza attiva ho avuto l'opportunità di strutturare un laboratorio che aveva l'obiettivo di creare uno spazio d'ascolto delle storie di adolescenti stranieri.

Il laboratorio è stato suddiviso in tre momenti:

- il far rivivere ai ragazzi, grazie alle suggestioni create dalle mie parole, immagini, colori e profumi della loro terra, il viaggio che hanno fatto per arrivare in Italia, la loro vita nel presente e i desideri per il futuro;
- la ricerca di immagini su delle riviste che rappresentassero il loro passato, il presente e il futuro, da incollare poi su tre cartelloni;
- il racconto dei cartelloni.

Anch'io ho partecipato attivamente e ho iniziato a raccontarmi; questo credo abbia agevolato la loro apertura.

Le loro parole mi hanno aiutata a comprendere quanto può essere complesso trovarsi spaesati in una terra di nessuno, né là né qua, soprattutto in un periodo complesso come quello dell'adolescenza.

La formazione in counseling ad indirizzo somato-relazionale, fatta in seguito, mi ha permesso prima di tutto di lavorare su di me e di comprendere quali competenze deve possedere chi lavora nella relazione, sempre e nel particolare con utenti migranti.

E' indispensabile sviluppare caratteristiche come l'accettazione positiva ed incondizionata, l'empatia, la congruenza, la considerazione degli aspetti non verbali, il sapersi calare in una condizione di sapere e di non sapere, l'apertura al nuovo, il saper ascoltare senza imporre né senza escludere. Ascoltare storie, emozioni, sentimenti lasciando spazio ai silenzi, creando un clima di fiducia e rispetto.

I migranti possono vivere momenti di enorme sofferenza e spiazzamento e il nostro compito è quello di dar loro supporto nell'affrontare crisi di transizione culturale tipiche dei processi migratori.

#### **I wish the roses came back**

#### **Teachers and counsellors sharing a laboratory about the stories of foreign teenagers**

I have been working as a teacher for ten years at the CSF Enaip Veneto in Verona. In the last years, this foundation has been receiving a lot of teenagers from different countries, therefore I can live everyday at close contact with different cultures and worlds. This is the reason why, every time I hear the word "intercultural" I don't think about theories, but about faces, people, stories.

Working on a project on active citizenship, I organised a lab whose intent was to create a group about the stories of teenagers coming from abroad.

This lab was divided into three parts:

- The students had to recollect - following my words - images, colours and perfumes of their own country and of their journey to Italy. They also had to describe their life as it is today and their hopes for the future;
- The students had to look for pictures in the magazines representing their past, present and future, and to put them on three posters;
- They had to describe these posters.

As I played an active part of this project, I told them about myself; I think that this helped them to open up with me too.

Their words helped me to understand how difficult it can be to feel lost in a foreign land and above all, in a time as difficult as adolescence can be.

My studies in counseling specializing in the somatic relational approach (counselling ad indirizzo somato-relazionale), gave me the opportunity to work on myself and to figure out which skills must have a person who works in the relationship with immigrants.

It is crucial to develop these skills in order to accept positively and absolutely the compassion, the congruence and the consideration of the non-verbal perspective and situations which you don't know or understand. It is essential to open up to new perspectives, to listen without prejudices and to create an atmosphere of trust and respect.

Immigrants may have suffered a lot and they may feel lost and our task is to give them support while they face this crisis of cultural transition typical of the migratory processes.

### **Olaniyi BOJUWOYE**

*University of the Western Cape, South Africa*

#### **Inter-Relationships of Culture, Health, Illness, Healthcare and Healing: Prospects for the Integration of Cultural Psychotherapeutic Practices**

Culture plays very significant role in the conceptualization of human functioning. The various cultural realities people have constructed, whether these are in terms of beliefs, values, languages, institutions, customs and laws, all have significant influence on conceptualization of human functioning. Beliefs about health or illness, attitudes towards overcoming illness and help-seeking or health seeking behaviours are all culturally related. Every culture has its own conceptual model of explaining health, illness and healthcare and this means that there is no universal worldview regarding causation of illness or appropriateness of treatment. This also implies no single cultural healthcare model has universal applicability. One cultural healthcare model is likely to have limited success when applied to people of another culture. However, there are ample evidences that every culture has beneficial contributions to make to overall healthcare systems of the world, hence the calls for integration of cultural healthcare systems. Integration of healthcare systems will not only make for the pooling of cultural resources for effective healthcare delivery but also for context sensitive healthcare practices. Although it is recognized that integration is not without many challenges, these, nevertheless, are not insurmountable.

### **Thierry BONFANTI**

*Psicoterapeuta, Italy*

#### **Caffè Dibattito Interculturale (Workshop)**

Nel 1992, a Parigi, nacque il primo "café philosophique". Si trattava di un dibattito filosofico svolto in un bar e aperto a tutti, su un argomento fissato dal conduttore. Tale Caffè si collocava all'incrocio tra due tradizioni francesi. Quella dei salotti letterari e quella dell'incontro tra bar e letteratura, particolarmente in voga a Parigi nel periodo surrealista. Questo primo "café philosophique" ebbe un gran successo e oggi, vent'anni dopo, ci sono più di cento Caffè Filosofici nella capitale francese e quasi ogni città francese grande o media ha il suo Caffè Filosofico. Nel 1995, sotto la guida di Michel Lobrot e insieme a Nicole Habrias, varammo una formula diversa nello spirito della Non-Direttività Interveniente, il Café-Débat (Caffè-Dibattito). Questa nuova formula si discosta dal Caffè Filosofico in diversi punti. La prima differenza è che l'argomento viene scelto dal pubblico, la sera stessa, secondo una procedura democratica a votazione. La seconda è che l'argomento non è necessariamente affrontato in chiave filosofica e partecipare non richiede nessuna conoscenza particolare. Il Caffè-Dibattito è condotto in modo che ognuno si possa esprimere attingendo alla propria esperienza di vita, alla propria cultura. Nel caffè dibattito, si può parlare di sé, del proprio vissuto, di argomenti della vita quotidiana. Questa impostazione permette, quindi, una partecipazione molto ampia. In effetti, nella pratica del caffè filosofico, quelli che si esprimono sono spesso persone che hanno una certa cultura filosofica e una certa facilità a parlare in pubblico. Il Caffè-Dibattito è più democratico. Ridà la parola al cittadino. È un luogo di espressione e di confronto delle proprie idee. Favorisce l'incontro tra le persone, il dialogo, il legame sociale. Stimola la riflessione. Rappresenta un fattore di aggregazione e di lotta contro l'isolamento. Partecipa alla vita culturale della città. Ho "importato" il Caffè Dibattito in Italia nel 2001 nella città di Trento ed è diventato un vero feno-

meno culturale che ha ispirato numerosissime altre iniziative associando cultura e bar. Per fare qualche esempio, in seguito al Caffè Dibattito, sono stati creati in Trentino e anche fuori provincia i caffè filosofici, caffè letterari, genitori caffè, Alzheimer caffè, caffè delle lingue, caffè delle donne, ecc. Per quanto mi riguarda, ho proposto per la prima volta nella città di Bolzano un caffè dibattito interculturale nel 2007. La differenza non sta negli argomenti che non necessariamente devono essere centrati sull'interculturalità bensì nella diversità del pubblico presente.

**Thierry BONFANTI**  
*Psicoterapeuta, Italy*

### **Nutrition Between Physiology And Psychology**

There is no doubt that nourishment affects health considerably. Hence, dietetics determines which foods are good, which ones are unhealthy and in which quantity they should to be swallowed according to the state of health of the people, to their sex, their age, etc. However, this reasoning doesn't take into account the psychological and emotional value of food, as well undoubted.

In fact, you can set two function of nourishment apart. One is the heterotelic function which corresponds to extrinsic motivations. It is the utilitarian function of nourishment. Another one is the autotelic function which corresponds to intrinsic motivations. It is the function in which nourishment has its purpose in the pleasure which gives. These two functions seem to be unrelated.

This autotelic function itself can be included in larger psychological function. Eating motivations have often a little to do with physiological needs and are often in contradiction with them.

These psychological motivations to eat are culturally determined and assume an important role in people psychic economy. In some cases, the pleasure of eating assume a compensatory function as occurs in the case of bulimia. In this case, I propose three directions of therapeutic work. One of them consists, in many case, in the improvement of the pleasure of eating, as in the compensatory use of food, the way of eating becomes rather compulsive and not very refined.

If the psychological value of food is undeniable, it would be as well absurd to deny the validity of the dietetic advice. Diets have their usefulness from a physiological and health point of view, even if each of them is arguable since dietician voice is not univocal. However, they shouldn't be mechanically prescribed without taking into account their emotional and psychological repercussions. Frustration is one of their side-effects with psychological and therefore physiological fallout. Every person on diet should be psychologically supported.

This conflict between physiological needs and desire can be met in other human activities. For instance, it is widely-known that gym is an important factor of health and yet sometimes it collides with people reluctance to apply themselves to it.

**Carmel BORG**  
*University of Malta*

### **Critically-engaging, intercultural dialogues in neoliberal times**

Intercultural encounters are essentially educational in nature. Set against a backdrop marked by dominant neoliberal discourses, this paper explores the current rhetoric on intercultural dialogue, looking for elements that distinguish intercultural dialogues that liberate from those that 'domesticate'. Illusions of voice and pseudo-empowerment will be interrogated with a view to proposing dialogues for transformation, hope and possibility.

**Francesco BOSSIO**  
*Università della Calabria, Italy*

### **Educazione e persona nella complessità. Itinerari di pedagogia interculturale tra identità, alterità e riconoscimento**

L'uomo non vive e non agisce mai da solo, ma è strutturalmente orientato al rapporto con gli altri, anzi, è proprio in questo rapporto che il soggetto realizza pienamente la propria personalità e la propria natura. Parlare di pedagogia interculturale in una società come la nostra dominata dalla globalizzazione, dal relativismo e dalla reificazione vuol dire necessariamente confrontarsi con ciò che l'uomo è, con la sua identità, riflettere sulle possibilità di incontro, di confronto e di riconoscimento, analizzare le istanze educative che possono, concretamente, condurci verso una società plurale e democratica. L'incidenza dell'altro, nel costituirsi dell'io, è quasi uno statuto dell'esistere umano, una norma dettata dalla sua

stessa indole, per la quale sottrarsi alla dimensione della relazionalità non solo significa andare incontro ad una aridità ontologica ed esistenziale ma, ancor più, morire all'ideale stesso di uomo, alienando una di quelle componenti che rende tale l'essere umano, elevando il suo essere a quel mistero affascinante che egli stesso, dagli albori della sua esistenza, anela a conoscere e a rivelare più di qualsiasi altra cosa. Il soggetto che prende forma, si caratterizza, si emancipa e si determina per mezzo delle esperienze, delle emozioni e, soprattutto, delle relazioni che attraversano la sua esistenza. L'altro è una risorsa impareggiabile fonte di confronto e di stimolo, in tutte le stagioni dell'umana esistenza, ma tuttavia è necessario che la persona ascenda prioritariamente alla piena consapevolezza di sé, alla sua essenza più autentica, il *proprium*, l'identità di essere singolare, unico ed irripetibile. Queste acquisizioni, ovviamente, non portano la persona ad isolarsi come una "monade", anzi all'opposto ascendendo all'essenza più autentica la persona incontra gli altri e vi si relaziona in maniera diversa, più autentica, positiva e progettuale. Proprio distinguendosi dagli altri la persona non confonde più le istanze proprie con quelle dell'altro, si pensi ad esempio alle dinamiche psicologiche di "proiezione" e di "spostamento", ma agisce maieuticamente il riconoscimento: ovvero, riconoscendo, autenticamente, se stessa nella sua identità la persona riconosce anche l'altro nelle sue peculiari caratteristiche che lo rendono persona. Possiamo indicare il bisogno del riconoscimento come esigenza fondamentale dell'esistenza, secondaria forse, solo all'istinto di autoconservazione. Ciascuna soggettività, per poter crescere e svilupparsi armonicamente, ha bisogno di essere riconosciuta nelle sue caratteristiche e peculiarità. Il soggetto nella sua dimensione originaria è continuamente attraversato dall'alterità e proprio grazie a queste continue simmetrie di riconoscimento può ascendere, alla sua natura più autentica, quella di persona unica ed irripetibile. Dobbiamo poi considerare parlando di riconoscimento almeno due aspetti principali che declinano questa fondamentale categoria pedagogica, una dimensione personale del riconoscimento, di cui abbiamo già accennato, e un secondo paradigma che, insieme al primo in maniera sinergica e complementare caratterizza, influenza e rende possibile il riconoscimento, la sua natura sociale che insieme alla dimensione soggettiva connotano questo fenomeno. Il riconoscimento rappresenta una categoria radicale non solo dell'educazione e del pedagogico ma dell'intera esistenza umana, a partire dal linguaggio come elemento originario della persona attraverso cui continuamente esperisce il mondo della vita insieme agli altri. Identità e riconoscimento sono due elementi differenti che tuttavia divengono complementari, nel senso che il riconoscimento diviene una funzione simmetrica della stessa identità personale, nei termini che la stessa identità diviene concreta e reale solo attraverso il riconoscimento. Nel riconoscersi le persone si aprono agli altri nella propria identità e questa costitutiva apertura viene accolta e restituita dalle altre persone che a loro volta si aprono alla reciprocità della relazione in maniera reale e autentica. Il riconoscimento è strettamente legato all'identità come condizione fondante della sua stessa sussistenza, sono persona anche perché sono riconosciuta come tale. In conclusione, il riconoscimento apre la soggettività all'alterità fino alla condivisione profonda dell'autocoscienza, riconoscere l'altro implica anche l'accoglierlo e rispettarlo nelle sue peculiarità e caratteristiche, conferendogli la dignità di soggetto e lo stesso statuto morale che grazie a lui riesco ad attribuire a me stesso. Il riconoscimento è quindi un processo che nasce nell'etica del rispetto dell'altro, degli altri, come di se stesso, fondamento stesso della civile convivenza.

### **Education and person in complexity. Intercultural education routes among identity, otherness and recognition**

Man never lives and acts alone, but he is structurally oriented towards relationships with others. In fact this condition allows a person to fully realize its own personality and its own nature. In a society like ours, dominated by globalization, relativism and reification, discuss about the intercultural education necessarily mean deal with what man is, consider its identity, meditate on the possibility of encounter, confrontation and identification, finally analyze educational aspect that can lead us towards a democratic and pluralistic society. The incidence of the other in the constitution of the ego is a condition of human existence, it is a rule imposed by its own nature, for which escape the dimension of relationality not only means to meet a drought ontological and existential, but even more, to die out the ideal of man, alienating one of those components that makes the human being, raising his being to that fascinating mystery that he, from the beginning of its existence, longs to know and reveal more of anything else. The person takes shape, is emancipated and determined by means of experiences, emotions, and especially by the relations that cross its existence. In all the seasons of human existence, the other is a resource unparalleled well of comparison and stimulation, but it is nevertheless necessary that the person primarily ascend to full self-awareness, at its most authentic being, the "proprium", the identity to be singular, unique and unrepeatable. These acquisition of course, does not bring the person to isolate themselves as a "monad", on the contrary the person, ascending to its most authentic essence, meets the other in a different way, more authentic, positive and planning. Just standing out from the other, the person does not confuse its own instances with those of others, consider, for example, the psychological dynamics of "projection" and "shift", but acts maieutically a recognition: that is, recognizing authentically herself in its identity, the person also recognizes the other in its peculiar characteristics that make it a person. We can point to the need for recognition as a fundamental requirement of existence, perhaps secondary, only to the instinct of self-preservation. Each subjectivity in order to grow and develop in harmony needs to be recognized in its characteristics and peculiarities. The subject, in its original aspect, is continually trav-



ersed from alterity and thanks to these continuous symmetries of recognition may ascend to its most authentic nature: a person unique and unrepeatable. We must then consider, talking about recognition, by at least two main aspects that tackle this fundamental pedagogical category, a personal dimension of recognition, which we have already mentioned, and a second paradigm, along with the first in a synergistic and complementary features, and makes it possible to influence the recognition, its social nature which together with the subjective dimension characterize this phenomenon. The identification represents an essential category not only in education and teaching but for the entire human existence, from the original language as an element of the person through whom experiences continually the world of life with others. Identity and recognition are two different elements which, however, become complementary, in the sense that recognition becomes a symmetric function of personal identity, that is identity becomes concrete and real only through the recognition. People open to others their own identity in recognition and that constitutive openness is accepted and returned by other people who in turn are open to the reciprocity of the relationship in a real and authentic manner. The recognition is very related to identity as a fundamental condition of its own existence: I am a person even because I am recognized as such. In conclusion, the recognition opens up the subjectivity to otherness up to the deep sharing of self, recognizing the other also implies to accept and respect its peculiarities and characteristics, giving it the dignity of subject and the same moral status that thanks to him I can give to myself. The recognition is a process that comes in the ethics of respect for the other, for the others, as well for himself: this can be the very foundation of civil society.

**Tine BRØNDUM**

University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

**Memory culture and learning amongst students at Danish colleges of education**

In this paper I outline the framework and some initial questions in my newly initiated PhD project on biographical learning and differing memory cultures amongst teacher students at Danish colleges of education. The paper will be opened with a short project description which will be followed by a presentation and preliminary analysis of the narratives of two teacher students. I will use these narratives in a pilot analysis of central aspects of the project, namely how the informants through their memories narratively express self-identity and relations to others as well as perceptions of their education. The paper will be concluded with a few questions for further discussion.

In my project I address communities of memory at Danish colleges and ask how alternative individual and collective memories overlap or dissonance with the dominating cultures present at the institutions. My approach is narrative life story interviews (Horsdal 2012) through which I address how students bring in or reflect upon their own biographical narratives and memories when they learn about history, religion and culture. The project will have a special focus on alternative memory cultures amongst ethnic or otherwise constructed minorities. With this focus I wish to address the role memory and cultural background play in the changing intercultural structures of minority and majority relations at the colleges.

In my future work I will use narrative interviews, observation and other forms of fieldwork to look both backwards and forwards in time. Through the life story interviews I aim to use the student's reflections on their personal trajectories leading up to now. Through these narratives I hope to gain insight into the reflections on and configurations of the narrator's identity work (Gee 2000) and to get a situated perspective of how and from what sources the informants create meaning and cohesion in their lives. Apart from life story interviews, I will conduct and use semi-structured interviews, logbooks and classroom observations in order to qualify a more forward looking analysis of how the students understand and use history.

The aim of the project is to address how we in teacher's education can include memories and personal narratives of students in order to make learning relevant and available? Furthermore I aim to explore how we in education can improve dialogic, intercultural and multiple perspective understanding across divergent cultural narratives and memory cultures.

**Jason BROWN**

*Western University, Canada*

**A Relational Approach to Cross-Cultural Practice**

From the perspective of a non-Indigenous researcher and psychologist, the presentation will reflect on three broad ways of working with Indigenous communities, families and individuals. The presentation will focus on the fundamental importance of: 1) understanding Indigenous values, knowledge and practices in communities different from their own, and 2) recognition and expression of one's own personal, professional and institutional identities and roles. 3) A relational approach to working across difference is proposed and applied to professional helping as well as instructional roles and research.

**Marco CATARCI**

*Università degli Studi "Roma Tre", Italy*

**Orientamenti e pratiche di educazione interculturale. Una ricerca comparativa nell'Unione Europea**

Il contributo propone gli esiti di una ricerca comparativa svolta da una rete di studiosi e ricercatori attivi nel campo dell'educazione interculturale in differenti Paesi Europei: Marco Catarci e Massimiliano Fiorucci (Università degli Studi "Roma Tre", Italia), Martine A. Preteceille (Université Paris VIII, Francia), Jagdish Gundara (University of London, Regno Unito), Otto Filtzinger e Giovanni Cicero Catanese (Institut für Interkulturelle Pädagogik im Elementarbereich e.V. – IPE, Mainz, Germania); Teresa Pozo Llorente (Universidad de Granada), Jordi Vallespir Soler (Universitat de les Illes Balears) e Lidia Cabrera Pérez (Universidad de La Laguna) (Spagna); Martha Montero-Sieburth e Hana Alhadi (Universiteit van Amsterdam; Olanda); George Markou (University of Athens, Grecia); France Guadalupe (Uppsala Universitet, Svezia). L'obiettivo principale della ricerca è quello di offrire un'analisi comparativa delle teorie e pratiche di educazione interculturale sviluppate nel contesto europeo in Paesi di antica immigrazione (Francia, Regno Unito, Germania), di nuova immigrazione (Spagna, Italia, Grecia) e nei Paesi del Nord Europa (Olanda e Svezia), nei quali sono stati costruiti specifici orientamenti di educazione interculturale. L'analisi è stata svolta attraverso domande di ricerca condivise adottate dai ricercatori nei diversi contesti:

RQ1. Quali sono le caratteristiche della presenza di immigrati o di gruppi con differente background culturale nel Paese?

RQ2. Quali sono le caratteristiche della presenza di allievi immigrati o con differente background culturale nel contesto scolastico nazionale?

RQ3. Quali sono i temi più rilevanti segnalati dalla ricerca scientifica in riferimento alla presenza di allievi stranieri o con differente background culturale nel contesto scolastico nazionale?

RQ4. Quali sono le strategie e le pratiche educative più rilevanti che sono state adottate per affrontare tali problematiche?

RQ5. Descrivere una buona pratica nella scuola e il contesto di riferimento.

RQ6. In conclusione, quali sono i principali punti di forza e di debolezza dell'approccio di educazione interculturale adottato nel Paese?

Per ciò che concerne i risultati attesi, va osservato che l'Europa è di per sé una regione caratterizzata da un'ampia diversità culturale e geografica, con 23 lingue ufficiali nell'Unione Europea e più di 60 comunità di minoranze linguistiche e culturali. Ci si attende che gli esiti dell'indagine abbiano una rilevanza specifica per i sistemi scolastici nell'Unione Europea in termini di impegno interculturale e di politiche educative. In conclusione, in un contesto come quello europeo, che non è mai stato culturalmente omogeneo, la prospettiva interculturale analizzata nello studio può rappresentare una strategia rilevante per il contrasto dell'esclusione sociale e per il rafforzamento della coesione sociale.

**Intercultural perspectives and practices in education. A comparative research in the European Union.**

The paper focuses on a comparative study carried out by a network of scholars and researchers who are active in the field of intercultural education in several European countries: Marco Catarci and Massimiliano Fiorucci ("Roma Tre" University, Italy), Martine A. Preteceille (Université Paris VIII, France), Jagdish Gundara (University of London, United Kingdom), Otto Filtzinger and Giovanni Cicero Catanese (Institut für Interkulturelle Pädagogik im Elementarbereich e.V. – IPE, Mainz, Germany); Teresa Pozo Llorente (Universidad de Granada), Jordi Vallespir Soler (Universitat de les Illes Balears) and Lidia Cabrera Pérez (Universidad de La Laguna) (Spain); Martha Montero-Sieburth and Hana Alhadi (Universiteit van Amsterdam; Netherlands); George Markou (University of Athens, Greece); France Guadalupe (Uppsala Universitet, Sweden). The main aim of the research is to provide a comparative analysis of intercultural theories and practices developed in the European context in several old immigration countries (France, United Kingdom, Germany), new immigration countries (Italy, Spain and Greece) and the countries of Northern Europe (Netherlands and Sweden), which have developed specific features of intercultural approaches to their education systems. This analysis has been carried out by using the following joint research questions adopted by the researchers in the different countries:

RQ1. What are the main features of the presence of immigrants and/or groups with different cultural backgrounds in the country?

RQ2. What are the main features of the presence of immigrant students and/or students with a different cultural background in the national school context?

RQ3. What are the most important issues raised by scientific research into the presence of immigrant students and/or students with a different cultural background in the school?

RQ4. What are the most relevant educational practices and strategies which have been adopted to address these problems in the national school context?

RQ5. Describe one example of best practice in the school with reference to its educational context.

RQ6. In conclusion, what are the major strengths and weaknesses of the intercultural education approach adopted in the country?

With regard to the expected findings, it must be remembered that Europe is a region of great cultural and geographical diversity, with 23 official languages in the European Union and more than 60 indigenous regional or minority language communities. It is expected that the research findings will have specific implications for the school system in the European Union in terms of intercultural engagement and government policy. In conclusion, in a context like Europe, which has never been culturally homogeneous, the perspective on interculturalism analysed in the study can constitute an essential tool for addressing marginalisation and enhancing social cohesion.

### **Marianna CENTO**

*Psicologa, psicoterapeuta in formazione IACP, Italy*

#### **La Terapia Centrata sulla Persona e la Psichiatria Transculturale: una ricerca complementarista.**

L'elaborato nasce dalla ricerca svolta nell'anno 2011-2012 in occasione della simultanea frequentazione del Quadriennio IACP e del Diploma in Psichiatria Transculturale. La ricerca esplora la possibilità di un arricchimento reciproco fra l'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona e la prospettiva Psichiatrica Transculturale francese, a livello teorico, clinico e dei rispettivi setting. La metodologia adoperata è quella complementarista (Devereux, 1978), ovvero di analisi obbligatoria ma non simultanea dei due approcci. In una prima fase tale metodologia viene applicata all'esplorazione teorica di postulati della C.C.T. e della Psichiatria Transculturale, mentre in seguito la si adoperava per presentare la presa in carico di una famiglia cinese, avvenuta presso la Clinica per gli adolescenti di Cochinchine, a Parigi, descrivendo il funzionamento del setting transculturale. Infine, si esplorano i contributi reciproci dei due approcci. A livello metodologico ritiene che la CCT arricchisca la Psichiatria Transculturale attraverso il concetto di "filosofia della natura umana", esplicitando il modello di persona veicolato dal terapeuta, e che con il concetto di "principio dialogico" favorisca il dialogo del terapeuta con le nozioni antropologiche di persona, spesso relazionali, veicolate dai migranti. Parimenti il concetto di "codifica culturale" può aprire la C.C.T. alla centralità della dimensione culturale dell'incontro terapeutico, favorendo il dialogo fra le rappresentazioni culturali del terapeuta e del paziente. Sotto il profilo clinico, se il rogersiano concetto di "congruenza" rende esplicito il coinvolgimento affettivo del terapeuta nell'hic et nunc della relazione, quello di "controtransfert culturale" ne sottolinea le implicazioni culturali. Inoltre, laddove la CCT propone la necessità dell'auto-analisi e della supervisione individuale dei casi clinici, la Psichiatria Transculturale opera attraverso un confronto di gruppo e potrebbe arricchire la C.C.T. introducendo la necessità di lavorare con l'interprete nella presa in carico dei migranti. In merito all'arricchimento dei setting, se il concetto di "costruzione intersoggettiva del setting" (Greggio, Zucconi, 2009) sottolinea la dimensione socio-politica e relazionale dell'incontro fra terapeuta e cliente, la "decolonizzazione di se stessi" proposta da Fanon (Fanon, 1952) mette in luce come tale incontro si giochi sul palcoscenico della storia, precedendo la relazione "Io-Tu". Entrambe gli approcci presentano una centratura sui bisogni rispettivamente del cliente e del paziente ed assegnano a quest'ultimo una posizione di potere. In conclusione, si sostiene la possibilità di creare dei setting "a geometria variabile" e "meticciati" (Moro, 1991), aperti all'incontro tra terapeuta e cliente nelle sue dimensioni storiche, politiche e sociali.

#### **Client Centred Therapy and Transcultural Psychiatry: a complementaristic research**

The purpose of the research (based on the experience got during the simultaneous attendance of IACP (Person Centred Approach Institute) and Transcultural Psychiatry Diploma in 2011-2012) is exploring, at theoretical and clinical levels, the mutual enrichment between the "Person focused Approach" and the "French Psychiatric cross-cultural perspective", and also the enrichment of their settings.

The method in use is that "complementaristic" (Devereux, 1978), that is the compulsory but not simultaneous analysis of the two approaches. At first this methodology is applied to the theoretical reconnaissance of C.C.T. (Client Centred Therapy) and transcultural psychiatry postulates, while then it is employed to describe

the "cross-cultural setting" by means of the charge of a Chinese family in the "Adolescents Clinic" in Cochinchine, Paris. At methodological level the C.C.T. can enrich the cross-cultural psychiatry through the "human nature philosophy" concept, explicating a person model carried by the therapist and through the "dialogic principle" promotes the dialogue between the therapist and the anthropological notion of person, often with relational characteristics, transmitted by the migrants. At the same time the "cultural code" can open the C.C.T. to the centrality of the cultural dimension of the therapeutic meeting encouraging the dialogue between the cultural representations of the therapist and the patient. Under the clinic profile, the Rogersian concept of "congruence" shows the therapist's affective role in the "hic et nunc" of the relationship, while that of "cultural counter transference" underline the cultural implications. Whereas C.C.T. suggest the necessity of auto analysis and individual supervision of clinical cases, the transcultural psychiatry works through a "team confrontation" and could enrich the C.C.T. introducing the necessity of working with a translator while supporting migrants. Regarding the settings' enrichment, if the "intersub-

jective setting construction”(Greggio, Zucconi, 2009) underline the socio-political and relational dimension of the meeting between therapist and patient, the “decolonization of oneself “ described by Fanon (Fanon, 1952) point out how this meeting is set on the history stage, anticipating the “you and I ” relationship . Both the approaches are centred on the client or on the patient’s needs and assign the last to a power position. To sum up we believe that it is important to create “variable geometry” and “hybrid” settings “(Moro, 1991), open to the meeting between therapist and patient through its historic, political and social dimensions.

### **Claudio CERNESI**

*Laboratorio Teranga – UNIMORE, Italy*

#### **Educazione interculturale e costruzione di relazioni**

Nella mia esperienza tanto sul territorio quanto nella scuola è consueto verificare come al termine “Educazione interculturale” si associno una serie di azioni quali ad esempio:

- Insegnare italiano come L2
- Attuare un protocollo di accoglienza
- Allestire uno scaffale multietnico
- Impiegare i mediatori
- Organizzare un serata di cucina multietnica
- Organizzare una festa multiculturale

....

Secondo i paradigmi della pedagogia interculturale queste sono un insieme di importanti attività propedeutiche o di corredo alla educazione interculturale ma non ne sono il cuore centrale

Se così fosse infatti ci troveremmo davanti ad un interculturalismo senza culture cioè ad una interazione senza gli attori dell’ interagire

La pedagogia interculturale si propone come progettazione tesa al facilitare la costruzione di relazioni tra persone

Attraverso tali relazioni si opera per rendere possibile la nascita di nuove possibili categorie culturali

L’elemento chiave dell’approccio interculturale è quindi l’azione di scambio con l’altro

Il punto di partenza diviene quello della differenza e non quello della differenza culturale dello straniero

Siamo di fronte a uguaglianze umane e differenze culturali e educazione interculturale è allora impostare forme di apprendimento transcognitive: ovvero una capacità di locomozione da un atto cognitivo all’altro, da una Forma mentis all’altra.

Agire sulle categorie culturali già presenti in un dato gruppo (classe, associazione, parrocchia ...) è fase delicata poiché porta a rivedere anche i rapporti interni alla propria rete relazionale

Lo sperimentare la relatività delle categorie culturali impatta con le difese del senso di appartenenza alla propria nicchia socio affettiva.

Lo stigma della differenza annulla sovente la possibile costruzione di relazione con la persona

La sperimentazione di questi anni porta a dire che la dinamica transitiva si attiva costruendo uno spazio tempo entro cui i soggetti possano avvicinarsi alla differenza in situazione “sicura” attraverso la proposta di una relazione di rispetto reciproca: dare rispetto e chiedere rispetto

Questa modalità rappresenta un esempio transitivo di relazione e il clima umano che ne nasce apre al possibile cambiamento delle proprie categorie culturali

I nostri territori sono abitati oggi da dinamiche comunicative segnate da scarso senso di appartenenza, conflittualità, apatia e contrapposizione pregiudiziale all’altro

Viene richiesto il testimoniare accettazione e interesse verso le persone quanto il confrontarsi con comportamenti sovente non rispettosi e quindi non accettabili impostando la relazione in equilibrio tra l’uso del codice materno e del codice paterno ... tanto con i ragazzi/e quanto con gli adulti.

#### **Intercultural education and relationship building**

In my experience both within the school as it is customary to see how the term "Intercultural Education" will combine a series of actions such as:

- Teaching Italian as L2
- Implement a protocol host
- Set up a shelf multiethnic
- Use the mediators
- Organize an evening of multi-ethnic cuisine
- Organize a multicultural celebration

....

According to the paradigms of intercultural pedagogy these are a set of important preparatory activities or accompanying the intercultural education but they are not the central core

If so in fact we would be in front of a interculturalism without a culture that is no interaction of the actors' interaction

The intercultural education is proposed as a design aimed to facilitate the building of relationships between people

Through these relationships we work to make possible the emergence of possible new cultural categories

The key element of the intercultural approach is therefore the exchange action with the other

The starting point becomes that of the difference and not the cultural difference of the foreign

We are faced with equalities and human cultural differences and intercultural education is then set trans-cognitive forms of learning: that is, a capacity for locomotion by a cognitive act another, from one form to another mindset.

Act on cultural categories already present in a given group (class, association, parish ...) is delicate stage because it leads to also review the relationships within the relational network

Experiencing the relativity of cultural categories impacts with the defenses of the sense of belonging to their niche socio affective.

The stigma of difference often cancels the possible construction of relationship with the person

The experimentation of these years has been to say that the dynamics is transitive active building a space-time within which the parties may approach the difference in situation "safe" by proposing a relationship of mutual respect: give respect and demand respect

This mode is an example of transitive relation and human climate which results from open to possible change of their own cultural categories

Our territories are inhabited today by the communicative are inhabited today by the communicative dynamics marked by low sense of belonging, conflict, apathy and opposition referred to another

Prompted the witness acceptance and interest in the people that deal with behavior often fail to respect and therefore not acceptable balance between setting the report using code maternal and paternal code ... so with the boys / girls as with adults.

## **Margherita CESTARO**

*Università di Padova, Italy*

### **Competenze di mediazione interculturale per educare alla cittadinanza in contesti plurali**

Nell'epoca attuale, la differenza s'impone ad ogni livello del vivere locale e globale non solo come "problema" di convivenza democratica ma anche — e in particolare — come "sfida" alla capacità umana di rintracciare le possibili "convergenze", a partire dalle quali si rende possibile per ciascuno (ai diversi livelli del vivere collettivo) collaborare con gli altri alla costruzione di contesti sociali e culturali nei quali a ciascuno sia consentito di riconoscersi, di crescere, di essere e di partecipare.

Collocandosi in tale direzione e ricorrendo ad una epistemologia dialogica, fenomenologico-ermeneutica e costruttivista, che riconosce, seppur da angolature diverse, nella relazione — e nella relazionalità — la dimensione esistenziale, ontologico e assiologica del soggetto-persona, il paper intende focalizzare l'attenzione sul concetto di mediazione interculturale, cercando di evidenziare in particolare le "aree" esistenziali-relazionali lungo le quali essa è chiamata ad agire, oggi, in una prospettiva pedagogica ed educativa.

Dopo aver evidenziato le "luci" e le "ombre" che gli studi nazionali e internazionali rilevano in merito al dispositivo della mediazione culturale/linguistico-culturale fino ad oggi praticato, il paper riconosce l'opportunità di "so-stare sulla mediazione" mediante un adeguato processo di riflessione critico-costruttiva. Nel raccogliere quindi l'istanza di distinguere la pratica della mediazione tra "professione specifica" e "competenza professionale" (situata e distribuita tra quanti operano nei diversi ambiti educativi, socio-culturali, sanitari) e nel ribadire come la mediazione rappresenti uno dei concetti-chiave attorno ai quali si articola la proposta pedagogica italiana (sia a livello di pedagogia generale che interculturale), il paper mira a sottolineare come essa rappresenti uno "stile professionale" che i diversi operatori — e in primis quelli educativi — sono chiamati ad assumere.

Nello specifico, il paper intende mettere in luce le competenze di mediazione interculturale che, collocandosi lungo gli assi antropologico, etico-valoriale e socio-culturale, consentono ad ogni operatore di agire in senso educativo e formativo sui concetti di appartenenza, cittadinanza, inclusione, giustizia e partecipazione democratica, promuovendo tra i diversi attori coinvolti reali processi interattivi di coesione sociale e umana.

Per tali ragioni, si ritiene che il paper, aprendosi a livelli differenti di riflessione (pedagogica, educativa e didattica, etica e politica), possa costituire oggetto di interesse sia per insegnanti sia per consulenti e studiosi/esperti.

### **Intercultural competences to educate for citizenship in plural contexts**

In the present age, the difference imposes itself on each level of the local and global life not only as "problem" of democratic coexistence but also — and in particular — as "challenge". It is a "challenge" to the human ability to trace possible "meeting points", from which it makes possible for each person (at different levels of the collective society) to collaborate with others in the construction of social and cultur-

al contexts “positives”, namely, which allow to each one to be, to grow and to participate. Putting itself in this direction, the paper follows an epistemology both dialogical, phenomenological-hermeneutic and constructivist which, although from different angles, recognizes that the relationship is the dimension both existential, ontological and axiological of subject-person. Hence, it aims to focus on the concept of intercultural mediation. In particular, it seeks to highlight the “areas” — both existential and relational — along which it is called on to act in a perspective both pedagogy and educational, today. After having highlighted the “lights” and the “shadows” that the national and international studies detect on the device of linguistic and/or cultural mediation until today practiced, the paper recognizes the opportunity to “stay on mediation” by means of a process of critical-constructive reflection. Therefore, collecting the instance to distinguish the practice of mediation between “specific profession” and “professional competence” (which is both located and distributed among those who work in different contexts both educational, social-cultural, and health), the paper intends to:

- reiterate that the mediation represents one of the key concepts around which the Italian pedagogical proposal (both in general pedagogy and intercultural pedagogy) articulates;
- emphasize such as it represents a “professional style” that the operators — and especially educational operators — are called upon to assume.

Specifically, the paper aims at highlighting the competences of intercultural mediation that, putting themselves along the planes both anthropological, ethical and social-cultural, allow each operator to:

- act in sense both educational and training on the concepts of belonging, citizenship, inclusion, justice and democratic participation;
- promote, between the various actors involved, real interactive processes of social cohesion and human.

Therefore, by opening up to different levels of reflection (pedagogical, educational, ethical and political), the paper can be the subject of interest for teachers, consultants and scholars/experts.

**Margherita CESTARO**  
*Università di Padova, Italy*

### **Competenze di mediazione interculturale per educare alla cittadinanza in contesti scolastici plurali**

Nell'epoca attuale, la differenza s'impone ad ogni livello del vivere locale e globale non solo come “problema” di convivenza democratica ma anche — e in particolare — come “sfida” alla capacità umana di rintracciare le possibili “convergenze”, a partire dalle quali si rende possibile per ciascuno (ai diversi livelli del vivere collettivo) collaborare con gli altri alla costruzione di contesti sociali e culturali nei quali a ciascuno sia consentito di riconoscersi, di crescere, di essere e di partecipare. Collocandosi in tale direzione e ricorrendo ad una epistemologia dialogica, fenomenologico-ermeneutica e costruttivista, che riconosce, seppur da angolature diverse, nella relazione — e nella relazionalità — la dimensione esistenziale, ontologica e axiologica del soggetto-persona, il poster intende focalizzare l'attenzione sul concetto di mediazione interculturale, cercando di evidenziare in particolare le “aree” esistenziali-relazionali lungo le quali essa è chiamata ad agire, oggi, in una prospettiva pedagogica ed educativa.

Nel raccogliere l'istanza di distinguere la pratica della mediazione tra “professione specifica” e “competenza professionale” (situata e distribuita tra quanti operano nei diversi ambiti professionali) e nel ribadire come la mediazione rappresenti uno dei concetti-chiave attorno ai quali si articola la proposta pedagogica italiana (sia a livello di pedagogia generale che interculturale), il poster intende mettere in luce le competenze di mediazione interculturale che, collocandosi lungo gli assi antropologico, etico-valoriale e socio-culturale, consentono ad ogni operatore scolastico di agire in qualità di mediatore interculturale.

Nello specifico, facendo riferimento ad una ricerca di tipo qualitativo, condotta all'interno di una Rete di Scuole per l'intercultura di un distretto scolastico della provincia di Venezia (che ha coinvolto il personale docente e ATA di ogni ordine scolastico incluso nella Rete), il poster intende evidenziare i “punti di forza” e i “punti di debolezza” sui quali risulta importante orientare una formazione che intenda promuovere e/o rafforzare, in quanti operano all'interno della scuola, reali competenze per agire come mediatori interculturali, costruendo contesti relazionali nei quali a tutti e a ciascuno sia data la possibilità di fare esperienza di cittadinanza, di partecipazione democratica, di equità e di giustizia, tra “diversi” anche per cultura.

Per tali ragioni, si ritiene che il poster possa costituire oggetto di interesse sia per insegnanti sia per consulenti e studiosi/esperti.

### **Intercultural competences to educate for citizenship in school contexts plural**

In the present age, the difference imposes itself on each level of the local and global life not only as “problem” of democratic coexistence but also — and in particular — as “challenge”. It is a “challenge” to the human ability to trace possible “meeting points”, from which it makes possible for each person (at different levels of the collective society) to collaborate with others in the construction of social and cultur-

al contexts “positives”, namely, which allow to each one to be, to grow and to participate. Putting itself in this direction, the paper follows an epistemology both dialogical, phenomenological-hermeneutic and constructivist which, although from different angles, recognizes that the relationship is the dimension both existential, ontological and axiological of subject-person. Hence, it aims to focus on the concept of intercultural mediation. In particular, it seeks to highlight the “areas” — both existential and relational — along which it is called on to act in a perspective both pedagogy and educational, today.

Therefore, collecting the instance to distinguish the practice of mediation between “specific profession” and “professional competence” (which is both located and distributed among those who work in different contexts both educational, social-cultural, and health), the poster aims at highlighting the competences of intercultural mediation that, putting themselves along the planes both anthropological, ethical and social-cultural, allow each school operator to act as a mediator between cultures.

Specifically, the poster shows a research of a qualitative type, carried out within a network of schools for the intercultural education (of a school district of the province of Venice) which involved the teaching staff and ATA - the technical, administrative and auxiliary staff - of each order of school included in the Network).

The poster means to highlight the points of “strengths” and of “weakness” on which it is important to focus a training that aims to promote and/or to strengthen, in all who work within the school, real competences to act as “intercultural mediators”, namely, as who is able to build relational contexts in which everyone has the opportunity to make experience of citizenship, of democratic participation, of fairness and justice, between “different” also for culture.

Therefore, the paper can be the subject of interest for teachers, consultants and scholars/experts.

**Nilima CHANGKAKOTI**

*Geneva University, Switzerland*

### **Weaving a meaningful narrative : reconciling cultures in an ethnopsychiatric setting**

Based on George Devereux’s complementarity principle (compulsory yet non simultaneous use of anthropology and psychoanalysis), french psychologist and anthropologist Tobie Nathan created a specific setting in order to treat patients from other cultures (distant from a standardized occidental culture) who do not respond successfully to treatment as offered in more conventional medical and psychiatric settings. This specific setting (a group of therapists from different cultures, all “western” trained as doctors, psychologists or social workers; a community interpreter from the patient’s culture) enables a joint process of meaning construction by building bridges between cultures.

Teachers, school psychologists, social workers find themselves sometimes at loss with children and adolescents from immigrant families. If the assumption is that what baffles them has something to do with “being from elsewhere”, these children and adolescents may then be sent to the ethnopsychiatric clinic. On the basis of clinical data collected from an ethnopsychiatric clinic in Geneva, this paper examines how a meaningful narrative can be constructed that enables the child to continue with life as soundly as possible. The different “threads” of the narrative will be the story as told by the professionals; the story as told by the family (parents); what the elders of the family’s community would say; what one would think, say or do in the families or home countries of the co-therapists.

Weaving these different threads together into a coherent pattern is not an easy process as they often represent different, sometimes conflicting, cultural visions. How can the child reconcile school and parental demands as well as peer relationships? Is being forcefully reminded of beliefs and practices one has sometimes voluntarily left behind acceptable for parents at various stages of acculturation? They come to the clinic for their children - will they willingly engage in a process where the focus is on them and their families’ ancestors rather than on the child? How do rational western trained professionals relate to traditional theories where otherworldly figures often play an important role?

**Siyin CHEN**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**Richard A. RINALDO**

*Laurentian University at Georgian College, Canada*

### **The relationship between mindfulness and self-esteem: a cross-culture study**

As Western psychology continues to incorporate mindfulness practices into psychotherapies, there is an interest in identifying the potential conceptual and philosophical differences between psychology-based definitions of mindfulness and original Buddhist mindfulness practices. The present study was designed to examine the cross-cultural validity of Western conceptualizations of mindfulness in the newest mindfulness measuring scale - the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ). This study compared Chinese monks (n=9) and Chinese students (n=21) to Western psychology professionals (n=15) and Western students (n=15) on the FFMQ. The role of Western psychological definitions of self-esteem, meas-

ured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), was examined within the context of mindfulness definitions within the Western and Chinese cultures. The cultural differences regarding mindfulness was demonstrated by the monks' lower FFMQ score in association to their greater mindfulness practice experience, when compared to the Western sample. Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was found between self-esteem and mindfulness. The result of this study suggested a need for Western psychology to re-examine its current understanding of mindfulness. Therefore, it is important for future research to replicate the current study in Buddhist monks from other Eastern countries, in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of this Buddhist practice.

**Marina CHIBISOVA**

*Moscow City University, Russia*

**Counseling in a Collectivistic Culture: What Russian Clients expect and how Russian Counselors Deal with this**

It has been widely discussed that counseling culturally different clients requires specific skills and attitudes. But are counseling models themselves universal or do they have to adapt to cultural peculiarities? In Russia most counselors are taught "universalistic" counseling models devised in individualistic cultures, but they have to work with the clients coming from a predominantly collectivistic background. A qualitative research has been carried out to find out how these differences show up in clients' expectations and counselors' behavior. The research consisted of two stages. On the first stage two types of respondents were interviewed. The first group was the people who at some stage had considered seeking counseling advice but had decided against it. The second group was people who were attending a counselor regularly, and they were asked about the satisfying and dissatisfying factors in their relationship with a counselor. The following peculiar properties of clients' expectations in Russia have been found: strategy of seeking a counselor: personal recommendation of an acquaintance as the basis for turning to a counselor may be perceived as a lack of reliable support via family and friends; stating boundaries (time limits, using the phone, etc) may be seen by clients as a rejection or lack of sympathy

- clients expect the counselors to adapt the abovementioned boundaries to clients' personal situations
- clients aspire to build a personal as well as a professional contact with a counselor. When the latter remains only on professional terms, the clients tend not to trust him.

During the second stage of the research practicing counselors were interviewed. The counselors notice the difficulties of applying "universalistic" counseling models while working with Russian clients, but they tend to describe these difficulties more as personal than cultural. They also describe adjustments that they have to make (such as sharing personal information etc).

**Beatrice CIATTA**

*Università di Lucerna, Switzerland*

**Diventare madri in terra straniera. Donne africane nella Svizzera tedesca: difficoltà e risorse**

Questo contributo è la sintesi di due importanti esperienze: la mia ricerca di dottorato e il biennio di Counselling.

La ricerca muove dall'intento di analizzare e conoscere la realtà che vivono le donne immigrate di origine africana, nella regione di Basilea, durante la gravidanza e durante il primo anno di maternità. In particolare capire :

- se e come l'esperienza migratoria condizioni il loro modo di vivere la gravidanza e la maternità.
- quale sia il significato attribuito alla maternità, alla nascita e al puerperio.
- quali siano le aree problematiche che generano disagio e sofferenza psicologica affrontando queste esperienze in un paese straniero.
- quale sia rapporto con il sistema sanitario e sociale.
- come si modificano e funzionano: la rete familiare e quella femminile.
- come e se cambiano: il modo di prendersi cura del bambino, gli usi tradizionali e le credenze.

L'obiettivo principale è quello di capire quali dei bisogni di queste donne vengono soddisfatti dal sistema sanitario e sociale svizzero e quali dai modelli culturali e sociali di appartenenza, dalla rete familiare, dalle credenze e dai rituali e di capire che tipo di aiuto può dare l'approccio centrato sulla persona agli operatori del settore nel fornire "cure culturalmente competenti".

**Becoming Mothers in a Foreign Country. African Women in the German-Speaking Part of Switzerland**

This paper is a synthesis of two important experiences: my PhD research on one hand and a counseling course on the other hand. The research moves by the purpose to analyze and understand the experience of immigrant women in the Basel region (Switzerland), during pregnancy and during the first year of



motherhood. In particular, to understand:

- The experience of motherhood, how the situation of immigration conditioned the way to live it.
- The meanings attributed to the event of pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium.
- The problematic areas that generate discomfort and suffering in African women facing motherhood in a foreign country, but also the resources and potential that this event triggers.
- The relations with the Health and Social Service.
- The female network (here vs. country of origin).
- Methods of childcare, traditional customs (how and if they change).

The main goal is to understand which of the needs of these women are fulfilled by the Swiss Social and Health System and which by cultural patterns, social and familiar support, spiritual belief and rituals; furthermore to explore the possible help that counseling based on the person centered approach can provide to care givers in enabling a listening and "culturally competent" care.

### **Rosanna CIMA**

*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

### **Reinaldo FLEURI**

*Università Federale di Santa Catarina, Brasile*

### **Mariateresa MURACA**

*Università degli Studi di Verona/ Università Federale di Santa Catarina, Brasile*

## **Quale intercultura? Sguardi e contributi dall'America Latina e dall'Africa Sub-Sahariana**

La nostra relazione, che pretende di coinvolgere in maniera interattiva educatori ed esperti del tema, ha l'obiettivo di esplorare, interrogare e problematizzare l'intercultura, a partire da pratiche di creazione di pensiero, nutrite da attraversamenti di frontiere (non solo geografiche) e rotte intercontinentali che ci hanno condotto, per ragioni di ricerca, dall'Italia all'Africa Sub-Sahariana e dal Sud del Brasile in Italia e viceversa.

Le prime riflessioni teoriche e i primi interventi di carattere interculturale si sono affermati, a partire dagli anni '80, in Europa, come risposta alle sfide della società multiculturale e multiethnica, e hanno assunto il carattere di una rivoluzione pedagogica, permettendo di superare strategie educative di carattere compensatorio a favore di una visione positiva della convivenza di soggetti culturalmente ed etnicamente differenti (Portera, in Portera, Böhm e Secco, 2007).

Messo alla prova in contesti extra-europei, quali l'America Latina e l'Africa Sub-Sahariana, tuttavia, il concetto di educazione interculturale rivela alcuni limiti e una fisionomia in certa misura ancora connotata da una visione occidentale (Giménez Romero, in Mantovani, 2008). In queste realtà colonialismo e migrazioni, dominazioni e convivenza, contatti spontanei e forzati hanno indotto profondi processi di acculturazione, fusioni sincretiche violente e abbandono forzato delle proprie identità culturali originarie. La sfida, dunque, è comprendere i complessi itinerari di formazione e produzione culturale, per favorire il superamento della soggezione e la costruzione di relazioni sociali più libere (Fleuri, 1998).

In che modo la proposta politica, etica ed educativa della decolonizzazione complessifica l'approccio interculturale in contesti segnati dal dominio e da disequilibri di potere? (Walsh, 2009) Qual'è il contributo delle cosmovisioni indigene e delle pratiche di cura tradizionali, marginalizzate dall'imposizione della modernità nell'America Latina e nell'Africa Sub-Sahariana e oggi recuperate dalle nuove costituzioni boliviana ed ecuadoregna? Quale mediazione culturale è ancora possibile?

La traduzione – linguistica, culturale, politica – dei concetti e delle proposte educative da una realtà ad un'altra produce reinvenzioni significative anche per il contesto originario della loro produzione. Così, a partire dalle riflessioni e dalle pratiche interculturali sviluppate in America Latina ed in Africa Sub-Sahariana, elaboriamo una proposta di presa in carico etnoclinica e di lavoro educativo multisituato con i migranti in Italia (Cima 2009), centrato sulla decolonizzazione dello sguardo, delle categorie e delle parole nell'interazione con l'altro venuto da lontano e l'adozione di un etnocentrismo eccentrico.

### **Which interculture?**

#### **Approaches and contributions from Latin America and Subsaharian Africa**

This paper intends to cover educators and experts in an interactive way about the problematization of the interculture, through the practice of the creation of thought, improved by the border crossings (not only geographic ones) and intercontinental routes that led us – due to our research - from Italy to Sub-Saharan Africa, from Southern Brazil to Italy and, at last, from Italy to Southern Brazil.

The first intercultural theoretical reflexions and interventions happened in Europe at the beginning of the eighties, as an answer to the challenges of the multicultural and multiethnic society, and took over the character of a pedagogical revolution, enabling the overcome of compensatory educational strategies, in support of a positive perspective about the coexistence of cultural and ethnical different subjects. When we put this concept of intercultural education to the test in extraEuropean contexts however – as in Latin

America and Subsaharian Africa -, it reveals same limits and, in a certain degree, western connotation. In these realities, colonialism and migrations, domination and coexistence, spontaneous and forced contacts induced to deep processes of acculturation, violent syncretic fusions and forced abandonment of the own original identity. The challenge in this contexts is to comprehend the complex processes of cultural production and formation, in support to overcome the subjection and to make possible the creation of freer social relations. In which way does the ethical and educational political proposal of the decolonisation problematize the intercultural approach in contexts marked by domination and inequality of powers? What is the contribution of the indian cosmovisions and the traditional healing practices - that were marginalized by the imposition of the modernity in Latin America and Subsaharian Africa and are being nowadays regained by the new Bolivian and Ecuadorian constitutions? What cultural mediation is still possible? The linguistic, cultural and political translation of the educational concepts and proposals of certain realities to some other ones produces significantly reinventions in the original contexts of its own productions. In this way, from the reflexions e practices developed in Latin America and Subsaharian Africa, we elaborate and propose an ethnoclinical and multi-situated educational work with the migrants in Italy, aiming the decolonization of the approach, of the categories and words in the interaction with the ones who have come from abroad, and adopting an ex-central ethnocentrism.

### **Pamela COCETTA**

*Psicologa, Specializzanda Psicoterapeuta IACP, Italy*

#### **Verso la ricerca di senso nella realtà schizofrenica di un africano**

La presente relazione nasce da un lavoro di collaborazione tra me in qualità di psicoterapeuta specializzanda IACP ed un'antropologa, per aiutare un cliente schizofrenico africano.

Nei primi 3 incontri con il cliente che chiamerò Patrick, ho seguito la modalità dell'intervista non-strutturata (Castelli, Giovannini, 2000), in cui l'obiettivo è stato quello di raccogliere informazioni sulla storia familiare e socio-culturale e fornire così all'antropologa indizi sul modo di funzionamento socio-relazionale del cliente.

In seguito, su diretta richiesta di Patrick i nostri incontri sono proseguiti, e quella intrapresa con lui è stata una terapia di supporto, volta al sostegno della struttura di personalità ed al rafforzamento dell'organismo nell'affrontare gli stress ambientali (Zucconi, Howell, 2003).

Quanto di patologico c'è in Patrick? Per rispondere a questa domanda ho fatto appello al concetto di cultura ed a quello di normalità-anormalità psichica, ed ho potuto constatare l'inefficacia di un approccio diagnostico-nosografico su di un cliente di altra origine culturale, poiché soffermandosi sul concetto di malattia, si focalizza sul sintomo perdendo di vista la persona. Un esempio di coordinamento dei concetti di cultura e di normalità-anormalità è dato dal capitolo del DSM-IV-TR sulle culture bound sindrome (APA, 2000), malgrado questo sforzo, continuano a sussistere innumerevoli discussioni sull'utilità delle etichette nosografiche nel classificare le patologie "altre" da parte della società occidentale. Invece un approccio diagnostico fenomenologico (Oyebode, 2008), permette di passare dalla descrizione della patologia alla comprensione dell'esperienza soggettiva del cliente; nella relazione con Patrick ciò si è tradotto nella co-costruzione del significato delle sue esperienze personali, sociali e culturali.

In conclusione, la collaborazione tra l'ACP e l'etnopsichiatria (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1942; 1951; 1961; 1965; Oyebode, 2008; Zucconi, 1986; Greenson, 1965; 1967/1972; Coppo 2003) ha permesso: l'attualizzazione di una visione democratica, fenomenologica e pragmatica alla realtà del cliente; l'instaurarsi di un'Alleanza di Lavoro; l'immissione nello schema di riferimento del cliente; l'espressione e la comprensione delle emozioni del cliente; il passaggio da una motivazione estrinseca al colloquio, ad una motivazione intrinseca di richiesta d'aiuto da parte del cliente; l'attivazione delle capacità personali del cliente nel far fronte a situazioni ambientali stressanti; l'attenzione del terapeuta nel non attivare un'accettazione selettiva del vissuto del cliente; di affrontare in maniera meno minacciosa il contatto con una realtà culturale diversa e di facilitare così un atteggiamento sempre più autentico nella relazione terapeutica; di rilevare alcuni aspetti non-patologici, o parzialmente patologici del cliente e la modificazione di alcuni deliri non spiegabili in deliri comprensibili.

#### **Looking for a sense in the schizophrenic reality of an African**

This report arises from the collaboration between me, as an IACP specializing psychotherapist, and an anthropologist, in order to help an African schizophrenic client.

In the first 3 meetings with the client, whom I will call Patrick, I followed the pattern of the unstructured interview (Castelli, Giovannini, 2000), aiming to collect information about his familial and socio-cultural history and to give the anthropologist evidence about his socio-relational working modes.

Subsequently, upon Patrick's explicit request, our meetings continued, and we undertook a support therapy, directed to the backing of the personality framework and the strengthening of the organism in dealing with environmental stress (Zucconi, Howell, 2003).

How much pathology is there in Patrick? To answer this question I made use of the concept of culture and that of psychic normality-abnormality, and I could observe the ineffectiveness of a diagnostic-

nosographic approach on a client with a different cultural origin, because, insisting on the concept of disease, it focuses on the symptom losing sight of the person. An example of coordination of the concepts of culture and normality-abnormality is given by the chapter on the culture bound system in the DSM-IV-TR (APA, 2000). In spite of this effort, there continues being disagreement about the usefulness of nosographic labels in classifying "other" pathologies by western society. On the other hand, a phenomenological diagnostic approach (Oyebode, 2008) allows passing from the description of the pathology to the comprehension of the client's subjective experience; in the relation with Patrick this has been converted into the co-construction of the meaning of his personal, social and cultural experience.

Finally, the collaboration between the ACP and the ethno-psychiatrist (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1942; 1951; 1961; 1965; Oyebode, 2008; Zucconi, 1986; Greenson, 1965; 1967/1972; Coppo 2003) allowed: the actualization of a democratic, phenomenological and pragmatic vision to the client's reality; the establishment of a Working Alliance; the inclusion of the client in the frame of reference; the expression and comprehension of the client's emotions; the passage from an extrinsic motivation to the meeting into an intrinsic one, a request for help by the client; the activation of the client's personal skills in facing environmental stressing situations; the attention of the therapist in avoiding activating a selective acceptance of the client's experience; to face in a less threatening way the contact with a different cultural reality and to help an increasingly authentic attitude in the therapeutic relation; to note some not-pathologic or partially pathologic aspects of the client and the modification of some inexplicable delusion into comprehensible ones.

### **Clarisse COSTA AFONSO**

*Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal*

#### **Language Learning and Oral Traditional Stories as tools to promote Intercultural Education**

In the last decades Portugal has been hosting many citizens of European and African origins, namely the ones coming from the former Portuguese colonies right after their independence or in more recent years, but also from Brazil or China. According to the Eurydice statisticians, 2004, there were in the Portuguese public schools 120 nationalities. Contrary to the East European and Asiatic emigrants, the school dropout among the population of African and Portuguese origin is very high due to many causes – the low economic and scholar level of the parents, the different cultural ambiance and for some the different language spoken at home, for instance, Creole from the Cape Verde Islands - . Due to their relevant number in elementary and secondary schools, their absenteeism and school dropout, this group has drawn the attention of several teachers and scholars who started to investigate those communities and to apply an intercultural approach within the teaching of the Portuguese language and culture.

The concept of cultural pattern (Ruth Benedict, 1983) are here very present as the emotions and values are very institutionalized in the Creole culture, which has not always been recognized by the school and fellows citizens. As stated by Kramsch "One of the major way in which culture manifests itself is through language", (as cited by Oliveira & Sequeira, 2012, p.16) a few actions have been taken in order to value their culture and self-esteem: creating classes where the Portuguese Youngers learn creole and the associated culture together with those who have creole as their mother tongue. Another interesting case study relates to the learning of proverbs of different countries and their oral traditional stories, valuing the different cultures, thus creating a better learning environment – also avoiding absenteeism - with very positive results in achieving the referred aims of self-esteem and cultural recognition.

This case-study published in 2012 (Oliveira & Sequeira, *A Interculturalidade na Escola e as Narrativas de Expressão Oral*, Lisboa, Porto:Lidel) will be described pointing out the main issues namely the students' reactions at the beginning and at the end of the project and the way the proverbs and stories were handled in the classroom.

### **Giuseppe CRISAFULLI**

*Docente IACP, Psicologo-Psicoterapeuta IACP, Italy*

#### **Senso d'identità, appartenenza razziale e percezione dei valori personali. Carl Rogers incontra Mark**

Nel valutare eventi inerenti a fenomeni di intolleranza razziale ci si pone naturalmente dalla parte di chi di tali discriminazioni è stato oggetto. La condanna e la disapprovazione verso tali azioni è atteggiamento ormai consolidato ed atto a perorare valori quali il rispetto per gli altri, la dignità di ogni persona e l'importanza della pace tra gruppi di diversa etnia o razza.

Il riferimento è ai "valori universali", condivisibili da gran parte delle culture, che tendono ad essere istituiti "a prescindere" da ogni soggettività, in quanto riconosciuti ed accettati da intere collettività.

Di converso, poche volte ci si pone dalla prospettiva di chi riveste un ruolo di strumento di discriminazione in quanto porzione del "sistema intollerante" e verso il quale si tende ad assumere posizioni generalizzanti. Per cui, tutti coloro che appartengono ed operano in tale sistema vengono definiti: i cattivi, gli

aguzzini, i carnefici, i servi del potere (ecc...).

Questo tema fu presente nell'incontro avvenuto in Sudafrica, durante l'apartheid (1982), tra Carl Rogers ed un giovane psicologo sudafricano bianco con lo pseudonimo di Mark.

Mark, che lavorava per conto del governo, si trovava in uno stato di forte contraddizione interna legato alla sua appartenenza istituzionale e razziale, nonché al ruolo professionale, in relazione a ciò che stava accadendo nel suo paese. Tale condizione lo esponeva ad un senso di alienazione dagli altri e da se stesso.

L'interazione tra i due fu breve ed inizialmente produsse in Rogers un senso di delusione perché riteneva di non essere stato sufficientemente efficace nel facilitare il processo di Mark. Successivamente, rispettivamente a distanza di sedici mesi e di tre anni, in alcune lettere, lo stesso Mark dichiarò come tale breve incontro generò in lui un processo doloroso di elaborazione di ciò che fu definito "il dilemma di un sudafricano bianco" (Rogers, 1986).

A partire da quest'esempio, la relazione argomenterà su come contingenze storico-politico a carattere razziale, sovente determinate dalle scelte di pochi, possano influenzare, agendo sui processi di consapevolezza, il senso d'identità, di appartenenza e la stessa percezione dei valori degli individui coinvolti.

Il contatto con la propria interiorità, anche attraverso l'interazione terapeutica, può determinare, pur se in modo doloroso, la ricostruzione di un'identità responsabile e validare valori che sono interni alla persona, per taluni aspetti speciespecifici (Rogers, 1964), e che possono incarnare a livello soggettivo ciò che viene ratificato dalla società in termini di "valori universali".

### **Identity, racial belonging and perception of personal values. Carl Rogers meets Mark**

Generally, the events related of racial intolerance are evaluated through the point of view of those victims of such discrimination. The condemnation and disapproval of these actions is consolidated attitude and which encourage values what respect for others, dignity for all people and importance of peace between groups of different ethnicity or race.

The reference is to the "universal values" shared by most cultures and which are established, "regardless" of any subjectivity, as recognized and accepted by the entire community. Conversely, few times we look at what from the point of view of the persons which are "instruments of discrimination" or parts of the "system intolerant" and towards which we tend to take positions generalizing; so, all those who belong and operate in such a system are defined: the bad, the torturers, executioners, the servants of establishment.

This theme was present in the interview between Carl Rogers and a young white South African psychologist called Mark in a meeting which took place in South Africa during the apartheid (1982).

Mark, which worked for the government, was in a state of contradiction related to its institutional affiliation and race, as well as to the professional role. This condition exposed him to a sense of alienation from others and from himself.

The interaction between Rogers and Mark was short.

Rogers initially was disappointed of the interaction because it thought that it don't was sufficiently effective in facilitating the process of Mark.

Subsequently, sixteen months and three years later, in several letters Mark said that this brief encounter started to him a painful process of elaboration of what was called "the dilemmas of a South African White" (Rogers, 1986 ).

In this presentation will discuss about how contingencies racials historical-political, often determined by the choice of a few persons, can influence, acting on the processes of awareness, the sense of identity, the belonging and the same perception of the values of the individuals involved.

The contact with one's inner self, through the therapeutic interaction, may determine, albeit in a painful way, the reconstruction of a responsible identity and validate values that are internal to the person, and for certain aspects species-specific (Rogers, 1964), and embody to subjective level that which is ratified by the society as "universal values".

### **Natalia DANILKINA**

*Immanuel Kant State University, Russia*

### **Meeting business inside a university**

Convergence of businesses and universities that can be regarded as a global trend now has become a quite popular matter of research. The studies carried out in Russia refer to a vast range of emerging problems – from the correlation of values to regulation of financial floods within a business and university partnership.

The challenges of the interaction are sometimes investigated and discussed in terms of cultural differences between the business and academic communities (e.g. Shiverskikh 2010), whereas the main issue of concern is the correlation or collision of the "old" classical and the "new" managerial cultures as the local cultures of the same university (Beliaev 2007, Abramov 2010, Prokhorov 2010, etc.). However,

the specificity of communication between the business and academic worlds inside the learning process as such is almost out of sight.

In practice, integration of business into the learning process has been exercised basically (with the exception of business schools and faculties) in the framework of "traditional" forms accepted years before. Most of the forms imply the inter-cultural communication situations within a fixed context: talking to business on the "business area", dealing with academics in a university classroom. That results in keeping the mutual perception highly stereotyped and the barriers hardly possible to overcome.

Such a division appears to be out-of-date and artificially reproduced. The modern university needs to be open to interaction with other entities that means also other occupational identities involved into higher education. It should become an open-loop professional system, opening to non-university environments (Radaev 2010, p. 8). Participation of business in education cannot be focused on the managerial and financial issues only.

It is suggested to extend some practices used by business schools and faculties on more variety of study programs (that is particularly crucial for economics-related trans-disciplinary programs and courses). Besides out-class activities, such as visiting enterprises, organization of internships according to curriculum, meeting entrepreneurs at conferences and public events, etc. there can be offered e.g. an in-class workshop conducted by business experts or the study-for-work platform available for bachelor and master students of any specialization – for regular seminars/master-classes conducted by business experts.

The diversification of the forms of cooperation inside a university is expected to facilitate professional and social adaptation of students, to increase the chances for business experts and university audience to become real partners, to develop their cultural, social and economic capital.

### **Giuseppe DATTOLA**

*Psichiatra/psicoterapeuta IACP, Italy*

#### **L'etnopsichiatria e psicopatologia: un dialogo tra sciamano e psichiatra**

L'etnopsichiatria è una scienza piuttosto recente; si riferisce ad uno specifico sguardo sul disagio psichico e sulla psicopatologia derivato dalla convergenza di modelli di lettura psichiatrici ed etnologici. Obiettivo di questo lavoro è mettere in evidenza la pregnanza degli aspetti culturali nella genesi, la lettura, la diagnosi e l'intervento sul disagio psichico e la psicopatologia, attraverso delle connessioni tra psicopatologia e cultura e delle differenze tra cultura e cultura.

La cultura è una struttura specifica di origine esterna (sociale) che contiene e rende possibile il funzionamento dell'apparato psichico, ovvero un sistema che contribuisce alla costruzione del mondo di una persona, contribuendo a modellare i pensieri, i valori ed il comportamenti. La base teorica dell'etnopsichiatria considera la malattia mentale ed il disagio psichico nel contesto di una cultura specifica: è solo all'interno di quella cultura che essi vengono definiti come malattia psichiatrica o disagio psichico, mentre nel contesto di culture differenti possono rappresentare altro !! rispetto alla definizione psicopatologica.

Inoltre viene anche messo in evidenza la diversità degli interventi: nella medicina occidentale l'intervento sul disagio psichico viene realizzato dagli psichiatri e dagli psicologi, i sintomi vengono letti attraverso la persona che li manifesta; nella medicina non – occidentale gli operatori sono gli sciamani, i sintomi vengono dissociati dalla persona ed il disagio psichico viene letto come un "intervento divino"

#### **The ethno-psychiatry and psychopathology: a dialogue between shaman and psychiatrist**

Ethno-psychiatry is a new science, which refers to a specific point of view at the psychological distress and psychopathology that derive from the convergence of psychiatric and ethnologic model. The aim of this work is to highlight the significance of cultural aspects in the genesis, reading, diagnosis and intervention on psychological distress and psychopathology through the connections between psychopathology and culture and differences between cultures.

Culture is a specific structure of external genesis (social) that contains and allows the operation of the psychic apparatus, a system that contributes to the construction of the world of a person, helping to shape the thoughts, values and behaviors.

The theoretic basis of ethno-psychiatry considers mental illness and mental health problems in the context of a specific culture: it is only within that culture which they are defined as psychiatric illness or mental health problems, while in the context of different cultures can be represent other relatively the same definition of psychopathology.

Also, the focus is on the diversity of interventions: in the medicine of Western world the intervention on psychological distress is achieved by psychiatrist and psychologists. The symptoms are read by the person who reveals them. In other cultures the operators are shamans, symptoms are dissociated from the person and the mental distress is read as a "divine intervention"

**Carlo DE AMICIS**

*Asociación Española de Counselling, Spagna*

**Eufrasio PEREZ-NAVIO**

*Università di Jaén, Spagna*

**“L’influenza dell’identità sociale di genere sull’empatia e sull’intelligenza emotiva: proposte per la formazione dei counsellor alla luce dei risultati di una ricerca.”**

L'Intelligenza Emotiva (Goleman, 1995; Mayer e Salovey, 1997; Boyatzis, Goleman e Rhee, 2000; Bar-On, 2000; Bar-On 2006) è una competenza della massima importanza per i professionisti del counselling. In un recente studio Martin, Easton, Wilson, Takemoto, Sullivan, (2004) dimostrarono che l'intelligenza emotiva differenziava i counsellor dai non counsellor e che alcuni fattori dell'intelligenza emotiva predicavano l'auto-efficacia nel counselling sia degli studenti sia di counsellor con esperienza. L'empatia è un fattore dell'intelligenza emotiva presente in tutti i principali modelli. La centralità che l'empatia riveste nel processo di counselling, era già evidente negli scritti rogersiani (Rogers 1970; Rogers e Kinget 1970). Tale centralità si scontra con le difficoltà che le scienze psicologiche manifestano quando vogliono definire tale concetto (Bonino, Lo Coco, Tani, 1998). Un nuovo modello di Empatia che è stato recentemente proposto (Montes e coll. 2011) definisce l'empatia come un fenomeno unidimensionale che oscilla fra due estremi: in un estremo si situerebbero le persone Apathe, nel mezzo le Empatiche e nell'altro estremo le Empate. Questi stessi autori hanno elaborato uno strumento per la misura dell'empatia. Recenti studi (Palomera, 2005; Thayer, 2003, Fernández-Berrocal e Extremera (2003) indicherebbero che vi è un'influenza del genere su varie dimensioni dell'Intelligenza Emotiva. Se si confermasse che l'empatia è, come pensiamo, un elemento influenzato dall'appartenenza di genere, sarebbe necessario dare una maggior rilevanza alla prospettiva di “genere” nel processo di formazione dei nuovi counsellor, così come nei corsi di aggiornamento e di supervisione dei professionisti del counselling. Per tale ragione, gli autori del presente articolo hanno iniziato una ricerca per approfondire la relazione esistente, tra appartenenza di genere, identità sociale di genere, empatia ed intelligenza emotiva. Alla ricerca hanno partecipato 66 studenti del primo anno del Corso di Laurea in Magistero della università di Jaén utilizzando un questionario che comprendeva la Scala di Stereotipi di Genere di Bem, La scala di intelligenza emotiva percepita TMMS-24 basata sulla Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) e la Scala per lo studio dell'empatia Escala de Personalidad Empata (Scala di Personalità Empata Scala di Montes Berges, 2011). I risultati raccolti indicano una chiara effetto del fattore “appartenenza sessuale” su una delle dimensioni dell'empatia così come del fattore “ruolo sessuale” su varie dimensioni dell'intelligenza emotiva e dell'empatia. I risultati sono discussi ed utilizzati per fornire indicazioni sia per future ricerche sia per la formazione dei counsellor.

**“The influence of gender social identity on empathy and emotional intelligence: proposals for the training of counselors in the light of the results of a research”.**

Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Boyatzis, Goleman and Rhee, 2000; Bar-On, 2000, Bar-On 2006) is a competence of the highest importance for professional counseling. In a recent study Martin, Easton, Wilson, Takemoto, Sullivan (2004) showed that emotional intelligence differentiated counselors from non counselors and that some factors of emotional intelligence predicted self-efficacy in counseling both students and the counselor with experience. Empathy is a factor of emotional intelligence which is present in all major models. The central role that empathy plays in the counseling's process was already evident in the rogerians writings (Rogers 1970, Rogers and Kinget 1970). This centrality clashes with the difficulties that arise when psychological sciences want to define this concept (Bonino, Lo Coco, Tani, 1998). A new model of empathy that has been recently proposed (Montes et al. 2011) defines empathy as a one-dimensional phenomenon that oscillates between two extremes: at one extreme level remaining people Apath, in the middle the empathic, and at the other extreme the empathy. These same authors have developed a tool for the measurement of empathy. Recent studies (Palomera, 2005; Thayer, 2003, Fernández-Berrocal and Extremera (2003) indicate that there is a gender effect on various dimensions of emotional intelligence. If it was confirmed that empathy is, as we think, an element influenced by gender's membership, it would be necessary to give greater importance to the gender prospect in the process of training new counselors, as well as in courses for counselors, and in the supervision of counseling's professionals. For this reason, the authors of this article began research to explore the relationship between gender belonging, social identity, gender, empathy and emotional intelligence. The participants were 66 students of the first year of the Degree Course in Teaching of the University of Jaén. They answered a questionnaire that included the Scale of Gender Stereotypes Bem, The scale of perceived emotional intelligence TMMS-24 based on the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) and the Scale for the study of empathy EPS Empath Personality Scale Montes Berges, 2011). The findings indicate a clear effect of the factor "belonging sex" on one of the dimensions of empathy as well as the factor "gender role" of various dimensions of emotional intelligence and empathy. The results are discussed and used to provide both directions for future research and for the formation of the counselor.

**Gessica DE CESARE**

*Coordinatore Psicologo Croce Rossa Italiana, Italy*

**Agnese MATTERA, Claudia BATTAFARANO, Daniela FIORAVANTI, Cristiana RUSSO, Francesca VIETTI, Alessandra DIODATI**

*Croce Rossa Italiana, Italy*

**Valutazione e gestione dello stress nei volontari di Croce Rossa Italiana impegnati nel lavoro di accoglienza ed assistenza ai migranti**

Obiettivo: Sperimentazione della validità di una metodica di valutazione e gestione dello stress in personale non professionista (nei volontari CRI ) impegnati nel lavoro di accoglienza e di assistenza dei migranti, precisamente agli sbarchi e durante la primissima accoglienza, attraverso lo svolgimento di gruppi supervisione. di Questo lavoro riporta i risultati dello di 3 gruppi in Puglia, nelle città di Lecce e Foggia, 3 gruppi in Sicilia, nelle città di Trapani, Licata e Catania, 3 gruppi in Calabria, nelle città di Crotona, Roccella Jonica e Monasterace.

Metodo: Ciascun gruppo si è svolto in circa due ore ed è suddiviso in due parti:

1. Primi 30 minuti circa: somministrazione di una scheda sociografica anonima, per la raccolta di informazioni relative a dati anagrafici ( età, sesso, attività lavorativa) e stili di vita, di un questionario auto valutativo sullo stress (utilizzato dalla Federazione Internazionale di Croce Rossa e Mezza Luna Rossa) e di un questionario auto valutativo sul burnout (Moss Burnout Inventory, già utilizzato da CRI durante corsi di formazione per il proprio personale);
2. Successivi 90 minuti circa: gruppo di supervisione delle attività svolte dai volontari: racconto e confronto su esperienze particolarmente difficili affrontate durante il lavoro con i migranti e di situazioni che contribuiscono ad aumentare lo stress.

Hanno partecipato ai gruppi 212 soggetti, così suddivisi per Regioni e città:

- 44 soggetti in Puglia, 18 a Lecce, 11 al Cara di Foggia, 15 al Comitato Centrale di Foggia;
- 61 in Sicilia, 12 a Trapani, 18 a Licata, 31 a Catania;
- 107 in Calabria, 63 a Crotona, 25 a Roccella Jonica, 19 a Monasterace.

I partecipanti ai gruppi non hanno in passato ricevuto formazione specifica sul lavoro di accoglienza ed assistenza ai migranti, nè sulla gestione di situazioni stressanti., pur essendo formati all'emergenza primo soccorso e protezione civile)

Dall' analisi quantitativa, si può sostenere che circa il 22% dei soggetti intervistati presenta livelli di stress e burn out appartenenti a range preoccupanti (maggiori di 15 per il questionario auto valutativo sullo stress e maggiori di 3 per il questionario sul burnout).

Tali livelli sono compresenti con variabili individuali, quali giovane età, lavoro precario, disoccupazione, lavoro di responsabilità ed inesperienza, che, come riportato in letteratura, sono variabili significativamente correlate con livelli di stress e di burnout. Infine, sempre concordando con la letteratura, la maggior parte di questi soggetti sono donne (circa l'80%).

Al fine di contenere le situazioni stressanti rilevate e quelle borderline, si prevede di impostare un progetto di supervisione continuativa che prevederà incontri di gruppo a cadenza prefissata ed il supporto delle strutture territoriali specialistiche per eventuali percorsi terapeutici individuali.

**Stress evaluation and management of the Italian Red Cross volunteers involved in the activity of reception and assistance of migrants**

Object: Experimentation of the effectiveness of a method of stress evaluation and management to be applied to non-professional personnel (Italian Red Cross volunteers) involved in the activity of reception and assistance of migrants, in particular, on landings and during the very first phase of reception, through the implementation of supervision groups. This paper reports the outcomes of the implementation of three groups in the regions of Apulia, respectively in the cities of Lecce and Foggia, three groups in the region of Sicily, in the cities of Trapani, Licata and Catania and three groups in the Region of Calabria in the cities of Crotona, Roccella Jonica and Monasterace.

Method: Every group session lasted about two hours and was divided into two parts:

1. In the first 30 minutes: distribution of an anonymous sociographic records regarding personal data (age, sex, work activity) and life style, of a stress self-evaluation questionnaire (used by the International Federation of Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies) and a self-evaluation questionnaire on burnout (Moss Burnout Inventory, already used by the IRC during personnel training programs);
2. During the following 90 minutes: supervision group on the activities carried on by volunteers: debate and comparison regarding particularly hard experience faced in the framework of the work with migrants and in situations which contribute to increase stress.

Overall 212 people took part in the groups, they were divided per regions and cities as following:

- 44 persons in the Region of Apulia, namely 18 in Lecce, 11 at the Reception Centers for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Foggia, 15 at the Italian Red Cross Central Committee in Foggia.
- 61 persons in the region of Sicily, namely 12 in Trapani, 18 in Licata, 31 in Catania;
- 107 persons in the region of Calabria, namely 63 in Crotona, 25 in Roccella Jonica, 19 in Monasterace.

Although trained on first aid emergency and civil protection, the participants in the groups have received

previous specific training neither on the activity of migrants' reception and assistance nor on the management of stressful situations. From the quantitative analysis is possible to state that about 22% of the interviewed is affected by levels of stress and burn out falling into worrying ranges (more than 15 for the self evaluation on stress; and more than 3 for the questionnaire on burnout).

These levels are present along with individual variables such as young age, precarious job, unemployment, work implying high levels of responsibility, lack of experience. As reported in literature, all these variables are greatly correlated with levels of stress and burnout. Finally, in accordance with the literature, most of these individuals are women (about 80%).

In order to contain stressful and borderline situations found, it is foreseen the implementation of a project of continuous supervision characterized by periodical prearranged group sessions, as well as the support of territorial specialistic facilities for eventual individual therapeutical treatment.

**Carla D'ELIA**

*Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Canada*

### **An intercultural approach to supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) students in secondary schools: Lessons from Ontario, Canada. (Workshop)**

The treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and queer/questioning (GLBTQ) students in Ontario schools has become a topic of great media and public attention. Some recent unfortunate events have brought to light the intense bullying and as a consequence, mental and sometimes physical anguish sustained by GLBTQ students in Ontario schools. As a result, the Ministry of Education in Ontario has implemented policies demanding equity and inclusion of ALL students in schools, including GLBTQ students. Bill 13, a law mandating that all schools create safe spaces, called gay-straight alliances, for GLBTQ students to help foster an environment of respect and tolerance has also been created. These recent changes have been controversial and challenging for the publically funded Catholic schools in Ontario to implement.

The policies demanding equal and inclusive schools in Ontario have been put in place, but the extent to which they have been implemented is yet to be determined. The concepts that are central to intercultural education can greatly assist in the implementation of equity and inclusive education policies for GLBTQ students while providing direction to schools, boards and the Ministry of Education. The key concepts of interculturalism that can be used to assist in the implementation of equity and inclusive education policy are: open-minded dialogue and the confronting of difficult questions, pushing past multiculturalism to a culture of equal respect and acceptance and education of all stakeholders including educators and administrators and government officials to name a few.

The purpose of this workshop will be to explore the challenges that GLBTQ students face in Ontario schools, and to examine how equity and inclusion policies for GLBTQ students could be implemented in an intercultural way in Ontario schools and worldwide, including in publicly funded Catholic schools.

**Rosita DELUIGI**

*University of Macerata, Italy*

### **Migrant traces and welcoming places: from educational context to pedagogical reflection**

Il contributo riporta i risultati di una ricerca sul campo, riguardante le strutture aggregative ed educative e gli interventi messi in atto per accogliere e sostenere i ragazzi di origine straniera nel contesto sociale. L'indagine si è svolta in 27 centri piemontesi di ispirazione salesiana che, nella quotidianità, offrono proposte e attività ai ragazzi e ai giovani del territorio. La ricerca era volta a rilevare la presenza dei minori di origine straniera, le attività più efficaci per accoglierli, i progetti strutturati nel corso del tempo, le prospettive pedagogiche sviluppate per sostenere ambienti sempre più interculturali e partecipativi.

Trasversalmente sono state prese in considerazione la realtà dei minori di origine straniera e le innumerevoli traiettorie che essi compiono per giungere nei paesi di accoglienza, con una particolare attenzione ai ragazzi delle seconde generazioni che, pur non compiendo il viaggio migrante, sono coinvolti in questo processo. L'incontro fra la teoria e la prassi farà emergere linee progettuali e di attuazione volte ad uno sviluppo di comunità sempre più consapevole e corresponsabile. A partire dalle riflessioni condivise all'interno della ricerca, sono stati ipotizzati alcuni modelli di inclusione che possono favorire un'integrazione – interazione condivisa e reciproca: la descrizione di questi processi consente, da una parte di osservare le dinamiche attive nei contesti specifici, dall'altra, di evidenziare gli elementi caratteristici della riflessività educativa.

L'intervento è volto a sollecitare la riflessione sulla prassi da parte di operatori del settore socio-educativo, in particolare educatori ed insegnanti, a partire dall'importanza della costruzione di reti fra servizi e agenzie educative del territorio. L'analisi dei dati, inoltre, mette in rilievo la necessità di prestare attenzione alle fragilità e alle risorse di ciascun soggetto, come polo di capitale umano che, se intercon-



nesso con gli altri, origina un capitale sociale maggiormente orientato al bene comune.

I nuclei forti su cui si è fondata la ricerca sono quelli della promozione di ambienti interculturali, della cittadinanza partecipata, della democrazia e dell'equità. Costruire spazi in cui i ragazzi possano confrontarsi, dialogare, fare esperienze è, infatti, un modo di incontrare le differenze, di conoscersi, di creare prossimità e di dare vita a laboratori di democrazia partecipativa. L'interazione reciproca ribadisce ancora una volta il valore di ciascun soggetto e la necessità di ricostruire luoghi comuni, a partire dai molteplici contesti di vita dei ragazzi e dalle innumerevoli traiettorie di costruzione della propria identità personale, in vista di una dinamica sociale più inclusiva e solidale.

The paper reports the results of a field study concerning the aggregation and educational structures and interventions put in place to welcome and support children of foreign origin in the social context. The survey was conducted in 27 centres in Piedmont (Italy) of Salesian inspiration, which in everyday life offer activities for children and young people in the territory. The research was designed to detect the presence of children of foreign origin, the most effective activities to accommodate minors, the projects structured over time, and the pedagogical prospects developed to support increasingly intercultural and participatory spaces.

Transversely, we have taken into account the reality of children of foreign origin and the many paths that they take in order to reach the host countries, with particular attention to children who are second generations migrants and who, while not themselves making the migrant journey, are involved in this process. The meeting between theory and practice will give rise to project guidelines and implementation strategies aimed at the development of greater awareness and responsibility in the community.

Starting from the ideas shared in the research, it is possible to assume some models for inclusion that can promote shared and mutual integration and interaction: the description of these processes allows us on the one hand to observe the dynamics operating in specific contexts, and on the other to highlight the characteristic features of reflexivity education.

The intervention is designed to encourage reflection on practice by operators in the socio-educational field, particularly educators and teachers, starting with the importance of building networks between services and educational agencies in the territory. The data analysis also highlights the need to pay attention to the fragility and resources of each person, as a centre of human capital that, if interconnected with others, gives rise to more capital for the common good.

The centres of strength on which the research is based are the promotion of intercultural contexts, participatory citizenship, democracy and fairness. Building places where children, teenagers and young people can meet, talk, and share their experiences is, in fact, a way to confront the differences, to know each other, to create proximity and laboratories of participatory democracy. The mutual interaction confirms, once again, the value of each subject and the need to rebuild common spaces, from the multiple contexts of children's lives and the many paths of the construction of their personal identity, in the interests of a more inclusive and dynamic social solidarity.

**Paola DUSI**

*University of Verona, Italy*

**Nektaria PALAIOLOGOU**

*University of Western Macedonia, Greece*

### **"Second generation of migrant students in Greece and Italy: description and perspectives"**

The purpose of this paper is to describe the socio-cultural situation of second generation immigrant students in two neighbour countries, i.e. Greece and Italy, which have faced the migration phenomenon during the last twenty five years, like most south European countries. The presentation attempts: a) to highlight the challenges and needs in order to reinforce second generation immigrant students (i.e. the children born by first generation immigrant families) in their school success, b) to discuss on educational policies that could help second generation immigrant students in the learning domain and in their social mobility. From a European perspective, the situation of the second generation of immigrant pupils has been examined in a large TIES-project, called "The Integration of the European Second Generation" (2009), with selected data from fifteen European cities in eight countries. However, we must take into consideration that the second generation of immigrant students is not a single homogeneous group of young people. This presentation explores commonalities and differences in two neighbour countries, i.e. Italy and Greece, in their educational policies, which seem to play significant role on the educational difficulties that the second generation of immigrant students might face during their school attendance, in order to prevent school underachievement and social disadvantage. It is also worth mentioning that these two countries were not included in the TIES-project.

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**Inmaculada GONZÁLEZ FALCON**

*Universidad de Huelva, Spain*  
**Maria Angeles ALFONSO LOPEZ**  
*Universidad de Cadiz, Spain*

### **Children from Elsewhere and their Integration in Italian Primary School**

The research arose from the need to find strategies that foster in immigrant children a sense of belonging to a common reality. The need to belong in a global context is difficult to satisfy, especially for those who undergo a sense of loss from the very beginning of their lives, such as children who experience migration. Integration in class, recognition between peers, and social belonging are closely linked dimensions. Where this sense of belonging is lacking, it is possible to foster belonging through participation in school life.

Data were gathered from 15 research participants: all children, aged 10 to 11, attending Italian primary schools (from South America, North Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East). These children were born outside of Italy and primary school was their first encounter with the Italian educational system. Some of them attended primary school from the beginning, some others from the third or fourth years, one of them only for the last (fifth) year.

The investigation tried to understand what factors support them in their encounter with school and what factors create obstacles. The main research questions were: "How was your experience in Italian schools? What difficulties did you encounter? Who helped you? What would you suggest to help the integration of a new immigrant child in class?" We used the conversational interview, and individual interviews were preceded by a focus group interview.

**Nicole ELLIOTT**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

**Suzanne STEWART**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Incorporating Spirituality and Traditional World-Views in Counselling the Life-Transition Needs of Canadian Indigenous Peoples**

In Canada, counselling and psychotherapy services are theoretically and practically taught within a Eurocentric context and way of thinking, which differs substantially from traditional Indigenous knowledges. Indigenous people have a different understanding of mental health and healing than what is understood through most prevailing theories and models of Western psychology. Most notable within the traditional knowledge's world-view is the holistic understanding of wellbeing, which holds that health occurs through the balance of the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional aspects of the self. As a group, Indigenous populations in Canada have shared experiences of historical and current colonization, poverty, and social stressors that have contributed to poor outcomes and transitions across the lifespan, including mental health, education, and employment. However, mental health services are heavily underused by the Aboriginal community, and research suggests that this is partly because most of these services are based on Western frameworks, and do not include Indigenous knowledges related to health and healing. This becomes problematic, as it has been suggested by many scholars and experts in the field, that counselling and psychotherapy with Indigenous people from a non-Indigenous perspective is in itself oppressing and a further means of colonization. In order to promote cultural safety, it is essential that mental health training programs incorporate Indigenous knowledges of mental health and wellness into their curriculum. The cultural identity of Indigenous peoples is a specific component that is important for counsellors to consider, as cultural identity has been shown to be a major factor for Indigenous peoples during life transitions. Two qualitative studies conducted by the authors explored Indigenous peoples experiences of unemployment and homelessness and found that cultural identity as an Indigenous person, racism, and oppression were all major issues involved in not being able to find housing, services, and sustainable employment. This presentation will present research findings that address the need to include and explore the cultural and spiritual identity of Indigenous peoples from Indigenous knowledges perspectives for therapists and counsellors, specifically in the context of life-transitions, which is often a focus of therapy. This paper presentation relates to the grater theme of the conference as it stresses the importance of incorporating traditional healing and the spirituality of Indigenous peoples in counselling and therapeutic practice.

**Michael ENNIS**

*Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy and the University of Cincinnati, USA*

### **Language as the Core of Intercultural Learning: An Integrated Approach to Language, Culture and Communication in the FL-Classroom**

In response to an inadequate treatment of culture in the foreign language classroom and the widely accepted need to instruct cultural awareness and intercultural competence, recent trends in education policy and pedagogy in the US and the EU have sought to establish culture as the “core” of foreign language curricula. While the theoretical foundations of this movement are accepted as indisputable, the paper takes issue with the continued separate treatment of language and culture in the classroom and, especially, any preferential treatment of culture over language. Rather than culture being at the core of foreign language education, the paper argues that language should be at the core of intercultural education. After outlining the basic tenets and insights of the culture movement in Foreign Language Pedagogy and Second Language Acquisition, the paper builds upon watershed scholarship (e.g. Claire Kramsch, Michael Byram and Milton and Janet Bennett) to introduce an over-arching framework for developing cultural awareness and intercultural competence, while maintaining the centrality of language and therefore the need to develop both linguistic and communicative competence in L2. The model is intended solely as an example for what might be developed from the bottom-up in various educational contexts, and not as a universal prescription for teaching language and culture concurrently.

**Andres ESCARBAJAL FRUTOS**

*Universidade de Murcia, Spain*

**Barbara GUIDETTI**

*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

### **Competenze interculturali nelle professioni socio-educative in Spagna: il caso di Murcia**

La Spagna è passata da circa 165.000 stranieri residenti all'interno dei suoi confini nel 1975, a oltre 1.200.000 nel marzo del 2002, per raggiungere la cifra di 5.700.000 nell'aprile del 2012 (Istituto National de Estadística 2012). Ciò ha dato avvio, nonostante il carattere multiculturale che da sempre la contraddistingue, a problemi legati all'inserimento degli immigrati nella società, alle sfide per il riconoscimento della loro cittadinanza, così come alla convivenza delle differenti culture. Difficoltà che hanno posto molti professionisti del settore socio-educativo di fronte alla condizione non solo di affrontare situazioni inedite, ma anche di dover trovare nuove strategie di intervento nel proprio lavoro. Il presente contributo scaturisce dal confronto e dall'analisi dei dati emersi dalla ricerca effettuata nella Regione di Murcia (Spagna) dal prof. Escarbajal Frutos e da quanto affiorato dal gruppo di ricerca dell'Ateneo Scaligero nel Progetto di Ricerca di Interesse Nazionale (PRIN) diretto dal prof. A. Portera (Competenze interculturali: modelli teorici e metodologie di formazione). Tale confronto si è posto l'obiettivo di evidenziare quali siano le competenze interculturali che i professionisti del settore educativo-extrascolastico e sociale necessitano oggi per svolgere al meglio la propria professione.

**Elena FAINI**

*Psicoterapeuta, IACP, Italy*

### **Lingue diverse parlano di maternità'**

Attraverso il racconto di un intervento pluriennale a sostegno delle donne italiane e straniere nel pre e post parto con lo strumento del gruppo di incontro, la relazione ha lo scopo di mettere in evidenza come l'evento maternità, spesso così critico in questo periodo storico e culturale, possa divenire un'occasione, attraverso l'incontro con diverse realtà culturali e personali, per rivisitare la propria esperienza emotiva e cognitiva. La condivisione, l'ascolto e il confronto con modi di vedere, di pensare, di esperire differenti facilita la revisione dei propri punti di vista e la risignificazione delle proprie esperienze emotive. Il gruppo, facilitato da un'equipe multidisciplinare, diviene contenitore di similitudini e differenze, laboratorio di ricerca di nuove possibilità personali e culturali di vivere e concepire la maternità. L'esito è rappresentato dall'acquisizione di maggior fluidità dei costrutti e dei vissuti e quindi da una ridefinizione del sé ideale di madre che favorisce una disposizione all'incontro col neonato e con l'esperienza stessa della maternità più aperta alla naturalità e alla realtà. La durata e l'intimità dell'esperienza può essere considerata preventiva e di sostegno alla depressione post partum.

Il contributo è legato al tema della conferenza da una parte perché racconta di un servizio alla maternità offerto e frequentato da donne appartenenti a diverse culture e a diverse etnie e dall'altra perché ciò che di fatto accade nell'esperienza del gruppo d'incontro è un processo di integrazione culturale che parte da punti di vista e vissuti propri per incontrare vissuti e punti di vista non solo di altre donne ma anche di diverse culture promuovendo un'idea di maternità che nasce dall'incontro di costrutti differenti.

L'intervento è rivolto a counsellor, psicologi, psicoterapeuti ed eventuali operatori della salute che operano nell'ambito del sostegno alla maternità.

**Yulia FEDYAKINA**

*UdSU, Russia*

Measuring intercultural competence of pedagogical higher school students in the process of teaching/learning.

The ability to communicate successfully with people of other cultures is increasingly necessary in a global world. And the Person, who is intercultural competent understands the culture-specific concepts of perception, thinking, feeling and acting. The given research describes results of measuring intercultural competence of pedagogical higher school students in the process of teaching/learning. It would be interesting for teachers and academics.

**Mario FERNÁNDEZ ALAMEDA**

*Psicologo Presidente della "Asociación Española de Counselling", Spagna*

**Gestalt Contact: the integrative model between spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling. An experience of approach to the pedagogy of relationships of support professional.**

For the development of this presentation it is necessary to put in agreement in relation to the concepts since the conceptual mind is vast and includes endless territories, motive of intellectual speculations and also creative source of new developments. When less I will explain to be able to contextualize the meanings of these three sources; spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling, its operability, his putting in scene in the frame of badly so called " mental health " term in my view inappropriate and short in what refers to the definition of the well-being of the people and I will show more later your inconvenience by sorting and reductionist.

" Well being " is so the experience that it encourages and that exercises influence to develop forms and methods that help to be a human being to remaining the major possible time in this condition. In this determination, often we forget that the natural thing and the consubstantial thing with the life is the "change", a progressive and circular movement that imposes the need continuade adjustment, in whose scenes the experience of the good is decided to be. Then it is time to introduce the concept of health, but not only mental, rather, in a broader context, which helps us to organize all our forces and resources to produce the necessary adaptation. This will take the concept of organismic self regulation (Fritz Perls) and that assures that no organism is self-sufficient, but at all time it forms a part of a field that includes it, so much to him as to his environment. This homeostatic balance (well-being) or process of self-regulation if it is synonymous of health, because if the organism remains in imbalance condition with his environment for a long time sick, since it will not be able to satisfy his needs. Theorganismic concept introduced by Perls makes mention to the holistic condition of the person but within a context that includes it and that is the scene where the life is projected since otherwise we would be talking exclusively of intrapsychic movements and no relational or best interrelate them. For humanist psychology and for all schools that developed from this source is necessary to assume that any living organism will never move in healthy conditions to discomfort or self-destruction and that, on the contrary, its orientation is continuously towards life. Saying at Carl Roger's words the human being is basically good. Therefore we might say that core base of well-being or malaise is life and..., how do life, how to live your own existence, It represents the scenario where they operate all the traditions and past legacies, social movements, therapeutic models, education and thought models that attempt to give shape to the existence. Located as the context in which I want to move to explain the integration of spirituality, psychotherapy and counselling is needed to say that to unite, to integrate, first it is necessary to establish the uniqueness their specificity because otherwise not can integrate the undifferentiated.

In this work I propose to present to the school of the gestalt approach as a school in whose philosophical bases, pedagogy and to do therapeutic, implicit is an integrative model that allows that there should develop the phenomenon of which "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". From this model, it is easy to recognize this integrative capacity of the school of Gestalt every time that thought has been retired physicalist and the exoteric religious, being replaced by the phenomenological model, where the meaning depends not on a system of beliefs, symbols or

external myths, but it springs from the internal and contemplative direct experience of the soul. Therefore talk about traditional healing, spirituality, psychotherapy or counselling is to speak of the same thing, whenever the purpose has an axis the development of the person from a perspective which treats the full development of their potential, the right to be who he is and the variables of self-responsibility and inter-responsibility deriving from the form that takes its existence. The fact that it has chosen The Counselling and not other slopes of professional does with regard to being human being and his vicissitudes; dynamic psychotherapy, religious mysticism, shamanism, traditional priests etc. There is because it represents a model that is defined in the person and his existence more than in his manifestations or symptomatology that define in certain way what is considered to be "normal" or "pathological", at least for a good part of the therapeutic current community. But the Counselling is aimed at the development of diversity and the ability to manage this diversity in human native and a line consistent with this practice is the school of Gestalt whose therapeutic experience not only assumes that "man" is multifaceted, but that also moves towards democratic governance and integration of the diversity that all human beings are. Saying in the words of Paolo Quattrini when speaking of the intrapsychic dynamic ; In effect, is a multi-

licity that needs democracy, since a stable unity of intent is nothing more than an illusion of monarchical type.

**Paolo FERRARIS**

*Psicoterapeuta, Consultorio Familiare, Italy*

**Intercultura in consultorio**

**Narrative e significati di un mondo che cambia**

L'esperienza da psicoterapeuta dell'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona (ACP) di Carl R. Rogers all'interno di un Consultorio Familiare (appartenente alla Confederazione Italiana Consulteri Familiari di ispirazione Cristiana, ONLUS) caratterizzato dalla co-presenza di professionisti di diverse tipologie e molteplici provenienze.

La quotidianità del Consultorio Familiare contrassegnata da una crescente multiculturalità dell'utenza e dalla interculturalità delle persone che vi operano: differenti professioni delle relazioni d'aiuto appartenenti alle tematiche della psicologia, della medicina, della giurisprudenza, della pedagogia; differenti indirizzi all'interno delle stesse aree tematiche e, in particolare per l'area psicologica, diversi approcci e competenze: psicologo, psicoterapeuta, counsellor, psichiatra.

Come anche l'appartenenza a differenti modelli di riferimento e formazione possa essere ritenuta di qualità multiculturale e quali modalità possano favorirne il progredire verso l'interculturalità; se e quanto è possibile intendere la multiculturalità come una fase precedente e propedeutica allo strutturarsi dell'interculturalità all'interno di un processo che va verso il pluralismo e l'accrescimento professionale. Ad un livello pragmatico il non incorrere nel fenomeno dell'esclusione - discriminazione, segregazione, eliminazione culturale - né in quello dell'inclusione per assimilazione culturale, che si allontana di gran lunga dall'integrazione data dall'accettazione della diversità culturale come positiva.

Convivenza di diversità alla ricerca di quegli elementi (vedere autori come C.R. Rogers, J. Norcross) che valorizzino vieppiù ciò che attiene l'accoglienza, l'ascolto attivo, la comunicazione interpersonale e le abilità d'aiuto; quali ricadute sulle persone che gravitano intorno alla microcosmo del consultorio: siano esse gli utenti, ora mai sempre più dalle differenti provenienze e appartenenze, che chi professa le proprie competenze e valori al loro servizio.

**Interculture at Councelling Room**

**Narrative and meanings of a changing world**

The experience as psychotherapist of the Person-Centered Approach (PCA) by Carl R. Rogers in a family consultancy center (belonging to the Italian Confederation of Christian inspired Family consultancy centers,) characterized by the co-presence of professional operators as well as practitioners from different areas and approaches.

The daily life of a Family Councelling -center is marked by an increasing rate of multicultural clients and of intercultural operators who work there: different operators in helping relationships, pertaining to issues of psychology, medicine, law and pedagogy; Different addresses within the same thematic areas especially the psychological one, different approaches and skills: psychologist, psychotherapist, counselor, psychiatrist.

Even if belonging to different approaches and training, could be considered of multicultural quality and which methods could facilitate the progress towards interculturalità; whether and how much is possible to intend multiculturalism as an earlier and preparatory stage to the structuring of interculturalità inside a process that goes towards pluralism and professional growth. At a pragmatic level to avoid to succumb neither in the phenomenon of exclusion -discrimination, segregation, cultural elimination- or in the inclusion through cultural assimilation, that departs far from the integration through acceptance of cultural diversity as positive.

Diversity coexistence searching those elements (see authors such as C.R. Rogers, J. Norcross) that appraise more and more what concerns the acceptance, active listening, interpersonal communication and helping skills; such as effects on people who gravitate around the microcosm of counseling room: be those either consumers, now ever increasingly from different backgrounds and affinity, or who profess their own skills and values to their service.

**Grace FEUERVERGER**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

**Auto-Ethnographic Reflections on the Immigrant and Refugee Experience in an Inner-City High School in Toronto**

My presentation offers a glimpse into the lives of some newly-arrived students of different racial, linguistic and religious backgrounds as they confront the process of immigration within the context of a Toronto

inner-city high school. These students carry with them hidden but enduring scars from war and other oppressions that deeply influence their lives. Using auto-ethnographic methodology, my research is devoted to giving voice to these students who inhabit a space filled with suffering and loss but also with resilience and cautious hope. This presentation is intended as a meditation on the possibility of classrooms as healing spaces that can transform the poverty of spirit that is reflected in the personal humiliation and despair of many vulnerable children coming from places of war and other oppressions.

I also include in this paper, pieces of my own personal and professional narrative: as a child of Holocaust survivors growing up in Montreal, as a former elementary school teacher, as a university professor and educational researcher of minority language issues, in order to articulate more clearly my reasons for embarking on this auto-ethnographic inquiry into the immigrant and refugee experience -- perceived both as a geographical space and also a psycho-spiritual border zone. I teach and write for teacher/educators who wish to make a real difference in the lives of their students, and I wish to speak to everyone who finds themselves, as I did, on winding and often treacherous paths, longing to discover the meaning and potential in their professional lives at school.

This is only a first attempt at illustrating and explaining the complex notion of cultural and personal uprootedness in its many manifestations; to recognize the tensions and dilemmas, and also the strength and resilience, that these newly arrived students conveyed to me in very informal, 'grassroots' ways. Finally this paper intends to demonstrate the power of story as a transformative, healing process towards a collective consciousness to create a more nuanced, more reflective pedagogical discourse of intercultural understanding and harmony in school.

### **Massimiliano FIORUCCI**

*Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Italy*

#### **Orientamenti interculturali: una ricerca sulle scelte scolastiche degli allievi con cittadinanza non italiana**

Il progetto "Orientamenti interculturali" all'interno dell'Azione 3 del FEI di cui è capofila il CREIFOS (Centro di Ricerca sull'Educazione Interculturale e sulla Formazione allo Sviluppo) – Dipartimento di Studi dei Processi Formativi, Culturali e Interculturali nella Società Contemporanea, Università Roma Tre è realizzato da un partenariato costituito da IIS Cartesio Luxemburg (Roma), Istituto Comprensivo Via Baccano (Roma), IPSIA Carlo Cattaneo (Roma), FOCUS - Casa dei Diritti Sociali, Associazione Donne a Colori, Comunità giovanile A Modo Bio e Associazione di Volontariato "Incredere". Al progetto partecipano, inoltre, come soggetti aderenti l'Istituto Comprensivo di Via Cassia (Roma), l'Associazione Articolo 3 (Marocco), l'Associazione Casa Africa (Corno d'Africa), l'Associazione Phrala Europa, l'Associazione Romni (donne Rom della ex Jugoslavia), l'Associazione "UM" (Rwanda e Burundi).

L'obiettivo generale del progetto è quello di promuovere l'inclusione sociale e la partecipazione attiva alla vita democratica dei giovani di origine straniera presenti nel territorio di Roma, tutelandone il diritto all'istruzione, favorendone un migliore inserimento scolastico e promuovendo il contributo dei giovani migranti al futuro del sistema Paese.

In particolare, il CREIFOS (Centro di Ricerca sull'Educazione Interculturale e sulla Formazione allo Sviluppo) – Dipartimento di Studi dei Processi Formativi, Culturali e Interculturali nella Società Contemporanea, Università Roma Tre sta svolgendo una indagine sulle motivazioni delle scelte scolastiche degli studenti con cittadinanza non italiana, a partire dalla raccolta di dati qualitativi e quantitativi. I risultati consentiranno di avviare processi più efficaci di orientamento, valorizzando le attitudini e gli interessi individuali. Una particolare attenzione è dedicata all'individuazione dei soggetti e dei rapporti che hanno pesato maggiormente nelle scelte scolastiche: insegnanti, genitori, fratelli, gruppo dei pari, connazionali. Nell'ambito di tale contesto il gruppo di ricerca dell'Università sta realizzando una indagine campionaria sugli studenti delle prime classi delle scuole secondarie di II grado di Roma per indagare sulle loro scelte scolastiche; dopo aver acquisito i dati da parte del Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, si sta predisponendo un campione statisticamente rappresentativo e, nel frattempo, sono state avviate le interviste qualitative rivolte agli insegnanti (ad oggi ne sono state realizzate 15).

### **Anastasia FOMITCHEVA**

*Moscow State University, Russia*

#### **Shift in motivation in Jigsaw classroom based on theory of self-perception**

The shift in student's motivation to learn the academic material that results from using cooperative learning techniques can be explained by Daryl Bem's theory of self-perception. In accordance with this theory when our feelings and attitudes are indefinite and ambiguous we make conclusion about them on the assumption of observing the situation and our behaviour. People often judge of their abilities and competence by their behaviour and their success in certain situations. We are more internally motivated to do things we feel we can be good at or succeed in. As the result of the perceived competence rises interest

in what we do.

According to overjustification effect (Deci, Ryan) expected, tangible rewards undermine intrinsic motivation. The reason is explained by an attribution shift. When students are told they will receive a reward if they work on the task, they may shift their attribution so that they feel they are working for the reward. In competitive classes students might work very hard but not necessarily for the joy of learning as much as they can. Student's interest in a task erodes when they start working for the reward. The successful students in a competitive group are motivated with the pleasure of attaining a comparative advantage over the other students in academic grades. But for many other children competition breeds stress and anxiety. Less successful students have negative expectations and practically can't get the positive experience and encouragement. The teacher's mission is to turn the students on to the curriculum, not to the reward. Learning must be valued for its own sake. The gain is to motivate not only the best students but all of them.

One of the positive outcomes of using Jigsaw in the classroom is that it increases intrinsic motivation. While working together on the same problem children need to communicate and the success of one student contributes to the success of another. When learning occurs in a low-anxiety atmosphere, it becomes more rewarding. Teacher needs no more to motivate them only by the rewards. Working together becomes an increasingly pleasurable and productive experience. When children begin to solve the problem together, they stop competing. It makes them like what they do, so they conclude that it's interesting. It raises their liking for school and enthusiasm about learning.

**Caterina Emilia FOPPA PEDRETTI**  
*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

### **Dialogo interreligioso ed educazione alla cittadinanza e alla pace a partire da Gerusalemme**

La componente religiosa rappresenta, soprattutto oggi, un elemento culturale essenziale nel perseguimento di un dialogo e di una convivenza significativi tra soggetti e tra popoli di tradizioni diverse, sebbene essa sia talvolta percepita più come un fattore di tensione e di scontro che di pacificazione e di potenziale integrazione tra i protagonisti. Anche con specifico riferimento alla Terra Santa, le prospettive del dialogo, della pace e dell'educazione alla cittadinanza sembrano essere, da un lato, soltanto un'utopia che sfugge ad ogni possibile reale implementazione e, dall'altro lato, rappresentano un tema "caldo", che attende soluzioni urgenti e sempre più necessarie. Questa situazione paradossale è spesso il risultato della difficoltà di tradurre i valori, le tradizioni e le risorse del dialogo interreligioso e dell'educazione alla cittadinanza e alla pace nell'esperienza pratica di una terra considerata santa da tre religioni, ma profondamente segnata dal lungo e drammatico conflitto tra due popoli. Il conflitto oppone in effetti due popoli e tre religioni che hanno coabitato in modo pacifico nel passato. Due popoli, tre lingue almeno, tre religioni divise in diverse confessioni. Tre culture d'origine - l'ebraica, la greco-latina, l'araba - immerse nel loro isolamento e spesso nutrite d'ignoranza dell'altro. L'ebreo, il greco-latino, l'arabo sono strumentalizzati, per meglio nutrire la diffidenza o, in tempo di crisi, l'odio dell'altro.

Gerusalemme ha nella Bibbia la missione di essere la madre di tutti i popoli. "Pregate per la pace di Gerusalemme" (Ps. 122,6), così diceva il salmista più di tremila anni fa. Soltanto per Gerusalemme, fra tutte le città della terra, è invocato il dono della pace. Perché Gerusalemme si situa in Asia all'incrocio del Mediterraneo, dell'Africa e dell'Occidente. La sua popolazione, venuta da un centinaio di Paesi del mondo, affonda le sue radici nel profondo dell'umanità. Vero microcosmo dell'universo, Israele è un popolo mediano, la cui mediazione potrebbe annunciare la nascita di un uomo nuovo e di una umanità infine riconciliata con se stessa. E' l'ordine che danno Mosè, Gesù Cristo e Maometto nelle Scritture, nel Nuovo Testamento e nel Corano. "Pace e giustizia si abbracceranno", canta il salmo 85. La riconciliazione non sarà possibile se ciascuno non si aprirà al perdono e non abbandonerà la pretesa di essere l'unico amante di Gerusalemme. Questo è il prezzo della pace.

La presentazione affronterà dunque i seguenti nodi problematici, collegando strettamente la riflessione teorica all'esperienza pratica maturata direttamente dalla relatrice, nei molti anni di studio e lavoro trascorsi in Terra Santa:

a) il ruolo e le esperienze di dialogo interculturale ed interreligioso in Terra Santa, una terra oggi separata da un muro, con due popoli che da lungo tempo cercano una via per vivere in pace e tre religioni ciascuna frammentata in molte correnti e molti riti. Tuttavia, in Terra Santa vi sono, a diversi livelli, molte esperienze di dialogo interculturale ed interreligioso: tutti questi livelli hanno il loro significato e la loro importanza e le esperienze di natura ufficiale e che coinvolgono i leaders delle varie comunità non possono essere sufficienti se non vengono supportate da un'adeguata azione educativa dal basso. In particolare, il dialogo interreligioso in Terra Santa è chiamato a testimoniare "la prospettiva in cui la religione non è vista come parte del problema, bensì come parte della sua soluzione (D. Rosen, 2002);

b) i fondamenti della pace, della riconciliazione e della nonviolenza nelle tre religioni monoteistiche, Ebraismo, Cristianesimo e Islam: ciò significa, da un lato, demistificare il legame tra religione, violenza e potere politico, condannando l'abuso della religione, che conduce al fondamentalismo e all'intolleranza, e, dall'altro lato, rafforzare la filosofia e la pedagogia della nonviolenza, esaltandone il ruolo profetico ed educativo per la gestione efficace dei conflitti e per il supporto ai processi politici positivi e dimostrando

l'impegno costruttivo della religione e la sua importanza come forza di riconciliazione. La sfida, soprattutto in Terra Santa, consiste nel facilitare la più ampia espressione dei valori religiosi universali da parte delle comunità religiose particolari e nel promuovere l'apprendimento di una nonviolenza attiva e creativa quale orientamento essenziale delle attitudini, del linguaggio e dell'agire personali;

c) l'attenzione non soltanto per il significato teologico e filosofico del dialogo interculturale ed interreligioso, ma anche per il contributo che tale dialogo può recare al rafforzamento dell'eredità di valori umani, sapienza, solidarietà, compassione che tutte le religioni condividono. Tale sensibilità favorirà il riconoscimento e la difesa di alcuni importanti diritti umani, civili, religiosi e culturali, il raggiungimento di soluzioni condivise per problemi universali, l'esercizio di una cittadinanza attiva e responsabile;

d) la possibilità di costruire un'effettiva cultura di pace in Terra Santa, laddove i "figli di Abramo" davvero lavorino attivamente per promuovere una cittadinanza responsabile, un'autentica cittadinanza di pace, con effetti umani e politici concreti. Ebrei, Cristiani e Musulmani sono infatti chiamati a lavorare insieme per la pace, la giustizia, la libertà, la dignità, i diritti umani e la "cura del mondo", la sua riparazione e la sua custodia, in collaborazione con tutte le altre comunità di fede del mondo (H. Kung, 1991). La necessità del dialogo e della cooperazione per la promozione dei valori spirituali e morali che si radicano nella fede religiosa è sottolineata anche dal documento Dabru Emet, firmato da 172 rappresentanti dell'Ebraismo negli Stati Uniti, in Canada, in Gran Bretagna e in Israele e pubblicato sul "New York Times" il 10 settembre 2000: "Ebrei e Cristiani devono collaborare agli ideali della giustizia e della pace. Ebrei e cristiani riconoscono, sebbene in modi diversi, che lo stato di irredenzione del mondo si riflette nella persistenza di persecuzioni e povertà, e nella miseria e degradazione degli uomini. Sebbene la giustizia e la pace appartengano ultimamente solo a Dio, i nostri sforzi congiunti, insieme a quelli di altre comunità religiose, possono aiutare la realizzazione del Regno di Dio che attendiamo con speranza. Separatamente e assieme, dobbiamo lavorare per portare la giustizia e la pace al nostro mondo" (Dabru Emet, 2000).

**Caterina Emilia FOPPA PEDRETTI**

*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

**Marta MILANI**

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### **Gestione dei conflitti, educazione alla cittadinanza e promozione socio-culturale: il ruolo del Cooperative Learning**

La presentazione intende innanzitutto sottolineare il ruolo essenziale del Cooperative Learning nel favorire il dialogo e l'interazione sociale positiva, la gestione costruttiva dei conflitti e lo sviluppo di un modello per l'educazione alla cittadinanza attiva e ai comportamenti democratici.

Questa strategia educativa è in grado di offrire stimoli interessanti perché si basa sull'interdipendenza positiva tra i soggetti coinvolti e permette di sperimentare dinamiche diverse da quelle competitive o individualistiche (Johnson & Johnson, 1991). Inoltre, attraverso l'apprendimento diretto e la sperimentazione delle competenze e delle abilità sociali, il Cooperative Learning previene l'indebolimento delle relazioni interpersonali. La scuola e le altre istituzioni educative e sociali possono, e dovrebbero, offrire l'occasione per il confronto di diversi atteggiamenti e diverse opinioni. In tal senso, il Cooperative Learning, basato sul lavoro in piccoli gruppi eterogenei, consente proprio di sperimentare questo tipo di confronto, attraverso l'ascolto reciproco, la mediazione e la condivisione tra i protagonisti (Cohen, 1999). E per tale motivo il Cooperative Learning si può considerare uno dei metodi più preziosi ed efficaci nell'ambito dell'educazione interculturale, della gestione positiva dei conflitti e dell'educazione alla cittadinanza (Lamberti, 2006). Le persone che interagiscono in un clima di cooperazione sanno in genere affrontare meglio i conflitti e vederli come mezzi di arricchimento delle relazioni, in virtù del confronto tra le parti e delle soluzioni costruttive che ricercano per comporre i contrasti. Grazie al supporto offerto allo sviluppo personale, rendendo il soggetto responsabile e capace di relazionarsi meglio con gli altri, il Cooperative Learning contribuisce anche alla creazione di piccole comunità scolastiche o sociali, i cui membri possono sperimentare il valore della collaborazione (Comoglio, 2006). In questo scenario, ciascuno è indispensabile, con le personali abilità, i limiti, l'intelligenza e l'identità individuale.

In particolare, il contributo prenderà in considerazione le implicazioni di questa prospettiva per il sistema educativo, con specifico riferimento al curriculum scolastico di educazione civica e cercando di proporre un nuovo essenziale curriculum condiviso per l'educazione alla cittadinanza. Si offriranno anche alcuni approcci e strumenti pedagogici innovativi, metodi di insegnamento, pratiche e strategie per valutare i contenuti e le definizioni della buona cittadinanza e sviluppare meccanismi con cui essa può essere educata e promossa, alla luce degli obiettivi democratici e di costruzione della pace propri del Cooperative Learning.

### **Conflict management, education for citizenship and cultural development: the role of Cooperative Learning**

The presentation aims to underscore the essential role played by Cooperative Learning in order to foster



and further dialogue, a positive social interaction, a constructive conflicts management and the development of a specific pattern which can train and educate for both active citizenship and democratic behavior. This educational strategy is able to provide interesting boost because it is based on a positive interdependence among the persons, which allows to experience different dynamics other than those related to competitive or individualistic field (Johnson & Johnson, 1991). Furthermore, through social skills, competence testing and direct learning, a Cooperative learning approach is able to prevent the weakening of interpersonal relationships. School and all the other educational and social institutions can and should better to provide the proper opportunity in order to compare different attitudes and divergent opinions. Thus, according to what has been previously stated, a Cooperative Learning, based on small heterogeneous groups activities, allows to experience this kind of comparison, through mutual listening, mediation and through the sharing among protagonists as well (Cohen, 1999). For this reason, the Cooperative Learning can be considered one of the most effective and valuable methods in relation to the fields of intercultural education, positive conflicts management and citizenship education as well (Lamberti, 2006). All those people, interacting in a cooperative atmosphere, are able to better face the conflicts as they represent means of enhancing relations, thanks to both the comparison among the parts and all those constructive solutions designed to solve contrasts. Thanks to the support provided to personal development, the Cooperative Learning makes the person responsible and able to better relate to others, and this approach contributes also to the creation of small scholastic and social communities, whose members can experience the value of collaboration (Comoglio, 2006). According to this background, everybody is indispensable within individual personal abilities, personal limits, intelligence and identity. In particular, the contribution will take into account all the implications related to this perspective concerning the educational system, with specific reference to civic education curriculum, trying to propose a new shared essential curriculum designed to citizenship education. In addition, some pedagogical-innovative approaches and tools will be provided, along with teaching methods, practices and strategies designed to evaluate contents and definitions concerning the good citizenship, developing mechanisms through which it can be educated and promoted, in the light of both democratic and peace-building goals directly involved in the Cooperative Learning process.

### **Antonella FORNARO**

*Psicologa Psicoterapeuta, Scuola Superiore 'Seminari Romani di Analisi transazionale', Italy*

### **Cosa accade quando l'altro 'non sente' ciò che 'sento': relazione tra copioni personale e culturale**

Il modello Analitico-Transazionale ha sviluppato dalla formulazione berniana di 'psichiatria sociale' ad oggi il suo carattere di interdipendenza rispetto ai campi applicativi del sociale e del clinico. I temi del comportamento aggressivo - violento e del vissuto multitraumatico costituiscono un'area di intersezione e di confronto tra l'area sociale e clinica: riguardano la persona nella sua interezza, a livello bio-psico-esistenziale, dal lato psicopatologico a quello giuridico-forense e pedagogico-didattico. La metodologia Analitico-Transazionale fornisce utili costrutti per la comprensione del fenomeno del trauma e del suo vissuto all'interno di un contesto socio-culturale dalle componenti scarsamente integrate. L'incontro con l'altro 'diverso' da sé in senso bio-psicologico e pedagogico (Latouche) è il focus dell'Analisi Transazionale: la diagnosi e l'intervento sulla trattotipologia del bisogno di attaccamento parte da Berne per affiancare gli studi afferenti a Bowlby e in Italia approda all'indirizzo fenomenologico-personalistico di M.T.Romanini, dopo avere percorso il territorio heideggeriano e husserliano insieme a quello della psicopatologia fenomenologica di B. Callieri. In questo workshop, all'interno dell'impostazione metodologica Analitico-Transazionale, si discutono e si mettono in relazione i costrutti di copione culturale e Stati dell'Io: il vissuto multitraumatico e i processi dissociativi sono l'espressione della diversità di stili di vita e di cultura vissuta da una famiglia slava trapiantata in un altro paese dove non è stato efficace il processo di integrazione. Infatti, il paese che fa accoglienza legge la diversità degli stili di vita e atteggiamenti dei membri della famiglia come 'mancanze' ed 'errori' piuttosto che diritto alla differenza (Filtzinger). Si proiettano brani filmici, che ritraggono la storia di una famiglia con significative problematiche di integrazione socio-culturali e relazioni intrafamiliari violente a livello fisico e psicologico, e si osservano i sintomi dissociativi che costellano le molteplici espressioni del vissuto multitraumatico. Inoltre secondo la teoria evolutiva degli Stati dell'Io si esemplifica il processo di formazione di alcuni fenomeni dissociativi, quali depersonalizzazione, derealizzazione, anestesia emotiva. Infine si individuano nello sviluppo della storia familiare l'emergere di condotte fobiche, che sottendono processi dissociativi: infatti, i membri della famiglia non hanno alimentato il diritto alla differenza, non hanno accolto il conflitto imparando a superarlo senza l'uso della violenza. Il filo conduttore dell'attività teorico-applicativa del workshop seguirà questi nodi: ipotizzare la struttura e il funzionamento delle aree dissociative e della personalità globale di due personaggi del film, raccogliere dati osservativi sul loro stato mentale correlato al vissuto multitraumatico e descrivere gli elementi costitutivi del copione culturale, emergenti dal contesto familiare, socio-culturale ed esistenziale.

### **What Happens When a Person Doesn't Feel What I'm Feeling: The Relationship Between Perso-**

## nal “Scripts” and Cultural “Scripts”

Analytical-Transactional model has developed, starting from its Bernian formulation of “social psychiatry” up to present time, a nature of interdependence with social and clinic applicative fields. The themes of aggressive-violent behavior and multitraumatic past form an intersection and comparison area between social and clinic currents: they concern the person as a whole, at a bio-psycho-existential level, from psychopathological side to legal-forensic and pedagogical-didactical ones. Analytical-Transactional methodology gives constructs useful to comprehension of trauma phenomenon and its past in a socio-cultural context whose components are scarcely integrated. Meeting the other, “different” from the self in a bio-psychological and pedagogical (Latouche) sense, is the focus of Transactional Analysis. Diagnosis and intervention on trait-typology of need for attachment starts from Berne to flank studies appertaining to Bowlby and make landfall M. T. Romanini’s phenomenological-personalistic direction in Italy, having already crossed Heideggerian and Husslerian lands together with B. Callieri’s phenomenological psychopathology ones. In this workshop, embedded in an Analytical-Transactional methodological setting, Script constructs and Ego states will be discussed and related: multitraumatic past and dissociative processes are expression of difference of lifestyles and culture lived by a Slavic family transplanted in a different country where the integration process has not been effective. The welcoming country indeed reads diversity of lifestyles and behaviors of family members as “lacks” and “errors” rather than right to differ (Filtzinger). Movie clips will be shown, depicting the story of a family with significant socio-cultural integration problems and intrafamiliar relationships violent at a physical and psychological level, and will be pointed out the dissociative symptoms spangling multiple expressions of multitraumatic past. Besides, following evolutionary theory of Ego states, the formation process of dissociative phenomena will be illustrated, like depersonalization, derealization, and emotional anesthesia. Finally, emerging of phobic conducts subtending dissociative processes will be identified in the development of family past: family members did not actually foster the right to differ, did not welcome the conflict while learning to overcome it without recurring to violence. The *fil rouge* of theoretical-practical activity during the workshop will be along the following key lines: hypothesize structure and functioning of both dissociative areas and global personality of two characters in the movie, gather concrete data on their mental state related to multitraumatic past and describe constitutive elements of cultural Script, surfacing from family, socio-cultural and existential context.

### Franco FRABBONI

*Università di Bologna, Italy*

#### L’indilazionabile volo della pedagogia dall’emisfero boreale all’australe. E ritorno.

Se osservata con lenti planetarie, la Pedagogia accusa un’antica gracilità epistemica. Le sue teorie pongono sì al centro il soggetto/Persona, ma limitatamente all’umanità - bianca, maschio, ricca, sazia - che abita le contrade boreali del Pianeta. Mai la Pedagogia cresciuta nei paesi dell’opulenza (occidentali) ha messo nel mirino, se non all’alba del terzo Millennio, l’umanità nera-femmina-povera-denutrita che popola l’altra metà della luna: i Paesi della sopravvivenza.

La causa del congenito strabismo della Pedagogia è che il suo capitale scientifico si è venuto accumulando tramite studi e ricerche condotte sull’umanità che popola il nord del Pianeta. Di più. Il suo patrimonio di Saggi è depositato soltanto negli scaffali dei Continenti occidentali.

Perché la Pedagogia è sollecitata ad alzarsi in volo dall’emisfero boreale per atterrare al più presto nell’emisfero australe?

Argomentiamo questo punto di domanda.

Il copioso scaffale della letteratura pedagogica intitola la Persona a punto di approdo della progettazione esistenziale della donna e dell’uomo. Attenzione però. La metafora al “singolare” (la Persona) è assunta come monismo che allude al suo “plurale”: le Persone. Una sorta di Arlecchino intercontinentale testimone di un acquerello di colori, di un mosaico di “diversità” di genere, di etnia, biofisiologiche e socioculturali.

A partire dal citato mosaico, la Pedagogia avverte oggi una crescente e preoccupante anoressia epistemica. Le sue accreditate teorie dell’educazione pongono sì al centro la progettazione della Persona, ma soltanto la donna e l’uomo che abitano le latitudini settentrionali e occidentali del Pianeta. Raramente, le teorie educative che conosciamo hanno posto nel mirino l’umanità della metà del Pianeta a sud/est dell’Equatore: colorata, povera, analfabeta. Per questo, la Pedagogia si trova al debutto del Duemila di fronte a un “bivio”. A dover scegliere - a occhi aperti - tra due sentieri dell’Educazione.

### Roberto FRANZINI TIBALDEO

*Sant’Anna School for Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy*

#### Responsibility towards Diversity. An Educational Proposal for the Enhancement of Democracy: the Intercultural Relevance of Lipman’s “Philosophy for Children/Community”

My proposal draws inspiration from my philosophical research on the idea of responsibility and from my teaching experience. As for the latter, from October 2010 to February 2012 I have been engaged as a researcher and teacher in the project funded by the EU, Regione Toscana and Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa "La scuola di tutti. Pluralismo, intercultura, inclusione, diritti" [Everybody's school. Pluralism, interculturality, inclusion, rights]. My "pupils" were primary and middle school teachers, who wished not only to achieve theoretical understanding, but also to learn how to successfully handle problems and conflicts arising in multicultural environments. For this reason, I proposed to discuss intercultural issues using interactive methodologies, such as Matthew Lipman's "Philosophy for Children/Community" (P4C). This experience gave me the chance to reflect on the sense of practicing philosophy both with adults and children, and to enquire into its relevance for the achievement of the following aims: a) recognizing, overcoming and deconstructing stereotypes and prejudice; b) achieving reflectivity as citizens and practitioners; c) recognizing, appreciating and supporting diversities; d) enhancing individual and social responsibility, sensitivity to diversity and democratic values. In my paper I will endeavour to touch upon and analyse these issues from both a practical and theoretical point of view. I will focus on the notions of responsibility, diversity, and democracy, and I will refer to scholars such as John Dewey, Hans Jonas, Matthew Lipman, Donald Schön, and Martha Nussbaum. I will also try to compare these philosophical reflections with the overall context of intercultural pedagogy.

**Kenneth FUNG**

University of Toronto, Canada

**Ted LO**

Psychiatrist, Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Canada

**A Cultural Expedition into Psychotherapy (Workshop)**

The practice of psychotherapy is steeped in culture, and cultural considerations are increasingly recognized as being vitally important in serving the diverse communities. This includes the cultural background of the therapist and the client. Having a cultural competent framework to consider therapist and client cultures as well as their interactions, including transference and countertransference, can greatly facilitate therapeutic communications and the practice of cultural competent psychotherapy. Further, cultural considerations of psychotherapy itself can add an additional perspective and a deeper level of analysis for the therapist – from *trans-theoretical* (e.g. common therapeutic factors across models of therapy), to *meta-theoretical* (e.g. specific assumptions, theories, and philosophies), to *intra-theoretical* (e.g. adaptation of metaphors). This approach can open up new ways of adapting standard methods of conducting psychotherapy, as well as offering the potential of discovering new psychotherapies that may be more suitable to particular inter-cultural clinical situations. Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy as examples, this workshop will engage participants through a series of guided experiential exercises to explore the nuances of these various levels of conceptualizing psychotherapy, demonstrating powerful ways of engaging thought, feelings, and behaviors in a short period of time, including techniques related to mindfulness. The exercises will serve as a vehicle to allow for a novel cultural and reflective experience for the participants. Finally, the workshop will be grounded in practical case scenarios to consolidate this approach towards practising and understanding psychotherapy.

**Federica GAGLIANO**

*Psicoterapeuta, Italy*

**Francesca FAROLFI**

*Psicoterapeuta, Italy*

**Quale incontro tra cultura di appartenenza e tendenza attualizzante? Esperienze di lavoro clinico con bambini e adolescenti**

Il nostro paese si trova ogni giorno di fronte al fenomeno dell'immigrazione extracomunitaria, il quale coinvolge in misura crescente anche bambini e adolescenti. Questi ultimi spesso vivono grosse difficoltà nell'incontro con la nostra cultura, soprattutto a causa della necessità di dover integrare e coordinare il proprio senso di appartenenza etnica con il modello di vita proposto dal paese d'accoglienza. Tali difficoltà rischiano di essere poco riconosciute sia dai familiari stessi che dal paese d'arrivo che dovrebbe occuparsi di loro. La presenza sempre più consistente di minori immigrati in Italia pone la necessità di fermarsi a riflettere sulle variabili psicologiche implicate nel processo di integrazione culturale di bambini ed adolescenti e induce a proporre una pedagogia interculturale che veda nella convivenza multi-etnica e multiculturale un'occasione di arricchimento e crescita personale e sociale e non solo un motivo di disagio e di difficoltà.

Come terapeuti dell'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona il nostro compito è quello di promuovere la ten-

denza attualizzante dei nostri clienti e di accompagnarli verso una condizione di maggiore contatto con se stessi e con i propri bisogni, aiutandoli nella difficile integrazione tra i valori e gli stereotipi dettati e/o imposti dalla cultura di appartenenza e il loro Sé organismico.

Le nostre esperienze professionali con i minori, in ambito privato e pubblico, ci hanno permesso di affrontare la problematica attraverso interventi diversi per fascia d'età e contesto socio-economico e familiare. Sia nell'infanzia che nell'adolescenza abbiamo riscontrato come le conseguenze di questa discrepanza tra tendenza attualizzante e aspettative culturali esterne possono assumere forme diverse: da quelle più attive come iperattività, disturbi della condotta, comportamenti aggressivi con esplosioni di collera, a quelle più passive che si manifestano con apatia, isolamento, senso di inadeguatezza, bassa autostima e senso di colpa.

Il nostro intervento, attraverso la presentazione di alcuni casi, vuole aggiungersi alle altre voci che prenderanno parte al Convegno Internazionale, promuovendo una maggiore sensibilizzazione al tema e alle dinamiche legate all'interculturalità e si rivolge a tutti coloro che lavorano nel campo dell'infanzia e dell'adolescenza o che ne sono interessati. Saranno discusse le problematiche affrontate insieme a minori appartenenti a culture diverse, nel difficile cammino verso la realizzazione di se stessi e una maggiore consapevolezza di fronte alla continua scelta tra il soddisfacimento dei propri bisogni e le richieste implicite che gli vengono fatte dalla loro cultura di appartenenza.

### **Which encounter between birth culture and actualizing tendency? Experiences of clinical work with young children and adolescents**

Our country experiences the phenomenon of immigration from non EU countries every day, with ever increasing numbers of young children and adolescents involved. They often face great difficulty in coming to terms with our culture, mainly due to the need to combine and integrate their own ethnicity with the life model of the host country. These difficulties are highly unlikely to be recognized by family members themselves and by the host country that should look after them. The increasing presence of immigrant minors in Italy raises the need to stop and think about the psychological variables involved in the process of the cultural integration of young children and adolescents and to propose an intercultural pedagogy that sees in multicultural and multiethnic coexistence an opportunity for enrichment and personal and social growth and not just a source of problems and difficulties.

As Person Centered Approach therapists, our task is to promote the actualizing tendency of our clients and to accompany them to a condition where they have greater contact with themselves and their own needs, helping them face the difficulties of integrating the values and stereotypes imposed and/or enforced on them by their birth culture and their organismic Self.

Our private and public professional experience with minors has allowed us to tackle the problem through a series of activities which vary depending on the age group and the socio-economic and family context. Both in early childhood and adolescence we found that the consequences of this discrepancy between the actualizing tendency and external cultural expectations may take different forms: from active ones such as hyperactivity, conduct disorders, aggressive behaviour with explosions of anger, to the more passive ones such as apathy, isolation, feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem and guilt.

Our intervention, through the presentation of some case studies, wishes to be added to the other voices taking part in the International Conference, promoting greater awareness of this issue and the dynamics related to interculturalism and it is aimed at all of those working in, or who are interested in, the field of early childhood and adolescence. We will address the issues faced by minors belonging to different cultures, in their difficult journey towards self-realization and a greater awareness, in front of the continued choice between satisfying their own needs and the implicit requests made upon them by their birth culture.

#### **Emanuele GALLI**

*Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, Italy*

#### **Duilio MANARA**

*Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, Italy*

**ALBERTI Linda, NESTOLA Priscilla, SPERLECCHI Sara, ZANNINI Lucia**

### **Cause e strategie di gestione dei conflitti interculturali tra infermieri e utenti. Uno studio fenomenologico-ermeneutico in un contesto italiano**

Problema: La letteratura infermieristica indica unanimemente la necessità di comprendere e rispettare le richieste culturali dei pazienti, evitando di basare l'assistenza su paradigmi fondati sulla sola cultura dell'infermiere. Tuttavia, pochi studi descrivono le strategie attraverso cui gli infermieri possono gestire i conflitti all'interno delle situazioni assistenziali caratterizzate interculturalmente.

Obiettivo: Esplorare i conflitti culturali tra infermieri e utenti con differenti background culturali, al fine di identificare le loro cause e i principali elementi che ne facilitano od ostacolano la gestione positiva.

Disegno di ricerca: Indagine qualitativa basata sul metodo fenomenologico-ermeneutico con studio di casi multipli. Sono state condotte 16 interviste semi-strutturate con infermieri che avevano vissuto situa-

zioni di conflitto con utenti con differenti background culturali.

Risultati: Sono state enucleate tre grandi tematiche:

\* Cause dei conflitti interculturali: problemi legati all'incomprensione linguistica e differenti significati attribuiti alle abitudini di vita e curative.

\* Gestione inefficace dei conflitti interculturali. I pregiudizi reciproci, la mancanza di conoscenze sulla cultura dei pazienti e un cattivo uso della traduzione linguistica sembrano ostacolare la risoluzione dei conflitti culturali. Spesso l'incomprensione o il conflitto sono sopiti, controllati, ma non elaborati, e la situazione si risolve con una delle parti che cede alle richieste dell'altra.

\* Gestione efficace del conflitto interculturale. L'apertura reciproca all'altro, l'uso trasparente e responsabile della mediazione linguistico-culturale, una buona capacità di controllo delle emozioni e la volontà corrisposta di ricercare una soluzione sono le modalità di una gestione efficace del conflitto culturale. Gli esiti che ne conseguono sono positivi per tutte le parti coinvolte e creano climi lavorativi aperti a soluzioni innovative.

Conclusioni: i conflitti culturali sono probabilmente molto più numerosi di quanto sia stato documentato e le loro conseguenze sono difficilmente misurabili. La prima causa di conflitto è la mancata elaborazione delle differenze culturali. Gli infermieri necessitano di specifiche competenze interculturali per gestire tali situazioni.

### **Causes and strategies of management for intercultural conflicts between nurses and clients. An hermeneutic-phenomenological study in an Italian context**

Problem: Nursing literature unanimously point out the need for understanding patients' cultural demands, and avoiding to deliver assistance based on paradigms just built on nurses' cultural backgrounds. However, only a few studies have described strategies that can help nurses to manage conflicts that may arise within inter-culturally characterized care situations.

Objective: To explore cultural conflicts between nurses and clients with different cultural backgrounds, in order to identify their causes and the main factors that facilitate or hinder the positive management of those conflicts.

Research design: Qualitative study based on phenomenological-hermeneutic method with a purposive sample of nurses. Sixteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with nurses who had experienced conflicts with patients with a different cultural background.

Results: Three major themes were identified:

\* Causes of intercultural conflicts: linguistic incomprehension and different meanings given to lifestyles and caring.

\* Ineffective management of intercultural conflicts. Reciprocal prejudices, lack of knowledge about patients' culture and misuse of language seem to hinder the resolution of the cultural conflicts. Misunderstandings or conflicts are often unexpressed or restrained, but they are rarely managed; often conflicts are solved by giving up by one of the protagonists.

\* Effective management of intercultural conflicts. Mutual openness to the other, transparent and accountable use of linguistic and cultural mediation, a good ability to manage emotions and desire to find a common solution are considered the right way for effective management of cultural conflicts. These outcomes are perceived as positive by all the parties involved, and create a positive environment, open to innovative solutions.

Conclusions: Cultural conflicts are probably more frequent than it has been documented, and their outcomes are difficult to measure. The first cause of conflict is the lack of elaboration of cultural differences. Nurses need intercultural competence to handle such situations.

### **Antoine GAMBIN**

*International Cooperation, Opportunities Aid Foundation, Malta*

### **RICK'S café network: teachers and school networked with the world**

RICK'S café is working with schools and building tools that provide an opportunity for them to create strategies for their internationalisation. We are carrying out pilot activities across Europe as part of the process of developing tools that will form part of the Readiness for Intercultural Change Model for schools. Our members have been very active and productive in workshops, discussion forums, training sessions and European Youth Intercultural Days in several countries. The RICK'S café network was born out of the idea that, unlike universities and other structures of this stature and social mission, schools generally do not have a choice about their audience and their student population. Schools are often in reactive mode to the changes in the social texture that take place around them. The RICM is an opportunity to build one's future irrespective of change. It helps schools be ready a priori to change in very much a close analogy to Foresight methodologies. The bottom line for a strategy for internationalisation is networking and net working. The lighter part of the presentation will be about how the school and the teacher need to be linked, online and actively seeking a wider vision, more opportunities to create links with the world. The presentation will also out-

line how the network is now on its way towards a self-sustainable future and it is also an invitation for participants in the Conference to partake of its success. It will outline the elements that constitute the RICM, its uses and the resources that support the user when a school is embarking on the setting of its strategy to become more of an international space for its students and teachers without losing out on its local and regional cultural identity.

**Tony Sam GEORGE**  
*Christ University, India*

### **Families in a Diverse Society—Implications for Clinical Practice in India**

This paper will examine the implications of working with changing family structures and functions in therapeutic contexts in India. India is rapidly changing society both economically and socially and its implications on family functions are evident in the presentation of issues in couples and family therapy. Clinicians are forced to reassess therapeutic models of care and revise their own therapeutic inclinations to meet the needs of diversity in families. Psychologically nuclear families, single parent families, 'double income – no kid' families, singles and same sex couples pose tremendous challenges to the practice of family therapy. These challenges have implications in the training of couples and family therapist in India. Training of family therapists have traditionally rested on the premise that families are intact, stay together and normally extended (non residential extended), follow a normative life cycle and assume patriarchal conditions. Globalised urban India has, however moved rapidly from these constraints posing challenges to practice and training. This paper will assess family therapy practice and training in India, present qualitative data on the experience of couple and family therapy training on counseling psychology interns and examine public help seeking behavior by couples and families.

**Lorena GEORGIADOU**  
*University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom*

### **'You look like them!': On learning from negotiating difference and power asymmetries in intercultural interviews in the field of counselling.**

The overall aim of this paper is to highlight the appropriateness of conducting intercultural interviews when researching in the field of intercultural counselling practice and to point out the centrality of cultural awareness, reflexivity and negotiation of power asymmetries when engaging in intercultural research in general.

The talk is based on a hermeneutic-phenomenological study on foreign counselling trainees' experiences of practising in a second language and culture. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with international counselling trainees; these were transcribed and analysed following the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Recurrent themes were identified across cases, and super-ordinate themes were generated. These were then turned into a narrative account of participants' experiences of intercultural counselling practice.

Briefly touching upon one participant's story as an illustration, this presentation will point out issues of ethnicity, racism and internalised stigma that may be experienced by foreign trainees when practising interculturality. This will however function as a foundation to illuminate parallels with conducting research, particularly qualitative interviews, with participants from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds than the researcher. Specifically, the talk will attempt a closer investigation into power dynamics present in the intercultural interviewer/interviewee relationships, will explore how issues of inequity might be unconsciously taking place in intercultural research and will finally argue that adopting a reflexive stance towards these can be particularly facilitative.

This work is contextualised within the wider framework of intercultural counselling training, practice and research. Following this, it is argued that the presentation is conceptually relevant to the conference's theme, namely 'intercultural counselling and education in the global world', and particularly its strand 'Cross-cultural Supervision and Research in Counselling'. Given the project's relevance to counselling training and practice, this presentation may be of interest to counselling trainees who may also have experiences of practising abroad or to supervisors and educators who may want to reach a better understanding of this phenomenon. More importantly however, as the focus of this talk will be on conducting research interviews with culturally diverse participants and the interrelated challenges that this process may incorporate, this presentation will be particularly relevant to researchers who engage with intercultural research, irrespective of the field.

**Roy GILLIS**  
*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Fundamentals of Counselling and Psychotherapy with Sexual and Gender Minority Clients**

This presentation will review some basic and advanced concepts to guide psychotherapists in their clinical work with sexual minority (lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or questioning) and gender minority (transgendered, transsexual, or more simply “trans”) clients. Concepts of sexual attraction, sexual fantasy, sexual behaviour, identity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, expressed and preferred gender roles, and self-labelling will be explained and differentiated from each other. How heterosexism disrupts the therapeutic alliance will be explained, and both obvious and subtle examples of how sexual and gender minority clients experience silencing and invalidation in psychotherapy will be illustrated. An intersectionality approach will be used throughout the presentation and the examples presented will highlight the complex and interactional influences of such factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, culture, age, religious beliefs, and social class on the expression of sexual and gender minority roles. Psychotherapy with sexual and gender minority clients will be then be situated within the larger framework of anti-oppressive clinical practice.

**Mariangela GIUSTI**

*Università degli Studi Milano-Bicocca, Italy*

### **Possibilità di una didattica laboratoriale interculturale partendo dalla Convenzione Internazionale sui Diritti per l'Infanzia**

La comunicazione riporta una ricerca-azione collaborativa, condotta dal 2008 al 2012. La ricerca ha messo in moto un processo euristico teso a progettare, condurre, descrivere occasioni di didattica laboratoriale interculturale ispirate agli articoli della *Convenzione internazionale sui Diritti dell'Infanzia e dell'adolescenza* e improntate al diritto all'educazione per tutti. Partendo dalla conoscenza e dall'analisi della *Convenzione*, la finalità della ricerca era di produrre materiali in grado di contribuire alla formazione iniziale e in servizio di giovani insegnanti e educatori. Si è utilizzato il metodo etnografico e riflessivo, interessato a riportare le varie fasi della ricerca-azione che ha coinvolto ricercatori e pratici (insegnanti, educatori) nella costruzione e nella successiva analisi di esperienze educative laboratoriali. Le attività laboratoriali ideate e condotte a partire da specifici articoli della *Convenzione*, sono state sperimentate, riviste, discusse e ripensate per mezzo di documentazioni fotografiche, videodocumentazioni, registrazioni sonore, blog. Attraverso la scrittura (sollecitata e prodotta) l'esperienza di ricerca è stata ricostruita ed è divenuta materiale utile a pensare l'educazione e a potenziare la formazione di chi vi ha preso parte e di altri. La *Convenzione sui Diritti dell'Infanzia* è un documento importante, la cui conoscenza però non rientra nella formazione iniziale dei docenti. Sarebbe significativo invece ispirarsi alla *Convenzione proprio* nella fase della formazione iniziale in quanto fornisce indicazioni e regole che sottendono una visione decisamente inclusiva della scuola e dell'educazione. La *Convenzione* può essere vista come una mappa, in grado di guidare l'insegnante in formazione nel compito (non semplice) di capire a quali principi generali è bene ispirarsi per svolgere al meglio il lavoro educativo nelle classi multietniche. Le finalità della ricerca sono state le seguenti: a) ideare laboratori rivolti a gruppi interculturali di partecipanti (bambini o ragazzi o adolescenti) intese come piccole comunità di ricerca, guidate da un docente o da un educatore esperto; b) mirare a fare acquisire agli allievi partecipanti conoscenze e buone capacità di giudizio a partire da alcuni diritti sanciti dalla *Convenzione*; c) sollecitare gli studenti partecipanti a riflettere sugli articoli della *Convenzione* (in proporzione all'età); d) gli ideatori e conduttori avrebbero dovuto essere disponibili a progettare i laboratori non in maniera apodittica e definitiva, ma interessati a prevedere la necessità di cambiarli, apportare modifiche, avere un atteggiamento riflessivo. Nella prima parte della comunicazione saranno ripercorsi i vari passaggi della ricerca-azione; nella seconda parte verranno proposte brevi descrizioni di alcuni laboratori a titolo di esempio.

### **Possibility of a teaching laboratory intercultural starting from the Convention on the Rights of Child**

This communication reports a collaborative action research, conducted from 2008 to 2012. Research has activated an heuristic process aimed to designing, conducting, describe some opportunities for intercultural learning workshop inspired by the articles of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and guided by the right to education for all. Starting from the knowledge and analysis of the *Convention*, the purpose of the research was to produce materials that can contribute to the initial and in-service teachers-training. It is used the ethnographic method and reflective, concerned to bring the various phases of action research involving researchers and practical (teachers, educators) in the construction and subsequent analysis of educational experiences laboratory. Activities' workshop designed and conducted from specific articles of the *Convention*, have been tested, revised, discussed and reconsidered by means of photographic documentation, video documentation, sound recordings, blogs. Through writing (solicited and produced) the search experience has been rebuilt and has become a useful material to think about education and to enhance the training of those who took part and others. The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* is an important document, whose knowledge is not included in the initial training of teachers. It would be rather significant inspiration from the *Convention* especially in

the aspect of initial training as it provides guidelines and rules that underlie an inclusive vision of school and education. The Convention can be seen as a map to guide the teacher in training in the task (not easy) to understand the general principles on which it is good inspiration for them to perform the work of education in multicultural classes. The purpose of the research were as follows: a) design workshops aimed at intercultural groups of participants (children or teens or young adults) are designed as small research community, led by a teacher or by a trained educator, b) aim to do acquire students participating in knowledge and good judgment from certain rights enshrined in the Convention; c) encourage participating students to reflect on the articles of the Convention (in relation to age), d) the creators and presenters should be available to design laboratories not in a final and apodictic way, but interested to anticipate the need for change, make changes, having a reflective attitude. In the first part of the communication will be retraced the steps of action research; in the second part will be offered brief descriptions of some laboratories as an example.

**Carl A. GRANT**

*University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA*

### **Urban Education, Place/Space as Social Products and Code Words and Social Justice**

The paper discusses urban education as it relates to place and space as social products. Place(s) are discussed as "social products" that denotes the ways in which sites acquire social meaning and receive or do not receive attention (e.g., urban schools) and spaces are discussed as "social products" as well as geometrical arrangements that may structure, constrain and enable certain movements and interaction for some students more than others. In addition, urban is discussed as a "code word." Place and space and intersectionality theorizing will be used to investigated and discuss how power and privilege are played out in the context of race, gender and social class.

**Floriana GRIMALDI**

*Psicologa – Psicoterapeuta IACP – Ulss n.13 di Mirano Dolo, Italy*

**L. WITTENBER, G. CARLINO**

### **Bisogni di salute nella relazione interculturale. Uno studio su soggetti migranti che si rivolgono ai Servizi-Socio-Sanitari**

Lo studio si propone di contribuire al dibattito inerente la salute interculturale, attraverso la conoscenza e l'esplorazione dei bisogni di salute delle persone migranti che si rivolgono ai servizi socio-sanitari e la comprensione dei fattori facilitanti la comunicazione interculturale. Il lavoro guarda all'esperienza migratoria da una prospettiva fenomenologica ed esistenziale, quale esito della tendenza attualizzante propria di ogni essere umano. L'indagine si svolge all'interno dei Consultori Familiari e del Centro di Salute Mentale della ULSS n.13 e coinvolge 30 operatori e 75 utenti migranti. Condotta attraverso metodi di tipo etnografico (osservazione partecipante, interviste narrative, focus group), essa rivela esperienze di sradicamento e solitudine, associate a bisogni di relazione, sicurezza e autorealizzazione. Le interviste esprimono, inoltre, lo stretto legame fra bisogni di salute e progetto migratorio: esso risponde, essenzialmente, al bisogno di "stare bene", inteso come possibilità esistenziale di realizzare i propri obiettivi personali e lo sviluppo delle proprie potenzialità, avvalorando quanto già messo in luce dagli studi sul benessere soggettivo (Ryan, Deci, 2001). Nell'incontro con gli operatori, prioritari sono i bisogni di comprensione, accoglienza e rispetto: ciò che per gli operatori rappresenta un problema di comunicazione è concepito, dall'Altro.migrante, come un problema di relazione in senso lato. Paradosso per cui, proprio là dove gli operatori incontrano più difficoltà perché investono più tempo ed energie nel trovare soluzioni comunicative efficaci, gli utenti "stanno meglio". Come se, nell'incontro interculturale come in ogni incontro interpersonale, l'intesa possa non dipende tanto dalla pre-conoscenza, ma dalla "propensione verso" (La Cecla, 2003). Alla luce di tali risultati, un approccio alla cura che possa dirsi interculturale muove, dunque, da un principio di iatreia, di un prendersi cura tra umani, "che contempla la presa in carico e può contemplare la terapia" (Coppo, 2003, p.207): è un approccio da persona a persona, che considera l'essere umano nella sua singolare universalità, nella sua biografia incarnata, vissuta, che racconta la sua storia e, raccontando la sua storia, parla anche della propria cultura. E' un approccio che, prima di essere interculturale, si propone dunque come "centrato sulla persona". Se assunto fino in fondo, l'ACP (Rogers, 1951) rappresenta così la possibile via per una cura interculturale: la relazione concepita da persona a persona, nel rispetto irriducibile per l'Altro, nella riduzione essenziale all'incontro autentico, diviene occasione di apertura, comprensione, accettazione vissuta e, quindi, per l'Altro-migrante, relazione che cura.

### **Health needs in intercultural relationships. A study on migrants and health and social care services**



The study aims to contribute to the present debate on intercultural health through knowledge and exploration of the health needs of migrants who turn to socio-sanitary services. The work considers the migratory experience from a phenomenological, existentialist perspective, and sees it as a result of the tendency to self-actualization that characterizes every human being. The research has been carried out in family planning clinics and in the Mental Health Centre of ULSS (Italian local health and social care services) n. 13, and has involved 30 operators and 75 migrant users. The study has been conducted using ethnographic methods (participant observation, narrative interviews and focus groups) and reveals loneliness and loss of roots, which are connected with a need for relationships, security and self-fulfillment. Moreover, the interviews express the close connection between health needs and migratory projects. This connection is essentially a response to the need for feeling well, that is to say the possibility given by life to fulfill one's personal goals and develop one's potential, which corroborates what has already been highlighted by subjective well-being studies (Ryan, Deci, 2001). When meeting the operators, a priority should be given to the migrants' need for being understood, welcomed and respected. What is considered by operators as a communicative problem is seen by the migrant, broadly speaking, as a relationship problem. This is a paradox, since whenever operators struggle the most and spend time and energies to find effective communicative solutions, users "feel better". In the light of these results, an approach to a healing that can be defined as an intercultural one is based on a principle of *iatreia*, i.e. taking care of each other as human beings, "which contemplates one's taking on responsibility and which can contemplate therapy" (Coppo, 2003, p. 207). It's a person-to-person approach, which takes into consideration each person in its single universality, embodied past, who recounts his/her story and, by doing so, he/she also talks about his/her own culture. Such an approach therefore is not only intercultural, but aims above all at being "person-centered". If thoroughly implemented, the ACP (Rogers, 1951) represents thus a possible intercultural healing option. In it, the relationship conceived as a person-to-person one, which is characterized by an unquestionable respect towards the other person and by its being essentially reduced to an authentic encounter, becomes an opportunity for openness, understanding and experienced acceptance, and therefore, for the Other-migrant, a healing relationship.

**Jagdish GUNDARA**

*University of London, United Kingdom*

**Current Intercultural Issues within the Global Context**

This paper will discuss issues in relation to intercultural education and studies at a time of great changes in many societies. It will touch on some of the controversies in this field and address some of the themes relevant to the Verona Conference, including the issues of counselling.

**Christine E. GUTHRIE**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

**Popular Culture as a Site of Critical Pedagogy: A New Soundtrack for Intercultural Learning**

The aim of this paper is to critically explore emerging variations in the concepts of race, identity, and culture with reference to how these concepts are presented in the work of a Canadian rock music group. The investigation of the complexities of race and culture directs attention to crucial interconnections between student engagement, interculturalism, and democracy.

This presentation draws on the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy, which directs the purpose of education towards the realities of oppression, the democratization of knowledge, and the hope for a better future. These ideas are crucial if we are to succeed in the challenge of developing inclusive and progressive education in a multicultural, globalized world. Critical pedagogy has been considered in relation to structured learning environments such as schools and community groups, but can it illustrate the processes of learning in other contexts? Popular culture is one such realm in which cultural identities are constructed, de-constructed, and contested. There is increasing interest in popular culture as an object of study in schools, but I propose that we go beyond this to recognize popular culture itself as a productive site of learning and inquiry.

In this paper, I will focus on one example in popular music. Through close examination of the Canadian art/music collective Yamantaka/Sonic Titan, I will describe practices in popular music that demonstrate the reflexive processes and challenging outcomes of critical pedagogy. The group's two founding members describe themselves as "mixed-race" (multiracial). Faced with the imposition of narrow, racialized identities, the members of this group are complicating existing notions of race and culture to highlight the possibility of "hybrid" identities that are fluid and changing. As we work to develop the capacity to educate with sensitivity to cultural contexts—a major competency in interculturalism—I suggest that these critical notions of culture and identity, and their unconventional sources, deserve serious consideration. This presentation is written from an academic perspective but is meant to engage all those with an interest in

intercultural and multicultural education. The paper, while focusing on an aspect of critical pedagogy in relation to popular culture, raises foundational issues of identify and culture that are central to the intercultural education project.

**Kimberly HART**

*University of Manitoba, Canada*

**Trauma Considerations for the First Nations Peoples of Turtle Island**

Trauma has a long history in the lives of the First Nations populations of Canada. Examples such as the reservation system and how it is implemented, forced land relocation, the residential school system and the sixties-scoop have had a multi-layer impact on the First Nations peoples of Turtle Island (North America) beginning from the individual, expanding to the family, and onward to the community and the nation. A review of the mental health and trauma literature suggests that the mainstream western and First Nations perspectives have incongruent understandings of trauma. What is more, there is considerable diversity within and across the various First Nations populations of Canada and this can also contribute to the ways in which these populations understand and ultimately heal from trauma. Therefore, the provision of mainstream mental health services to the First Nations populations of Canada who have experienced trauma may not be effective, culturally-sensitive or comprehensively supportive, which may create more harm and marginalization to an already vulnerable population.

The purpose of this paper presentation is to facilitate new knowledges in the area of trauma regarding the First Nations peoples of Turtle Island. It is based on a research study that is seeking to explore how the members of a particular northern Manitoba Cree nation perceive, understand, and experience trauma. This paper presentation will give a brief overview of trauma in relation to First Nations peoples of Turtle Island and it will share the implications of this study for cross-cultural counselling. Addressing the theme *Cross-cultural Supervision and Research in Counselling*, this presentation will be of particular interest to counsellors, mental health program supervisors, academics, and researchers.

**Michael HART**

*University of Manitoba, Canada*

**Kimberly HART**

*University of Manitoba, Canada*

**Gladys ROWE**

*University of Manitoba, Canada*

**Through Indigenous eyes: Intercultural counselling and the mino-pimatisiwin approach**

Intercultural counselling has often focused on the provision of services from dominant locations to individuals in marginalized populations. This dominant location has included particular theoretical stances most often utilized by the service provided. In such process, even people from marginalized populations have been educated and/or trained to work from the dominant location. In an effort to create change in such dynamics, one of the presenters has outlined an approach stemming from the worldviews and practices of individuals from one group that has been marginalized on Ininiwi-Ministik (North America), specifically Indigenous peoples. This mino-pimatisiwin approach has supported Indigenous peoples as services providers to work in ways that are consistent with their own worldviews and practices, and with other Indigenous peoples. As with some other theoretical orientations, the mino-pimatisiwin approach can inform and support practitioners from other cultures, particularly when working interculturally with Indigenous peoples. This presentation will first provide a brief overview of the mino-pimatisiwin approach as it has been developed from the traditional healing practices of Indigenous Elders and helpers. The approach will then be discussed in relation intercultural counselling. The presentation will close with recommendations for futher developments in the field. The short presentation is provided to both practitioners and researchers particularly interested in expanding their practices and research to include approaches stemming from traditional Indigenous perspectives. It is directly reflects the strand, "Integrating Traditional Healing and Spirituality into Counselling and Psychotherapy" as the approach is based within Indigenous worldview and stems from traditional Indigenous practitioners.

**Regine HARTUNG**

*Hamburg institute of teacher training and school development, Germany*

**Rita PANESAR**

*BQM Beratung Migration Qualifikation - counselling - migration – qualification, Germany*

**Quality of Schools in the Migrational Society - Qualification for Intercultural Coordinators - a new**

## way for intercultural opening of schools?

In Hamburg - as in the most bigger cities in Europe - schools have become multicultural institutions where students with different origins study together. In order to give students the chance to develop their full potential in a global world it is necessary that institutions and staff are prepared to deal with cultural, linguistic and social heterogeneity. Studies have shown, that schools that change their structures towards diversity education and diversity management improve their learning atmosphere and contribute to an improvement of students' results (e.g. Toronto, Zürich etc.)

The *department of intercultural education* of the *Hamburg Institute of teacher training and school development* and the project „BQM“ (literally translated: Counselling Qualification Migration) have developed a curriculum for a qualification for teachers as “intercultural coordinators“ and started it in summer 2012. The aim of the course is to qualify interested teachers to initiate intercultural change processes at their schools. They are encouraged to connect to ongoing school development processes, bring in relevant stakeholders rising the school's expertise in leading multicultural classes to better results. The qualification connects three threads in every module:

- 1.) Awareness raising by anti-bias-approach (coming from the US over South Africa to Germany) - sensibilizing for discrimination and prejudices
- 2.) Knowledge-transfer in Intercultural school development (curriculum development, staff development and organizational development)
- 3.) Coaching in change management (counselling participants concerning projects and concepts they develop during the qualification)

On the conference I will present the innovative qualification, reflect on first experiences and exchange expertise with interested teacher trainers, school administrators, academics, teachers or other interested multipliers.

**Adam HORVATH**

*Simon Fraser University, Canada*

## **The Therapeutic Relationship in Cross-Cultural Therapy: The Gift of Differences**

(Preconference Workshop)

Psychotherapy across “cultural divides” highlights the challenges of dealing with differences. Differences between the therapist's and clients expectations of the nature of the process, different assumptions about the respective roles and responsibilities of the therapist and client, and differences between the participants' ego ideals. These and other differences directly and obviously confront the therapist and highlight the challenge of bridging the gap between the self and the “other.” However, these therapy situations also provide unique opportunities to not only acknowledge but to dynamically incorporate these tensions into the very core of the therapy process. The presentation will focus on the therapeutic potential of using these differences, what is “unknown,” to build a unique collaborative relationship with the client and how the negotiation and management of such cross cultural therapy relationship can be an effective component of treatment.

**Awad IBRAHIM**

*University of Ottawa, Canada*

## **Race, Language and Globalization: What can “Global Hip-Hop Nation” Teach us about Citizenship?**

Using Brazil, Japan, Hong Kong and Arab Spring as examples, my aim in this presentation is to explore and decipher the semiotic meaning of Global Hip-Hop Nation. This is a Nation, I am contending, that has its own linguistic and cultural passport. This passport is symbolic in nature and works through symbolic codes, which are accessed globally by its dwellers, citizens. So, I am asking: how does one get this passport, that is, how one access this Nation and get his/her passport stamped?; and what are the political, linguistic and cultural implications of becoming a citizen of this Global Nation? Once your passport is stamped and you become a “citizen” of this Global Nation, I am concluding, then you have access to cultural and linguistic codes that only citizens of this Nation have access to. In the case of Brazil, especially in the *favelas*, I will show for example, thanks to Hip-Hop “race” can be talked about and addressed as a social issue (problem if you like). In the case of Japan, the citizens of this Global Hip-Hop Nation impacted the Japanese language in such a way that, again thanks to Hip-Hop, the Japanese language has rhymes now where it did not have before the introduction of Hip-Hop in Japan. In the case of Hong Kong, the devalued Cantonese language is now front and center, again, thanks to the impact of Hip-Hop in Hong Kong. In the Arab Spring case, I will actually argue that it started with a Hip-Hop song: *Mr President* by El Général (Tunisia). I will conclude with pedagogical implications by answering the question: *What can “Global Hip-Hop Nation” Teach us about Citizenship?* This is a global rhizomatic citizenship,

ultimately I want to show, where symbolic cultural exchanges are (at) its kernel and where “margins” are connecting creatively.

**Mami ISHII**

*Naturopathic Doctor, Integrative Mental Health, Canada*

**Ted LO**

*Psychiatrist, Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Canada*

### **Delicious Moments: The Preliminary Observation from Integrating Cultures of Healing into Modern Practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy**

With the globalization of the modern society, many mental health issues are related to the prolonged state of separation from the authentic self at multi-level of our being. The modern society in some ways provides us with denials to live in accordance with one's true personality, spirit, or character due to external pressure. As traditional healing practices focuses on all four domains of human wellness - body, mind, soul, and society, this wholesome experience becomes the opportunity to connect all those domains. This moment, when one is embracing the beauty of his or her total being by re-realizing and restoring the integrity of authentic self, can be described as *Oishii*, "delicious" in Japanese. It means not only flavour of food, but also embracing and savouring all beauties of the wholesome experience including being one with self, others, nature and spirituality through engagement of all senses. Starting from the pleasure sensation associated with our basic physiology, this delicious moment can be explained and extended to experience our thoughts, memory, emotion, spirituality, values, and societal meanings. Ultimately it becomes the opportunity for one to feel and re-create the harmony within to combat the feeling of demoralization and create the sense of hope and integrity. This presentation introduces this preliminary concept of "deliciousness" with regard to its development from integration of psychotherapy and traditional healing practices. Traditional healing practices will be analyzed within a framework based on the domain of mind, body, soul/spirituality and society, and from theoretical views of *Amae*, psychoanalytic, behaviourism existentialism, client-centred, mindfulness, and savouring psychology. This presentation is for any mental health professionals and students who are interested in the unique exposure to the holistic approach integrating traditional healing practices and modern psychotherapy practices. Participants will be invited to learn concepts of "deliciousness" through the modern formulation of traditional healing in counselling and psychotherapy. This framework might indicate opportunities for further integration, and potential trends for the future of mental health care delivery. This is indeed the benefit of the study of cultures of traditional healing.

**Mami ISHII**

*Naturopathic Doctor, Integrative Mental Health, Canada*

**Ted LO**

*Psychiatrist, Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Canada*

### **What are your ‘Delicious Moments’?: Integrating Cultures of Traditional Healing into the Modern Practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy (Workshop)**

Integration of traditional healing into modern practice of counselling and psychotherapy can create a unique therapeutic moment. Through the engagement of multi-levels of human wellness, one can embrace the beauty of his or her whole being and leading into re-realization and restoration of the integrity of authentic self. This concept comes from a Japanese word "*Oishii*" meaning savouring all beauties of wholesome experience. In this workshop, this preliminary concept "delicious moments" is explored through series of experiential exercises. Participants are invited to actively and openly engage their senses and perceptions focusing on four domains of human wellness - body, mind, spirit/soul and society and how they interconnect and harmonize together in order to expand their own delicious moments. Integration of some traditional healing practices and psychological theoretical frameworks will be introduced and followed by group discussion to examine its clinical application. This workshop is for any mental health professionals and students who are interested in the experiential opportunity for the integration of traditional healing and modern psychotherapy.

**Natasha JAMAL**

*OISE – University of Toronto, Canada*

### **A review of student voice initiatives: From the traditional to the critical democratic notion of student roles**

In an effort to better involve students in their schooling and educational experiences, there is now an emerging body of literature on different student voice initiatives. This paper presents a brief literature review of these initiatives, categorizing them according to whether schools adopt a traditional, democratic or critical-democratic understanding of students. Furthermore an analysis of how these initiatives impact issues of inclusion and equity are presented with a discussion on what this means for student learning. Traditional democratic student voice initiatives are found to be managed by adults suppressing student voice since they do not challenge the power dynamics between students and teachers. Democratic student voice initiatives are able to better involve students to express and address their concerns, however inequitable practices of schooling remain intact and are reproduced since the deeper structural issues are not interrogated. Critical democratic student voice initiatives are found to better respond to inequities in both schooling and in the lived experiences of students as learning and democracy become a way of life. It is also noted that this last kind of initiative is also the most difficult to carry out as it requires a radical transformation from the typical understanding of what it means to learn, to be a student and teacher.

**Lina Jaramillo**

*Anthropologist and Counsellor, Italy*

**Luvia Soto Cabrera**

*Labour Psychologist, Italy*

### **Dealing with Boundaries in a Multicultural Setting**

When dealing with people from different cultures, asking ourselves about limits and boundaries is a common situation in our daily professional practice as counselors, coaches, psychologists, etc. Limits can be related to three different spheres: i) the theoretical constituents of our profession and its instruments to work with clients (many of them considered as universal from an occidental point of view); ii) our own limits (professionally and personally); iii) the limitations of the client (because of social and economic conditions, attitudes towards the original culture, and the one of the host country, etc.). The aim of our work is to discuss these issues from a multidisciplinary perspective (especially from anthropology, health and labour psychology) in order to establish a debate about what based on our experience are the main challenges. In doing so, we will consider two client profiles: foreign individuals living in Italy and multicultural teams working in the same territory. Some ideas on how to enhance both our multicultural competencies, and its contribution to our “multicultural clients” well-being will be proposed.

### **Confini e sfide nel lavoro con clienti nel campo interculturale**

Nella nostra pratica come counsellor e coach in contesti multiculturali, spesso ci dobbiamo confrontare con quelli che potrebbero essere limiti, vincoli o restrizioni, nello svolgimento di un lavoro efficace con i clienti. Da un nostro punto di vista, questi possono nascere rispetto a tre diversi ambiti: i) la connotazione etnocentrica delle teorie costituenti le nostre professioni e i suoi strumenti; ii) le nostre competenze professionali nonché caratteristiche personali, iii) le caratteristiche e condizioni sociali, economiche e lavorative dei clienti, i loro atteggiamenti verso la sua cultura di origine e la cultura del paese di accoglienza, ecc. Lo scopo del nostro lavoro è quello di illustrare le principali sfide che affrontiamo nel lavoro con clienti che provengono da altri mondi socio-culturali che risiedono in Italia. Dopo di ché, presentiamo alcune idee che potrebbero aiutarci a superare questi limiti nonché a migliorare le nostre competenze multiculturali professionali, in modo da contribuire al benessere dei nostri clienti.

**Aleksandra KANIA**

*University of Warsaw, Poland*

### **Dilemmas of democracy. Between neo-populism and neo-liberalism**

The paper scrutinizes changes in the notion of democracy and its evaluation prompted by the successive “waves of democratization”. Their overall outcome was the deepening of contradictions between the fundamental principles of democracy, spelled out by Aristotle as “freedom, equality and justice”. Contradictions and tensions between the basic principles of democracy, particularly between freedom and equality find expression in the conflict between liberal and populist political orientations. Though in their “classic” forms liberalism and populism stood in opposition to each other, this paper points out the connections between neo-liberalism and neo-populism of our days. The global scale of the new composition on political stage create the need to rethink the strategy of developing education enabling to face up to new political realities.

**Sophia KARIOTAKI**

*Doctoral Candidate, University of Manchester, United Kingdom*

## **Lost in Translation: A Bilingual Therapist's Process to Acknowledge her Limitations working in her Second Language and Learning from them**

In this presentation I am going to present a case study that I contacted on my own work as a therapist working in my second language. Nowadays more and more individuals live and work in other countries than their origin and they had to learn how to communicate in a language different than their mother tongue. Particularly in professions such as counselling psychology that quite accurately is called talking therapy, the use of language is the primary mediator that allows therapist and client to work together toward the therapeutic process. Therapists use language to build and establish a therapeutic relationship with their client and help them to verbalise and understand their inner world (Javier, 1995). In addition an important role of the therapist is to share the client's language space and to be familiar with the words that they describe their experience (Claus, 1998). As a practitioner for whom English is not my mother tongue, I work routinely with English speaking clients. Even though I have been trained in English and I feel confident with my ability to work as a therapist, sometimes I find myself feeling inadequate just because I don't share the same mother tongue with my clients. Am I understood? Am I able to conceive fully my client's story? At times these questions left me wondering the effects of my bilingualism on the establishment of an in depth therapeutic alliance with my clients and on my own professional growth. This case study was contacted as an attempt to understand better my own linguistic identity and culture and to reflect on what the fact of belonging to a different linguistic background from my clients means to me as a therapist. Using an audiotape-assisted interpersonal process recall (IPR), I collected my reflections and thoughts of five sessions with one client and analysed these data using thematic analysis. From this process, five themes were identified 'Wrong Use of English Language', 'Trying to be understood', 'Inadequacy of making clear-accurate sentences' and 'The impact of language inadequacy in the use of CBT techniques'. Through this presentation I hope that I will provide an opportunity for other bilingual counsellor and psychotherapist to discover and recognise their own limitations working in a second language and at the same time a prototype of processing their work.

### **Maria KAVOURI**

*Mediatore Interculturale, Association of Intercultural Mediators Network- AimNetwork, Italy*

### **Rick's café network**

#### **An insider's view: The importance of being in a network (Poster)**

With this poster we aim to introduce the Comenius network project: Rick's café network; through eyes insider's partner Aim Network. This is a local Association of Intercultural Mediators, based in Ferrara, Emilia Romagna, Italy. Aim Network was born inside Rick's café network and grows up under its guidance and its influence.

We will exam the concept, the structure, the objects, the activities and the influence on its partners and toward a wider audience, made up from schools, policy makers, stakeholders and specialists in issues related to intercultural education. Rick's café network stands for Renewing Intercultural Competences and Knowledge Spaces. It is coordinated by CECE - Confederación Española de Centros de Enseñanza of Spain. The main partnership is composed from 16 organisations based all over Europe; they are involved 3 universities, 2 schools and other institutions. In this Consortium are also joined a good number of organisations and schools as hosts.

Objectives: The network started working in December 2010 when it embarked on a three year programme of events including training activities, workshops, research, European Intercultural Days and publishing activities. Mainly, it focuses to improve the initial knowledge and especially Intercultural education of teachers and other categories of personnel working in the school education sector. It aims, also to develop strategies, exchange experiences, to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and drive the school toward internationalization. This network of organizations and individuals recognizes the value of open vision in the minds of student and works to preserve it. RICK'S cafe' is not a research network but a network of schools, educators, policy makers and players in education who work together to learn together and from each other.

Results: In these two years the network organized 9 online forum, 5 training sessions and 3 international workshops taken in account the most important issues facing education today, particularly early school leaving with a focus on interculturality, religious perspectives and intercultural mediation's issues. Together, they are developing a RICM (Readiness for Intercultural Change Model) after looking around them and exchange views and experience. They pool information about situations and developments happening in different parts of Europe. The next tasks will involve publishing on Rick's café web-site of mini papers on Educational issues and the realization of 2 EYIDs (European Youth Intercultural Days) as one is already realized in Porto in January 2013.

### **Maria KAVOURI**

*Mediatore Interculturale, Association of Intercultural Mediators Network- AimNet-work, Italy*

## "L'importanza delle TIC nella formazione interculturale degli insegnanti"

Questo contributo vuole spaziare nell'ampio ventaglio di opportunità che offre la competenza informatica nell'arricchimento della formazione degli insegnanti. Si parlerà dell'uso delle competenze informatiche per la creazione di pagine web, come mezzo di apprendimento linguistico, trasmissione di concetti, formazione e introduzione in comunità di apprendimento. Si esploreranno inoltre, i sistemi di gemellaggio fra le scuole europee ed altri sistemi per uscire dall'isolamento e il provincialismo e creare comunità attive di protagonisti in educazione. Infine si esamineranno le possibilità di reperimento di fondi per la formazione degli insegnanti, attraverso gli stanziamenti del fondo sociale della Commissione Europea.

Parole come diversità, multiculturalità e interculturalità, popolano quotidianamente il nostro vocabolario ma la loro gestione a livello pratico è difficile. Problemi come l'abbandono scolastico, nelle fasce sociali più sensibili, e specialmente in quelle caratterizzate dall'emigrazione, sono molto frequenti e spesso dovuti ad una carente risposta scolastica. Nelle scuole di ogni grado in Italia, nonostante i grandi interventi da parte dell'Unione Europea, esistono degli agglomerati di insegnanti che presentano difficoltà di apprendimento di una lingua straniera specialmente l'inglese che funge da lingua "franca". Spesso sono monolingue con una limitata competenza informatica ed una carente educazione interculturale. L'Unione Europea ogni anno stanziava grandi somme, per la formazione degli insegnanti, le quali spesso rimangono inesattate per mancanza di conoscenza. Si metteranno, quindi, a disposizione degli insegnanti materiali informatici utili, idee e link sui fondi stanziati dalla Commissione Europea per migliorare le loro competenze in tutti gli ambiti e specialmente in ambito interculturale.

## "The importance of ICT in intercultural education of teachers"

This paper wants to overview in a wide range of opportunities offered by computer technology skills in enrichment of teacher training. We discuss the use of computer skills for creating web pages as a means for language learning, transmission of concepts, training and the introduction in the learning community. We also explore the systems of twinning schools in Europe and other systems to emerge from isolation and provincialism and create active communities of players in education. Finally, we look at ways of raising funds for the training of teachers through the appropriations of the Social Fund of the European Commission.

Words like diversity, multiculturalism and interculturalism, populate our daily vocabulary but their management in practice is difficult. Problems, such as early school leaving, in the most sensitive sectors of society, and especially in those characterized by emigration, are very common and often due to a lack of school answering. In schools at all levels in Italy, despite major interventions by the European Union, there are agglomerations of teachers who have difficulty learning a foreign language, especially English language that serves as "lingua franca". They are often monolingual with limited computer skills and a lack of intercultural education. The European Union allocates large sums every year, for teachers training, which often remain not requested for lack of knowledge. We will, therefore, available to teachers materials useful information, ideas and links to the funds allocated by the European Commission to improve their skills in all areas and especially in the field of intercultural education.

**Eduard KHAKIMOV**

*Udmurt State University, Russia*

**Marina SIRAEVA**

*Udmurt State University, Russia*

## Students' linguistic club in the polycultural educational space of the Udmurt State University

The program for shaping Polycultural educational space is being developed in the Udmurt State University. Theoretical background: Theory of education through integration (A. Danilyuk, 2000); Polycultural educational space (V. Borisenkov, O. Gukalenko, A. Danilyuk, 2004); persona-centered Polycultural education (E. Khakimov, 2012).

Students' linguistic club could be regarded as a component of Polycultural educational space. Participation in various activities of the linguistic club gives an opportunity to each student to: (1) be recognized of his / her cultural peculiarities; (2) be involved in acts of cultural enrichment.

Research issue: How does intercultural competence of the participants of the linguistic club change?

Research method: Questionnaires and test of intercultural competence.

Research procedure: Comparison of data and results (validity, Mann-Whitney criteria). 32 students-participants of the linguistic club and 34 students (bachelors of pedagogy, who didn't attend linguistic club) were involved in the research. They had completed the test and questionnaires after 1 year of education in the Udmurt State University, Russian Federation.

We are going to present the results of research and explain general and specific conditions for creating the Polycultural educational space.

**Abraham KHAN**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**Oksana VINNICHENKO**

*Ternopil State Medical University, Ukraine*

### **A Healing Model among Caribbean Christians for Health Care Delivery**

This paper queries a healing model among Caribbean Christians, identified as the Whole Person Healing Ministry. Congregation-based and aiming to treat the whole person, the model draws on a multi-disciplinary team of health care professionals, and thus includes prayer as a healing modality. It holds out the possible of recognizing spiritual gifts of healing, or divine healing, along curative vocations such as the medical arts, nursing, psychological counseling, and social work, as part of a community health care delivery system. The model was developed to resolve a cultural tension created by two ways of understanding religion: Eurocentric versus Afro-centric Christianity. It purportedly makes room for healing and healing practices, for the training and formation of healers, as part of a community ministry to deliver health care services in areas where the government initiatives are inadequate. It represents as such another approach – healers, practitioners and sites- to the study of religion, and the study of the interaction between religion and medicine. However, the question remains as to whether the model or approach can work in a multicultural setting? The presentation offers some reflections along the lines of that question.

**Abraham KHAN**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Islamic Influence in the Caribbean: Traditional and Cultural Healing Practices**

This paper discusses dam karma, an Islamic healing practice, as an adjunctive therapy in the cultural and political economy of the Caribbean. It opens up opportunities for exploring further connections between areas such as counseling psychology and spirituality, or Islamic hospital chaplaincy, and that of religion and medicine. And, it offers in the form of a hypothesis, an explanation of the resistance to the practice, gaining acceptance as a supplemental treatment in the health care delivery system, especially among English speaking countries in the region.

**Kelly KIRKSEY**

*Holistic Psychotherapist, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, USA*

**Andrea FARENGA**

*Marshall University, USA*

### **Transformative Movement, Mindfulness and Meditation: A Gateway to Wellness and Resiliency** (Preconference Workshop)

This experiential workshop will allow participants to engage in a variety of global practices geared towards promoting increased self-awareness and stress reduction. Through dynamic movement, breathing techniques and mindfulness activities, the participants will be able to create a palette of wellness strategies for use with students, clients and more importantly, one's own personal practice. The techniques we will focus on are appropriate for a variety of venues from academia to direct patient care. The healing modalities to be presented have their foundation in yoga, Native American practices and meditation.

**Donna KOWALCHUK**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

### **The Face of Privilege: One Canadian Principal's Reflections on Leading for Interculturalism**

**Purpose:** The author, a white privileged female sought to enact equity and social justice for Aboriginal students in the school that she led. The purpose of this study was to reflect on the intercultural insights (competences) gained through her experience.

**Rationale:** Issues of diversity are not new in Canada. Neither is the need for social cohesion and inclusion. The issue considered in this reflective paper is: If Canada takes pride in being a multicultural society, why do its politicians and public education leaders tolerate a disproportionate number (more than half) of Aboriginal students leaving school before they graduate?

**Research Design:** A theoretical framework based in critical theory, specifically a critical democratic perspective and the work of Paulo Freire (1998), situated the problem and guided the case study. This problem is complex and multilayered, and steeped in Canada's colonial history as it relates to Aboriginal



(First Nation and Métis) people. An intercultural approach was used in order to study the author's experience as a white privileged female who makes the issue of race and culture central to her leadership and practice.

Insights: Seven reflective insights are described as an intercultural framework for white privileged school leaders in order to ground their conceptions of leadership and guide their future educational leadership practice.

Implications: Future research needs to expose the voices and experiences of other leaders, both privileged (non-Aboriginal) and marginalized (Aboriginal), who have successfully interrupted the colonial legacy in their schools with equity and social justice for all students.

### **Alessandra LA MARCA**

*Università di Palermo, Italy*

#### **Metacognizione e interculturalità. Nuove tecnologie per imparare a pensare**

Research about metacognition and its implications for learning and instruction have become a central issue in education. The call for teaching metacognitive skills is considered one of the main implications for instruction that emerged from over three decades of research about how people learn.

The objectives of this research are thus formulated: to analyze the quality of teaching practices intentionally geared in response to the differentiated needs of students, and set according to the principles of educative personalization; to individualize didactic methodologies that can improve the students' motivation in learning through the use of new technologies; to offer teachers the opportunity to reflect upon their own tasks and endeavors through the acquisition of a practice collection-analysis method, shared within their action research group.

The reports of teachers, along with all the didactic materials produced, have been related to the previous teaching planning and classroom observation carried out by the researcher. Surveys to teachers, parents and students, focus group, classroom observation, routine collection, regular observation are the means used for gathering the required data. Any single item of the research has been carefully observed and compared so as to obtain some constants in the field of individualized didactics.

The materials we gathered, both in paper and digital format, may be considered as a precious tool for the educational training process and also for all those teachers who are willing to innovate and revitalize their teaching action. In particular, the teachers' pieces of telling are supported by the teaching material they produced to reach precise educational objectives according to precise student profiles.

Besides recognizing the motivations of teachers, the analysis of the practices gathered in this study made it possible to verify the ways by which they test the use of digital resources and the technological infrastructures of the internet in their daily teaching practices. A well, we can see the ways they offer their students a scholastic course that values their specificity, and how they are able to enhance and stimulate collaboration and communication amongst students.

### **Stefania LAMBERTI**

*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

#### **Cooperative Learning nutrimento per ghiande ridicolmente minuscole: proposte d'azione**

Lo stimolo delle riflessioni di Bauman in riferimento all'educazione ritengo possa diventare un orizzonte di senso alquanto significativo per credere, come egli stesso afferma che "ogni maggioranza all'inizio era una minuscola, invisibile e impercettibile minoranza. E che perfino le querce centenarie provengono da ghiande ridicolmente minuscole".

Lo scopo del mio intervento consiste in una essenziale riflessione sul bisogno di educazione interculturale a seguito di una precipua lettura del contesto sociale. Inoltre, evidenzierò i principi che connotano l'educazione interculturale sottolineando il carattere rivoluzionario che essa ha in sé.

Di seguito proverò a sostenere perché il Cooperative Learning è una metodologia efficace per l'educazione interculturale presentando gli elementi fondanti del CL e ritenuti dai massimi studiosi a livello mondiale.

Più nel dettaglio presenterò una proposta didattica che usa il CL per promuovere autentica educazione interculturale. Il curriculum elaborato per la scuola primaria è strutturato in tre aree: Sensibilizzazione, Interazione responsabile e Verso un nuovo umanesimo: saper vivere nell'incerta complessità.

Per ognuna di queste aree sono indicati la finalità, gli obiettivi cognitivi, metacognitivi e socio-emotivo-relazionali che le singole proposte d'aula e di scuola perseguono.

L'idea di proporre un intervento di scuola è in linea con i più recenti sviluppi del Cooperative Learning, che vogliono promuovere autentica interdipendenza positiva nel plesso e nell'Istituto al fine di garantire la creazione di scuole comunità educanti.

Infine, si vogliono presentare, in concerto con il Prof. Albertini, i fondamenti neuroscientifici del Cooperative Learning, metodo che dal nostro punto di vista può e dovrebbe divenire filosofia di vita.

**Stefania LAMBERTI**

*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

**Giorgio ALBERTINI**

*IRCCS - San Raffaele Pisana, Italy*

### **Cooperative Learning per lo sviluppo dell'intelligenza emotiva e sociale: fondamenti neuroscientifici**

I repentini cambiamenti delle società attuali influenzano profondamente le relazioni di interdipendenza che talvolta si connotano in maniera negativa. Una delle sfide educative alle quali non è possibile sottrarsi è quella di imparare a stare con gli altri, ciò significa apprendere a gestire le relazioni come fonti di ricchezza. In tale ottica la presa di coscienza del ruolo e della gestione delle emozioni per lo sviluppo sano e integrale della personalità nonché il loro corretto impiego è quanto mai fondamentale nel settore educativo, ma anche in altri contesti, ad esempio quelli sanitario, aziendale e giuridico della vita professionale, ma soprattutto in quelli della vita personale.

L'incapacità di riconoscere e controllare le proprie emozioni può essere causa di fallimenti relazionali, pertanto le agenzie educative, la famiglia e la scuola in primis, hanno il compito irrinunciabile di insegnare ad essere e a stare con gli altri. Il "divenire noi" è una meta che lungo il percorso può trovare non poche difficoltà. Eppure, come afferma D. Goleman siamo "programmati per connetterci", ma perché il programma funzioni è necessario apprendere "le istruzioni". Pertanto, insegnare e apprendere la socializzazione è fondamentale per evitare la solitudine, uno dei rischi o mali della nostra società interconnessa, in cui le persone potenzialmente sono in rete, ma talvolta hanno difficoltà nelle relazioni faccia a faccia. Interazione sociale, quindi, verso l'autonomia per la sopravvivenza con qualità di vita.

Con il nostro workshop vorremo far sperimentare e condividere l'importanza di educarsi ed educare alla relazione, iniziando da semplici abilità sociali apprese mediante un insegnamento diretto. La scelta del Cooperative Learning ci sembra fondamentale proprio perché la metodologia si fonda sull'integrazione dello sviluppo di cognitivo, meta cognitivo e socio - emotivo - relazionale. Precipuamente vorremmo condividere le recenti riflessioni delle neuroscienze che evidenziano come le relazioni interpersonali plasmino la nostra mente e influiscano sul nostro corpo e sullo sviluppo dell'intelligenza intrapersonale. Più nello specifico, l'epigenetica ci sta aiutando a comprendere che tutti gli agenti ambientali possono indurre modificazioni all'espressione dei geni e quindi l'ambiente e in particolare l'educazione diventa, insieme alla genetica, uno dei fattori determinati lo sviluppo e la crescita di un bambino. Sono sempre più numerosi i contributi delle neuroscienze a sostegno di un'educazione centrata sul modello dell'intelligenza emotiva e sociale oltre che sul modello dell'intelligenza cosiddetta più razionale e per problem solving, nell'ambito della quale per prendere decisioni la mediazione fra i due aspetti dell'intelligenza è fondamentale.

**Belle LIANG**

*Boston College, USA*

### **Generationpulse.org: Social Media for Service Learning**

Technology has changed not only the way educators should teach, but also the objectives of teaching. This presentation will propose objectives for teaching in the 21st Century informed by observations about education and students in this "digital and global generation". Thus, this presentation fits with the conference theme of intercultural education. I will present a project called GenerationPulse.org and demonstrate how it can be used to address intercultural education by bridging academic course material, new media, students' natural interests in technology, and involvement in social justice outreach. GenerationPulse.org is an online community where youth from around the world explore issues and ways to promote social justice. Created by a student team under my direction at Boston College, GenerationPulse aims to leverage social networking to provide the dual functions of collaborative project-based learning and guided peer support. In the first function, the project challenges a fully wired generation of students to use social networking to pursue higher goals and to foster global awareness and activism. It also gives students and instructors meaningful ways to reach out from the academic to the global community. In the mode of providing guided peer support, GenerationPulse gives tools and venues for disadvantaged youth to find their voice and share their stories with youth in other parts of the world.

The recent Postcards for Peace project exemplifies the spirit of the site, with students from the U.S. submitting virtual postcards depicting "what peace means to you". Former child soldiers in Northern Uganda received these messages and responded with postcards of their own, as part of a recovery program.

The proposed presentation will explore the project's teaching goals, and how these were met by drawing

on social networking technologies, thinking critically about social networking and its place in education, with the hope of responding critically to technological and social trends and discerning the best in them.

**Ted LO**

*Psychiatrist, Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Canada*

**Kenneth FUNG**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**Psychotherapy Considered in a Cultural Competent Framework**

With globalization, increasing diversity is a fact of life in many societies, and in many spheres of activities in any society. To cope with this post-modern phenomenon, certain level of cultural competence is required in all endeavours. Psychotherapy when defined narrowly along the Western tradition is a culturally bound activity. However, if psychotherapy could be defined more broadly as an activity conducted through largely verbal communication with a healing function, it could be seen as a universal phenomenon. To consider this activity within a cultural competence framework will provide practitioners with the opportunity to examine its cultural underpinnings, and the means to adjust such activity to meet the needs of their diverse clients. The cultural competence framework we will present has been developed at the University of Toronto, and applied in the core curriculum of our psychiatric residents, our faculty development, the training of various health professionals, and the consultations to various agencies and institutions. Cultural identities are seen as a dynamic and multivariate concept, which includes the myriad of intersecting identities we all possess. It extends beyond the usual ethnocultural or racial premise of inter-cultural or multi-cultural therapy. When viewed in such light, all therapeutic encounters are cross-cultural, and similar principles apply, making cultural competence an essential component of clinical competence in a diverse society.

**Yuliya LOGASHENKO**

*Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Russia*

**Pavel TOROPOV**

*Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Russia*

**Ludmila POCHEBUT**

*Saint Peterburg State University, Russia*

**Ethnocultural peculiarities of youth's representations about the social-legal activity**

The question about democracy, person freedom, readiness of people to protect their own rights is important in Russia nowadays. We can see it by activation of protest movement in several Russian cities in spring and summer in 2012. The youth is the most active, progressive and sensitive part of the society and eager to change it. Meanwhile, when it is necessary to stand upon their rights, young people demonstrate the traditional forms of behavior which repeats the patterns of the older generation. However, in different ethnic cultures there are different ideas about human rights. Russia is a poly-cultural State. Also, now there is an active migratory process on the post-soviet area, which can effect to the social-legal activity of the people.

Investigating of the activity of a person by the protect and forming of rights, we have suggested, that a) youths' representations about such activity has ethnocultural differences and b) representations of young people by different ethnics about several aspects such activity are similar.

So, according the first part our research there are some distinctions between young people of different ethnocultural groups in the content and components of SLA.

According the obtaining data of this research and some recent researches (Toropov, Kuznecova, 2012), there are some distinctions in the representation of youth about social-legal activity, which appears as in attitude to SLA as in the main motives. We suppose the cause conceals in the ethnocultural peculiarities of each subsample.

Just the same, the representations of youth of whole sample about some aspects of SLA are similar. Perhaps it could be explained by a common history of development, before a breakup of the Soviet Union.

The results of our investigation could be interesting and useful to:

- teachers, who are directly relating with formation of the social-legal activity;
- psychologists, because results clear up the structure of social ideas and some mechanisms prosocial behaviour of youth;
- social pedagogues, giving them an instrument for activation of the main motives of social-legal youth activity to boost the quality of their life.

This paper is closely connected with the theme of the conference because it deals with several important questions - the educational area, ethnocultural differences and intercultural competence.

**Esther LUNA GONZÁLEZ**

*University of Barcelona, Spain*

**Ruth VILÀ BAÑOS**

*University of Barcelona, Spain*

**M.Àngels MARÍN**

**Olga GONZÁLEZ**

### **The integration of migrant youth in Catalonia: educational proposals**

We present some results of the research “diagnosis in depth on the integration of young people migrated to Catalonia” (ARAFI, Generalitat of Catalonia, 2012), in oral presentation. The purpose of this research project is to deepen the integration process of migrant youth in Catalonia, specifically of young people between 14 and 18 years old. Among the findings highlight that young people have a very closed and exclusive concept of citizenship as a status, and a low level of awareness of cultural diversity, although they have an attitude of appreciation and acceptance, favorable to intercultural coexistence. However, they have a vision of cultural diversity and immigration in terms of coexistence, without recognition. Immigration is seen as a vulnerable group, with a low economic and cultural development and it is also perceived as a problem, even as the cause of the current crisis difficulties. Young people also tend to relate to their cultural group, and respond passively in understanding on behavior problems and public affairs. Among the elements to feel citizen is especially important the language. The young people over 10 years living in Catalonia are those that tend to have a civic sense of belonging to the place of residence. In fact, the longer it takes the young foreigners living in their new homes, they lose important elements of cultural identification of the country of origin, but religion, popular celebrations, art and the tendency to form couples are identity stable aspects. It requires urgent educational intervention at various levels and for different agents. We emphasize the importance of receiving emotional and effectively enhance meeting spaces, work bias, mainstreaming intercultural education, promotion of the Catalan language learning and teacher training in intercultural competences. These results are interesting for teachers and academics in cultural studies. This contribution specially relates to intercultural education in the global world, theme of the conference. Migratory phenomena in recent decades either from inside or from European countries, have transformed societies in multicultural societies. The arrival of this large contingent of people from abroad involves a challenge and an opportunity for the Catalan context. Given the complex reality of immigration, integration is the only rational solution in accordance with the principles and values of the Western world. The results of the large study presented (with a sample of 3,830 young people) are about the integration of young foreigners offers a diagnosis of the reality of these young people and necessary educational actions.

**Sarah MAITER**

*School of Social Work, York University, Canada*

**Ramona ALAGGIA**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**Adrienne S. CHAN**

*University of the Fraser Valley, Canada*

### **Interpreter and language Issues in Intercultural Work**

Although considerable attention is being paid to cross-cultural and intercultural counselling approaches, providing counselling when language differences exist between client and counsellor continues to be problematic and complex in various counselling and social service settings. In this presentation we share findings from a study with child welfare workers in Canada who provide services to families who do not speak/have adequate fluency in the national language/s of the country. A focus group format was used to gather data so as to create opportunity for participants to reflect on what was being discussed and to add their experiences in similar settings. Findings show that some agencies have hired counselors who speak the languages spoken by clients so as to be able to provide services in those languages as much as possible. For example, Portugese speaking workers provide counselling to Portugese speaking clients and so forth. In other situations, translators are used during meetings with clients. We discuss both facilitators and barriers to services being provided and to the formation of a counsellor-client relationship as noted by our participants. Some challenges with using interpreters include: issues of confidentiality, engagement with client, quality of the interpretation, lack of training around the use of interpreters, increased workload, inadequate compensation and recognition, role confusion, and emotional drain. Interpreter benefits include: workload help, interpreter as a cultural conduit, increased ability to communicate with client and more reliable assessments. Specific issues were also noted by workers who used the same language as the client including: dialect and word usage differences in regions, empowerment of client, positives and challenges in the counsellor-client relationship, a lack of recognition of the challenges of the work, and increased workload.

This is a paper presentation that will be useful to policy makers and practitioners in the human services.

Counsellors, teachers, academics and other social services providers in both formal and informal settings will gain better insights into the complex issues of using interpreters and of providing services in a language other than the national language of a country. The presentation contributes to the conference themes of intercultural competencies and to considerations of cooperative learning.

**Vincenza MALATINO**

*Psichiatra-psicoterapeuta, AUSL 6 Palermo – Poliambulatorio di Lampedusa, Italy*

**La primavera araba a Lampedusa: riflessione su un fenomeno di immigrazione di massa**

Le massicce ondate migratorie abbattutesi sull'isola di Lampedusa hanno determinato un fenomeno di stress ambientale di proporzioni imponenti. La risposta degli abitanti dell'isola ha dato vita a comportamenti di vario tipo che verranno analizzati in questo lavoro. L'analisi di questo fenomeno tende a porre riflessioni sulla difficoltà a costruire relazioni di incontro quando l'altro viene percepito non solo come diverso ma diventa a tutti gli effetti un invasore.

L'insostenibilità di questo straordinario evento ha prodotto fenomeni di conflittualità tali da determinare nei lampedusiani tensioni aggressive e sentimenti ambivalenti nei confronti dei migranti. Dopo un iniziale atteggiamento di accoglienza e solidarietà, a causa dell'alto numero di stranieri presenti (circa 10.000 contro i 5.000 abitanti dell'isola), si sono configurate condizioni di degrado ambientale e sociale al limite della sopravvivenza che hanno dato vita a sentimenti di paura e minaccia per la sicurezza personale e economica, visto che principale risorsa di Lampedusa è il turismo.

Il lavoro ha come obiettivo quello di provare a immaginare un intervento di psicologia dell'emergenza in un tale contesto. Esso può rivolgeri essenzialmente a counselor, terapeuti e mediatori culturali che operano nei settori del trattamento e dell'assistenza all'immigrazione. Si sottolinea come la tematica del riconoscimento dell'altro in quanto persona debba comunque stare al centro di ogni intervento nell'acquisizione di competenze centrate sul sapere, saper fare e saper essere. A tal proposito utili riflessioni e dibattiti possono essere aperti all'interno di agenzie educative e di istituzioni.

**The arab spring in Lampedusa : reflection on a mass phenomenon of migration**

The massive migration waves that have stricken the island of Lampedusa have led to a phenomenon of environmental stress of impressive proportions. The response of the inhabitants of the island has given rise to a variety of behaviors that will be analyzed in this paper. The analysis of this phenomenon tends to underline a reflection on the difficulty to build encounter relationships when the other is perceived not only as different but actually becomes a real invader.

Such an unbearable and extraordinary event has caused phenomena of conflict on the inhabitants of the small island ,causing tensions and aggressive and ambivalent feelings towards migrants. Since the main source of Lampedusa is tourism, after an initial attitude of acceptance and solidarity, due to the high number of foreigners (about 10,000 immigrants versus 5,000 inhabitants of the island), the situation has now degenerated into a social and environmental degradation which has made survival almost impossible causing feelings of fear and threat to personal safety and economic security.

The aim of this work is to try and imagine an intervention of emergency psychology in such a context. It can be addressed essentially to counselors, therapists and mediators working in the areas of immigration treatment and care . The paper emphasizes that the issue of the recognition of the other as a person, however, should be the focus of any intervention in the acquisition of skills centered on the knowledge, know-how and how to be. Useful discussions and debates may therefore be opened within educational agencies and institutions.

**Giovanna MALUSÀ**

*Università degli Studi di Trento, Italy*

**Massimiliano TAROZZI**

*Università degli Studi di Trento, Italy*

**Elementi di efficacia del Cooperative Learning nell'educazione interculturale: uno studio di caso longitudinale nella scuola primaria**

Diversi studi mostrano l'importanza dell'interazione con l'altro come paradigma educativo e l'efficacia del Cooperative Learning nel promuovere lo sviluppo di competenze relazionali facilitanti l'apprendimento.

Nel presente contributo si pone un focus critico sul Cooperative Learning (Learning Together Technique) (Johnson & Johnson, 1994) in una classe terza multiculturale di una scuola primaria del Trentino, caratterizzata da numerosi progetti interdisciplinari di educazione interculturale e da modalità di apprendimento cooperativo condivise tra i docenti del team.

Lo studio presentato è generato dalla necessità di individuare e potenziare gli elementi di efficacia che favoriscono un clima facilitante l'apprendimento nel gruppo classe, ma ancor prima che permettono la

creazione di un gruppo interculturale basato su relazioni di fiducia.

L'indagine ha coinvolto 19 alunni/e, 8 docenti, 38 genitori e 3 esperti esterni, con una progressiva raccolta dati, conforme alle procedure del Codice Etico, comprendente 23 interviste focalizzate a testimoni privilegiati (registrate e trascritte verbatim), somministrazioni (4) di un questionario alunni, osservazioni, ricerca documentaria e fotografica, con una ricostruzione anche retrospettiva del caso fino alla situazione di partenza in classe prima.

Mentre lo studio di caso ha rappresentato il disegno teorico di ricerca, con la scelta di molteplici 'fonti di prova' (Yin, 2003) in un processo di triangolazione e di convergenza di significati, a livello analitico gli autori hanno utilizzato una strategia basata sulla Grounded Theory costruttivista (Charmaz, 2001).

I risultati ottenuti nelle tre aree tematiche (intercultura, collaborazione a scuola dei genitori, efficacia del Cooperative Learning) e presentati secondo le quattro categorie degli attori considerati nella ricerca (docenti, esperti esterni, genitori, alunni/e) evidenziano elementi comuni, che confermano l'acquisizione da parte degli studenti di competenze sociali utili alle relazioni interculturali e alla mediazione dei conflitti, ma solo se in presenza sinergica di alcune condizioni. Gli elementi di efficacia percepiti mostrano, infatti, come denominatore comune la condivisione, sperimentata a diversi livelli: sia come condivisione di obiettivi e pratiche educative all'interno di ogni categoria coinvolta nel processo, sia in modo trasversale tra tutti i partecipanti, nel rispetto dei differenti gradi di adesione al progetto.

La presentazione permetterà un possibile scambio interattivo con altri docenti di classi multiculturali, offrendo ulteriori spunti di lavoro e piste critiche di ricerca per promuovere, con interventi educativi efficaci, processi intenzionali di inclusione/interazione sociale.

### **Efficacy elements of Cooperative Learning in intercultural education: a longitudinal case study in the primary school**

Several studies show the importance of social interaction as a paradigm of education and the efficacy of Cooperative Learning in promoting the development of relational competences that facilitate the learning process.

In this contribution the authors critically focus on Cooperative Learning (Learning Together Technique) (Johnson & Johnson, 1994) in a third-grade multicultural class of a primary school in Trentino, characterized by numerous interdisciplinary projects on intercultural education and by cooperative learning techniques shared by the teachers in the team.

The present study was generated by the need to identify and enhance the efficacy elements which, first of all, help the establishment of an intercultural group based on trustworthy relationships and then can create a supporting environment for the class learning process.

The inquiry involved 19 pupils, 8 teachers, 38 parents and 3 external experts. The progressive data collection (in accordance with the Code of Ethics) includes 23 focused interviews to privileged witnesses (recorded and verbatim transcribed), administration (4) of pupils' questionnaires, observations, photographic and documentary research with a retrospective re-creation of the case that goes back to the initial situation of first grade.

The case study represented the research theoretical frame and involved the choice of multiple "sources of proof" (Yin, 2003) in a triangulation process as well as in a process of convergence of meanings. Analytically, the authors used a strategy based on the Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2001) in its constructivist approach.

The results obtained in the three main areas (intercultural education, parents' co-operation in school and Cooperative Learning efficacy) and presented in relation to the four groups of subjects involved in the research (teachers, external experts, parents, pupils) show common elements. These elements confirm the acquisition by the pupils of social competences which are useful in building intercultural relationships as well as in managing conflicts, provided the presence of specific synergistic factors. In fact, the efficacy elements emerged need a sharing situation to work, basically sharing of goals and educational practices both within and across the different groups of subjects involved in the project.

The presentation will possibly lead to an interactive exchange with other teachers of multicultural classes in order to offer new ideas to promote social interaction processes and starting points for further research.

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### **Qualità e equità in contesti multiculturali. Una Grounded Theory critica nel primo ciclo d'istruzione**

Tassi di insuccesso più alti dei loro coetanei emergono dalle statistiche internazionali ed italiane (OCSE, 2009; MIUR, 2011) negli alunni/e migranti in Italia, dati che dipingono di ombre le finalità stesse di una Scuola pubblica, che dovrebbe essere, in quanto tale, anche equa e democratica.

In questo articolo si presentano alcuni risultati di uno studio longitudinale, che ha seguito un gruppo classe multiculturale dalla prima della scuola primaria alla prima media in un Istituto Comprensivo del Trentino. La specificità metodologica del lavoro è data dalla postura di un ricercatore del team: un insegnante. L'indagine, generata dall'urgenza di individuare percorsi efficaci per promuovere un apprendimento di qualità per tutti, ha coinvolto 19 alunni/e, 36 genitori e 26 docenti, con una progressiva raccolta dati dal 2005 al 2011 (conforme alle procedure previste dal Codice Etico) comprendente interviste focalizzate registrate (62) a testimoni privilegiati, somministrazioni (10) di un questionario alunni, osservazioni e ricerca documentaria, con una trasformazione in testo ed una trascrizione verbatim di tutto il materiale (405 sources), codificato con il supporto di NVivo9.2.

Dopo una presentazione sulla metodologia adottata, definibile come una Grounded Theory critica nel suo approccio costruttivista (Charmaz, 2005) orientato alla Social Justice Education (Denzin, 2007), gli autori espliciteranno le 7 categorie costruite e le loro relazioni come fasi di un percorso efficace.

Ne emerge un modello, non generalizzabile se non teoreticamente, in cui le scelte etiche determinano le fasi successive e si pongono come precondizioni essenziali di un processo pedagogico efficace, basato sulla risorsa strategica di docenti competenti che, attraverso risorse adeguate e strategie attive, promuovono la costruzione di contesti di apprendimento in uno spazio scuola dove l'esperienza multiculturale si declina come valore aggiunto, facilitando competenze sociali direttamente correlate al successo formativo.

L'efficacia del processo esaminato, di cui si evidenziano le condizioni di trasferibilità ad altri contesti, si fonda, pur in una visione sistemica, su alcune condizioni interagenti, riferibili all'equità sociale come scelta etica, ai contesti socio-politici-economici coerenti con un progetto di coesione sociale e alle metodologie efficaci dei docenti.

La presentazione è rivolta a studiosi della Ricerca educativa e a docenti impegnati sul campo.

### **Quality and equity in multicultural contexts. A critical Grounded Theory in the first stages of education**

Higher school failure rates emerge from International and Italian statistics (OCSE, 2009; MIUR, 2011) related to immigrant students in Italy rather than to their Italian peers. These data cast a shadow on the purposes of state school itself, which - as such - should guarantee equity and democracy.

In this article the authors present some results of a longitudinal study that followed a multicultural class from first to sixth grade in a school in Trentino (from first class of primary school to first class of middle school in the Italian school system). The methodological specificity of the contribution is the posture of one of the researchers in the team, i.e. that of a teacher.

The inquiry, generated by the need to find effective paths to promote quality education for everybody, involved 19 pupils, 36 parents and 26 teachers, with a progressive data collection from 2005 to 2011 (in accordance with the Code of Ethics), including recorded focused interviews (62) to privileged witnesses, administration (10) of pupils' questionnaires, observations and documentary research, with a transformation into text and a verbatim transcription of all the material (405 sources), encoded with the support of NVivo9.2.

After a presentation of the chosen methodology, defined as a critical Grounded Theory in its constructivist approach (Charmaz, 2005) Social-Justice-Education-oriented (Denzin, 2007), the authors present the seven built categories and their relationships as steps of an effective process.

What emerges is a model, not generalisable if not theoretically, in which the ethical choices determine the following steps and are presented as a crucial prerequisite for an effective pedagogical process based on a strategic resource, i.e. competent teachers. In fact, through adequate resources and active strategies, teachers promote the construction of learning environments in the school space where the multicultural experience becomes an added value, facilitating social skills directly related to achievement in education.

The effectiveness of the tested process, whose conditions of transferability to other contexts are also highlighted, is based - though from a systemic perspective - on specific interacting conditions, relating to social equity as an ethical choice, to the socio-political-economic contexts coherent with a project of social cohesion and to effective methods of teaching.

The presentation is aimed at students of Educational Research and teachers working in the field.

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### **Listening to students from migrant background. Some notes from research**

Due to the magnitude and fast tendency of increasing of the immigrant population in Spain, in the last two decades, in educational research arena there has been a marked predominance of evidence on outcomes and academic attainment of students from a migrant background, but very little about the pro-

cesses, their lived experiences, their needs and expectations or their goals. Few research projects provided a close-up perspective on immigrant students as they interact in education systems, in order to get an insight into the educational experiences as understood and portrayed by the students themselves. (Mena Cabeza, 2009)

In the light of this situation, this paper reports findings from a study that focused on the immigrant students' perspectives on schooling by accessing and documenting contextualized experiential accounts of one particular student from a Chinese background and the way in which she interpreted and experienced her trajectory in the Spanish educative system. When studying a specific case, one must always use caution in generalizations. However, as Soojin & North (2011) asserted "all children deserve an accurate and fair exploration of their lives told by their own textured voices and experiences" (p.398) to uncover the multiplicity of experiences and make visible the difficulties as well as the outcomes.

Findings suggest that educational trajectory, keeping engaged with post-compulsory school and academic success is far from straightforward. Her narrative is a vivid portrait of the most important factors that facilitated and hindered a meaningful education. Special attention was played to school experience in terms of the relationship with teachers, with peers and pedagogical and curricular responses of the school system to her specific needs.

This work drew upon international research related to intercultural education and social justice that advocated and used students' voice and experiences as a foundation to defy discrimination, stereotypes and misconceptions in educating students from a migrant background (Griffiths & Troyna, 1995; Nieto, 2000; Phillion, 2008), to respect and legitimize students' own lives (Freire, 1972) and to improve school practices by listening to what students have to say about their own education (Sleeter & Grant, 2003; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004; Cook-Satter, 2006)

This study could be potentially relevant as it expands implications for current knowledge of schooling processes of students with a migrant background and informs scholars, teachers and educators on all levels as they can benefit from a deeper understanding of the strengths and needs these students bring into school.

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### **Contextual Factors that Influence the Career Decision-Making Process for Indo-Canadian Young Men entering the Sciences**

A discrepancy between the ever-increasing representation of ethnic minorities in the school system and their almost complete lack of representation in the career counselling literature is apparent (Betz, 2001). There have been very few studies pertaining to career choice among children of immigrants. The main objective of this study is to analyze the process by which Indo-Canadian young men choose a career in the sciences. This presentation will examine various factors that affect their academic and career paths, including their perception of supports and barriers in pursuing their academic and career choice. In addition, this presentation will also look at the role of self-efficacy in the formulation of career decisions and the outcome expectation that young Indo-Canadian men have in choosing a profession in the sciences. For many South Asian parents, the experience of raising their children in a society different from their own cultural base can pose challenges arising due to intergenerational conflicts. It is important to examine whether Indo-Canadian young men consider intergenerational conflict as a potential barrier to their career and educational decision-making process, and, if so, how they cope and arrive at decisions.

A descriptive qualitative analysis was conducted using the Social Cognitive Career Theory of Lent, Hackett, and Betz (1994) as a theoretical base to understand the process by which Sikh Indo-Canadian young men made career decisions to enter the sciences. Across the sample of participants, personal factors, such as interests and various forms of learning experiences, were cited as significant in forming career choices. Contextual factors, such as family, norms held by the ethnic community, and requirements of academic institutions, were cited as potential impediments to career choice implementation but were seen as manageable by the participants. Self-efficacy played an important role in moderating the participants' view of contextual factors and their ability to create various coping strategies to maintain their career choice. The educational decisions of these young men were influenced by factors such as parental influence, cultural expectations, and considering marriage and family plans, which will be further explored in the presentation. Implications for counsellors will also be considered.

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### **Storia globale e storia dell'altro. Come decostruire la presunzione di superiorità morale**

L'educazione interculturale si propone di promuovere un "nuovo noi" che superi la contrapposizione "noi" - "loro". Uno dei maggiori ostacoli è costituito dalla presunzione di superiorità morale del "nostro" mondo.



Un tentativo di metterla in discussione passa per una ricerca e didattica della storia in cui le storie "altre" siano valorizzate. Le narrazioni di questo tipo sono scomode perché comportano una critica della "colonialità" di cui è imbevuta la nostra "modernità" (Todorov, 1996; Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2011).

Questa prospettiva poggia su una concezione narrativa dell'educazione e della cultura (Mantovani, 2004, 2005, 2012a) vista come "un insieme di narrazioni condivise, contestate e negoziate" (Benhabib, 2002, p. 5). La costruzione di una nuova cittadinanza, inclusiva e partecipativa, passa attraverso il riconoscimento di "storie dell'altro" che permettano la conoscenza ed il rispetto dell'altro.

Un libro di storia attento a questa dimensione (Mantovani, 2012 b) è attualmente sperimentato in alcune scuole superiori come strumento di educazione interculturale nella prospettiva TOE, Through Other Eyes (primi risultati nella relazione che segue). Esso è ambientato nel cinquecento, momento determinante in cui "noi" siamo diventati ciò che siamo ed abbiamo incontrato "l'altro" nei "nuovi" mondi oltremare, dal Messico di Montezuma all'India in cui il gran mogul Akbar proclama la tolleranza religiosa negli stessi anni in cui in Europa infuriavano le guerre di religione. L' "altro" sono i "selvaggi", gli eretici, gli ebrei, i dissidenti che rifiutano di piegarsi all'autorità costituita.

### **Global history and history of "the other". Deconstructing the presumption of moral superiority**

The aim of intercultural education is the construction of a "new us" to replace the opposition between "us" and "they". One obstacle is the presumption that "our" cultural world is morally superior to "others" worlds. Production of a global history centered on "others" points of view might help to reduce this presumption. This kind of history implies an auto-critical effort (Todorov, 1996) to expose the "colonial" perspective which imbues "our" modernity (Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2011). The way towards an inclusive and participative citizenship may profit from introduction of global history providing students with knowledge on "others" traditions.

This perspective is based on a narrative conception of both education and culture (Mantovani, 2004, 2005, 2012a) as "a set of narrations shared, contested and negotiated" (Benhabib, 2002, p. 5). A book on "others" history has been prepared (Mantovani, 2012 b) and is presently used in secondary Italian schools in the framework of Tuning and TOE (Through Other Eyes) projects (first results in the presentation by Alessio Surian and al.). The book is about the fifteenth century, a period in which "we" met "the other" in the "new" worlds abroad, from the Mexico of Montezuma to the India of the great mogul Akbar who granted freedom of faith in his domains in the same years in which Christian countries were torn apart by religious wars. The "others" were "sauvages", heretics, jews, and all sorts of nonconformists who refused obedience to the established authorities.

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### **"La figura dell'adulto facilitatore nell'approccio della Philosophy for Children: un medium dell'educazione democratica, riflessiva e valoriale"**

Obiettivo di questo contributo, rivolto ad insegnanti e pedagogisti, è quello di presentare la competenza argomentativa, metacognitiva e caring della figura del facilitatore nella Philosophy for Children (P4C), alla luce della prospettiva pedagogica interculturale. La P4C è un curriculum rivolto all'infanzia ed incentrato sulla possibilità di trasformare la classe, o qualsivoglia contesto educativo, in una comunità di ricerca (CdR), cioè in una comunità di individui impegnati ad esercitare una democrazia del pensiero, attraverso un'attività autoregolata dal metodo dialogico-argomentativo, che genera un processo di negoziazione di significati per giungere alla condivisione di credenze ragionevoli.

Per il fondatore Matthew Lipman, questa pratica filosofica favorisce lo sviluppo delle facoltà proprie dei cittadini di una democrazia. Come gli abitanti di una società democratica dovrebbero impegnarsi nella ricerca razionale di soluzioni condivise che riguardano problemi della comunità, così la classe si trasforma in una CdR capace di confrontarsi responsabilmente.

Il paradigma critico-riflessivo della P4C intende l'educazione come partecipazione degli allievi, ed il facilitatore (che qui analizzeremo nell'approccio lipmaniano, anche alla luce di alcuni recenti contributi) ha il compito di "condurre" il gruppo nel percorso di ricerca filosofica; egli può avvalersi di differenti strategie per limitare incomprensioni semantiche e misconception, per sollecitare le ragioni che hanno condotto alle conclusioni espresse dai bambini, promuovendo quell'apertura a nuovi orizzonti di ricerca che garantisce la validità della procedura dialogica e l'educazione democratica al confronto con visioni del mondo alternative alla propria.

Questa è per i bambini un'esperienza quotidiana: i flussi migratori dell'ultimo quarto di secolo hanno portato la scuola (e le istituzioni governative) a fronteggiare il pluralismo culturale, linguistico, religioso dell'attuale società civile.

Come emerge dalle "Indicazioni nazionali" (2012), il percorso formativo degli studenti dovrà necessariamente confrontarsi con la pluralità delle culture: la pedagogia interculturale si è assunta il compito di rendere gli individui consapevoli della molteplicità delle identità possibili, aprendo alla differenza, intesa come ricchezza e bene comune. E rinviando al contempo a quanto abbiamo tutti in "comune", ovvero

all'universalità dell'uomo. Le culture dei singoli, nella scuola, possono diventare terreno d'incontro, dialogo e arricchimento tra i diversi modelli culturali.

Ci pare che in quest'ottica la pratica della facilitazione possa rappresentare un importantissimo strumento per l'educazione interculturale, efficace nel rendere gli allievi consapevoli delle istanze etiche, politiche, estetiche sottese alle loro concezioni del mondo, e dunque nell'avviare un processo di apertura democratica verso ciò che appare loro diverso, ma che potrebbe essere più vicino di quanto credano.

### **“The Role of a Facilitator in the Philosophy for Children Approach: a Medium for the Democratic, Reflective and Valuable Education”**

The purpose of this paper, addressed to teachers and educators, is presenting the argumentative, meta-cognitive and caring competence of the facilitator in Philosophy for Children (P4C), from the perspective of intercultural education.

P4C is a project addressed childhood and focused on the possibility of transforming class, or any educational context, in a Community of Inquiry (COI), that is a community of individuals committed to a democratic exercise of thought, through an activity self-regulated by the dialogical method, which generates a process of meaning negotiation to arrive sharing reasonable beliefs.

For the founder Matthew Lipman, this philosophical practice promotes the development of those faculties that should be its citizens of a democracy. As citizens of a democratic society should strive to seek rational solutions to shared problems that affect the community, so the class becomes a Community capable to compare responsibly.

The critical-reflective paradigm of P4C aims education as students participation in the COI and the facilitator (we'll analyze Lipman's approach, enriched with some recent contributions) has the task of "leading" the group in the path of philosophical inquiry. He can use different strategies to limit semantic misunderstandings and misconception, to solicit reasons that led to the conclusions expressed by children, to promote openness to new research horizons which guarantees the procedure dialogic validity and a democratic education, in comparison with alternative visions of the world to their own.

This is a daily experience for children: the migration of the last quarter century have taken the school (and governmental institutions) to involve with cultural, linguistic, religious pluralism of the civil society.

As is clear on the "Italian National Guidelines for the first cycle of education" (2012), the training of the students must necessarily deal with cultures plurality: intercultural pedagogy has taken charge of individual awareness about the multiplicity of possible identities, the openness to difference, as wealth and common good. But at the same time it refers to what we all have in "common", the universality of men. At school, individual cultures can become a meeting and dialogue environment, and a medium of enrichment between different cultural models.

It seems that in this context the practice of facilitation represents a very important tool for intercultural education, efficient to make students aware of ethical, political, aesthetic instances underlying their conceptions of world; and incisive therefore to incline a process of democratic openness towards what appears to them differently, but that might be closer than they think.

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### **Il monitoraggio delle attività psicosociali nei Centri di Accoglienza per migranti: la necessità' di una efficace supervisione**

Il presente lavoro è rivolto agli psicologi e a tutti gli operatori coinvolti nelle relazioni di aiuto nei contesti della migrazione ed ha lo scopo di mettere in luce l'importanza e la necessità di supervisione di chi opera in tale campo.

La Croce Rossa Italiana, tramite il Progetto Praesidium, svolge il monitoraggio delle attività socio-sanitarie nei centri dedicati all'accoglienza e all'assistenza dei migranti e durante gli sbarchi al fine di supportare e rafforzare la capacità di gestione di tali attività. I centri monitorati in questo lavoro sono i Centri di Primo Soccorso e Accoglienza, i Centri di Accoglienza, i Centri di Accoglienza Richiedenti Asilo ed i Centri di Identificazione ed Espulsione delle regioni Sicilia, Puglia e Calabria.

Nei centri monitorati i field officers operanti nel Progetto hanno effettuato, durante tutto il 2012, una raccolta dati utilizzando delle procedure standardizzate tra le quali una scheda di monitoraggio delle attività psicosociali composta da una raccolta di item oggettivi di cui è possibile effettuare una verifica nel tempo.

Dall'elaborazione dei dati delle schede relative al primo semestre 2012 è emerso, come dato principale, che non vengono svolte, nei centri monitorati, attività regolari di formazione e di aggiornamento degli operatori, né una supervisione periodica delle loro attività.

Tale dato è stato confermato anche nella fase di controllo dei risultati, la verifica è stata fatta tramite l'analisi delle schede di monitoraggio psicosociale compilate nel secondo semestre del 2012. I dati del

secondo semestre hanno messo inoltre in luce le difficoltà operative nell'organizzazione delle attività psicosociali proposte dai centri e la faticosa relazione coi servizi territoriali di assistenza sanitaria. Si evidenzia la necessità di supervisione degli psicologi che operano nei contesti di accoglienza per migranti e la necessità di investire nella tutela della salute psicologica degli operatori, prevedendo una formazione continua e supervisione periodica del lavoro svolto. Ciò, in un'ottica biopsicosociale, oltre a promuovere la salute del personale coinvolto in contesti migratori, può determinare un diretto miglioramento dei servizi psicologici e sociali proposti nei centri: una corretta valutazione della vulnerabilità e presa in carico dei migranti, il supporto psicologico e sociale a donne e famiglie con bambini, l'organizzazione degli spazi disponibili nel centro, lo svolgimento di attività di integrazione e socializzazione.

### **Monitoring of psycho-social activities in governmental reception centers hosting migrants: the need for effective supervision**

The present work is directed to psychologists and all the operators involved in helping relationships in different migration contexts and aims at emphasizing the importance of and the need for supervision of the personnel employed in such field.

In the framework of the Project Praesidium, the Italian Red Cross carries on monitoring of health and social activities both in the centres for the reception and assistance of migrants and on landings on the Italian shores. Such work aims at supporting and strengthening the management of these activities. The centers monitored by the Italian Red Cross include the Centers for temporary stay and assistance, the reception Centers, the Centers for asylum seekers and the identification and deportation Centers in the regions of Sicily, Apulia and Calabria.

In 2012, the field officers working for the Project have carried out data collection in the monitored centers using standardized procedures, among others, a monitoring record of psycho-social activities composed of a set of objective items which can be verified in the course of the time.

The elaboration of the data concerning the first semester of 2012 reveals, as main outcome, that neither regular training and refreshment courses for the operators nor periodic supervision of their activity are carried out. Such data have been confirmed also in the phase of data control. The check has been made through the analysis of psycho-social monitoring records filled in during the second semester of 2012. The data referring to the second semester emphasized the operational difficulties in the organization of psycho-social activities proposed by the centers as well as the hard relation with the territorial services devoted to health assistance.

It is highlighted the need for supervision of psychologists working in the context of migrants' reception and the need to invest in the safeguard of operators' psychological health, envisaging continuous training and a periodic supervision of the work carried out. This, according to a bio-psycho-social perspective, besides promoting the health of the operators involved in the contexts of migration, can contribute to the direct improvement of social and psychological services proposed in the centers. This includes: a correct assesment of the vulnerabilities, the assistance of migrants, the psychological and social support to women and families with children, the organization of available spaces in the center, the realization of activities of integration and socialization.

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### **Ascolto empatico e competenze interculturali: la formazione umanistica nella relazione d'aiuto col migrante.**

Il presente lavoro è rivolto all'attenzione degli psicologi, dei formatori e di tutti gli operatori coinvolti nelle relazioni di aiuto nei contesti della migrazione ed ha lo scopo di mettere in luce l'importanza e la necessità di una formazione relativa all'ascolto empatico integrata con competenze interculturali. I riferimenti teorici sono quelli della Psicologia Umanistica di Carl R. Rogers e dell'approccio Biopsicosociale. La Croce Rossa Italiana svolge, tramite il Progetto Praesidium, il monitoraggio delle attività socio-sanitarie nei centri dedicati all'accoglienza e all'assistenza dei migranti e durante gli sbarchi al fine di supportare e rafforzare le capacità di gestione di tali attività. Gli operatori coinvolti (mediatori culturali e field officers) svolgono un'attività di continua relazione col migrante e con il personale dei centri citati nei territori di Sicilia, Puglia e Calabria. Analizzati i bisogni formativi dei team presenti sui territori del progetto, lo psicologo coordinatore delle attività psicosociali ha promosso l'apprendimento del metodo di ascolto empatico come buona pratica nella comunicazione col migrante, formazione estensibile a tutte le figure coinvolte nella relazione d'aiuto in questo contesto. La formazione promossa ha previsto l'apprendimento interattivo tramite un corso di tipo teorico-esperienziale previa somministrazione di un pre-test relativo alle conoscenze sul tema in oggetto. Le tematiche affrontate nella formazione sono state: conoscenze di

psicologia della migrazione, competenze interculturali nella comunicazione col migrante, promozione della salute del migrante ed ascolto empatico. Alla luce di quanto appreso durante la formazione e di quanto sperimentato sul campo è stata condotta, la verifica dei risultati, che ha compreso la somministrazione di un post-test ed una discussione finale. La formazione ha visto particolarmente attivi i mediatori culturali in un processo di co-costruzione e di implementazione della capacità comunicative col migrante. E' stato quindi promosso un approfondimento di tali temi in successivi incontri ed è stata stimolata la discussione e l'apprendimento attivo di abilità di comunicazione efficace in un'ottica biopsico-sociale ed etnopsichiatrica. Il lavoro ha sottolineato la validità dell'apprendimento delle capacità di ascolto e di tematiche di etnopsichiatria, ha stimolato inoltre la riflessione sulle caratteristiche della relazione d'aiuto che vanno integrate con le competenze interculturali nel lavoro in contesti di accoglienza dei migranti.

### **Empathic listening and intercultural competence: humanistic training in the helping relationship with migrants**

This paper is directed to psychologists, trainers and all the operators involved in the helping relationship in different migration contexts. It aims at emphasizing the importance of and the need for specific training on empathic listening combined with intercultural competence. Theoretical reference is made to Humanistic Psychology of Carl R. Rogers and to Biopsychosocial model.

In the framework of the Project *Praesidium*, the Italian Red Cross carries on monitoring of health and social activities both in the centres for the reception and assistance of migrants and on landings on the Italian shores. This work aims at supporting and strengthening the management of these activities. The operators involved (cultural mediators and field officers) carry on a continuous relation with migrants and with the personnel of the above-mentioned centres in the regions of Sicily, Apulia and Calabria. Following the analysis of the training needs of the teams working in these regions, the psychologist in charge of the coordination of psycho-social activities has promoted the learning of the emphatic listening method as good practise in the communication with migrants. Such training can be extended to all the stakeholders involved in the helping relationship in this context. The training, which was preceded by the distribution of a pre-test aimed at evaluating the knowledge on the themes dealt with in the course, promoted interactive learning through a theoretical and experience-based course. The topics of the training included: knowledge of psychology of migration, intercultural competence in the communication with migrant, promotion of migrants' health and empathic listening. Based on the contents learnt during the training and what was experienced in the field, an evaluation of results was conducted. This included the distribution of a post-test as well as a final discussion. The training was characterized by the active participation of cultural mediators in a process of collective building of communication competences with migrants. Hence, it was promoted the in-depth analysis of such themes in subsequent meetings and it was promoted the discussion and the active learning of effective communication according to a biopsychosocial and ethno-psychiatric perspective. The evaluation revealed the effectiveness of both listening abilities learning and the issues related to ethno-psychiatry. It further stimulated the reflection on the features of helping relationship which need to be integrated with intercultural competence in the activity of migrants' reception and assistance.

**Domenica MAVIGLIA**

*Università degli Studi di Messina, Italy*

### **Il valore del dialogo in Paulo Freire come fondamento dell'educazione interculturale**

L'analisi del pensiero pedagogico dell'educatore brasiliano Paulo Freire (Recife, 1921 – San Paolo, 1997) nasce non solo dall'oggettiva importanza che questa grande personalità pedagogica ha avuto nella seconda metà del Novecento, ma anche e soprattutto dall'influenza che tutt'oggi essa possiede.

Nella società complessa e multiculturale dei nostri giorni la concezione pedagogica del pensatore sudamericano rappresenta, infatti, un autorevole esempio di fusione tra teoresi pedagogica e pratica educativa interculturale meritevole di occupare un "posto" strutturale nell'educazione del nostro tempo proprio perché capace di rispondere alle sfide e alle necessità fondamentali dell'educazione contemporanea. Infatti, leggere riflessivamente e con spirito critico le sue opere principali, tra cui *La pedagogia degli oppressi* (1967), induce, inevitabilmente, a comprendere e capire il senso, il valore e il significato che essa racchiude ancora oggi, nonostante siano trascorsi quasi cinquant'anni dalla sua prima edizione. L'opera svela, infatti, un rispetto sempre vivo per la persona, insistendo molto sui modi e sulle forme, sull'importanza e sulla pratica del dialogo e della parola come elementi fondanti ed essenziali per riscoprire, rispettare e riconoscere come persona e come risorsa il vero volto dell'Altro.

L'educatore sudamericano, come nel Brasile degli anni Sessanta del Novecento, avviò il processo di scolarizzazione insegnando "a leggere la parola leggendo il mondo", l'intento della proposta di riflessione e di analisi critica della sua concezione di educazione problematizzante è quello di "leggere il mondo complesso e multiculturale della nostra società attraverso la parola e il dialogo", pervenendo così a rinunciare a pensare secondo categorie di gerarchizzazione e di discriminazione e favorendo, invece, un

incontro autentico con le diversità.

Ecco, dunque, che l'analisi critica dei concetti che fondano il pensiero pedagogico dell'autore diviene fondamentale per comprendere il senso di questa proposta pedagogica. I concetti quali l'umanizzazione, il dialogo, la parola, l'educazione problematizzante, l'educatore racchiudono e svelano un'importanza pedagogica e un valore educativo molto forte tanto da recuperare, riscoprire e valorizzare i valori più autentici dell'esistenza che attraversano la dimensione interpersonale e quella comunitaria. Concetti, questi, che dal punto di vista pedagogico-educativo ed etico-sociale possiedono, senza alcuna ombra di dubbio, uno statuto assio-teleologico e maieutico-poietico molto rilevante che, però, rischia di rimanere e limitarsi a "buona teoria", diventando così inefficace, se "l'audacia" e l'impegno del "vero educatore" non sfida e non lotta il peso paralizzante delle dinamiche di etno-monoculturalismo che attraversano l'esperienza educativa, trasformandola in praxis.

### **The value of dialogue in Paulo Freire as a basis of intercultural education**

The analysis of educational thought of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (Recife, 1921 – San Paolo, 1997) is triggered off not only by the objective importance that this great pedagogic personality had had in the second half of the 20th century, but also and above all by the influence he possesses yet today.

In the complex and multicultural society of our days, the pedagogic conception of the south American thinker represents indeed an authoritative example of fusion between pedagogic theory and intercultural educational practice which merits occupying a structural "place" in our days' education exactly because it is capable of responding to the challenges and fundamental necessities of contemporaneous education. Indeed, reading reflexively and with a critical spirit his principal works, among which *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1967), inevitably induces to understand and appreciate the sense, the value and the significance that it encloses yet today, even if nearly fifty years have passed since its first publication. Indeed, the work reveals an always present respect for a person, insisting strongly on the means and forms, on the importance and on the practice of the dialogue and of the word as founding and essential elements in rediscovering, in respecting and in recognizing as a person and as a resource the true face of the Other. The south American educator, like in Brazil in the 60s of the 20th century, started the process of education by teaching to "read the word by reading the world", the intention of the invitation to reflection and to critical analysis of his conception of targeted education being the "reading of the complex and multicultural world of our society through the world and the dialogue", succeeding thus at refusing to think according to categories of hierarchy and of discrimination and favoring, on the contrary, an authentic encounter with the diversity. So it is here that the critical analysis of the concepts that found the pedagogic thought of the author becomes fundamental to the understanding of the meaning of this pedagogical proposal. Such concepts as humanization, dialogue, word, targeted education, educator, include and reveal the pedagogical importance and the educational value strong enough to retrieve, rediscover and valorize the most authentic values of the existence that cross the interpersonal and social dimensions. These are the concepts that, from the pedagogico-educational and ethico-social points of view, possess without a shadow of doubt a highly relevant assio-teleological and maieutico-poietic statute that, however, risks remaining and limiting itself to a "good theory", becoming thus ineffective, if the "audacity" and engagement of the "true educator" do not challenge and fight the paralyzing weight of the dynamics of ethno-monoculturalism that encounters educational experience, transforming it in praxis.

**Kenneth D. MCNEILLY**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **School Experiences of Canadian Adolescents with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Parents**

Although parenting by lesbian, gay, and bisexual-identified (LGB) individuals has attracted increasing research attention over the past few decades, relatively little focus has been given to the personal identity development of adolescents raised in such families. There is scant qualitative data that describes the phenomenon from the viewpoint of Canadian adolescents. This paper presents the findings of an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of Canadian adolescents with LGB-identified parents. Nine Ontario youths (mean age 17.5) were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. Twelve themes emerged which were organized under three overarching domains: family themes, queer identity themes, and school themes. This paper highlights some of the participants' responses related to school themes. Participants shared stories to indicate that they, like their LGB-identified parents, deal with issues related to "coming out." They also spoke of their desire for schools to make greater efforts to expose all students to narratives other than the heterosexual family narrative. Finally, they recounted their own personal experiences to highlight some of the best (and worst) practices they have observed in schools with respect to the treatment of LGB-led families. This paper presents examples of their responses and offers recommendations to educators and counsellors. Additionally, it considers how adolescents create their own identity by orienting their own experiences against the experiences of others and against master narratives such as the master narrative of heteronormativity.

**Ezio MENONI**

*Istituto di Psicoterapia Integrata, Associazione Italiana per l'Integrazione in Psicoterapia, Italy*

**Processi che “sostengono la vita” in ospedale  
Un’esperienza di counselling interculturale secondo il modello integrativo EAIE**

Il modello terapeutico a cui il nostro gruppo clinico si riferisce da alcuni anni (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011), afferisce all’area dell’integrazione teorica in psicoterapia. La sua base epistemologica è il principio della consilienza (incontro-traduzione-dialogo) fra conoscenze provenienti da differenti campi di studio dei “processi di vita” (sviluppo-riparazione-adattamento). I processi di Evolutività, Affettività, Intersoggettività e Esperienzialità sono interconnessi a formare un sistema adattivo complesso che ha caratteri di omologia e universalità “annidati” nei sistemi di significato socio-culturali. Vengono presentate le storie di due giovani donne di origine balcanica degenti in ospedale per patologie oncologiche diverse. L’analisi delle loro storie, pur differenti per natura e contesti, evidenzia fattori proattivi e critici comuni presenti nell’esperienza personale e interpersonale delle ragazze e del personale socio-sanitario. Sono necessarie “zone di conforto” e processi di previsione proattiva e prosociale per controllare i processi di distress con forti percezioni di pericolo, di perdita e di dolore. Ciò è possibile con una rete relazionale empatica “abbastanza buona” con scambi di narrazioni, significati e simboli sulla base dei sistemi affettivi di care e di default, di cui la persona è protagonista. I processi ad alto rischio di sofferenza (percezione di solitudine, di impotenza, di non avere via d’uscita) con memorie di traumi complessi e quelli di riparazione (sentirsi visti, capiti, voluti, validati) hanno caratteri universali. Essi sono basati su valori affettivi vitali e sulla costruzione delle condizioni che consentono l’attivazione delle risorse della persona-paziente, protagonista della vita, della storia e della assistenza personalizzata. I valori delle relazioni familiari (genitori, compagni, figli, maternità) e le memorie della vita e dei luoghi di origini sono fondamentali. Una terapeuticità fondata su tali conoscenze promuove l’integrazione nella persona, caratteristica essenziale dei processi di vita, attraverso le connessioni tra memorie, percezioni affettive e motivazioni al futuro che “tengono insieme” i sistemi del Sè. Queste ragazze insegnano che la creazione di un ambiente affettivo “sicuro”, attraverso processi di validazione relazionale, rispetto e sostegno dei sistemi motivazionali è la base di una “buona prassi clinica” basata sull’affettività, sull’esperienzialità proattiva e su valori umanistici. Dall’esperienza derivano alcune evidenze per la formazione del personale socio-sanitario che lavora con persone in condizioni di rischio di vita provenienti da contesti socio-culturali diversi.

**Life supporting processes in hospital  
An experience of intercultural counselling according to integrative model EAIE**

In recent years our clinical group refers to an integrative model EAIE (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011) which belongs to the area of theoretical integration in psychotherapy. Its epistemological basis is consilient (meeting-translation-discussion) among different science domains about life processes (development-repair-adjustment). The processes of Evolution, Affect, Intersubjectivity and Experience are interconnected to build up a complex adaptive system with features of homology and universality “nested” within of socio-cultural meaning networks. Two clinical stories of two Balkan in-patient girls with different oncological pathologies are presented. Their stories, even if different in nature and context, highlight both proactive and critical factors in the personal and interpersonal experience of both girls and health personnel. “Zones of comfort” are needed along with proactive and prosocial personal forecasts to control distress processes with strong feelings of danger, loss and pain. This is possible by means of “good enough” relational emphatic networks with exchanges of narratives, meanings and symbols based on care and default affective systems. Both high risk distress processes (loneliness, helplessness, no way out) with complex traumatic memories and repair processes (to feel understood, accepted and validated) have universal features. They are based on affective vital values and on construction of conditions which foster development of resources of person-patient who is the protagonist of the life, of the clinical story and of the counselling. Therapeutics founded on these knowledge promote personal integration, a core feature of life processes, through connections among memories, affective perceptions and motivations which “hold together” Self systems. The values of family relationships (parents, partners, sons, maternity) and affective memories of life in the places of origin are basic. These girls with their stories teach us that the perception of “safe” environment, validation and support of motivations are fundamental in a “good clinical practice” based on affective experience and humanistic values. From this caring experience it is possible to draw some evidence for training of health personnel who works with people in danger of life from different socio-cultural origins.

**Giuseppina MESSETTI**

*Università degli Studi di Verona, Italy*

**Bambini e famiglie di altre culture: rappresentazioni e pratiche educative nei servizi dell’infanzia**

La comunicazione presenta i risultati di una ricerca qualitativa avente lo scopo di esplorare le rappresen-

tazioni e indagare le pratiche educative di insegnanti di Nido e Scuola d'infanzia in merito alla presenza di bambini (e famiglie) di altre culture nel proprio gruppo classe.

La ricerca si colloca al confine tra la riflessione pedagogica sull'infanzia e i servizi ad essa dedicati (Musatti, 1992; Pontecorvo, 1992; Mantovani, 2003), gli studi di educazione interculturale (Nigris, 1996; Demetrio, Favaro 1997; Cambi, 2001; Portera, 2003; Bove, Mantovani, 2006; Favaro, Mantovani, Musatti, 2006; Mantovani, 2007); e il più recente filone di indagine sull'analisi delle pratiche educative e didattiche (Altet, 2003, 2006; Laneve, 2005; Damiano, 2006; Mortari, 2010; Day, Laneve, 2011).

I risultati della ricerca evidenziano una realtà articolata e complessa, individuano nei partecipanti istanze formative di tipo interculturale e, dal punto di vista metodologico, mette in luce la rilevanza di un approccio di indagine misto (Mixed Methods). Nella prospettiva dello sviluppo delle competenze interculturali, dalla ricerca emerge quanto sia fondamentale promuovere negli insegnanti la consapevolezza delle proprie rappresentazioni, precomprensioni, credenze, vissuti soggettivi, in una parola delle dimensioni "implicita" dell'azione educativa, che tacitamente permeano e improntano le pratiche didattiche e gli stili relazionali.

### **Children and Families from Elsewhere: Representations and Educational Practices in the Child-care**

In this presentation I report on a qualitative research whose goals were to investigate: (a) pre-school and nursery school teachers' representations of the presence of children and families from other cultures in their class groups; (b) the educational practices that these teachers employ to foster learning of the Italian language and to nurture the culture and native language of the pupils.

The research involved 115 teachers in an Italian region (Veneto) with a high percentage of foreign residents (one of the highest in the country). The teachers were participating in the training project "Reading to grow – Interculture" funded by GlaxoSmithKline in collaboration with the Veneto Regional Observatory on "New Generations and Families".

The research is situated at the boundary between educational reflection on childhood and childhood services (Musatti, 1992; Pontecorvo, 1992; Mantovani, 2003), studies of intercultural education (Nigris, 1996; Demetrio, Favaro 1997; Cambi, 2001; Portera, 2003; Bove, Mantovani, 2006; Favaro, Mantovani, Musatti, 2006; Mantovani, 2007) and the more recent strand of inquiry analysing educational and instructional practices (Altet, 2003, 2006; Laneve, 2005; Damiano, 2006; Mortari, 2010; Day, Laneve, 2011). The results reveal an articulated and complex reality, identify intercultural training needs in the participants and, on the methodological level, highlight the relevance of a mixed methods approach.

From the point of view of the development of intercultural competencies, the results suggest that it is essential to foster teachers' awareness of their own representations, pre-understandings, beliefs and subjective experiences; in one word, of all those "implicit" aspects of educational action that tacitly permeate and shape instructional practices and relational styles.

#### **François MIFSUD**

*OISE, University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Exclusive Inclusion: Exposing the Deficit of Inclusivity and Evaluating Hospitality for the Inter.**

The concept of inclusion has become the central notion that links education with the inter and multi discourse. In this presentation my first objective is to problematize the notion of inclusivity by associating inclusivity with exclusivity. Though inclusivity and exclusivity appear as opposing notions, I will be claiming that both notions subsist on the self (which can also be interpreted as us) as the sole agent and arbiter for the other. Within an inclusive ideal it is the self the agent that determines the other's expression of his/her diversity. Thus this exclusive agency of the self within inclusivity obstructs the encounter between diversities and limits the possibility of dialogue. My second objective is to propose hospitality as the effective dialogical space for an inter relationality. The conception of hospitality that I will be using is based on Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida philosophical reflections. Both Derrida and Levinas reflect upon biblical, classical and traditional representations of hospitality. They firmly state that hospitality offers an authentic experience of inter; which experience will lead to radical ethical and political actions for the other. My conclusive argument is to show that hospitality's potential of engaging the self and the other into a dialogical relationality is based on recognition of agency in the other. The instance in hospitality the other expresses her/his agency, the self's agency becomes open for the newness of the other. Hospitality in this context is defined as a dialogical space where the self's and the other's agencies alternate. It is through this alternation of agencies that the inter can be converted into a teaching and learning experience.

#### **Barbora MIHÁLIKOVÁ**

*National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements, Slovak Republic*

**Eva KATRENIÁKOVÁ**

### **Empirical Mirror of Inclusive Education in the Slovak Republic in the International Context of IEA PIRLS Study**

The aim of this article is to survey the current situation of schools in Slovakia on the basis of available international data from IEA study PIRLS. Papers deal with main findings in connection with ethnic minority in Slovakia, in the context of PIRLS international study. We compare data from IEA study PIRLS and bring some conclusions with respect to European countries (Romania and Bulgaria) which also recorded the proportion of Roma students in their primary schools. We take a brief look into the smaller school unit – classes, their characteristics, and the proportion of Roma pupils in 2006 and 2011, teaching practices and the perspective of parent's attitude to the education at all. In our analyses we look at the overall trend in reading literacy of students in Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania and we compare the trend of the achievement for the groups of students from Roma ethnic minority and for the students from majority of society. Do these trends show a similar pattern? Do the potential changes in educational systems have similar impact on students from Roma ethnic minority and on students from majority of society in analysed countries? To gain a broader understanding, we also look at some background characteristic from teachers, their working conditions and the class size.

All students should learn how to study and activate their cognitive functions not only for education to be more successful but also for them to be able to adapt to technological, social and cultural changes in the constantly changing world. Students should learn how to communicate, understand others, comprehend rules and respect the different opinions of others, understand facial expressions and other manifestations of emotions, it is essential to develop their cognitive functions. Many conflicts among people are evoked by insufficient reasoning, incorrect logical deductions, unverified hypotheses, insufficiently flexible thinking, egocentrism or an insufficiently developed vocabulary. And this is the reason why we apply our papers to the conference Intercultural Counselling and Education in the Global World. Our contribution is mainly intended for teachers, academics, for policy makers in the educational field and for other people, who are working with Roma ethnic minority.

**Kelly-Ann MILLER**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Present Global Realities: A Need for Intercultural Educational Strategies**

Globalization has made significant impact in the social, cultural and economic areas around the world, our schools of education are not exempt from the globalization process. Students today, face an increasingly interdependent world and accordingly, require a broad range of skills and sets of knowledge, which includes being culturally competent, the ability to embrace a variety of knowledges and the ability to collaborate with persons from cultures differing from their own. Schools of education play a key role in the preparation of students for their future thus, schools of education must reflect the Global reality in their pedagogy. Yet, if schools are to adequately prepare students for their future, it requires educators and leaders at all levels to have new conversations, new initiatives and overall transformation of school systems. This paper highlights important aspects of intercultural practices in education for current conditions and integrating new comer, new immigrant students in their host locations. It analyses the research of two schools in locations with increased immigration and increased cultural diversity, where intercultural methods have been utilized within their curriculum. It is relevant to address these locations since educators need to take account the cultural background of the student and how it impacts their learning. The argument is that intercultural modes of education offers a discourse that delves beyond the "problem of diversity", an alternative model of education that encourages dialogue across cultures, develops responsible learners and overall a more equitable learning environment that fosters interconnectedness.

**Farida MINGAZOVA**

*Udmurt State University, Russia*

### **Language education: multicultural approach to course development**

Modern society is challenged to enable people to be aware of multiculturalism and diversity in a globalizing world.

Language learning directly contributes to enhancing intercultural awareness. Culturally pluralistic content provides students with the knowledge of cultural diversity. Active and interactive teaching techniques promote developing skills for effective communication in intercultural situations. However, it is often the case that students show great interest in cultural patterns peculiar to other countries of the world, but, at the same time, they tend to be less interested in ethnic groups within their own society. It is natural that sources from English-speaking countries are representative mainly of their own cultures. There also can



be found materials concerning differences between Western and Eastern cultural practices. To maintain balance between foreign and local cultural concepts teaching materials need to be designed (aimed at) showing the differences and similarities among cultures within the Russian society. In making such comparisons, however, any sort of value judgment should be avoided. The more young people know about the different cultural beliefs, values and attitudes of their close neighbours, the better they will understand their cultural behaviours. The knowledge of cultural differences could help overcome prejudices and stereotypes which are barriers to tolerance, respect and good communication. This is particularly important in twenty-first-century Russia, when ethnic and cultural diversity is increasing due to growing immigration with ensuing ethnic tensions.

**Diana MOEHRKE**

*Recruitment and Welfare Manager, Grafton College, United Kingdom*

**Victoria PERSELLI**

*Academic, School of Education, Kingston University, United Kingdom*

**The time for “recognising” intercultural learning has come**

How does pedagogical thinking shape current internationalisation practice at tertiary level? This is the question we have been asking ourselves in our work as educators with international students in UK higher, further and language education contexts. This paper will present the interim findings from a literature review of different approaches to internationalisation as part of a research project which seeks to investigate the lived experiences of intercultural learning among international students in the UK. Problematised against neoliberal agendas (such as revenue generation, the promotion of Western values), this paper will apply a critical pedagogical lens to highlight hegemonic forces as these impact on understandings and practices of internationalisation at tertiary level.

For many years international students were perceived as a homogenous group, needy of the appropriate knowledge and skills to be academically successful in their new environment (Ryan, 2005; Kreber, 2009; Louie, 2005). This, in turn, led to stereotypes and misconceptions, with international students regarded as rote learners, silent class fellows and so on (Leask and Carroll, 2011; Turner, 2009; Ryan and Carroll, 2005), rendering meaningful intercultural interactions between students problematic (Harrison and Peacock, 2009). More recently, a positive shift in perception has been occurring which recognises international students as resourceful peers in their own right (Jin and Cortazzi, 2013b; Welikala, 2013; Trahar and Hyland, 2011; Ryan, 2011; Haigh, 2008). Such accounts currently seek to foster the development of education as a reflective process that incorporates the cultural situatedness of learning into its practice (ibid.).

Consequently, our review will focus on two key points: firstly, the gradual move from deficit and assimilatory thinking towards a “pedagogy of recognition” (Caruana and Spurling 2007, p. 67); secondly, the literature that pursues approaches of recognition and its function towards positively repositioning international students and their learning. Despite an increase in the literature that seeks to re-think existing internationalisation approaches, much of the discussion appears to lack the pedagogic underpinning that one might legitimately seek in culturally diverse settings (Jin and Cortazzi, 2013b; Welikala, 2013). The focus has been primarily on internationalisation, whilst intercultural learning processes that foster inclusive and transformative pedagogies have been absent from the vast majority of internationalisation discourse. We therefore argue that the time for “recognising” intercultural learning has now come, and we grapple with questions of how this might be realised in internationalised learning contexts.

**Mokgadi MOLETSANE**

*University of the Western Cape, South Africa*

**Traditional Healing in South Africa: Western and Traditional Cultural Psychotherapeutic Practices and Opportunities and Challenges to Integration of African and Western Cultural Practices**

Individual’s actions take place within a cultural context. How someone experiences distress or makes sense of psychological problems depends on deeply ingrained cultural beliefs and practices. If a person’s behavior is viewed without taking the person’s cultural beliefs into account, the person might be misdiagnosed and unable to receive effective treatment. When one deals with people in a therapeutic context, cultural awareness and sensitivity are of paramount importance. In a multi-cultural society like South Africa, one would expect that the mental health profession would reflect the demographic characteristics of the country; however, during the apartheid years, psychologists and psychiatrists were mainly white. These professionals were often far removed from the cultural milieu of their black patients and were unable to speak the language of their patients. The contribution of culture is being increasingly recognized and integrated in all fields of psychology. Africans believe that there is a powerful being which supersedes all of us. This supreme power is invisible and can be seen as God or gods. Below this supreme-being are the ancestors who play a crucial role in people’s lives by communicating with God on

behalf of the living. Thus, illnesses and disorders happen when the lines of connection between the individual and ancestors disturbed. In order to diagnose the illness or disorder, the traditional healer has to establish where in these lines of connection the disturbances have occurred. Traditional beliefs and practices concerning illness and health are still widely followed especially in rural areas of South Africa. Since the traditional healers are easily available and represent the same cultural group as the clients, they are trusted and perceived as well-trained. Out of these traditional beliefs and practices has come an African understanding of aetiology which needs to be understood by those who assisting clients from an African cultural background. Traditional healers are starting to be acknowledged for their extraordinary knowledge of histories, religions, philosophies, institutions and other bodies of knowledge and language of their culture. Psychological disorders are often caused by multiple factors acting in complex and dynamic ways. Alongside traditional healing, the biopsychosocial model and diathesis-stress models also provide us with broad theoretical frameworks that allow a number of different perspectives to be used thus demonstrating the multidimensional nature of psychopathology.

**Roy MOODLEY**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**The Identity of Cross-Cultural Counselling and Psychotherapy in a Time of Diversity**

This paper examines the issues that are confronting intercultural (cross-cultural, multicultural, transcultural) counseling and psychotherapy at a time when there is a call for the inclusion and intersectionality of the Group of Seven Identities (for example, gender, class, race, sexual orientations, disability, religion, age). It has never been more prevalent in the history of psychotherapy that marginalized clients through their socio-cultural and geo-political histories are positioned 'outside' the masculine cultural metaphors and conventional theoretical epistemologies of Eurocentric, masculine and heterosexist psychology. For marginalized clients, such as racialised minorities, women, deaf, gay and lesbians, the hegemonic masculine narratives of clinical and counseling psychology, and psychotherapy only make it possible for these clients to be 'outside the sentence', not just grammatically and metaphorically of psycho-analysis, but in the accessibility, clinical governance, and ethics of therapeutic practice. This calls into question the current ideologies and practices of intercultural counseling psychology and psychotherapy and its ability to address the critical issues, such as social justice, individual and cultural rights, and human rights. The emphasis on multicultural, interculture, cross-culture and its dominant hegemonic narratives of culture and ethnicity as sites for psychopathology and resilience renders the intercultural counselling project a failure; a breakdown; a collapse of the very principles of empathy, compassion and healing the wounds of racism, culturalism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, disabilism, and many others.

**Mervat NASSER**

*Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, United Kingdom*

**Eating Disorders and the Weight of Identity**

This presentation discusses the interface between body, culture and the evolution of eating disorders from a weight focused disorder to identity deficit syndrome. It illustrates the dependency of the body on the existing social structure and its susceptibility to various forms of modification and regulation particularly at times when cultures are undergoing rapid changes, socially, politically and economically. Through the notion of the "open body" the presentation will discuss how the body is engaged in a constant dialogue with the ever-changing conditions of the "lived in culture" forcing the self to resort to the body for concrete definition. Hence, the weight control encountered in eating disorders is more likely to be a reflection of a desire for self-control and definition. However, self-definition through body reconstruction is not only limited to weight regulation. It may include many other body reshaping practices, all of which are influenced by the prevailing economic structures, media forces and the tyranny of the image industry. Within this remit, the figurative reconstruction of the body needs to be seen as representing a more grounded self/ identity, perhaps more able to negotiate the demands of transition and the forces of socio-cultural instability.

**Tania OGAY**

*University of Fribourg, Switzerland*

**Loana CETTOU**

*University of Fribourg, Switzerland*

**Parents and teachers becoming partners during the first year of schooling:  
an intercultural communication perspective**

This paper reports preliminary findings from a study on the child's entry into schooling. It focuses on the parents and teachers relationship. Taking an intercultural communication perspective we study the building of parent-teacher relationships during the first weeks of kindergarten. We analyse observations of parents and teachers' interactions when children arrive and leave school referring to the semiopragmatic framework of intercultural communication (Frame, 2013). The results show how much the situational context of their interaction impacts upon the relationship they establish. In our view, the role of the situational context has often been overlooked in intercultural communication, which has focused almost exclusively upon the "cultures" of the interactants.

With our warmest thanks to our colleagues Vije Franchi and Angelika Toth from the University of Geneva, with whom we realized the data collection.

**Maria Giovanna ONORATI**

*University of Aosta Valley, Italy*

**Furio BEDNARZ**

*Senior Researcher and President, ECAP Foundation, Switzerland*

### **Developing intercultural competences in practice: an innovative model under the lens**

The paper focuses on the first results of an ongoing evaluative study about the hold and implementation of a learning model aimed at developing intercultural competences in VET practitioners especially working in the field of education, social work and healthcare, to which this paper is also mainly addressed. The study draws on results of 2 EU-LLP projects involving seven European universities and higher education Institutions: an Erasmus Intensive Program named "ICIC" addressed to bachelor students, and a Leonardo TOI named "I-VET", addressed to VET teachers and trainers. The latter project carries out the transfer to a new target group, VET practitioners, of the learning model developed in the IP project, in the attempt to stabilize it in an international Summer School, whose pilot edition will take place in Ticino in 2013.

Through a learning model based on a situated and self-experienced learning process, the socio-educational research-action about intercultural competency developed by both projects fosters an inclusive education that may facilitate integration of people with a migration background through their access to lifelong learning. By moving from an experiential and multidimensional approach to learning the proposed training model triggers well defined cognitive "movements" (Reggio, 2010) that may develop "ethnorelative" mindsets (Bennett, 1993, 2007) and reflective attitudes, as presuppositions for what Mannheim (1946) called the "adogmatic mind" and for rebuilding the "core knots of trust" in late-modern reflective societies (Giddens, 1991, 1994). The learning pathway also pays a special attention to "bridging social capital" (Putnam, 2000) as a robust activator of intercultural sensitivity.

The innovative elements of the model which will be particularly focused on in the paper are:

- the concept of "intercultural competency" (Onorati – Bednarz, 2010; Onorati – Bednarz – Comi, 2011) based on "transformative learning" (Illeris, 2007; Mezirow, 2000) and a holistic assumption of human learning (Jarvis – Parker, 2005), as a process involving all knowledge dimensions (cognitive, affective, relational);
- the appropriateness of such an approach to VET target group;
- the unprecedented combination of formal and informal learning as a key for valuing experience as a source for knowledge and activating transformative learning in adults;
- the validity of the model, assessed through qualitative and quantitative tools, such as: surveys on participants; learning diaries (Moon, 2012); peer-reviewing; focus groups that allow to self-evaluate expectations and learning achievements; SWOT analysis.
- the quality of the transfer process according to principles defined by the "Common Quality Assurance Framework" for Vet in Europe.

**Maria Francesca PACIFICO**

*Dottoranda di ricerca in pedagogia e insegnante di scuola primaria specializzanda in counseling, Italy*

### **Counseling educativo - interculturale e integrazione scolastica in classi multietniche attraverso l'apprendimento cooperativo**

Le più comuni difficoltà di adattamento psicologico rilevate tra i bambini immigrati sono state: sintomi di psicopatologia, (Minde and Minde, 1976; Cocharne, 1979), ansia e depressione più elevate (Bengi-Arslan et al, 1997), disturbi post-traumatici da stress (Barrett et al., 2002). I bambini immigrati mostravano una più bassa autostima (Aurelius, 1980), una minore auto-immagine (Lackand, 1994), un concetto di sé più negativo e più alti livelli di ansia (Roebers and Schneider, 1999). Alcuni studi internazionali hanno messo in luce qualche tipologia di problema nell'adattamento sociale nei bambini immigrati, senza alcun gruppo di controllo di soggetti nativi (Goldenberg, 1973; Takac, 1976; Burke, 1980).

Studi comparativi hanno riscontrato molti problemi di adattamento socio-emotivo e maggiori disturbi del comportamento tra i bambini immigrati in età scolare (Derbyshire, 1969; Nicol, 1971; Bagley, 1972; Rutter et al., 1974; Ekstrand, 1976; Gaertner-Harnach 1981; Xin Ma, 2002; Gonneke et.al, 2003; Crosnoe, 2006).

La devianza comportamentale dei bambini immigrati è risultata essere minore rispetto a quella dei bambini nativi (Kallarckal and Herbert, 1976; Touliatos and Lindholm, 1980 a). Altri studi non hanno evidenziato significative differenze di problemi comportamentali (Osborn, 1971; Touliatos and Lindholm, 1980 c; Bengi-Arslan et al., 1997; Kolaitis et al., 2003; Atzaba-Poria, 2004). Nell'età evolutiva la migrazione può rappresentare una condizione di sofferenza interiore o un trauma (Grinberg and Grinberg, 1989), uno sradicamento (Mirsi, 1977), un fattore di rischio e uno stato di vulnerabilità (Moro, 2001); può essere analizzata considerando variabili oggettive e soggettive (Aluffi Pentini, 2002), e la qualità delle relazioni (Favaro & Fumagalli, 2004; Favaro & Luatti, 2004). I benefici del Cooperative Learning sono risultati essere nel promuovere un migliore adattamento psico-sociale nelle classi multiethniche (Slavin, 1985; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 1996; Slavin et al., 1994; Comoglio 1999). 64 bambini di quarta elementare hanno partecipato alla ricerca: 45 immigrati di seconda generazione e 19 italiani. 34 bambini hanno preso parte a un programma d'intervento educativo. Le valutazioni di questo gruppo relative alla fase di pre-intervento e di post-intervento sono state comparate con quelle di un gruppo di controllo, composto da 30 bambini, con una simile percentuale di bambini immigrati. I principali obiettivi di questo studio sono stati: (1) esaminare l'efficacia di un programma educativo nel migliorare l'adattamento sociale dei bambini immigrati, confrontati con i pari italiani; (2) descrivere qualitativamente i programmi e gli strumenti dell'educazione interculturale in alcune scuole di Roma. L'apprendimento Cooperativo ha favorito in tutti i miglioramenti nell'adattamento sociale, nell'autostima, nella qualità delle amicizie tra i pari. Nel complesso non sono emerse differenze significative tra i bambini italiani e immigrati rispetto ai miglioramenti conseguiti.

### **Intercultural - Educational Counseling and School Integration in Multiethnic Classrooms through Cooperative Learning**

The most common difficulties of psychological adaptation found among immigrant children were: symptoms of psychopathology (Minde and Minde, 1976; Cocharne, 1979), higher depression and anxiety (Bengi-Arslan et al, 1997), stress post-traumatic disorders (Barrett et al., 2002). Immigrant children exhibited lower self-esteem (Aurelius, 1980), lower auto-image (Lackand, 1994), more negative self-concept and higher levels of anxiety (Roebbers and Schneider, 1999). Some international studies found some kind of social adjustment problem in immigrant children without a control group of native subjects (Goldenberg, 1973; Takac, 1976; Burke, 1980). Comparative studies pointed out many socio-emotional adjustment problems and higher behavioral disorders among immigrant children in school age (Derbyshire, 1969; Nicol, 1971; Bagley, 1972; Rutter et al., 1974; Ekstrand, 1976; Gaertner-Harnach 1981; Xin Ma, 2002; Gonneke et.al, 2003; Crosnoe, 2006). Behavioral deviance of immigrant children resulted to be lower than native children (Kallarckal and Herbert, 1976; Touliatos and Lindholm, 1980 a). Other studies did not found significant difference of behavioral problems (Osborn, 1971; Touliatos and Lindholm, 1980 c; Bengi-Arslan et al., 1997; Kolaitis et al., 2003; Atzaba-Poria, 2004). In evolutive age the migration may represent an inner affliction or traumatic rift (Grinberg and Grinberg, 1989), a uprooting (Mirski, 1997), as a risk-factor and status of vulnerability (Moro, 2001); it can be analyzed considering objective and subjective variables (Aluffi Pentini, 2002), and the quality of relationships (Favaro & Fumagalli, 2004; Favaro & Luatti, 2004): Benefits of Cooperative Learning were found in promoting better psycho-social adjustment in multiethnic classes (Slavin, 1985; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 1996; Slavin et al., 1994; Comoglio 1999). 64 children of fourth-grade of primary school took part in the research: 45 of second generation immigrants and 19 italians. 34 children involved in the program. Pre and post-program evaluations for this group were compared with those of a control group, made up of 30 children and with a similar percentage of immigrant children. The main goals of this study were: (1) to investigate the effectiveness of an educational program on social adjustment of immigrant children, comparing them with italian peers; (2) to describe qualitatively intercultural education's programs and instruments aimed to promote integration in some schools of Rome. Cooperative Learning improved in all the children, the social adjustment, the self-esteem, the quality of friendships between peers. On the whole, no significant differences emerged between italian and immigrant children.

**Luís António PARDAL**

*Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal*

### **Immigrants and social interaction: the role of the school in the intercultural dialogue**

After a time not far from a school culturally monolithic, the reality that emerged with immigration occurred in Portugal in recent decades leaves the sight of all the enormous complexity of the problem of integrating "different", particularly in ethnic, national and cultural plans.

The question is easy to ask: how to treat these differences in school and therefore in society? The same can not be said of the solution: assimilate, negating the identity of origin? stimulate ethnicization, em-

phasizing that same identity? seek a midway solution?

The discussion presented in this study around these issues uses sociology as instruments of analysis in the context of identity and social integration, while bringing to debate the thought of a group of immigrants through their representations of the portuguese, in terms of human relations between the parties involved, and their positions in relation to how to conduct the school with regard to the relationship between integration and social identities of "different" in the host society.

The analysis of research results is based on a sample of 117 individuals, mostly (112) belonging to three sets ethnonational more numerous of the immigrants communities installed in the country: brazilians (40), slavs (41) and africans portuguese speaking (31).

In terms of human relationships, the data show a population who live together either with foreigners or with portuguese and a representation of these as something racists, opinion not shared by the slavs..

The consensus among them, evident in how they see the role of the school in relation to their culture and language, in the case of the slavs, is, however, accented with regard to how they wish to live in the host society: they refuse the assimilationism as mechanism for integration into portuguese society and the overvaluation of the diversity of identities, seen as a limitation to the insertion in the middle.

### **Christos PARTHENIS**

*National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece*

### **Eirini TSELIU**

*National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece*

### **"Educational inclusion, study of educational exclusion, equitable education and social acceptance of children of Roma origin in a globalized world, throughout the intervention of the Project: "Education of Roma Children"- Qualitative and quantitative data"**

This paper focuses on the phenomena of school integration, educational exclusion, school failure and school drop out of Roma children throughout the actions of the Program: "Education of Roma Children". The specific project started in 2010 through various interventions in schools aiming at benefiting Roma children as well as indigenous students.

The demands from schools which require assistance and guidance in meeting the educational needs of Roma children have created initially a response from the state that however could not envisage the long term needs of a changing multicultural and global society. The goal of the present paper is to highlight to what extent the support measures within the Program have reached improvement at the educational level. The main goal of the program's associates continues to be the integration of Roma children, through the vehicle of intercultural approach, to the mainstream school and not to establish a separate 'preparatory structure', particularly designed for Roma children.

This paper is addressed to all stakeholders in the educational process (students, parents, teachers, schools headmasters and advisors, administration staff, members of academic community), the local community, as well as the executives of the state. Regarding the two aforementioned recipients, it has been ascertained from the Program's implementation so far, that political interventions in favor of living standards improvement and integration of Roma origin individuals to global society, partly succumb to simplified interpretations of the complex and multifaceted dimension of social reality of Roma.

The aim is to develop an intercultural curriculum that will assist in building a cultural identity that reflects the perspectives, hope and opportunities for all citizens. More than that, it will promote the public interest and national unity in a global community by reflecting cultural diversity within a set of regulations that may integrate all citizens from whom it derives its legitimacy. Additionally, the integration of Roma children at school is an important priority for the development of any citizen in the 21st century. This is exactly what modern societies oblige: to form accountable, participative and social-aware citizens who intend to live in open-minded, democratic and fair environments.

Despite the theoretical foundation, the paper is going to resemble the qualitative (nine actions) and quantitative data of the Program for the school years 2010-2012.

### **Amanda PERRI**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Creating a Community of Empathetic Learners in the Classroom: The Role of Dramatic Play (Workshop)**

Embracing the vast diversity of cultures, religions, abilities, and backgrounds of students in the classroom is no easy task for teachers. Regardless of teachers' best attempts to incorporate equality in the classroom, the pull of a culture of ethnocentrism can often overrule our good intentions. How can teachers facilitate a culture in their classroom that embraces diversity that extends to rest of the world? Research has long recognized the role of empathy in fostering intergroup relations. Specifically, individuals who are rated high on empathy are more likely to help others outside their culture and feel compassion

towards those perceived as different. In addition, creating empathetic concern has been shown to eliminate previously prejudiced beliefs. These findings suggest that providing teachers with the knowledge and resources to create a community of empathetic learners may contribute to an overall increase in student's celebration of diversity, inside and outside of the classroom. How can teachers foster empathy in students? Research shows that elementary aged children who engage in socio-dramatic activities, like acting, score the highest on empathy measures. Some studies have also shown that when children were given acting training they experienced an increase in empathy. Incorporating dramatic activities in the classroom has the potential to educate students about diversity while also having the potential to improve their empathetic concern in and beyond the classroom. This presentation will focus on the value of creating a community of empathetic learners and will highlight creative and fun activities that can be used by teacher-researchers in their own classrooms.

**Danijela S. PETROVIĆ**

*University of Belgrade, Serbia*

**Bruno LEUTWYLER**

Co-leader, Institute for International Cooperation in Education IZB/PHZ Zug, Switzerland

**Carola MANTEL**

Research Associate, Institute for International Cooperation in Education IZB/PHZ Zug, Switzerland

**Bojana M. DIMITRIJEVIC**

*University of Belgrade, Serbia*

**Blagica ZLATKOVIC**

Teacher-Training Faculty in Vranje, University in Nis, Serbia

**Exploring how different teacher perspectives on cultural difference are translated into teaching practice?**

In the contemporary globalised world, teachers face a large number of challenges. Among them, the challenge of dealing with an increased cultural diversity in the classrooms.

From the perspective of constructivist theory, teachers perceive cultural heterogeneity in the classroom with different levels of complexity, according to their intercultural sensitivity. Their perception of cultural difference (their 'worldview') influences their thoughts, feelings and behaviour toward students who have a different cultural background.

At the same time, teachers play an important role in providing students with a culturally different background, a possibility for high learning achievement and building a class community that recognises, respects and proficiently uses cultural difference for the benefit of every student.

Based on Bennett's 'Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity' (DMIS) (Bennett 1986; 2004), the main aim of this research is to answer the question: In what ways does the worldview of teachers affect their notion of cultural difference and what are the prototypical translations of different worldviews into the field of education?

A deeper understanding of how different teacher worldviews are translated into teaching practice – scrutinised in a West-European as well as in a South-East-European context - will bring important insight for teacher preparation programs and for the professional development of in-service teachers.

For the purpose of this research, ten semi-structured interviews were carried out in each country context. In Switzerland, the interviews were carried out with elementary school teachers and in Serbia with elementary school teachers of English language. The interviews included questions on a hypothetical situation, a 'critical incident'. The teachers' perception of this situation, their expected behaviour and their reason for such an intervention were explored. In addition to the interviews, each respondent completed the questionnaire of a testing tool for intercultural sensitivity, the „Intercultural Development Inventory“(IDI) (Hammer 2009). All the data is analyzed according to the content analysis by Mayring (2008).

In this paper, the research results concerning the 'critical incident' will be presented and implications for teacher education in both countries will be discussed.

**Leonardo PIASERE**

*Università di Verona, Italy*

**Carlotta SALETTI SALZA**

*Università di Verona, Italy*

**Sull'(in)competenza interculturale degli operatori nei servizi per la tutela dell'infanzia: le adozioni dei bambini rom in Italia**

Negli ultimi vent'anni, parallelamente all'aumento generalizzato di richieste di adottare un bambino, è cresciuto vertiginosamente il numero delle dichiarazioni di adottabilità emesse dai Tribunali dei Minori

italiani riguardanti i bambini rom. Raramente si tratta di minori orfani, cioè rimasti senza uno od entrambi i genitori, ma sono il più delle volte minori dichiarati "in stato di abbandono" e quindi tolti alle famiglie naturali. Il numero è così elevato che si può dire che, oggi in Italia, un bambino rom ha venti probabilità in più rispetto ad un bambino non rom di essere dichiarato "in stato di abbandono" ed esser dato in adozione. Il paper riporta i risultati di due indagini, quantitative e qualitative, svolte negli ultimi anni col sostegno della Fondazione Migrantes, concentrandosi sul problema della qualità dell'azione dei diversi operatori implicati nei servizi per la tutela dell'infanzia. L'assenza di mediatori linguistici competenti, la ricerca di modalità artificiali di comunicazione e di incontro, psicologismi esasperati, e soprattutto pregiudizi anti-zingari radicati e ignoranza dei sistemi educativi familiari rom, sono fra i tanti tratti che concorrono a costruire una solida e strutturata incompetenza interculturale fra gli operatori che intervengono nelle diverse fasi dei procedimenti di adozione.

**On the intercultural (in)competence of child welfare service workers: the adoption of Rom children in Italy**

In the last twenty years, together with a general increase in child adoption requests, the number of adoptability declarations issued by the Italian Juvenile Courts regarding Rom children has rocketed. These children are rarely orphans, i.e. children who have lost one or both parents, but are mostly minors declared to be "in a state of abandonment" and therefore taken from their natural families. The number is so high that it may now be said that, in Italy, a Rom child has twenty times more chance of being declared as "abandoned" and being adopted than a non-Rom child. The paper reports the results of two quantitative and qualitative surveys carried out in recent years with the support of the Fondazione Migrantes, focusing on the problem of the quality of the actions of several workers in the child welfare services. The lack of competent linguistic mediators, the search for artificial communication and meeting modalities, extreme psychologisms, and above all, deep-rooted anti-Gypsy prejudice and ignorance of the way Rom families educate their children are among the many aspects that converge and result in a solid and structured intercultural incompetence of the workers who intervene in the various phases of the adoption procedure.

**Niva PIRAN**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**Embodied Journeys in Diverse Cultural Landscapes and Counseling**

The domain of the body has carried a central role in the reproduction of culture; yet, at the same time it offers possibilities of transforming culture. The presentation centers on bodies as cultural metaphors and on the shaping of individuals' body practices by cultural, political, and historical contexts. The presentation suggests that deciphering the inscriptions of culture on bodies in the process of counseling allows for engaging in a critical look at cultural institutions and offers possibilities of healing at the individual and community levels.

**Niva PIRAN**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

**Mervat NASSER**

*Kings College, United Kingdom*

**Embodied Journeys in Diverse Cultural Landscapes: Implications to Counseling and Education (Workshop)**

This workshop aims to invite participants to examine their own embodied journeys, and to consider the way these journeys may inform their practice of counseling as well as their work in educational settings. The workshop will focus first on experiences participants identify as 'landmarks' in their embodied journeys. In examining these landmarks, the workshop will be informed by the *Developmental Theory of Embodiment* that considers the way in which experiences in the physical, social stereotypes, and embodied social power domains are shaped by individuals' social locations (gender, social class, disAbility, sexual orientation, ethno-cultural heritage, immigration/uprooting). This exploration will then continue with the delineation of implications to the practice of counseling and education, informed by facilitators' and participants' ongoing work.

**Fabrizio PIZZI**

*Università di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale, Italy*

## Unaccompanied Immigrants Minors in Italy. Reception and integration strategies

The theme concerning the “migrant minors” or “foreign minors”, is often carried out in an indistinct manner, and consequently presents an image of homogeneity which doesn’t correspond completely to reality. In Italy there are primarily migrant minors who arrive with their family, minors born in our country of foreign parents and minors born abroad, who are then reunited here with their parents: consequently, more attention is given to them by researchers and social policies. More recently, however, other categories of minors have concerned our country and other topics are beginning to be investigated, due to the transformations of the phenomenon: one of them is unaccompanied foreign minors and it is precisely the subject of our analysis. It’s an emerging issue, which is found within the more general field of immigration, that is still barely visible in public debates, but increasingly present in social literature, calling also the attention of pedagogical research. The present contribution focuses on reception procedures and measures of integration carried out for the unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy and on the need for an educational and intercultural approach to this issue.

**John P. PORTELLI**  
*OISE-University of Toronto*

## Intercultural Education and Student Engagement: The Challenges and Possibilities of Critical-Democracy

While there is a general commitment to student engagement in education, serious differences arise when we consider the aim or purpose of student engagement. Should students be engaged in subjects and topics preselected by a ministry of education with the aim of producing ‘productive citizens’ who will mechanically reproduce neoliberal values (sentence seems long and fragmented)? Or should students be engaged in genuinely controversial issues that matter to them and that raise substantive issues of equity and social justice? Should students be engaged in material that will prepare them for employment? Or should students be engaged in material that they themselves select, contributing to their own individual growth and autonomy?

Based on several Canadian empirical studies, policy documents and theory, this presentation will begin by critically examining three major perspectives on student engagement: student engagement as a way of reproducing dominant views; student engagement as individual growth; student engagement as a way of being that honours the values of a critical and robust democracy. The presentation will make a case for the latter form of engagement based partly on the concept and practice of a curriculum of life.

The second part of the presentation will focus on the connections between student engagement and various conceptions of intercultural education. I will argue for the importance of a robust notion of intercultural education based on equity and social justice aimed at the development of genuine student engagement. (Say something here about how you are also arguing that current practices of student engagement have colonizing effects)

The final part of the presentation will highlight the challenges and possibilities for the development of student engagement within the context of intercultural education. These include the role and limits of dialogue, neo-liberalism and standardization, narrow notions of student success, the so-called ‘achievement gap’, a curriculum of life, the role of graffiti, and the ethics of subversion. Certain critical questions that guide this inquiry include: Are there limits to dialogue and on what basis? Is the standardization enforced by neoliberalism a new form of colonialism or antithetical to equity and social justice? Does the current discourse on the ‘achievement gap’ help reproduce the standardization and one size fits all mentality which form the basis of colonialism? What role might the curriculum of life and the use of graffiti in pedagogy have in resisting current colonial tendencies? And what about the ethics of subversion as a moral position that challenges neoliberalism?

**Agostino PORTERA**  
*University of Verona, Italy*

## Intercultural competence in Education, Counselling and Psychotherapy

The twenty first century has begun with many changes, which affect the human being in its entirety. The present time of globalisation, interdependence and living in a multicultural society is experiencing a period of crisis. Operators show difficulties to cope with the risks and the opportunities related with such changes especially in education (schools and families), but also in psychological field. The presentation is grounded on the fact that there is an urgent need of a new concept of competences in education counselling and psychotherapy. Over the last decades, in many countries, terms like *transcultural*, *multi-cultural* and *intercultural education* have been used interchangeably (Grant and Portera 2011). At present there is a lack of epistemological and semantic clarity on the term *intercultural competences*, too.



Despite the substantial amount of researches and publications, many authors seem to use the terms uncritically and without clear and sharp distinctions. After reframing the concept of intercultural competences, the presentation also highlights some practical consequences for education, counselling and psychotherapy.

**Miguel PRATA GOMES**

*Anne Frank House / PFSE / A2IPR / CIIE, Portugal*

**Free2Choose\_Create. (Re)thinking about practical dilemmas in Human Rights (Workshop)**

Much has already been written about Intercultural Education, Citizenship and Human Rights Education. In most cases discussions are abstract in nature and argue for specific approaches. Though theoretical and philosophical discussions are important, during the present crisis in Western thought, this paper/workshop intends to introduce a more practical approach to discussing/debating Human Rights dilemmas with youngsters. The intention is not to propose permanent and individualistic solutions, but to simply offer a way to engage youth, in our world and in our time, in discussions about Human Rights dilemmas that arise in everyday situations. The departure point is the concepts or universalist assumptions that derive from the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The instrument that will be presented is a DVD entitled Free2Choose, originally produced by the Anne Frank House (Amsterdam -Netherlands), which contains short video clips that present dilemmas involving a collision of Human Rights in very specific situations. For example: the situation at hand is a demonstration of a group of neo-Nazis in front of a synagogue in Germany! The question that is posed to young people is whether this is a free speech issue and therefore protected by law or whether this is a violation of the Jewish community's right to be protected against discrimination. In such instances, there are valid arguments for both. Young people are encouraged through engaging and interactive working methods to reflect on this dilemma.

While initially these short film clips were created by adult professionals, in the last few years it has been the youth themselves who have been trained to create their own short film clips. The topics they choose tend to be much more connected to the lived reality of youth today.

The interactive methodologies used in for discussion/debate are meant to promote key competences such as critical thinking, active listening and respectful discussion. The ultimate purpose is to empower young people to become active citizens committed to building a better world.

This is a theoretical and practical work on-going over the past years conducted by a number of researchers connected to the Anne Frank House; this workshop is addressed to all those interested in working with young people on the theme of Human Rights.

**Peter PRAXMARER**

*European Master in Intercultural Communication (EMICC), Università della Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland*

**Academic Cultures in Europe and The Social Science Knowledge System: First Approximations and Lessons Learnt during Eleven Years of the Eurocampus Study Program in Intercultural Communication**

This paper tries to invite its readers to reflect upon academic cultures as institutionalized social science knowledge systems, in Europe and elsewhere, and provides a rudimentary and impressionist frame of analysis to this end. The paper also looks at academic culture(s) from the inside of a European study program (the "Eurocampus" of the European Master in Intercultural Communication (EMICC)), which for the past eleven years has brought together, on a rotating schedule, students and professors from nine European universities.

**Silvio PREMOLI**

*Università Cattolica di Milano, Italy*

**Costruire competenze interculturali nel Child and Family Welfare Services**

La crescente connotazione multiculturale delle società occidentali richiede che anche nei Child and Family Welfare services vengano adottati un approccio interculturale (Santerini, 2003) e una *cultural competence* (Pecora et al., 2009).

La ricerca "Competenze interculturali: modelli teorici e metodologie di formazione" PRIN MIUR dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano mira a descrivere e analizzare le competenze interculturali che insegnanti e operatori sociali mettono quotidianamente in atto e a definire un modello formativo che sviluppi queste competenze. Vengono qui estrapolati gli aspetti della ricerca inerente educatori del CFW. Si tratta di una practice-based research che utilizza il metodo della narrative inquiry e dell'argomentazione della competenza situata basati sul paradigma dell'esplicitazione (Theureau, 2004;

Vermersch, 2004). Una volta individuata e descritta, la competenza richiede di essere argomentata. L'approccio interculturale cui si fa riferimento è di tipo comprensivo, basato su aspetti dinamici e soggettivi della cultura e sullo sfondo della "cittadinanza" intesa come paradigma di piena appartenenza ad un contesto sociale, nell'obiettivo non tanto di esaltare le differenze quanto di costruire la coesione sociale (Santerini, 2003). Tale prospettiva, diversa da quella puramente differenzialista, richiede di sviluppare negli operatori non una mera "conoscenza" della differenza culturale, ma una vera e propria competenza. Il concetto di competenza si riferisce alle capacità di leggere, analizzare e interpretare situazioni interculturali particolari e complesse e di affrontare e risolvere conflitti. Per competenza interculturale «si intende un complesso di abilità necessarie per agire in modo efficace e appropriato quando si è in relazione con altri linguisticamente e culturalmente differenti» (Santerini, 2012, p.276). La competenza interculturale può essere definita, anche, come quella capacità che permette contemporaneamente di saper analizzare e comprendere le situazioni di contatto tra persone e gruppi portatori di culture differenti e di saper gestire queste situazioni. Consiste nella capacità di prendere una distanza sufficiente in rapporto alla situazione di confronto interculturale, per riuscire a cogliere e leggere i processi in gioco e a controllare questi processi (Flye Sainte Marie, 1997).

Le competenze interculturali complesse identificate nel lavoro di ricerca sono tre:

- riconoscere e valorizzare le differenze, come capacità di aprirsi alla diversità in prospettiva personalistica, riconoscendo le identità plurali e cogliendo dinamiche e negoziazioni interculturali, e di applicare alla lettura degli eventi e delle relazioni uno sguardo storico e situato;
- ridurre i pregiudizi, come capacità di incrementare la variabilità nella percezione dell'altro, di evitare semplificazioni e di de-culturalizzare i conflitti, riconoscendo l'importanza di altre dimensioni oltre a quella della cultura e dell'origine;
- costruire orizzonti condivisi, come capacità di promuovere il dialogo, gestire i conflitti e i disaccordi normativi e valoriali.

Sul piano delle ricadute formative è particolarmente rilevante:

- incrementare consapevolezza in merito al ruolo che può giocare l'eurocentrismo degli educatori (Barbanotti & Iacobino, 1998);
- sviluppare la capacità di ricercare un equilibrio dialogico tra l'affermazione dei diritti dei bambini e altri valori che nei diversi contesti entrano in competizione con quei diritti (ad esempio, lavoro minorile, contributo dei bambini all'assistenza di familiari, rappresentazioni diverse della genitorialità, mutilazioni genitali), con un riferimento preciso al quadro normativo nazionale e internazionale (in particolare la Convention on the rights of the child - CRC), poiché il maltrattamento sui bambini è un concetto socialmente, culturalmente e storicamente determinato e un eccesso di relativismo rischia di non proteggere i minori (Reading et al., 2009);
- promuovere la capacità di armonizzare il modello educativo della famiglia di origine e il modello educativo del servizio di CFW che con essa si relaziona.

### **Buidiling intercultural competences in CFW**

The increasingly multicultural connotation of western societies requires that Child and Family Welfare services adopt an intercultural approach (Santerini, 2003) and a cultural competence (Pecora et al., 2009).

The "Intercultural Expertise: theoretical models and training methodologies" research PRIN MIUR (Research project of National Interest – Ministry for Universities and Scientific Research) undertaken by the Catholic University in Milan had the objective of describing and analysing the intercultural capabilities that teachers and social workers use daily and to define a training model which helps develop these skills and competences. This is an outline of the aspects of the research study pertinent to CFW social workers.

This study is a practice-based research which uses narrative inquiry and argumentation of located in everyday workplace skills and competences related to the *theory of explanation* (Theureau, 2004; Vermersch, 2004). Once the competence has been pinpointed and described it then needs to be discussed and analysed.

The intercultural approach to which we refer is of a comprising kind based on subjective and dynamic cultural aspects which relates to "citizenship" in terms of the theory of belonging to a social context with the aim not so much as to highlight differences but to build social cohesion (Santerini, 2003). This perspective, different to the purely differentialist one, requires the social worker to develop not merely understanding of cultural differences but to develop a cultural competence. The concept of competence refers to the ability to see, analyse and interpret specific and complex intercultural situations and to face and solve conflicts.

The complex intercultural competences which have been pinpointed in the research study are three:

- recognising and appreciating differences;
- reducing prejudices;
- building shared objectives.

Of particular importance are the effects on training:

- increase the awareness of the role played by educators' 'eurocentrism' (Barbanotti & Iacobini, 1998);

- develop the ability to find an equilibrium between children's rights and other values which collide with one another in different contexts (e.g. child labour, children's contribution to assisting relatives, different forms of parenting, genital mutilation) while keeping in mind national and international laws (in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child) since child abuse has social, cultural and historic connotations and an excess in relativism may put children at risk (Reading et al., 2009)
- promote the ability to complement the caring model of the origins of the family and that of the CFW service with which the family has dealings.

### **Maria PROVENZANO**

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#### **Dirigere contesti scolastici multietnici tra managerialità e leadership autentica**

Partendo da una lettura ed un'analisi delle indagini attuate in ambito internazionale *sull'Educational Management and Leadership*, una parte della ricerca è centrata sulla critica della cultura burocratico-manageriale della performatività (Ball, Barzanò), in cui il dirigente scolastico è la personificazione di un nuovo managerialismo.

Di contro, vengono proposte alcune riflessioni con riferimento agli studi di Sergiovanni, Jenlink, Fullan, Woods, Bottery ma focalizzando la ricerca sulla *inclusive leadership* di Ryan, finalizzata a perseguire la giustizia sociale e l'equità. Anche Gunter ed altri (Walker e Shuangye, Starratt, Blackmore, Leo e Barton, Lumby, Langlois, Lapointe, Stefkovich e Begley, Branson), sostenendo la necessità di una leadership autentica, contrappongono al perseguimento di stretti fini produttivi di efficienza ed efficacia l'esigenza del raggiungimento dell'equità nel rispetto della dignità umana e della libertà individuale (Sen e Nussbaum). Non mancano i riferimenti alla pedagogia e alla didattica interculturale (Cambi, Genovese, Portera, Santelli Beccegato) per una scuola che affronta la sfida della globalizzazione (Bauman).

L'altra parte della ricerca riporta le considerazioni emerse in seguito all'analisi dei risultati di un'indagine, condotta nelle scuole multietniche e non della Sicilia centro-occidentale. Si tratta di un'indagine sulla *school leadership* finalizzata a conoscere i valori e le competenze, che dovrebbero caratterizzare la leadership del dirigente scolastico in contesti scolastici con un'elevata presenza di studenti con cittadinanza non italiana. Al fine di trovare modalità e strumenti di promozione di equità e giustizia in contesti scolastici multietnici, per dirigenti scolastici ed esperti formatori nella *school leadership* e nel management scolastico, vengono ipotizzate specifiche competenze attribuibili al dirigente, se considerato come school leader facilitatore della comunità scolastica, leader visionary/manager, problem solver, facilitatore del cambiamento, promotore di una prospettiva interculturale, sostenitore di una scuola democratica.

#### **Direct Multiethnic School Contexts between Managerialism and Authentic Leadership**

Starting from a reading and analysis of the surveys carried out in an International context on the Educational Management and Leadership, a part of the research is centered on criticism of culture-bureaucratic managerial of the performativity (Ball, Barzanò), in which the school leader is the personification of a new managerialism.

In contrast, I propose some reflections with reference to the studies of Sergiovanni, Jenlink, Fullan, Woods, Bottery but focusing the research on inclusive leadership of Ryan, aimed to pursue social justice and equity. Even Gunter and other (Walker and Shuangye, Starratt, Blackmore, Leo and Barton, Lumby, Langlois, Lapointe, Stefkovich and Begley, Branson), supporting the necessity of an authentic leadership, are contrary to the pursuit of narrow productive purposes of efficiency and effectiveness and in favor of the need to obtain the equity in the respect of human dignity and individual freedom (Sen and Nussbaum). There are references to the intercultural pedagogy (Cambi, Genovese, Portera, Santelli Beccegato) for a school that addresses the challenge of globalization (Bauman).

The other part of the research returns the considerations emerged after the analysis of the results of a survey, conducted in multi-ethnic schools and not of the central and western Sicily. This is a survey on school leadership focused on knowing the values and skills, which should characterize the leadership of the headteacher in school contests with a high presence of students with citizenship not Italian. In order to find ways and means of promotion of equity and justice in multiethnic school contests, for school leaders and expert trainers in school leadership and school management, are assumed specific skills attributable to the headteacher, if considered as school leader facilitator of school community, visionary leader/manager, problem solver, facilitator of change, promoter of an intercultural perspective, supporter of a democratic school.

### **Ajit PYATI**

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#### **Yoga and the "Shadow": Intersections with Depth Psychology and Processes of Inner Transfor-**

## mation

Yoga in the West generally refers to the ancient Indian practices of *hatha yoga* - a largely (but not exclusively) physical set of exercises designed to optimize overall health and well-being. The much deeper philosophical and existential body of work that yoga represents is often overlooked. In addition, yoga in the West has become a highly commodified affair and is integrated into Western consumerist culture. This paper builds on these critiques by focusing on a popular misconception of yoga. Specifically, the paper analyzes the integration of yoga into Western consumerist culture, where yoga has become misidentified as a form of personal distinction and a practice primarily based on “feeling good.” While there is certainly nothing wrong with enhancing one’s sense of well-being, this misunderstanding of yoga’s basic aims is highly problematic. In particular, yoga’s potential for a depth psychotherapeutic and healing experience can be overlooked. To address this issue, the paper explores the connections between the practices of *hatha yoga* and depth psychology. Jung’s conceptualization of the “shadow” (the repressed and splintered-off aspects of the psyche) is an important theme in this analysis. Drawing on the work of Jungian scholars and therapists such as James Hollis and James Hillman and influential yoga luminaries such as Swami Satyananda and T. Krishnamacharya, a case is made for a deeper union between depth psychology and yoga. In the spirit of the emerging field of *yoga therapy*, this paper argues for the importance of the psycho-spiritual and emotional effects of yoga practices. The implications of this intersection can be important for the future development of yoga as a therapeutic and healing practice in the modern world.

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In a global and open space for learning such it is the one provided by the Web, the capacity of harmonizing resources and participation could be the *via maestra* to generate socio-cultural inclusion, as crucial dimension of an intercultural education. The concept and practice of Learning Design can contribute to this idea: it aims at promoting a pedagogy based on the “orchestration” of contents, activities, participation, from the ethical and professional point of view of the “designer” (Kress, 2010), but also taking into account the learners “difference” and diversity in an educational intervention. Even when there is an increasing number of contributions with regard to the design for innovative adoption of educational technologies, personalization, autonomous learning, with an accent hence in innovation and the medium, little has been said about designing for an “intercultural ergonomic” of networked learning experiences.

Global courses adopting virtual learning environment are frequent from the very beginning of the eLearning (Goodfellow&Lamy, 2009). Recently, some attention has been paid to the design of an intercultural sensitive virtual learning place, which can promote further intercultural learning (Dunn & Marinetti, 2002; Rollin & Harrap, 2005; McConnell, 2008; Edmundson, 2005; Rutheford & Kerr, 2008). The participatory construction of virtual working/learning spaces aimed at supporting international cooperation project on intercultural education between several countries has also been discussed (Raffaghelli & Richieri, 2012). However, the attention of much of these research works is on understanding the intercultural impact of the transnational learning experience per se on learners, instead of on the learning design as process of decision taking with regard to the dimensions that can generate a concrete intercultural approach in a transnational learning experience. In this paper, a case study is introduced to explore the learning design process about an European advanced training course for adults’ education, in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme, as “enlarged cultural context of learning” (Margiotta&Raffaghelli, 2010; Raffaghelli, 2012). Adopting a Grounded Theory methodological approach (Corbin&Strauss, 2008), the focus on the working process as accounted by the several educators involved in an collaborative, intercultural experience of learning design, attempts to make emerge the key elements of what we could call “designing for learning in an enlarged cultural context”.

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## **Nascere in Italia da genitori stranieri. Processi di costruzione di cittadinanza**

La presenza di persone di origine non italiana caratterizza ormai strutturalmente la composizione della nostra società e delle nostre scuole, ormai attrezzate all’accoglienza di alunni di origine straniera anche in corso d’anno.

La nascita e, soprattutto, la scolarizzazione dei figli, hanno indotto molti cittadini immigrati a ripensare al proprio progetto migratorio, abbandonando progressivamente l’idea di tornare nella propria patria in tempi relativamente brevi e stabilizzando la propria presenza in Italia, che diventa il luogo in cui crescono e si socializzano i figli; è il tessuto stesso della società che risulta profondamente mutato e reso più complesso da esperienze plurali in termini culturali e linguistici, che mettono in discussione confini,

simboli ed identità.

Cosa significa, in termini di costruzione di cittadinanza, essere nati in Italia da genitori stranieri? In che modo i genitori di origine immigrata educano i propri figli a diventare cittadini? E come agiscono pratiche di cittadinanza questi ragazzi (che la sociologia definisce "seconde generazioni", categoria non priva di ambiguità), che fanno continuamente esperienza di modelli culturali differenti?

Attraverso interviste ai genitori e ai figli, condotte in contesti territoriali differenti tra il 2005 e il 2008, sono stati esplorati tali processi e significati, per arrivare alla costruzione di una *grounded theory* sui processi di costruzione della cittadinanza, assunta in questo contesto non tanto come uno status o una condizione giuridica (che nel nostro paese si acquista per *ius sanguinis*), quanto piuttosto come *lived experience*, in cui prevale una dimensione soggettiva, che pur restando legata al contesto in cui si colloca, apre ad una dimensione pedagogica ed educativa.

Lo scopo di questo contributo è fare luce, attraverso l'individuazione di modelli educativi, di stili genitoriali e situazioni relative al contesto sociale, sulle condizioni che facilitano i genitori stranieri nella realizzazione di percorsi di cittadinanza e nella creazione delle premesse affinché anche i propri figli possano costruire ed attivare proprie pratiche di cittadinanza.

### **To Be Born in Italy by a Foreign Family. Processes of Citizenship Building**

Nowadays the presence of people of non-Italian origin structurally characterized the composition of our society and our schools, now equipped for the reception of pupils of foreign origin during the course of the year.

The birth and, above all, the education of children, have led many immigrants to rethink their migration, progressively abandoning the idea of returning to their homeland in a relatively short time and stabilizing its presence in Italy, which becomes the place where their children grow and socialize with peers; it is the very fabric of society that is profoundly changed and made more complex by plural experiences in terms of culture and language, questioning boundaries, symbols and identities.

What does it mean in terms of building citizenship, being born in Italy to foreign parents? How do parents of immigrant origin educate their children to become citizens? And how do they act practices of citizenship these guys (that sociology calls "second generation" category, which is not unambiguous), which make continually experience of cultural models?

Through interviews with parents and children, conducted in different territorial contexts between 2005 and 2008 such processes and meanings have been explored, to get to the construction of a grounded theory on the processes of construction of citizenship, taken in this context as much as status or legal status (which in our country is purchasing on *ius sanguinis*), but rather as a lived experience, which is a largely a subjective dimension, which while remaining linked to the context in which it appears, opens to a pedagogical and educational dimension.

The purpose of this paper is to shed light, through the identification of educational models of parenting styles and situations related to the social context, the conditions that facilitate foreign parents in the creation of pathways to citizenship and to create the conditions so that even their children can build and activate their citizenship practices.

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### **Challenging grand narratives in teacher education**

One important aspect of intercultural education, often overlooked, is the emotional aspect of learning that occurs for example when ethnocentric preconceptions and values are confronted and deconstructed (cf. Gundara 2000; Lahdenperä 2004; Pihl 2002). In these processes interrogating and deconstructing predominant grand narratives and the creation of counter narratives are vital (cf. Ladson-Billings 1998; Zamudio et al 2011). From an intercultural perspective, this paper discusses the issue of national grand narratives and how to challenge hegemonic monocultural and monolingual discourses and develop teacher students' awareness of their own agency.

The study took place in a teacher education programme in 2008 (spring and autumn) and 2009 (spring), where the students explored the experiences of the five historical national minorities (Sami, Tornedalers, Swedish Finns, Roma and Jews) in Sweden, especially in relation to language and education. The students' answers from an optional questionnaire (N= 192) at the end of the course about the course content are the main source for the analysis.

Discovering the sufferings of the national minorities through their history, language oppression together with discrimination and racism in school contexts, was in many cases completely new knowledge to the students and made a strong impact on them, especially emotionally. The study indicates that through exploring the historical and present situation of the minorities', awareness about their agency to transform classroom practices and the life opportunities of their future pupils developed among the students. Furthermore, the implications of the study are that a course concerning the national minorities can act in favour an inclusion of not only minority pupils but also new migrant groups in school contexts.

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### **Multicultural Challenges at the Door of Polish Schools.**

#### **What is the Level of Polish Teachers' Intercultural Competence?**

Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman while opening European Culture Congress in Wrocław, Poland (2011) quoted Hans Georg Gadamer, who believed that "Europe's task consists of passing on to all the art of everyone learning from everyone". This is our mission and destiny. German philosopher was also convinced that "who has the language, has the world". In other words who wants to broaden his knowledge about himself and about "Others", who tries to learn about them as much as he can through differences and similarities to his own culture, who opens himself to the abundance of diversity, broadens his horizon of cognition (experiences "fusion of horizons" through a partnership dialogue). Deeper communication enables people to better understanding and to undertake common enterprises.

We need an intercultural competence which is understood as a responsible acting in unknown situations (Gadotti, Illeris 2009, Lewowicki 2012, Nikitorowicz 2009, 2010). Its development becomes a social must.

Are we prepared to contemporary multiculturalism? (Portera 2008)

Throughout many centuries Poland used to be a multicultural, multinational and multiethnic society. We knew how to cooperate and live together, and how to make our state flourishing. Our ancestors used to say: "Guest at home – God at home". Such attitude helped us to undertake dialogue in intercultural dimensions. After wars and political decisions our country has changed in shape. Some groups of people do not live in Poland any more or are represented by minorities. So we don't experience a real multiculturalism now.

Comparing with other European countries we have a monocultural state. According to Eurostat data foreigners make only 0,1% of our population but we are aware of changes. People from Ukraine, China, Vietnam, Byelorussia, India, Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Kazakhstan come to live in Poland. Children of those foreigners will soon attend Polish schools.

So the questions arises how effectively prepare Polish teachers to intercultural processes? It needs good diagnosis based on empirical investigation. The research inspired by books of Joy de Leo and Edgar Morin, or on "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue" brings interesting results. It shows the real degree of intercultural skills and declared competences of Polish teachers. It also reveals what we have to improve. Fortunately being at the beginning of multicultural classroom challenges, we may consciously prepare ourselves using experiences (developed methods, strategies) of educators from other countries.

**Denni ROMOLI**

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#### **Il counselling interculturale di gruppo in una comunità per l'infanzia: un'esperienza basata su un modello clinico integrativo**

Il presente contributo si riferisce a una prospettiva di integrazione teorica nel counselling psicologico di gruppo con un team di educatori. Essa è fondata sulla consilienza come confronto e dialogo tra saperi provenienti da campi conoscitivi diversi. La base teorica dell'intervento è l'integrazione di quattro dimensioni: Evolutività, Affettività, Intersoggettività, Esperienzialità (Menoni e Iannelli, 2011). Esse sono intrecciate nei processi di sviluppo, di riparazione e di adattamento secondo un'epistemologia complessa del sistema mente-cervello-corpo. Viene presentato un modello integrativo di counselling di gruppo, nello specifico una supervisione a un'équipe educativa che opera in una struttura residenziale per bambini (0-6 anni), di origine italiana, nordafricana e asiatica. La supervisione ha portato alla revisione del modello di lavoro della comunità educativa. Essa è stata attuata seguendo due direttrici tra loro interconnesse: a) la trasmissione di contenuti sulla psicologia e sulla psicopatologia dello sviluppo e b) l'implementazione della consapevolezza individuale e di gruppo delle funzioni e della qualità della relazione educatore-bambino. Successivamente viene illustrata la storia clinica di un bambino di origine nord-africana, nella quale è messa in luce l'interrelazione tra sapere esplicito e implicito. Inoltre, vengono evidenziati elementi fondanti la relazione d'aiuto. Essi sono: la creazione di un ambiente relazionale sicuro e validante, la consonanza e co-regolazione affettiva, la condivisione esperienziale di affettività positiva e narrazioni e la personalizzazione dell'intervento. Tali elementi sono centrali nella promozione del benessere e hanno carattere di universalità, poiché afferiscono a dimensioni umane specie-specifiche di sviluppo e riparazione. Essi sono in inscindibile rapporto con le peculiarità antropologiche e culturali. Sono fornite, infine, indicazioni per la formazione di personale che lavora in contesti multiculturali con bambini in condizioni di rischio clinico.

## **Intercultural group counselling in a foster home: an experience based on an clinical integrative model**

This contribution refers to a perspective of theoretical integration in the psychological group counseling with an educational team. It based on consilience as a debate and dialogue between theories coming from different fields of knowledge. Our model is based on the integration of four dimensions: Evolution, Affect, Intersubjectivity, Experience (Menoni & Iannelli, 2011). They are interwoven with the processes of development, repair, adaptation, according to a complex epistemology of mind-brain-body system. An integrative model of group counseling is presented, in particular a supervision to an educational team that works in a foster home for Italian, north African and Asian children (0-6 years). The supervision has brought to the revision and enhancement of the professional model of the educational community. It has been realized following two guidelines interconnected each other: a) the transmission of contents about developmental psychology and psychopathology; b) the increase of the personal and the group awareness of the functions and the quality of the relationship between educator and children. Later it will be presented and discussed the clinical history of a North African child, with a focus on the interrelationship between explicit and implicit knowledge. Furthermore, the fundamental elements of the helping relationship will be stressed. They are: a safe and supportive environment of "good enough" relationships, the affective attunement and co-regulation, the sharing of experiences of positive affectivity and narratives and the personalization of the intervention. These elements, central in the promotion of the well-being, are universal, because they refer to the human species-specific developmental and repair processes. They are in an interwoven relationship with anthropologic and cultural features. Finally, will be given some indications for the training of the teams who work in multicultural contexts with children in condition of clinical risk.

### **Gladys ROWE**

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### **Michael HART**

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### **Kimberly HART**

*University of Manitoba, Canada*

## **Stories are all that we are: Re-connecting with Ancestral and Personal Stories towards Indigenous Well-Being**

Historical trauma has many impacts such as internalized oppression, a narrative of violence, shame, guilt, anger, disconnection, exclusion and hopelessness. Experiences of continued colonization in Canada has created disconnection from ancestral continuity stories that ground us. Generations of Indigenous peoples are working towards healing from these disconnections beginning with the fundamental question "who am I"? This journey of who we are, how we understand our identity links directly to personal wellbeing, balance and growth are essential to facilitating journeys of wellbeing in practice. Canadian Indigenous nations use stories and storytelling to express and convey Indigenous knowledges. Methods also include experiential knowings, reconnection with ceremonies, and inward knowledges such as dream work. Ancestral stories work to transfer culture, identity, and a sense of membership. Personal stories situate us. Sharing our stories supports authenticity, inclusiveness and belonging. Stories are how people find connections in common experiences despite circumstances that attempt to foster disconnection, individuality and exclusion. However, we are connected, we are in relation with everything and everyone around us – and because of this our individual healing and transformation directly impacts all our relations. This is a process to engage in decolonization and reconnection, in order to re-centre Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing in personal healing. This presentation is based upon a search for understanding identity within the stories of Cree Elders and other mixed-blood Cree individuals experiencing identity disconnections utilizing natural conversations (Kovach, 2010). Stories provide a means to authentic reconnection and reclamation and work towards healing and decolonization. Implications and potential of the incorporation and honouring of stories as a means of individual identity healing and decolonization in counselling practice will be explored.

### **Claudia RUITENBERG**

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## **Hospitality in Education: A Universal Ethic for Particular Contexts?**

In previous work I have argued that an ethic of hospitality, as elaborated by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, is a powerful ethic to frame parents' and teachers' responsibilities to welcoming chil-

dren into this world. The question I address in this paper is how culturally specific the ethic of hospitality is, and how this might affect culturally diverse educational contexts. Although Derrida does not argue that hospitality is an ethic relevant only for particular hosts and guests in particular places and times, his take on hospitality is undeniably informed by Jewish philosophy and his own Jewish background. So how does an ethic of hospitality hold up to cultural differences in conceptions of hospitality, and to culturally diverse contexts of education?

Even if hospitality is offered without an expectation of reciprocity and without provisos and limitations, the context in which a place is offered to an *arrivant* still conditions hospitality. Derrida insists that hospitality needs to be offered to a particular guest, not to “any guest,” substitutable for another one, which means it must inevitably be offered in a particular place, at a particular time, in particular ways. How do this place and time affect what hospitality it is possible and necessary to offer? And what to do when the newcomer’s understanding of hospitality differs from the host’s? In this paper I turn my attention to the cultures and circumstances of hospitality. In culturally diverse educational contexts, it is quite possible that a teacher or school administrator believes he or she is receiving a student hospitably, but that the student in question does not perceive that a place is being offered where he or she may arrive.

I discuss how laws and conventions of hospitality are related to the hostility of the environment—in the ocean or the desert, it is almost impossible not to offer hospitality—in order to consider the relative hostility of the world to students of different backgrounds, and the demands of hospitality this produces. I also discuss how language shapes the hospitality that can be offered and received. Since language is, as Derrida reminds us, not merely a “linguistic operation” but an “ethos,” the language in which education is conducted shapes and limits the hospitality offered to students who may speak different languages. How may Derrida’s ethic of “leaving a place for the other to come if he comes” inform and provoke particular educational contexts?

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**Aurora VESTRI**

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### **Non dimentichiamole**

#### **Servizio di sostegno alle famiglie di persone detenute nella C.C. di Prato “Maliseti”**

Il carcere è percepito come un contesto completamente separato dalla società. Gettato il mostro in prima pagina entro il carcere, la società si sente legittimata a dimenticarsi di lui. Il presente lavoro vuole evidenziare una realtà diversa. Entro il carcere c'è un'intera popolazione che soffre per i parenti che rimangono fuori ad aspettarli. In particolare la nostra attenzione si rivolge alle famiglie dei detenuti.

Effettuata una disamina delle difficoltà dei familiari dei detenuti, descriveremo le forme di disagio psicologico manifestato dai figli privati di un genitore quando quest'ultimo è privato della libertà personale. Per offrire un supporto ai familiari dei detenuti, abbiamo istituito un counseling-center.

Obiettivi e rilevanza con i temi della Conferenza. Il presente lavoro illustrerà le specificità del servizio, tenendo conto di una serie di fattori che caratterizzano la popolazione a cui il servizio si rivolge: interculturalità, diversa estrazione sociale, valori sottoculturali. Sarà inoltre evidenziata la necessità di integrare servizi penitenziari e territoriali attualmente scotomizzati.

Target dell'intervento. Operatori sociosanitari penitenziari e territoriali

### **We can't forget prisoners' families**

#### **Support service to the prisoners' families of Prato**

The prison is conceived like something completely separated from the rest of the society. When a man enter in a prison, the society forget him. This work want to change this reality, because in prison people are worried for their family. After a careful analysis of prisoners' families trouble, we want to find and describe the different form of psychological hardship of the sons who have their parents in prison. That's why we decided to create a counseling-center.

The objective and the most important subjects of the conference: this work want to show the objective of this service which will make attention to several features of the population: muticulturalism, walks of life, etc. We want also underline the importance of increasing prison services and territorial services.

**Margarita SANCHEZ MAZAS**

*University of Geneva, Switzerland*

**Aneta MECHI**

*University of Geneva, Switzerland*

### **From biases to socio-cognitive flexibility: A training device for teaching in intercultural school settings**



The main objective of our current research is to develop a training program for secondary teachers based on the cross-domain approach of problematic learning situations in multicultural contexts. It addresses mainly categorization and attribution processes and several other biases in teachers' perception and interpretations that may interfere with appropriate responses to complex educational situations. The training program aims at developing a social cognitive flexibility approach to enable teachers to deal with problematic situations (such as pupils' intergroup processes, learning difficulties, academic failure, social and cultural identity dynamics) often perceived as stemming from either the individual or his/her socio-cultural background, according to the fundamental or ultimate attribution error (Ross, 1977, Pettigrew, 1979, Pansu, Dompnier & Bressoux, 2005). After the definition of the key concepts and the explanation of the training methods, qualitative and quantitative data collected for the purpose of testing the efficiency of the training device (e.g. through social-cognitive flexibility indicators and content analysis of real situation accounts) will be presented. They will be discussed in the light of a theoretical and pedagogical approach grounded on social psychology whose relevance will be stressed in the field of intercultural education.

The contribution will be supported by a power point presentation and followed by a discussion. It could be of interest for academics as well as for a teachers' audience.

### **Nadia SANSONE**

*Psicologa Counsellor, Scuola Superiore 'Seminari Romani di Analisi transazionale', Italy*

#### **Mamme in attesa, una costruzione condivisa**

Negli ultimi decenni specifica attenzione è stata data a quel tempo nella vita di una donna che precede il parto; quest'attenzione ha in genere riguardato aspetti prevalentemente medici o inerenti il cambiamento fisico. Sempre più le neo-mamme manifestano disagi e malesseri legati alla maternità, accompagnati dalla difficoltà di chiedere aiuto e inseriti in un contesto dove manca un supporto in termini di rete. L'Analisi Transazionale offre un quadro teorico e un sistema di interventi utili ad elaborare una risposta a questi bisogni. Partendo dal nucleo concettuale, nonché quadro interpretativo degli Stati dell'Io di Berne, si pone l'accento sul dialogo interno tra Bambino e Genitore e su quello esterno col genitore storico e il bambino immaginato. La capacità di ricostruire e ampliare le modalità di questi dialoghi preludono la riconciliazione tra le parti di sé, oltre che una nascita vissuta in modo autentico e libera da auto-inganni. Nasce così il progetto "Mamme in attesa, una costruzione condivisa": un percorso di counselling socio-educativo per mamme in attesa. L'obiettivo del progetto è di facilitare l'esplorazione condivisa di sentimenti, comportamenti e pensieri riguardanti la gravidanza, favorendo il riconoscimento dei propri bisogni e l'espressione delle proprie emozioni. Le destinatarie sono mamme italiane e straniere residenti nella Provincia di Roma che aderiscono al percorso volontariamente. Il servizio si struttura in incontri periodici di gruppo che si svolgono sia di persona che online, attraverso un forum riservato alle sole mamme del progetto. Nel corso degli incontri, particolare attenzione viene dedicata al tema dell'integrazione multiculturale e dell'individuazione di un terreno comune come possibilità di uno spazio condiviso in cui costruire la propria maternità. Attraverso una modalità che integra momenti teorici con momenti applicativi, le future mamme da un lato riceveranno informazioni rispetto al momento vissuto e legate al tema dei cambiamenti in corso, delle fantasie nutrite, del riconoscimento dei propri sentimenti; dall'altro avranno a disposizione uno spazio protetto in cui poter esprimere le proprie paure e i propri bisogni, rileggendo il dialogo interiore alla luce del confronto col gruppo. Esercitazioni e momenti formativi collaborativi contribuiranno alla formazione di una rete di supporto in cui ciascuna donna, nel rispetto e nella ricchezza offerta dalle diverse culture d'origine, potrà riscoprire e costruire la propria maternità.

#### **Pregnant Women, a Shared Construction**

During last decades, a peculiar attention has been given to that time in the life of a woman that forerun childbirth; although this focus has generically regarded mainly medical aspects or ones concerning physical change. More and more new moms express awkwardness and discomfort related to maternity, along with the difficulty of asking for help, locked in a context missing a support in terms of networking. Transactional Analysis offers a theoretical framework and a system of interventions useful to work an answer out to these needs. Starting from Berne's Ego states, conceptual core and interpretative framework as well, the interior dialogue between Child and Parent and the external one between historical parent and imagined child will be stressed. The ability to reconstruct and widen modalities of these dialogues prelude to reconciliation of the parts of self, besides a birth authentically experienced, free from self-deceit. This is the background on which the project "Moms expecting, a shared buildup" is rooted: a social-educational counselling path for moms expecting. The objective of the project is to ease shared exploration of feelings, behaviors and thoughts on pregnancy, fostering recognition of own needs and expression of own emotions. Addressees are both Italian and foreign moms living in Rome area subscribing to this path voluntarily. The service is structured as periodical group meetings taking place both in person and online, via a private, dedicated forum open to moms from project only. During meetings a great deal

of attention is given to the themes of multicultural integration and identification of a common ground as a possibility for a shared space where build their own maternity. The modality will complement spaces for theory and times for practice. Moms-to-be will have information on the time they are living and related to themes of currently happening changes, fantasies nourished, recognition of their own feelings. Moreover, they will have at their disposal a protected space where to express their fears and their needs, reinterpreting interior dialogue in the light of the dialogue with group. Practice and learning moments will contribute to building a support network where each woman, respecting the richness and variety of each one's home culture, will have the chance to rediscover and build up her own maternity.

**Milena SANTERINI**

*Universita' Cattolica di Milano, Italy*

**Le competenze interculturali nel lavoro educativo**

Insegnanti, educatori ed operatori che lavorano in contesti caratterizzati dalla diversità, come le scuole e le classi eterogenee, sono sempre più "obbligati" ad incrementare le loro competenze. Nell'ambito delle professioni sociali e educative, il paradigma della competenza viene concepito come occasione di riflessività e di trasformazione "in situazione" (Schon 1983, Mezirow 1991, Le Boterf 1999, Perrenoud 2000). In questo senso, la formazione degli educatori in campo interculturale deve essere basata sullo sviluppo delle competenze anziché sulla trasmissione di conoscenze. La logica interculturale, infatti, per le sue caratteristiche di storicità, soggettività, dinamicità, contestualizzazione, potenzialità interpretativa (Abdallah Preteille 1990, Ouellet 1992, Porcher 1998, Santerini 2003) richiede una circolarità riflessiva tra l'evidenza culturale e la sua interpretazione da parte degli operatori e degli insegnanti. La comunicazione presenterà gli sviluppi di una ricerca svolta tra 45 insegnanti e educatori della Lombardia in cui sono state argomentati e discussi 74 episodi a carattere interculturale. Dalla ricerca emerge come per individuare, descrivere, valutare, formarsi alle competenze interculturale occorre non redigere o arricchire repertori ed inventari ma concentrare l'attenzione sulla concretezza dell'agire dei professionisti. La ricerca ha permesso di incrementare lo sviluppo delle loro competenze, che avviene essenzialmente per via esperienziale, trasformando i fatti lavorativi in apprendimenti, nonché di suggerire nuovi modelli per la formazione iniziale e in servizio.

**Intercultural Competences in Educational Work**

Teachers, educators and professionals working in contexts characterised by diversity, such as heterogeneous schools and classes, are more and more "compelled" to increase their competences. Within social and educational professions the paradigm of competence is perceived as a chance for reflection and transformation "in action" (Schon 1983, Mezirow 1991, Le Boterf 1999, Perrenoud 2000). That is the reason why the training of educators in the intercultural field must be based on the development of competences rather than on the transmission of knowledge. Intercultural logic has certain characteristics: historicity, subjectivity, dynamism, contextualization, potentiality of interpretation (Abdallah Preteille 1990, Ouellet 1992, Porcher 1998, Santerini 2003) and therefore requires a reflective circularity between the cultural evidence and its interpretation by professionals and teachers. The report will show the developments of a research carried out among 45 teachers and educators in Italy (Lombardia), where 74 "intercultural episodes" have been debated and discussed. The research shows how, in order to find, describe, evaluate, train oneself to intercultural competence, it is necessary not to edit or enrich catalogues and archives but to concentrate one's attention on the professionals' concrete work. The research has not only allowed the professionals to increase the development of their competences - which essentially takes place through experience, thus transforming the working facts in learning - but it has also suggested new models for the initial and in-service training.

**Wissya SANTONI**

*Psicologa – Psicoterapeuta, IACP, Italy*

**Oriente e Occidente si diedero la mano: il confronto tra la Psicoterapia Centrata sul Cliente e la filosofia buddista**

Il nostro secolo è caratterizzato da una crisi globale che, a causa del dominio della tecnologia sull'ambiente naturale, minaccia gravemente il benessere psicofisico. Lo studio delle dinamiche che sono alla base di questi problemi risultano essere sguardi ristretti su realtà sistemiche in cui tutto è interconnesso e interdipendente (Epstein, 1995). Per comprendere questa crisi multidimensionale risulta necessario esaminare la situazione come un processo dell'evoluzione culturale umana. Utilizzando questa prospettiva, la crisi può essere tradotta come un elemento di trasformazione. Il disagio dell'anima è, nel particolare, una crisi che coinvolge il piano intellettuale, emotivo, morale e spirituale. Rogers (1961) ne delinea le caratteristiche usando il termine "incongruenza", ossia "la discrepanza e il disaccordo fra la percezione che il soggetto ha di sé e quanto sperimenta a livello organismico". In questo momento di

squilibrio tra forze razionali-mentali (la percezione) ed energie emozionali-intuitive (l'esperienza organica) si insinua la causa del disagio e l'inizio della crisi. La cura di questo disagio si struttura spesso all'interno di una relazione d'aiuto, che ha lo scopo di facilitare l'altro a vivere quello che sente a livello cognitivo, emotivo e spirituale. Affinché la relazione sia curativa, secondo Rogers (1957), il cliente e il terapeuta devono essere in contatto tra loro all'interno di una situazione in cui l'uno si trova in uno stato di incongruenza e l'altro vive ed esprime empatia, accettazione positiva incondizionata e congruenza. Gli insegnamenti buddisti della tradizione Mahayana insegnano a recuperare la salute mentale attraverso le pratiche della consapevolezza, della gentilezza amorosa e dell'integrità (Kornfield, 2008). Nel buddismo il concetto di cura equivale a purificare il proprio corpo, le emozioni e i pensieri negativi e a comprendere le ragioni profonde e i significati delle proprie azioni per evolvere umanamente e spiritualmente (Epstein, 1995).

Alla luce di quanto detto, la psicoterapia e la spiritualità sembrano avere un obiettivo comune: la costruzione di un percorso che, creando equilibrio tra fare ed essere, tra sapere e sentire, conduca l'individuo verso uno spazio di vita pienamente vissuta perché guidata dall'esperienza e dalla percezione individuale (Molino, 1998).

Nella presentazione verranno esplorati i punti di contatto tra la Psicoterapia Centrata sul Cliente di Rogers e gli insegnamenti buddisti, per confermare la necessità di aprirsi a una nuova cultura che si interessi della salute globale della persona e che, nello specifico, si prenda cura del disagio psicologico secondo una prospettiva olistica che comprenda elementi cognitivi, emotivi e spirituali.

### **East and West Shake their Hands: a Comparison Between the Client-Centered Therapy and the Buddhist Philosophy**

Our century is characterized by a global crisis which heavily threatens our psycho-physical wellness due to a dominance of technology over our natural environment. Studying the dynamics which are on the basis of these problems results in a limited point of view on systemic realities in which everything is interconnected and interdependent (Epstein, 1995). In order to understand this multidimensional crisis it's necessary to examine the situation as a process of the human cultural evolution. From this perspective, crisis can be seen as a transformational element.

Spirit unease is, in particular, a crisis which involves the intellectual, emotional, ethical and spiritual levels. Rogers (1961) outlines its characteristics by using the term "incongruity", meaning "the discrepancy and disagreement between the patient's self concept and what he goes through at organismic level." In this moment of imbalance between rational-mental forces (perception) and emotional-intuitive energies (the organismic experience), the cause of the unease and the beginning of the crisis creep in. The treatment of this disorder often revolves around counseling, since it can help the subject understand what he or she feels at an emotional, spiritual and cognitive level. According to Rogers (1957), for this relationship to be therapeutic, the client and therapist need to be in contact within a situation where the former finds his or herself in a state of incongruence and the latter experiences and demonstrates empathy, positive unconditional acceptance and congruence. Mahayan Buddhist teachings show how to retrieve mental health through the practices of awareness, affectionate kindness and integrity (Kornfield, 2008). Buddhism Care Concept means to purify one's own body, emotions and negative thoughts and to understand one's own profound reasons and personal actions, in order to evolve both humanly and spiritually (Epstein, 1995).

In the light of all this, psychotherapy and spirituality seem having a common aim: building a path through which a subject can achieve a full experienced life, guided by experience and individual perception, by creating a balance between doing and being, knowing and feeling (Molino, 1998).

In this presentation we will explore the common points between Rogers' Person-centered psychotherapy and Buddhist Teachings. The goal is to strengthen the need to open ourselves to a new culture interested in the global health of human beings and which, in particular, cares for psychological disorders from a holistic perspective, including cognitive, emotional and spiritual elements.

#### **Enrica SANTORUM**

*Medico - Neuropsichiatra infantile, ULSS20 Verona - U.O.C. Materno Infantile, Età Evolutiva e Famiglia, Neuropsichiatria Infantile, Italy*

**F. Borgognoni, E. Burbi, A. Castioni, F. Feltrin, L. Maccagnan, S. Mirandola, R. Zampieri, M. Brighenti**

*ULSS20 Verona*

#### **Minori Migranti: prima raccolta dati e riflessioni operative**

Unità Operativa Complessa Materno Infantile Età Evolutiva e Famiglia, Neuropsichiatria Infantile D1 dell'Azienda ULSS20 di Verona, Direttore Maurizio Brighenti

Gruppo di lavoro sulle tematiche migratorie

L'UOC Materno Infantile Età Evolutiva e Famiglia, Neuropsichiatria Infantile D1 dell'Azienda ULSS20 di Verona si rivolge a pazienti d'età compresa tra 0 e 18 anni che presentano disagi o patologie di tipo neu-

rologico, psichiatrico, psicologico e cognitivo. Il costante incremento dell'afferenza di famiglie migranti all'interno del Servizio ha, quindi, richiesto l'introduzione di alcune modifiche nel percorso diagnostico e terapeutico. Nell'UOC dal 2005 è stata attivata un'equipe multiprofessionale, attualmente denominata *Gruppo di lavoro sulle tematiche migratorie*, con competenze specifiche in ambito etnopsichiatrico. Nel corso del 2012 è stato condotto uno studio epidemiologico sui i primi accessi al Servizio di minori stranieri negli anni 2010 – 2011, rilevando le aree di provenienza, il motivo della richiesta e la diagnosi. I dati epidemiologici rilevati hanno permesso di analizzare alcune caratteristiche specifiche della popolazione migrante rispetto alle caratteristiche del totale dei minori. Inoltre, hanno aperto la riflessione sulla necessità di fornire informazioni più chiare e plurilingue sul servizio a questa tipologia di utenza numericamente significativa, nonché istituzionalizzare la collaborazione con i mediatori culturali per offrire la possibilità di una consultazione multiprofessionale e multiculturale. I dati hanno permesso anche di affinare un dispositivo clinico in grado di rispondere in modo efficace ed efficiente ai bisogni di cura dei minori migranti e delle loro famiglie che si rivolgono al Servizio, ricercando tecniche e strumenti di intervento "altro" che favoriscano le cure e, nello stesso tempo, promuovano l'integrazione, contribuendo così a un migliore utilizzo e ad una maggiore efficacia delle cure stesse. Infine, è emersa l'opportunità di implementare ulteriormente la collaborazione con le agenzie e i servizi del territorio che a vario titolo si occupano di minori stranieri (scuola, servizi socio sanitari, privato sociale) al fine di sperimentare insieme percorsi innovativi.

### **Migrant Minors: First Data Collection and Reflections**

The "UOC Materno Infantile Età Evolutiva e Famiglia, Neuropsichiatria Infantile Ulss20" (operating unit for children, adolescents and family, neuropsychiatry) in Verona is a service for patients aged between 0 to 17 years, who present discomfort or neurological, psychiatric, psychological or cognitive diseases. In line with the national trend, in our service we have observed a progressive increase in the demand for assistance from migrant families; this fact has highlighted the gaps and the critical points in our care system when dealing with different cultures and this has motivated changes in the diagnostic and therapeutic paths. Since 2005 we have activated a multiprofessional team in our UOC known as the "*working group in migratory themes*", with specific skills in ethnopsychiatric field. During 2012 the working group carried out a first epidemiological study related to foreign patients who accessed the service in 2010-2011, recording the area of origin, the reason for the request and the diagnosis. The epidemiological data collected have allowed us to analyze some characteristics of the migrant families and their children in the geographical area of our service. The data have also led us to refine clinical practice in order to respond effectively and efficiently to the care needs of migrant patients and their families, searching for new techniques and tools for a different assumption, in a cross-cultural perspective, to experiment with more innovative ways and respectful therapeutic modalities and promote integration together. Moreover, the results of the study have highlighted the need both to provide multilingual and more comprehensive information to this large migrant population as well as an improved collaboration with cultural mediators in order to offer a multiprofessional and cross-cultural approach. Finally, the study has underlined the importance of an increased cooperation with agencies, local services and associations that work with migrants in different ways (schools, health services, recreational and educational services) in order to experiment innovative approaches together.

**Laura SELMO**

*Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca*

**Jole ORSENIGO**

*Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca*

### **"Quale democrazia nel tempo attuale? Teoria e pratica per la costruzione di una società attiva e multiculturale"**

Che cosa significa democrazia nel nostro tempo? Siamo di fronte a una crisi della democrazia? E l'educazione può ancora essere uno strumento importante per creare una società democratica? Questo contributo di carattere teorico si pone come obiettivo quello di rispondere a queste domande attraverso un approccio storico e filosofico. Inserendosi nel dibattito scientifico attorno al tema dell'educazione alla cittadinanza attiva e dell'educazione interculturale vuole esplorare il rapporto tra democrazia ed educazione, attraverso anche la descrizione di alcune metodologie educative, quali il *service-learning* e il *community engagement*, volte a realizzare in concreto questo connubio.

### **Which Democracy? Theory and Practice to Build Up an Active and Multicultural Society**

What does democracy mean in our time? Is there a crisis of democracy? And can education still be an important instrument to create a democratic society?

The aim of this theoretical paper is to answer these questions through a historical and philosophical study. It explores the relationship between democracy and education in this time and in a multicultural

context and it describes also some educational methodologies such as the service-learning and community engagement.

**Dasha SHALIMO**

*Sheridan Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning, Canada*

**Early Childhood Education Programs from an Intercultural Perspective: Conceptual Unity and Practical Discrepancy**

The workshop will extend on Bennett's (2005) ideas by bringing practical insight to the two approaches using North American and European Approaches as examples. It will elucidate the latest changes that have occurred in structure and delivery of some North American approaches. It will discuss how implementation of pre-primary and/or social pedagogy approaches support the child's democratic right to actively participate in program curriculum design and in community life. In other words, the workshop, using the method of deconstruction, will involve the audience into dialogue on how democracy, citizenship, equity and student/child engagement is supported through implementation of pre-primary and/or social pedagogy approaches.

This workshop fits best under strand 7: Democracy, citizenship, equity and student engagement and will make a contribution in proliferation of the children's participatory rights in the early childhood curriculum design and implementation. This workshop also connects to issues of interculturalism as it focuses on programs from different cultural contexts and the way they interact with each other.

The presentation will target teacher and academics audience providing interactive environment supportive of the open discussion and constructive dialogue.

**Yael SHARAN**

*GRIP Group Investigation Projects, Israel*

**Cooperative Learning and the Culturally Sensitive Classroom**

As classrooms around the world become increasingly diverse, more and more teachers turn to cooperative learning as the most appropriate mode of instruction. Due to the constant refinement of cooperative learning practice, supported by ongoing research, it has become accepted as one of the "best practices" in education in general and in the heterogeneous classroom in particular. A careful look at cooperative learning principles and methods reminds us of their compatibility with the "fundamental needs of human development" that Portera (1998) outlined as a base for the intercultural classroom.

CL was born of great respect for individual differences and always viewed the classroom as heterogeneous. Even CL's ancestry is heterogeneous – it was born to several "parents:" Dewey, Lewin, and Deutsch, to name a few.

As a generic and diversified pedagogy CL emphasizes the potential contribution each individual child can make to learning, and reaches out to the field of intercultural education with an offer to establish a reciprocal relationship. We'll discuss how to activate this relationship in the classroom, explore a few of the ways culture affects learning and set out some guidelines for teaching in the culturally sensitive classroom.

**Yael SHARAN**

*GRIP Group Investigation Projects, Israel*

**Marialuisa DAMINI**

*Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy*

**Expanding cooperative learning through group investigation**

(Preconference Workshop)

Cooperative learning is a generic approach to teaching that has spawned a variety of methods and models to facilitate learning together in small groups so that everyone can participate in and contribute to attaining the group's goal. One of these models is Group Investigation (GI), where the content of the inquiry is determined in varying degrees by the diversity of students' interests, experiences and knowledge (Sharan, Y. & Sharan, S., 1992, 1999; Thelen, 1960, 1981).

Group Investigation is a cooperative learning model that integrates the process of academic inquiry with interaction and communication among learners. As learners take an active part in their inquiry in the course of a GI project, the classroom becomes a social system built on cooperation in learning within groups and on coordination of learning among groups. Group Investigation is applicable in any content area, whenever a multifaceted problem is identified that has more than one answers and/or source for its

resolution. GI is also aimed at students of all ages, in all grades, including college and university classrooms.

GI is consistently supported by research, with ongoing examination of its effectiveness in promoting academic achievement, social relations, acceptance of diversity and high-order thinking (Sharan, Y. & Sharan, S., 1992, 1999; Sharan, S., Sharan, Y. & Tan, I. 2012). A recent analysis of the literature on GI by Mitchell et al (2008) presents evidence of renewed interest in making the effects of GI known to a contemporary generation of teachers and researchers.

In this experiential workshop we will present the stages of the GI model and enable participants to experience a GI project by investigating several questions regarding the relevance of GI to the intercultural classroom: 1) How a GI project in the intercultural classroom can actively involve students' varied backgrounds and learning styles; 2) How the sharing of responsibilities for an investigation creates conditions that help students of different backgrounds and abilities gain status and acceptance among their peers; 3) Are GI or its components good vehicles for helping students and teachers realize that the different interests, backgrounds, values, and abilities of group members are in fact the group's greatest asset and enrich the class' pool of resources for expanding knowledge; 4) What adjustments and modifications can be made in the GI process in light of different cultural contexts?

### **Concetta SIRNA**

*Professore di Pedagogia, Presidente Associazione Pedagogica Italiana, As.Pe.I., Italy*

### **Chiara TERRANOVA**

*Supervisor in un Help Service, N.C.R. Serbia*

## **Competenze Interculturali e mondo del lavoro: la mobilità nelle imprese multinazionali come sfida alla costruzione identitaria**

I contesti globalizzati modificano la realtà lavorativa esigendo nuove competenze interculturali, necessarie per operare adeguatamente adattandosi alle onnipresenti differenze ed alle interdipendenze culturali reciproche. Nel mondo dei servizi e in quello imprenditoriale è ormai necessario un processo di formazione capace di aiutare a sviluppare una cultura organizzativa e manageriale in grado di valorizzare le diversità e gestire le conflittualità tipiche dei gruppi multiculturali. Un caso particolare è quello collegato con le ricorrenti attività di delocalizzazione delle aziende multinazionali, sempre alla ricerca di paesi dove sia più conveniente spostare i centri-servizi ma anche di personale con particolari capacità organizzative e gestionali. In esse i gruppi di lavoro sono generalmente caratterizzati da presenze multiculturali e multiethniche che operano in condizioni di perenne mobilità. Obbligate a rinegoziare continuamente il proprio status e in situazione di stressante competizione, queste persone rischiano di maturare un particolare vissuto di estraneità rispetto a tutti i contesti extra-aziendali, di volta in volta diversi, in cui sono costretti a spostarsi. Interagendo di volta in volta con culture diverse, spesso sono costrette ad utilizzare, sia nel lavoro che nella realtà familiare e sociale, una lingua appresa non coincidente né con quella materna né con quella del paese di residenza, che non hanno il tempo di imparare adeguatamente. Comprensibilmente, rifiutano di instaurare legami forti di integrazione con la cultura locale, nella consapevolezza di essere impossibilitati a radicarsi per molto tempo nei vari contesti in cui sono chiamati ad operare. Vivono la loro particolare condizione in modo contraddittorio e conflittuale: il *disagio*, legato al continuo sforzo di conoscenza e di adattamento, spesso si alterna alla *curiosità* ed all'eccitazione della scoperta/esplorazione delle novità positive/negative dei nuovi contesti, senza escludere periodi di forte *nostalgia* per il mondo perduto e la sensazione di *insicurezza* per l'assenza di legami e di prospettive stabili. La prospettiva di una maggiore mobilità lavorativa da svolgere in ambienti di vita culturalmente diversi rappresenta ormai la vera sfida per i processi di costruzione identitaria e per quelli di strutturazione delle relazioni familiari e sociali. Essa esige che la nuova generazione di giovani sviluppi un training interculturale adeguato che li renda meno fragili e più aperti al dialogo, attrezzati culturalmente, psicologicamente e spiritualmente per un lavoro ed una vita sociale molto più problematica ma anche più dinamica e ricca di prospettive e potenzialità esperienziali.

## **Intercultural Skills and Work: Relocation and mobility of multinational companies as a challenge for the construction of the identity processes**

The globalized contexts have been changing the working place by requiring new intercultural skills. Now it has become more and more necessary that every individual adapts to cultural differences and interdependencies. In the services and business world there is the need to develop an organizational and management culture in order to enhance cultural diversity and managing the multicultural groups typical conflicts. A special case is that one connected to the multinational companies relocation processes, always looking for countries where it is cheaper to move their service centres and personnel with specific organizational and managerial skills. In these groups generally works a staff who is characterized by many multicultural and multiethnic executives in recurrent mobility. They must continually renegotiate their status in a stressful competitive situation and develop a particular experience of alienation with re-

spect to different contexts outside the working place, because unknown to them. They interact from time to time with different cultures and they often have language difficulties because of the frequent changes of residence. The language spoken in the workplace is usually different from the language spoken in the host country, which does not have the time to learn. Understandably, they refuse to establish strong bonds of integration with the local culture, because they are aware to be unable to put down roots for a longer time in the various contexts in which they are called to work. They often live their particular condition in a contradictory and conflictual way: *discomfort*, related to the ongoing effort of knowledge and adaptation, *curiosity* and excitement of the discovery / exploration of new contexts, *strong nostalgia* for the lost world, *insecurity* due to the absence of ties and a stable outlook.

The need to constantly move to work in different countries has become a problem for many people, for their identity, for their families and for social relations. It requires that the new generation develops an appropriate intercultural training to make them less brittle and more open to dialogue, culturally, psychologically and spiritually equipped for a job and a social life much more difficult but also more dynamic and reach.

**Christine SLEETER**

*California State University, USA*

### **Multiculturalism and Education for Citizenship in a Context of Neoliberalism**

Globally, schools increasingly are grappling with how to address immigration, on top of ethnic diversity that is already part of the nation. In part, this is an academic problem (i.e., how to help immigrant and other ethnically diverse students to become academically successful, in the context of the dominant national language and culture). This is also a social problem: how to prepare immigrants as well as all students to relate to each other and become participatory members of a shared democratic society. It is the latter problem that I will address.

Educators as well as governmental leaders usually support the idea of citizenship education. However, in an analysis of goal statements for citizenship education, Cotton (2001) found that they tend to be lofty but vague, giving little guidance for pedagogy. Commonly educators interpret citizenship and cultural diversity through a taken-for-granted liberal or neoliberal lens. Conventional multicultural education, which I will critique, tends to assume a liberal conception of citizenship that is based on individualism and a simplistic analysis of how power works. I will argue that the growing reach of neoliberalism requires re-framing multicultural citizenship education. Neoliberalism can be understood as a “restoration of elite power” (Harvey, 2005) in which increased privatization and market competition is eroding a sense of the public, linking education more firmly to the needs of large corporations, and facilitating the flow of wealth and power to a small global elite.

After critiquing a liberal and neoliberal conceptions of citizenship and cultural diversity, I will frame multicultural citizenship education as a political project of social justice that embraces a diverse public, and that links local with global struggles for equity and human rights. As such, it offers a potential counter-narrative to neoliberal education, and a rich framework for considering citizenship. This framing suggests citizenship education as helping young people learn to name forms of injustice (as well as justice) in their own lives, and analyze their roots. It suggests helping young people learn to grapple with tensions between cultural diversity and human rights, and learn to hear multiple perspectives about complex social issues. Finally, it suggests engaging young people in active, collaborative democratic processes at the classroom, school, and community levels, in which they act on real equity issues they experience.

**Tholene SODI**

*University of Limpopo, South Africa*

### **Ethical Issues in Integrating Traditional Healing and Spirituality into Counselling and Psychotherapy**

In recent years, a growing number of voices in many developing countries have called for collaboration between traditional healers and western trained health care practitioners. Some of these calls have even advocated for the integration of traditional healing into counselling and psychotherapy given the potential value that is associated with some aspects of indigenous healing. Regardless of the form of collaboration that may develop between traditional healing and psychotherapy in different countries, it is evident that there are some ethical and professional issues that need to be considered. In this paper, the pertinent ethical issues (like human rights, respect for different cultural practices, intellectual property rights, education, etc.) associated with the collaboration between the two healing systems are explored. I also discuss these ethical and professional issues in the context of the inspirational ethical principles of non-maleficence, fidelity (and responsibility) and the respect for people’s rights and dignity. I conclude the paper by arguing that collaboration between the two healing traditions is possible only if there is mutual respect and commitment by traditional and western trained health practitioners

**Tholene SODI**

*University of Limpopo, South Africa*

### **Indigenous Healing Practices in Limpopo Province of South Africa: A Qualitative Study**

The aim of the study was to investigate traditional healing practices among the Venda and Tsonga speaking people of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study employed a qualitative design. Six traditional healers, selected through purposive sampling were asked to participate in the present study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. Seven themes emerged from the narratives of the six participants. The seven themes identified are: a) the process of becoming a traditional healer; b) family and community reactions to the chosen career; c) patients treated; d) types of illnesses treated; e) diagnostic procedures used; f) treatment methods used; and, g) the notion of ethics by traditional healers. The study puts in perspective the ethical issues of competence, dealing with minor children and confidentiality. Some of the challenges associated with collaboration between traditional healing the Western health care system are highlighted by the traditional healers.

**Chomphunut SRICHANNIL**

*University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom*

### **The conceptualisation of Buddhist counselling: The practitioners' perspective**

Buddhist counselling, a culturally responsive form of counselling in Thailand, is still under-researched and as such the way it operates has not been fully explored. This paper presents how a group of Buddhist counsellors conceptualise Buddhist counselling. A focus group was conducted with five counsellors who practise Buddhist counselling in Thailand. This was followed by a semi-structured individual interview with each counsellor. Transcripts of the focus group and interviews were analysed for recurrent themes using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), and the analyses of both individual interviews and focus group data were then combined. The findings revealed three interconnected themes: a) the relief of suffering as a main therapeutic goal; b) the process of tuning-in as pivotal; and c) the Four Noble Truths as a therapeutic map. These themes detail the main ingredients of Buddhist counselling, and so provide a greater understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of Buddhist counselling from the practitioners' perspectives. The findings are discussed in terms of the impact of Buddhist teachings on the participants' therapeutic practices. The paper concludes with the suggestion that bringing Buddhist teachings into therapy can be beneficial not only for the professional development, but also for the personal development of the practitioner.

**Suzanne STEWART**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Indigenous Traditional Healing: How are Traditional Knowledges used in Western Counselling and Psychotherapy?**

Indigenous mental health is considered a key area of concern across various disciplines worldwide. Traditional healing knowledges remain overlooked by Western health care systems, yet remain vital and successful resources for addressing contemporary mental health problems of all people, including trauma, depression, anxiety, and life-transitions needs. Current research by the author suggests that traditional knowledges based in traditional healing practices and medicines can be used in hybrid model of Indigenous counselling, psychotherapy, and assessment. A description of the important issues inherent to Aboriginal traditional healing and how these can be addressed by both academic researchers and clinical practitioners will be followed by concrete examples from qualitative studies examining the mental health supports of Canadian Indigenous peoples.

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## Growing up Global through Cosmopolitanism as Education

The proposed paper focuses on the need of deploying new educational strategies to cope with the challenges raised by contemporary scenarios of increasing mobility and, consequently, to address the needs of children at risk of exclusion for the lack of intercultural dialogue as a precondition for social cohesion. In particular, the stress will be upon what can be innovative approaches in school contexts. Indeed, in the transition to the new schooling context, immigrant children and minority groups often experience educational disadvantages and require particular support to fulfill their potential. For example, the EU highlights that the school performance of pupils with migrant background is lower than those of native pupils and stresses the need to revamp educational models and institutions accordingly. This requires to develop educational actions that can provide immigrant children and, more generally, children at risk of exclusion for the lack of intercultural dialogue (e.g. children belonging to cultural minorities) with cognitive and cultural tools which can support their learning and living and help them in achieving higher levels of inclusion and participation. On the other hand, these actions should provide resident children with dialogical and reflective competences that are the basis for the construction of a real cosmopolitan dialogue. Against this backdrop, the proposed paper will present the PEACE project which aims at promoting cosmopolitanism and global citizenship in primary school age children. The chief innovation of PEACE consists in fostering, by creating specific materials, philosophical communities of enquiry composed of children with different cultural roots. The approach to cosmopolitanism and intercultural dialogue in PEACE happens less through a mere working and living together than through the involvement of children into a philosophical dialogue, which improves children's ability of making sense of a "cosmopolitan reality" (Beck 2006). Philosophically making sense of the cosmopolitan reality is a way on the part of children of really growing up global (Sharp 2009) without remaining ensnared in children's characteristic "arrogance" (Eadem), that is, blindness to other ways of life, and, on the part of teachers of realizing cosmopolitanism as education (Hansen 2011; Oliverio 2012). The presentation is directed principally to teachers and academics and is deeply in tune with the main theme of the conference to the extent that it raises the issue of what education up to the reality of a global world should look like and it endeavours to provide one (possible) answer both at the theoretical and at the methodological level.

**Alessio SURIAN**

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**Giuseppe MANTOVANI**

*Università di Padova, Italy*

**Marwa MAHMUD**

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### Storia e intercultura come incontri di sguardi. Esempi di pratiche laboratoriali collaborative

L'articolo presenta alcune riflessioni sulle pratiche laboratoriali interculturali nelle scuole superiori a partire da esperienze promosse a Reggio Emilia dal Centro Mondinsieme. Tali pratiche vengono discusse nell'ambito di una breve e parziale rassegna di alcuni sviluppi recenti nell'insegnamento della geo-storia a livello internazionale ed, in particolare, quanto elaborato nei progetti Tuning, ed in progetti educativi di ampio respiro come Through Other Eyes (TOE).

In questo contesto appare particolarmente rilevante il lavoro volto a mettere in discussione la presunta superiorità del "nostro" mondo (Mantovani, 2012), e le sollecitazioni a immaginare futuri desiderabili di autori come Appadurai (2004) e Mignolo (2011), a favore di una svolta epistemologica "decoloniale".

L'articolo discute, quindi, i risultati di laboratori volti a tradurre le precedenti indicazioni teoriche in pratica all'interno di attività di educazione interculturale nelle scuole superiori italiane. Viene qui presa in esame l'esperienza di Mondinsieme, che nel processo didattico privilegia le esperienze degli studenti e ne facilita gli apprendimenti favorendo il confronto fra diverse prospettive narrative e attività collaborative all'interno del gruppo-classe. I laboratori hanno fatto ricorso ad educatori "esterni" alla scuola, a partire da un coordinamento con i docenti attraverso focus group iniziali che hanno messo in evidenza due esigenze:

1. sollecitare un coinvolgimento emotivo degli studenti nello studio della storia (liceo classico);
2. stimolare a percorsi di approfondimento e sviluppare una posizione critica rispetto ai fatti storici (istituto professionale).

Il percorso laboratoriale, attraverso strategie di cooperative learning e l'uso di strumenti multimediali, ha visto il gruppo-classe realizzare un prodotto finale con cui gli studenti esplicitano il proprio "sguardo", fatto di nuovi interrogativi e riflessioni critiche, applicato sia agli eventi storici esaminati, sia a processi umani più recenti che sottendono dinamiche conflittuali simili.

### History and interculture as worldviews sharing. Examples of collaborative workshop practice

The paper presents some initial reflections concerning intercultural education workshops as implement-

ed in Reggio Emilia secondary schools by Centro Mondinsieme. Such educational practice is being discussed in the framework of a brief review of recent developments in the teaching of geographical and historical curricula, drawing from international projects such as Tuning, and Through Other Eyes (TOE). Within such framework it seems particularly relevant to analyze and to make use of works that intend to discuss and to deconstruct assumed superiority of “our” world (Mantovani, 2012), as well as works that encourage to imagine desirable futures by authors such as Appadurai (2004) and the “epistemic disobedience” turn as outlined by authors such as Mignolo (2011).

The paper reviews and discusses the process and results of the workshops that made reference to such framework while introducing intercultural issues in Italian secondary schools. In particular, Centro Mondinsieme educational approach is learner centred. It gives priority to learners’ views and it facilitates learning by encouraging active listening to different narrative perspectives as well as collaborative peer activities. Centro Mondinsieme workshops introduced to the class “external” educators who work in close cooperation with the regular teachers on the basis of initial focus groups. Such focus groups highlighted two key issues:

1. the need to involve students at the affective level as well when it comes to study history topics (in the case of licee type secondary schools);
2. the need to generate in-depth analysis and to develop critical thinking concerning historical topics (in the case of vocational secondary schools).

Through a cooperative learning approach and the use of multimedia tools the workshops enabled secondary school classes to develop final products expressing students’ own views on the basis of new questions and critical reflection concerning both the historical topics they have been working with as well as recent events involving similar conflict dynamics.

**Roberto SWAZO**

*Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, USA*

**Dorota CELINSKA**

*Roosevelt University, College of Education, USA*

**Cutting Edge Practices to Teach Multicultural Competencies in Counseling, Psychology, and Education: Teaching Abroad or on Campus? (Workshop)**

This manuscript provides the results of a comparative study conducted in the U.S.A. with counseling, psychology, and education graduate students in which multicultural competencies were taught through explicit and implicit modes, with the latter utilizing both the traditional on campus and international study-abroad course formats. Data were collected via self-report (a 6-point Likert rating scale), permanent product analysis (rubrics for reaction journal and cultural activity paper), and a questionnaire (post-trip reflective evaluation). A total of seventy seven graduate students from diverse backgrounds were sampled through three semesters. The preliminary results indicate that, compared to peers taught through other course formats/modes, students enrolled in the international study abroad course report more willingness to learn about, and interact with diverse populations. Further, these students evidence more growth relative to empathy towards diverse clientele and insight into cultural viewpoints, as well as deeper understanding of own culturally-based biases. The manuscript provides the study results; an overview on how the faculty-led course abroad and the on campus course were taught and organized, along with the pros and cons of each course format and students’ perspectives on their experiences and personal growth. It also offers a list of recommendations for the professions of counseling, psychology, and education in terms of the cutting edge practices relative to implementation, instruction, and delivery of multicultural competencies.

**Massimiliano TAROZZI**

*Università di Trento, Italy*

**Formare insegnanti all'educazione alla giustizia sociale in contesti interculturali**

Molti studiosi concordano sul fatto che la formazione degli insegnanti è una questione fondamentale per dar corpo a un progetto di giustizia sociale e, in particolare, è di fondamentale importanza per la preparazione di insegnanti che si trovano a operare a contatto con la diversità culturale. Secondo Gramsci, gli insegnanti dovrebbero essere considerati come intellettuali trasformativi, il che significa che il profilo di un educatore non può essere ridotto ai codici normativi, definendolo in termini puramente strumentali o tecnici. Una formazione degli insegnanti intesi come intellettuali pubblici e impegnati riguarda non solo le loro conoscenze, le abilità e le competenze, ma soprattutto ha a che fare con la passione, l'impegno e la responsabilità etica. In definitiva la formazione degli insegnanti rivolta alla giustizia sociale non si riduce a una mera questione di metodi. Pertanto, le strategie educative più efficaci per gli educatori sono quelle aventi come scopo il raggiungimento dei livelli più profondi della soggettività e l'empowerment dei pratici

finalizzato alla co-costruzione di un ethos, non semplicemente modificando le condizioni esterne o 'depositando' superficialmente informazioni. L'efficacia di un programma di educazione interculturale per gli insegnanti dipende dalla possibilità di condividere un ethos pubblico all'interno di una comunità di apprendimento. Un ethos è una competenza etica che comprende sia conoscenze e competenze, è radicata in visioni del mondo interiore e sorge dai recessi più profondi dell'identità, sempre correlata alle esperienze e alle scelte etiche. Un ethos dà senso alle capacità, alle competenze e alle conoscenze necessarie per lavorare in aree svantaggiate in cui la differenza culturale si incontra con la povertà e le disuguaglianze sociali e ha un impatto sui recessi profondi della personalità dei soggetti in formazione.

In questa presentazione saranno forniti alcuni esempi di formazione degli insegnanti condotti sulla base di questa prospettiva. In particolare, dato che è impossibile di fornire ricette tecniche, o puntuali strumenti pedagogici per formare insegnanti come intellettuali pubblici all'interno di un paradigma di giustizia sociale, verranno offerti un paio di esempi, tratti dalla ricerca e dalla pratica di formazione degli insegnanti sia negli Stati Uniti sia in Italia. In particolare si farà riferimento a:

1. una ricerca condotta con il metodo dell'etnografia critica su di un programma di formazione degli insegnanti nel sud della California
2. un vasto programma di formazione per insegnanti e dirigenti condotto in Trentino sul tema della educazione interculturale, elaborato sulla base dei risultati della ricerca precedente.

### **Educating teachers for social justice in intercultural context**

Many scholars agree that teacher education is a key question to embody a social justice agenda, and in particular is crucial for preparing teachers working with diverse students. According to Gramsci, teachers should be viewed as transformative intellectuals, which means that an educator's profile cannot be reduced to normative codes, defining it in purely instrumental or technical terms. Training teachers as public committed intellectuals involves not only knowledge, skills and competences, but most passion, engagement and ethical commitment. Teacher education for social justice is not about methods. Therefore, the more effective education strategies for educators are those aiming at reaching the deepest level of subjectivity and empowering practitioners with the purpose of co-constructing an ethos, not simply modifying external conditions or 'depositing' superficial information. The efficacy of intercultural teacher education program depends on the possibility of sharing a public ethos within a learning community. An ethos is an ethical competence which encompasses both knowledge and competence, it is rooted in inner worldviews and it rises from the innermost recesses of identity, always interrelated with experiences and ethical choices. An ethos makes sense of skills, competence, and knowledge required to work in low-income, multicultural disadvantaged areas and has an impact on deep domains of the personality of subjects in training.

Some examples of teacher education according to this perspective will be given. In particular, since it is impossible to provide technical receipts, or pedagogical techniques for educating teacher as public intellectuals within a social justice paradigm, I will offer a couple of examples of it, taken from my research and practice on teacher education both in the US and in Italy. In particular I will refer to:

1. a critical ethnographic study on teacher education program in Southern California
2. a large teacher training program for teachers and principals in Trentino on intercultural education, based on the results of the previous research.

#### **Ekaterina TROJNIKOVA**

*Udmurt State University, Russia*

### **Continuous intercultural education in multiethnic region: definition of goals**

The modern tendencies of the world educational space determine the relevance of the developing problems in preparing personality for cross-cultural interaction.

A particular attention should be paid to the issues of continuous education.

The research in the field of the intercultural education implementation for children and students was conducted in a multi-cultural region of Russia – Udmurt Republic for several years. The content and technology of intercultural training was developed, that provided the positive results in the development of intercultural competence.

#### **Svetlana TROYANSKAYA**

*Udmurt State University, Russia*

### **Educational Museum as a Tool of Developing University Multicultural Space**

The author offers the idea to include museum into the University educational process. The museum could be regarded as a tool of developing of students' intercultural competences as well as of University polycultural space. The paper introduces the possible museum images and evaluates the prospects of

educational museum pertaining to the issue of developing polycultural educational space while giving an example of Educational Museum at the Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Social technologies.

1. First image is Museum as memory. It is considered to be a depository of exhibits, artifacts and their reflections: ideas, emotions of people from different ethnic backgrounds.
2. Museum is a place, where wonders, surprises are collected. It holds various rarities, unique things and collections that could arouse certain interest. Museum objects attract our attention and motivate to educational and research activity.
3. Museum as spiritual atmosphere, polycultural space for interaction.
4. Museum as a social institute created social emotions and behavioral patterns helps to desing polycultural education.

Educational museum is obviously aimed at achieving educational goals and based on particular subject areas. Students and teachers are regarded as addressees and users of the museum. Such Russian museums have a 150 year history, we can cite as an example Educational museum of military schools in Saint Petersburg which was founded in 1864; realizing classical didactic principles this museum could be considered as a pedagogical innovation. Development and expansion of the concept "museum" is a recognized modern tendency; an educational museum could become not only collector and consolidator of education history, but it could be as well an information center, an instructor and propagandist, a pantheon for outstanding teachers, museum-and-educational center of the University.

Research method – qualitative. This is analysis of students' essays, reviews and compositions. Most of students consider the museum "as a temple of people's memory, it reflects many personalities, their belongings that could reveal its owner's character, way of life, working days and days off. The museum evolves personal attachment to this or that social community; it is a milieu made up of symbols that contain particular information that is why it is supposed to have a great emotional impact."

In the educational process of our Institute the museum is regarded as an educational unit which is to deal with conducting lectures / excursions as well as with student's independent activities. That is on the one hand. On the other hand, the museum is a social institute which is to provide student's access to values, implement the concept of polycultural education. Therefore, educational museum is a tool of developing university polycultural environment.

### **Richard Eugen UNTERRICHTER**

*Psicologo e sociologo, APBPSP Psicologi di Base, Italy*

#### **Famiglia come, integrazione multiculturale: un'esperienza di comunità concreta (Workshop)**

Con l' Istituto Comprensivo di scuola elementare e media Vigolo Vattaro ( in provincia di Trento) è stato presentato, entro il piano giovani di zona dell'altipiano della Vigolana 2011 della provincia di Trento, il progetto dal titolo "Famiglia come".

Il progetto è stato inserito all'interno di una logica di miglioramento dei livelli di inclusione sociale e territoriale dei ragazzi e delle loro famiglie. Si è voluta dare particolare attenzione alle problematiche: dell'adozione, delle nuove famiglie ( che vivono le separazioni e le ricomposizioni in nuove famiglie allargate) e della multiculturalità. Trovandoci a confronto ed in presenza di dinamiche sociali/famigliari differenti rispetto al passato, ci siamo proposti di riconoscere e conoscere meglio la realtà della famiglia nel contesto odierno e locale. In particolare abbiamo condiviso l'importanza di occuparci di sociale tenendo bene in considerazione i più moderni orientamenti di welfare che intendono il futuro delle politiche sociali passare dal modello assistenziale (cioè passivo) alla sussidiarietà (partecipazione attiva della persona). Il percorso è stato strutturato su due piani d'azione entro un arco temporale di un anno:

- A. Laboratori esperienziali;
- B. Formativo di confronto.

L'intento si è rivolto a costruire empowerment sociale sugli argomenti proposti contemporaneamente alla comunità adulta ed alla comunità giovanile ( con le modalità debitamente differenti), con l'intenzione di favorire un dialogo all'interno delle stesse famiglie, mettendo a confronto genitori che partecipano agli eventi informativi serali e figli che partecipano ai laboratori dentro la scuola.ù

#### **Family as: psycho-socio-educational experience in the field of intercultural in the province of Trento**

With the Comprehensive School of Elementary and Middle school Vigolo Vattaro (province of Trento) was presented within the plan area of the plateau of young Vigolana 2011 in the Province of Trento, the project entitled "Family as".

The project was included within the logic of improving the levels of social and territorial inclusion of children and their families. We wanted to give special attention to the problems: adoption new families (living separations and new shifts in extended families) and multiculturalism. Finding a comparison in the presence of dynamic social / family different than in the past, we proposed to recognize and learn more

about the reality of the family in today's context and local levels. In particular, we shared the importance of taking care of the social good into account the latest guidelines of welfare which means the future of social policy shift from welfare (ie passive) subsidiarity (active participation of the person).

The course has been structured on two action plans within a period of one year:

- A. Experiential workshops;
- B. Formation of comparison.

The choice of topics addressing the stimulating debate and discussion intergenerational and intercultural weaves the idea of synergistically activate two separate paths. The intent is aimed at building social empowerment topics proposed simultaneously with the adult community and the youth community (in the manner duly different), with the intention of promoting a dialogue within the same families, comparing parents who participate in information events and evening children participating laboratories in the school.

### **Richard Eugen UNTERRICHTER**

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#### **“Nuove famiglie..... bisogni diversi”**

La frequenza dei matrimoni misti, conosciuti anche come interetnici o interculturali, nel corso degli ultimi anni è aumentata significativamente in Italia. Per alcune coppie è proprio la diversità tra le due persone a costituire l'attrazione dell'uno per l'altra; in altri si registra invece essere una reazione ed un rifiuto del sistema di valori e regole familiari di provenienza a contribuire in maniera determinante alla costruzione di queste coppie. La Riforma del Welfare State promuove anche lo sviluppo delle politiche solidaristiche della comunità civile. Per costruire il processo di Welfare care è necessario disporre di capacità manageriali di orientamento psico-sociali per progettare e implementare servizi nuovi e flessibili. Dall'integrazione di conoscenze e metodologie nuove che fondino gli strumenti e le conoscenze (psicologia, sociologia, pedagogia...) è nato un nuovo servizio denominato "A TU PER TU- Psicologo di Base" ideato da me (psicologo e sociologo) poi migliorato ulteriormente negli anni.

Per realizzare tutto questo nel 2008 ho ideato un nuovo servizio che ho chiamato "A TU PER TU- psicologo di base". Prima di tutto, sottolineo un triplo obiettivo a cui è stato votato il servizio: primo cogliere, su un versante, i nuovi bisogni nella loro fase di prima emersione, se non addirittura anticipandoli, secondo costruire un modello di intervento psico-sociale non medicalizzato che offrisse alle persone un supporto all'educazione e all'attivazione della resilienza personale di se stessi e degli altri, terzo rispondere all'esigenza di contenere la spesa sociale senza per questo abbassare il grado di efficacia dell'intervento.

Al servizio s'è rivolta anche una rappresentanza di famiglie miste su cui vogliamo focalizzarci qui. Queste ultime hanno riportato fatiche riconducibili all'integrazione, le separazioni, le delusioni e gli insuccessi vissuti come un carico spesso troppo pesante da sopportare per le famiglie contemporanee non miste e che nel caso di quelle interetniche spesso si vedono acuitizzate. Si evince quindi l'importanza di riuscire a fornire interventi di sostegno o supporto emotivo che realizzino il superamento di una situazione esistenziale difficile.

#### **New Families ..... Different Needs A Photograph of Mixed Families**

The frequency of mixed marriages, also known as interethnic, intercultural, over the last few years has increased significantly in Italy. For some couples it is the difference between the two people to be the attraction of one for the other, in others it is rather to be a reaction and a rejection of the system of values and family rules of origin to make a decisive contribution to construction of these couples.

The Reform of the Welfare State also promotes the development of policies solidarity of the civil community. To build the process of welfare care You must also have the management skills of psychosocial orientation to design and implement new services and flexible. But times change and the needs of people with them. This is also the services must be able to respond. Integration of knowledge and new methodologies that seat with the tools and knowledge (psychology, sociology, pedagogy ...) has created a new service called "FACE TO FACE-Psychologist Base" designed by me (psychologist and sociologist) then further improved over the years.

To achieve this in 2008 I created a new service that I called "FACE TO FACE-base psychologist." First of all, I emphasize a triple goal that was voted the service: the first take, on one side, the new needs in their early emergence of the first, if not anticipating, according to a model of psychosocial intervention that unmedicated offered personal support to education and to the activation of personal resilience of themselves and others, the third response to the need to contain social spending without reducing the degree of effectiveness.

To the service is also a representation of mixed families where we want to focus here. These efforts

have reported related to integration, separations, disappointments and failures experienced as a burden often too much to bear for contemporary families and not mixed in the case of those ethnic often seen sharpened. It is clear therefore important to be able to provide support interventions or emotional support that realize the passing of a difficult life situation. It is therefore to have a focus and a broader horizon privileged observation including, as taught by the humanistic view, the inner world of people, but also external and social phenomena such as customs.

**Luciano VETTORE**

SIPeM

**Michele GANGEMI**

SIPeM

### **La “medicina partecipata”, frutto della sintesi tra culture**

Quando si parla di conflitti tra culture raramente si prendono in considerazione le differenze nelle relazioni tra “curante” e “curato”, e specificamente tra medico e paziente: sono differenze di stato (uno è sano e l’altro ammalato, e già per questo in condizioni di “inferiorità”); differenze di estrazione sociale, e soprattutto differenze di competenza culturale: il medico è il detentore della “cultura” scientifica e professionale, sulla quale fonda le proprie decisioni diagnostiche e terapeutiche; ma anche il paziente ha una sua “cultura”, che non è scientifica ma esistenziale, perché nessuno può conoscere meglio di lui il vissuto della sofferenza “sperimentata” di persona. Nell’esercizio attuale della medicina si constata un conflitto tra queste due culture; la distanza tra di esse può venire ridotta solo facendole comunicare tra loro con il riconoscimento delle potenzialità intrinseche. Per una medicina che non sia fatta solo di diagnosi e terapia, ma anche del prendersi cura delle persone sofferenti, è indispensabile la compartecipazione di tutti gli “attori” – curanti e curati - in quanto consapevoli del proprio ruolo e corresponsabili nelle decisioni. In questo agire dinamico i pazienti debbono essere aiutati a mettere a disposizione la loro “cultura” in quanto “esperti” della propria condizione di malati; è questo il significato del diventare “pazienti esperti” senza peraltro annullare l’asimmetria di cultura e di ruolo rispetto a chi li cura. Il loro “empowerment” si realizza nella così detta “medicina partecipata”, che non limita il proprio ambito d’azione alla “negoiazione” delle decisioni, ma consiste nella costruzione attiva e condivisa di queste, cioè dell’alleanza terapeutica. Per diventare pazienti “esperti” (e non pazienti saccenti, o esigenti) è necessaria un’educazione; essa può avvalersi di due armi formidabili, alle quali debbono essere a loro volta educati i “curanti”: l’abilità di counselling, che è essenzialmente capacità di ascolto partecipe; la “medicina narrativa”, capace di trasformare la semplice comunicazione in relazione tra persone adulte e responsabili, mediante un colloquio che metta pienamente in gioco la loro “umanità” con le sue componenti emotive oltre che tecniche. Solo così viene integrata l’apparente antinomia tra “evidence based medicine” e “narrative based medicine”. Inoltre - grazie alla sintesi tra culture differenti, ma non più antitetiche - si aiuta lo sviluppo di quella medicina personalizzata, che sta muovendo i suoi primi passi anche in ambito scientifico - per esempio attraverso la “farmaco-genomica” - così da trasformare finalmente la terapia delle malattie in cura delle persone.

### **“Participatory Medicine”, the synthesis of two different cultures**

The relationship between physician and patient is rarely thought of as a conflict between two different cultures. Yet there are differences between the person giving care and the one receiving it, differences which concern not only their state of health, but also their respective social conditions and cultural experiences. The physician can count on his scientific and professional culture in the exercise of diagnosis and therapy; the patient has, however, his own particular culture which is made up of his personal experience, as he is the best to know the reality of his own suffering. In current medical practice these two cultures are often in conflict and in order to reduce such conflict it is necessary to recognize the intrinsic potentialities of both and facilitate their interaction. If medicine is made not only by diagnosis and therapy (that is to cure diseases), but also by taking care of the suffering patient, all persons involved, both physicians and patients should contribute by first appreciating the importance of their respective role and then taking part in reaching shared decisions. In this new dynamic approach to medicine patients should be helped to make available their “culture”, that is the experience of their own condition of suffering. This is what is meant by being an “expert patient”, a role which does not undermine the role and culture of the physician; the patient empowerment becomes true in the so called “participatory medicine”, where simple negotiation about decisions between physician and patient is not enough, but decisions are reached in an actively shared process of joint responsibilities, that is a real therapeutic alliance. Two principal different approaches are available to become or to be recognized as an “expert patient” through a training experience in which both patients and physicians should participate: counselling skills where a special emphasis is given to the listening attitude; and “narrative medicine” where the simple communication becomes, through verbal exchanges in a really human dimension, a true relationship between adult and responsible people. In this way the apparent contrast between “evidence based medicine” and “narrative medicine” is resolved and integrated towards an experience based medicine. In addition, this

synthesis of different but not antithetical cultures contributes to a further development of the personalized medicine, which is meritoriously growing also in the scientific researches of pharmaco-genomics. So, the therapy of diseases will finally change into the care of the individual patients.

**Oksana VINNICHENKO**

*Ternopil State Medical University, Ukraine*

**Abraham KHAN**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

### **Religion and Mental Health from a Ukrainian Perspective**

Transformations that are taking place in Ukraine change the common understanding of a healthy society. They range from ecological situations, to geographic situatedness and to increasing socially conditioned and stressful factors brought on by human error and natural disasters. On top of that is the revival of stressful economic and social situations after the collapse of USSR, combined with the spiritual vacuum created by 74 years of compulsory atheism in the country. All these have influenced negatively the human psyche in Ukraine and people's sense of physical and mental health. To cope with the negative influence or counteract its impact on health and well-being, individuals may have recourse to a range of healing practices or therapies outside of medical science. Though the healing practices vary, they are ones associated with different religious traditions that share in Ukraine's historic and national ethos: the Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholic Churches, Hassidism, and Sufism in the Crimean peninsula. People visit the priests to perform exorcism, or go to a monastery spring or gravesite of a saintly person, known to have healing power in the hope of restoring health and relieving disease, which in some cases medical intervention is of no avail. Such practices often incorporate ancient pagan healing rituals characterizing centuries of Ukrainian ethos. This paper discusses how religious healing practices intersect and/or interact with that of medicine in Ukraine. The aim is to provide a description or report, and hence to better understand the whole context of the intersection and interaction with respect to religious and medical attitudes to healing of the personality, and possibly propose a Ukrainian healing model. It is a step to integrating traditional healing and spirituality in to counseling and psychotherapy and part of a larger project towards the initiation of a dialogue between religion and medicine relative to healing in Ukraine.

**Flavia VIRGILIO**

*Università di Udine, Italy*

**Stefano STEFANEL**

*Dirigente scolastico, liceo scientifico Marinelli, Italy*

### **Il curricolo dalla parte delle radici: partire dagli studenti per costruire cittadinanza (Workshop)**

“ [...] strano pregiudizio che valorizza ciecamente la profondità a scapito della superficie, pretendendo che superficiale, significhi non già di vaste dimensioni, bensì di poca profondità, mentre profondo significa di grande profondità e non di superficie ristretta ” (Deleuze, 1968a: 18).

Il tema del curricolo è oltre modo attuale in particolare in questo momento in cui la scuola, conclusa la fase di sperimentazione e valutazione, si trova nella situazione di avviare in modo ordinario il lavoro sulle Indicazioni Nazionali. Il tema delle competenze di cittadinanza è uno dei punti chiave del documento, ma questa “nuova cittadinanza” è possibile solo a partire dai contesti in cui la cittadinanza si pratica, o non si pratica, tutti i giorni. Il tema delle radici, allora, è un tema forte su cui saldare la riflessione educativa; tocca le aree delle discipline, ma anche del senso che le discipline assumono nello scenario contemporaneo e tocca le aree dell'identità, non solo degli studenti, ma anche dei docenti e della scuola come istituzione. Il workshop è focalizzato sul tema della valorizzazione, nella struttura curricolare di una scuola secondaria di primo grado ad alta intensità migratoria, dei saperi informali degli allievi. Il lavoro sui saperi informali ha consentito da un lato di creare in classe momenti di costruzione di common ground tra studenti, italiani e stranieri, e con i docenti, e dall'altro di promuovere strutture di partecipazione in cui gli allievi fossero protagonisti dei processi di apprendimento (Sefton & Green, 2004; Green, 2008; Baraldi & Iervese, 2012; Lizzola, 2013). L'ipotesi di lavoro che si è voluto mettere alla prova è che la valorizzazione degli apprendimenti informali possa rafforzare alcune aree del curricolo formale attraverso due movimenti, da una parte il riconoscimento delle competenze maturate fuori dalla scuola, dall'altra la rimodulazione del curricolo sulla base della significatività dell'apprendimento (MIUR, 2012). Il progetto ha coinvolto, oltre alla scuola, altri soggetti del territorio, attivamente impegnati nella costruzione di cittadinanza diffusa.

Il workshop si rivolge a docenti ed educatori e intende, attraverso la discussione sui materiali proposti (breve video), promuovere la discussione sulla relazione tra aspetti formali e informali negli apprendimenti delle competenze; in particolare sono state esplorate gli ambiti di competenza della cittadinanza e dei linguaggi.

## Looking at curriculum from the roots: moving from students point of view to build citizenship

“ [...] strange prejudice that blindly enhances the depth at the expense of the surface, claiming that superficial means not of vast dimensions, but of little depth, while deep means of big depth and not of restricted surface ”(Deleuze,1968: 18).

Reflecting on curriculum is quite relevant especially at this time when the schools, after having tested and evaluated the National Guidelines, are actually starting to work to apply the new National Guidelines. The issue of citizenship competences is one of the key points of the document, but this "new citizenship" is only possible if we look at the contexts in which citizenship is practised, or not practised, every day. The theme of the roots, then, is a strong theme on which to focus educational reflection. It entails to reflect on disciplines taught at school, but also on the sense that the disciplines have in contemporary world. Reflecting on knowledge roots entails to reflect on identity, not only of students' identity, but also teachers' and school institutional identity. The workshop is focused on the theme of inclusion and recognition of informal learning in formal curriculum. The experience has been realized in a lower secondary school with and intensive presence of students coming from a migrant background. Working on students' informal knowledges has allowed one hand to create in class experience of building common ground between students, both Italian and foreign, and the teachers, and on the other to promote participatory structures in which students were protagonists of their learning processes (Sefton & Green, 2004; Green, 2008; Iervese & Baraldi, 2012; Lizzola, 2013). The working hypothesis that we would like to test is that the value of informal learning can strengthen certain areas of the formal curriculum through two movements: on the one hand the recognition of competences and learning acquired outside the school, on the other hand, the reorganization of curriculum itself on the basis of meaningful learning (Ministry of Education, 2012). The project has involved not only the school, but also other local NGOs, actively engaged in the construction of common citizenship.

The workshop is designed for teachers and educators and intends, through the discussion of the proposed materials (short videos), to promote discussion on the relationship between formal and informal learning. In particular areas of competence of citizenship and languages have been explored.

### **Hildegard WENZLER-CREMER**

*Freiburg University of Education, Germany*

### **Susanne BRAUNGER**

*Freiburg University of Education, Germany*

## Learning from Each other – Gaining Intercultural Competence

We would like to present selected results of the evaluation of the Project “Mentor Migration SALAM - Spielen Austauschen Lernen Achtsam Miteinander“ (Playing-Sharing-Learning-Attentively-Together) in a workshop using interactive elements.

During the project SALAM students studying to become teachers in a variety of different subjects and students studying Social education mentor a child from a migrant family for a period of 8 months. They spend 2-3 hours of leisure time a week together. Two attributes are characteristic: Firstly as the students are assigned to only one child, they can develop a good relationship to that child and its family. They receive the opportunity to act pedagogically and to reflect on the experiences they make. Secondly the project helps to expand the children's horizons, gaining a wider knowledge of their surroundings, the city quarter they live in, the city itself. The object is not to do homework, in the classical sense, with the children, nor to do special language training. The act of students and pupils coming together offers in itself lots of learning opportunities: the children are forced to communicate, they negotiate the choice of activities with the students; they explore new places and spaces; they learn something about student life. The students on the other hand gain a better awareness of how to act in intercultural encounters; they gain insights into milieus they would usually not know or have the opportunity to enter. They can assist the families with any questions regarding the German educational system. 50-70 students per year have been involved since 2009. The Freiburg University of Education, the City of Freiburg and four primary schools are cooperating in the project. The University recruits and selects the students and supports them via supervision. The project is integrated into the curriculum, so that the students can also get credit points for taking part. The whole project is regularly evaluated and scientifically escorted.

In the presentation we will focus on the Training of Intercultural Competence by participating in this project. We focus on the students' way of dealing with otherness, identifying stereotypes, prejudices and cultural attributing of the students. Following the Intercultural Competence model of Deardorff we consider their understanding of the other's world view, their getting culture-specific information and gaining sociolinguistic awareness.

### **Gretchen WILBUR**

*DePaul University*



## **An Equity Culture Framework for Inquiry, Agency, and Community**

Pre-conference Workshop Session

Global perspectives on intercultural and multicultural education are informed by research and practice in teacher education (Grant & Portera, 2011). The international discourse is deepening our understanding of how social justice and democratic aims can be advanced in educational policy, practice, and outcomes. Cross-national research using a common tool for inquiry and assessment can advance this work, not by homogenizing, but by describing culturally relevant approaches for constructing equity education cultures. Such cultures cultivate student voice, agency, inquiry, and make power relations transparent, which are core elements of a critical multicultural approach.

This session will present research findings on an equity education culture framework that offers descriptive guides for new paradigms to replace those that currently exist in classrooms (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004; May & Sleeter, 2010). The framework describes teacher decisions and relates them to student outcomes. A coding matrix with seven equity criteria and four learning outcomes was found to be a valid tool for describing this relationship in an US urban middle and a rural high school. Qualitative analysis of themes, found in the matrix intersections of criteria and outcomes, frame descriptive guides for teachers that can increase their intentionality and effectiveness in constructing learning communities that advance the aims of equity, social justice, and critical multiculturalism.

Using an interactive workshop format, participants will actively engage in critiquing the framework's relevance in global contexts. Participants will analyze actual classroom scenarios from Italy, Estonia, and the US using the equity culture matrix to code evidence of equity criteria and learning outcomes. Cultural and pedagogical factors that influence coding and interpretations will be identified through collaborative discourse. Modifications to the coding matrix will be invited to increase the framework's cultural relevance for inquiry and assessment, and thus its potential as a tool for cross-national research. Results from this collaboration will be tested in the weeks following the conference in Italian university and schools.

**Gretchen WILBUR**

*DePaul University, USA*

**Nancy MORGAN**

*DePaul University, USA*

## **Intercultural Communication to Competence: Adult student inquiry through global travel**

A travel course, *Who Talks to Whom in Schools & Cafes?*, led a diverse group of adult learners from a US Midwestern university to make progress in developing their intercultural competence through inquiry into intercultural communications in the US, Italy, and Estonia. Through onsite visits to schools and public places in Italy and Estonia in a 2-week travel course, students observed verbal and non-verbal interactions in various contexts, including cafes, piazzas, schools, and universities. Using concepts from assigned readings (e.g. Gay, 2012; Hofstede, 2012; Saint-Jacques, 2012; Triandis, 2012), students analyzed how socio-cultural factors shape interaction patterns in different societies. Students chose observational criteria, collected data, and discussed interpretations with local scholars.

Using an inquiry approach enabled adult students to engage in self-directed, reflective learning in a context that was out of their comfort zone. They examined their discordant experiences from a personal and cultural perspective. Their inquiry was grounded in theoretical readings, which they used to establish criteria for their observations. Analysis of observational data was aided by interviews with Italian and Estonian scholars to assist with culturally sensitive interpretations. Students' self-reflections on their findings indicate that the experience increased their level of intercultural competence.

In the presentation and paper, I describe the travel course design and the inquiry approach that led students through stages of developing intercultural competence. Student reflections from the experience will be used to highlight their struggle and growth with the affective dimension of intercultural competence. Bennett's (2009) intercultural positioning system provides a framework for analysis and will be connected to adult learning theory and principles. The integration of these characteristics will suggest an inquiry approach for adult development of intercultural competence.

**Ursula Viktoria WISIAK**

*Department of Medical Psychology and Psychotherapy / Medical University Graz, Austria*

**Hans Joachim HANNICH**

**Jeanette RIEDEL**

*Institute of Medical Psychology, Greifswald, Germany*

## **Social and Behavioural Aspects in a MSc Curriculum in Migrant Health**

The number of migrants in the enlarged European Union is increasing rapidly. So the physical and men-

tal status of health gets an increasing relevance, a lot of different factors have an important impact on migrants health, as biological and genetic preconditions, cultural and political requirements of their home- and host country, social conditions, mental health etc.

For protecting and healing the health of migrants in their host- countries a multifactorial approach is necessary. Experts with specific migrant-related knowledge have to be trained to be able coping with this complex, multidisciplinary task - where health, human rights and intercultural aspects - are equally represented. Therefore we started 2010 to develop a curriculum for MSc in Migrant Health, Addressing New Challenges in Europe – CHANCE funded by ERASMUS Lifelong Learning Program. The head is the university of Pecs with six European partner universities. This joint-degree program will be built around six competencies.

According to Blooms taxonomy we train the students in one semester in three different courses.

Course I: Theoretical Foundation of Migrant Health

Graduates shall have a broad and integrated knowledge of theories and models of migration, stress and coping and psychopathology.

Course II: Intercultural Competencies

Here the competence building is in skills for supporting migrants acculturation processes, mental health promotion skills and intercultural communication skills

Course III: Field Work

The students get a training in acting as a humanist, we want to increase the critical thinking skills, life-long learning skills and it is a community-based learning.

As methods we use for example E-learning, seminar, experts lecture, self-study of literature, literature reviews, analyses of texts, oral, role playing, interaction with simulated patients, Video feedback.

The results of the evaluation show, that the participants were rather satisfied than dissatisfied with the seminar, although there are differences between the single sessions. The good results of the test of knowledge represent an effective preparation for the test, but also show that it was neither too easy nor too difficult to pass.

Overall the Module 6, Social and Behavioral Aspects of Migration, of the CHANCE-Project was successfully implemented and pilot tested as an obligate elective course of medical studies.

### **Humair YUSUF**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

#### **Client Experiences of Islamic Traditional Healing: A Phenomenological Inquiry**

This paper presentation examines the experiences of Muslim men and women who sought treatment for emotional distress from Islamic healers. Phenomenological analysis reveals that religious conceptualizations of distress provided by healers enabled participants to understand and accept emotions rather than suppress them. Participants did not feel judged or stigmatized and could therefore share their distress with others and seek help instead resorting to avoidant or maladaptive coping behaviors. Significantly, the rituals and religious strategies employed by Islamic healers were rarely described as being beneficial.

Participants' descriptions of the healing process indicated that relief was due primarily to religious conceptualizations of distress which enabled them to ascribe meaning to their suffering, as well as the absence of stigma which let them explore, label, articulate, accept and share their emotions. The findings of this study, therefore, suggest that the efficacy of Islamic traditional healing is based largely on underlying conceptualizations of distress and the creation of an environment conducive to healing, rather than specific interventions or strategies. It argued that approaches such as Client-Centered Therapy (Rogers, 1951) and Emotion-Focused Therapy (Greenberg & Watson, 2006) are therefore more likely to facilitate the integration of Islamic healing into counseling and psychotherapy than cognitive therapy as advocated by Hamdan (2008) or Hodge and Nadir (2008). This presentation is aimed at counselors and therapists who work with clients from the Muslim diaspora. It aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of their experience of treatment, thereby improving the relevance, suitability and efficacy of mental health services provided to them.

### **Humair YUSUF**

*University of Toronto, Canada*

#### **Dual Interventions amongst the Muslim Diaspora: Contradictions and Challenges**

There is growing evidence of the simultaneous use of traditional healing and counseling and psychotherapy for mental illness, especially amongst diasporic communities (Moodley & Sutherland, 2010). This study uses phenomenological methodology (Smith, 1996) to explore how representations of illness (Leventhal, Brissette & Leventhal, 2003) amongst Canadian Muslims incorporate competing and contradictory notions of illness and wellbeing.

Findings indicate that ongoing exposure to the biomedical model of illness resulted in participants turning initially to counseling and psychotherapy to manage their illness. Yet these approaches often failed to provide satisfactory explanations regarding the cause of clients' distress and increased vulnerability to negative judgments and stigmatization. Participants subsequently turned to Islamic healing traditions which provided an acceptable identity to their suffering, enabled them to understand its cause, mitigate social consequences, and ascribe meaning to their experiences. These traditions, however, also increased feelings of guilt, shame and defectiveness, which were more effectively addressed through Westerns counseling and psychotherapy.

This study therefore highlights potentially adverse consequences of dual interventions and argues that a crucial element in their successful application is the acknowledgment and acceptance of inherent contradictions in representations of illness. This presentation is aimed at counselors and therapists who work with clients from the Muslim diaspora. It aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of their experience of treatment, thereby improving the relevance, suitability and efficacy of mental health services provided to them.

**Rosana ZAMMIT**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

**Janine SNOOK**

*OISE-University of Toronto, Canada*

**The Mindful Therapist: Using Mindfulness to Enhance Counselling Skills and for Self-Care**

Interest in mindfulness has surged in recent years as research has increasingly shown the many psychological and biological benefits mindfulness can provide. From helping people to relax to the treatment of psychosis, mindfulness is emerging as a powerful tool for assisting those suffering with a wide array of mental health issues. Much of the focus on mindfulness has been on how it can directly help clients, however, there is growing amount of research indicating that counsellors who embrace mindful practices themselves also benefit on both a professional and personal level. Mindfulness can help counsellors to form stronger therapeutic alliances with their clients, show more empathy, be more attentive, and better tolerate difficult emotions. It can also be a powerful means of relieving stress, and preventing counsellor burnout, vicarious traumatization, and compassion fatigue. With these findings in mind, we propose to make a presentation regarding the benefits mindfulness can provide to counsellors and provide some strategies for cultivating a mindfulness practice. These strategies would include adopting a beginners mind, the process of letting go, and different meditation practices (e.g. sitting meditation, walking meditation, loving kindness etc.). The presentation, which is intended for counsellors, will involve a PowerPoint presentation and audience interaction. Participants will also be encouraged to take part in at least one mindfulness exercise during the session. Mindfulness has a long, culturally rich history and has been used for over 2,500 years to help alleviate suffering.

**Matteo ZAPPAROLI**

*Psicologo – Psicoterapeuta, Associazione DoveSeiTu, Italy*

**Anna Maria SILINGARDI**

*Medico – Psicoterapeuta, Associazione DoveSeiTu, Italy*

**Per una Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile**

Il presente lavoro si pone l'obiettivo di creare una opportunità di incontro, in una riflessione oggi più che mai attuale sul tema delle nuove culture nelle politiche delle relazioni di aiuto. Da alcuni anni in Italia esistono alcune innovative forme giuridiche composte da unioni di più professionisti, (Psicoterapeuti, Psicologi, Counsellor e Psichiatri), che consapevoli del vuoto di offerta di prestazioni Psicoterapiche presente nel nostro paese, si adoperano per offrire servizi di consulenza a costi sostenibili. E' evidente la crescente carenza istituzionale nell'erogazione di tale prestazione sanitaria riconosciuta dai LEA, ed è allo stesso tempo troppo alta la soglia di accesso esistente alle medesime prestazioni erogate in ambito privato. Si intende approfondire e stimolare un dibattito sul tema culturale delle nuove buone pratiche, che il sistema sociale di oggi ci richiede di inventare.

Le attuali riflessioni offerteci dalla pedagogia interculturale, accorrono a sostenere il bisogno sempre più evidente di trasformazione e istituzione di nuove forme di intervento sempre più compatibili con i reali bisogni delle nostre comunità complesse, creando nuovi modelli di cura, che siano anche veicoli di pace, democrazia, e pari dignità tra le persone.

Esiste una crescente domanda di Psicoterapia che viene sempre più disattesa, ed il rischio diviene che i facilitatori di questa esclusione sanitaria, sia proprio l'indifferenza degli addetti alla promozione della salute. Nell'intervento inoltre, si vuole dare spazio alle recente esperienza che ci vede impegnati nella realizzazione di uno Studio Associato di Psicoterapia Socialmente Sostenibile che sta sorgendo nella città di Mantova, condividendo e confrontandoci con tutti i professionisti che vorranno partecipare, sui valori,

gli obiettivi, la cultura e la politica delle nuove buone pratiche nello specifico dell'intervento psicoterapico, per facilitare una necessaria integrazione paradigmatica con nuovi modelli sempre più interculturali, maggiormente centrati sulla sostenibilità e di conseguenza sulla persona. Diviene sempre di più indispensabile il sapere coniugare l'essere persona e l'essere professionista, in un presente mai come ai nostri giorni così in evoluzione ed anche ricco di opportunità, farlo o non farlo è comunque nostra responsabilità, il fine rimane la riduzione del divario esistente tra chi eroga servizi di alta qualità e chi può accedervi, costruendo così una società più equa.

### **Psychotherapy for a Socially Sustainable**

The present work aims to create an opportunity to meet, in a reflection, today more than ever current on the issue of new cultures in the policies of helping relationships. Since some years in Italy there are some innovative legal forms composed by the unions of more professionals, (Psychotherapists, Psychologists, Psychiatrists and Counsellors), who, aware of the emptiness of psychotherapy benefits offered in our country, shall attempt to offer consulting services at affordable cost. It 'clear that increasing institutional shortcomings in the provision of such health services recognized by the LEA, and at the same time too high a threshold of existing access to the same services provided in the private. We means to deepen and stimulate a debate on the issue of new cultural good practices, that the today's social system requires us to invent.

The current reflections provided us by intercultural education, rush to support the increasingly evident need of transformation and creation of new forms of intervention are more and more compatible with the real needs of our complex communities, creating new care's models, they are also vehicles of peace, democracy, and equal dignity among the people.

There is an increasing demand for psychotherapy that is increasingly ignored, and the risk is that the facilitators of this exclusion healthcare it's the indifference of those involved in health promotion. In this intervention we want also give space to the recent experience in which we are involved in the realization of an Associated Socially Sustainable Psychotherapy Studio that is rising in the city of Mantua, sharing and comparing ourselves with all professionals who wish to participate, on the values, goals, the culture and politics of the new good practices in the specific psychotherapeutic intervention, to facilitate necessary paradigmatic integration with new increasingly intercultural models, most centered on sustainability and consequently on the person. It becomes more and more essential to know the ability to combine being a person and being a professional, in a present today as ever so evolving and also full of opportunities, to do or not to do is still our responsibility, the goal remains the reduction of gap between those who provide high quality services and who can access it, thus building a more equitable society.

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### **A mediated intercultural education: the role of new media technologies in promoting the integration of children from migrant families**

The aim of this paper (especially addressed to teachers and educators) is to present the outcomes of a part of a PhD project developed in order to understand if, how and why new media technologies could be used in educational contexts to improving school and social integration of children from migrant families.

From the time when European states have been involved in a continuous flux of people from all over the world, many projects have been developed in order to enhance the socio-economical integration of migrant adults. As time goes by, ever more migrants have decided to create a family in the host Country and the number of children having migrant background was and it is, still now, constantly grown. For this reason, in these last years, many scholars have underlined the importance

to consider the integration of the post migrant youth as a key element to sustain the social cohesion of the state implicated in this process. In the era in which technological progress has influenced all the spheres of human life, and consequently also the dynamics implicated in the immigration flows, one possible way to achieve easier this aim it could be represented by the use of new media technologies.

After having studied the international literature associated to these topics, the paper examines if and how ICTs could influence the socialization process of the post-migrant youth present in a youth centre located in a North-East part of Italy. In order to achieve this aim, it is been adopted a multi-method approach (participant observation, native image production, photoelicitation interview, etc.) because it allows to acquire different point of views and, therefore, more complete outcomes.

Considering the data raised up by this project, it is possible to say that new media technologies represent a significant part for the life of youths from migrant families, and, as well as for the 'natives'; consequently, these technological tools could be considered as a «transnational» (Appadurai, 1996, p. 72) language able to join together youth from different countries of the world and, for this reason, they could be possible key elements in improving intercultural education. In this sense, it seem possible to suppose that, today, the intercultural education should assume also (but non only) the shape

of an ordinary mediated practice.

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### **Il ruolo delle discipline umanistiche nella formazione interculturale degli insegnanti**

Il contributo si focalizzerà sul ruolo che le discipline umanistiche possono svolgere nella preparazione di insegnanti che possano poi utilizzare la loro professionalità in scuole e comunità territoriali ad alta eterogeneità. In questa prospettiva si farà riferimento soprattutto a ricerche sviluppatesi nel contesto di quegli studi postcoloniali che si sono confrontati criticamente con i rischi degli approcci culturalisti nella ricerca pedagogica. La relazione inizierà con una breve introduzione ad alcuni punti di forza e di debolezza del contributo offerto dalla ricerca postcoloniale nell'ambito della formazione degli insegnanti, con particolare riferimento alla critica postcoloniale nei confronti di curricula e approcci troppo eurocentrici. Ci si soffermerà poi su alcune suggestioni tratte dall'opera di Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak e di Edward Said, due autori che vengono riconosciuti per il loro ruolo di riferimento nella ricerca pedagogica di ispirazione postcoloniale, ma che nell'ultima fase delle loro ricerche hanno contribuito anche a una sostanziale critica e riformulazione di alcuni dei fondamenti epistemologici su cui si basa la stessa prospettiva postcoloniale. Verrà sottolineato come sia Said che Spivak (sebbene in modi diversi fra loro) segnalino con forza la necessità di ricollocare le discipline umanistiche al centro della ricerca pedagogica, soprattutto per quanto riguarda la formazione degli insegnanti chiamati a operare in contesti educativi transnazionali e multiculturali.

Secondo la prospettiva di Said (2004), le discipline umanistiche possono infatti contribuire a sviluppare negli insegnanti un atteggiamento critico ed auto-critico nei confronti dei propri presupposti teorici e delle proprie pratiche educative, e possono inoltre aiutare gli insegnanti a cogliere con più attenzione la molteplicità di differenze presenti nei contesti educativi multiculturali. Spivak, dal canto suo, sostiene che la pratica delle discipline umanistiche può aiutare gli insegnanti a ri-calibrare il proprio atteggiamento verso le differenze, rendendoli sempre più capaci di "imparare dal basso" (Spivak, 2000). La relazione si soffermerà quindi su un breve confronto fra le prospettive di Said e Spivak e la posizione di Martha Nussbaum, un'autrice che – sebbene a partire da presupposti teorici molto diversi – ha richiamato più volte l'attenzione sul ruolo centrale che le discipline umanistiche dovrebbero svolgere oggi nei sistemi educativi (Nussbaum, 2010).

In conclusione, il contributo proporrà alcune prime riflessioni su come queste prospettive teoriche sul ruolo delle discipline umanistiche potrebbero essere utili nell'affrontare due problematiche che – come osservato da Sleeter (2010:117) – appaiono oggi centrali nella formazione interculturale di insegnanti che siano poi chiamati a lavorare in scuole e comunità territoriali ad alta eterogeneità: il problema della tendenza da parte di molti insegnanti ad essenzializzare le appartenenze socioculturali dei loro allievi e le difficoltà che molti docenti rilevano nell'esaminare criticamente le modalità culturali con cui è costruito il loro stesso approccio educativo.

### **The role of Humanities in preparing teacher for heterogenous schools and communities**

The paper will focus on the role that Humanities can play in preparing teachers for heterogeneous schools and communities. In this perspective we will refer especially to researches developed in the frame of those postcolonial studies that deal critically with the risks of culturalistic approaches in education. The paper will start with a short introduction to some strengths and weaknesses of the contribution that postcolonial research offered to teacher education, with special reference to postcolonial critical perspective toward eurocentric curricula and approaches. We will then refer to a few suggestions drawn from the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Edward Said, two authors who are well-known for the major role they played in shaping the field of postcolonial educational research, but who in their latest works gave also important contributions toward a substantial critique and re-formulation of some of the epistemological pillars on which postcolonial perspective relies. It will be underlined how both Said and Spivak (although in quite different ways) asked for a re-positioning of Humanities at the core of educational research, especially in preparing teachers for transnational and multicultural educational contexts. Following Said (2004) perspective, Humanities can enhance a critical and self-critical attitude toward teacher's assumptions and practices and can help teachers in appreciating intersectional differences in multicultural educational contexts. Spivak, on the other hand, argues that the practice of Humanities can help teachers in re-arranging their approach toward alterity, helping them in becoming more able to "learn from below" (Spivak, 2000). The paper will then shortly compare both Said's and Spivak's perspectives with Martha Nussbaum's well-known claim for a central role that Humanities should play in current educational systems (Nussbaum, 2010)

Finally, the paper will elaborate some tentative suggestions on how these theoretical perspectives on Humanities can help in handling two of the problems that – as Sleeter has observed (2010: 117) – have to be dealt with in preparing teachers for heterogenous schools and communities: the problem of teachers' essentializing attitudes toward students' sociocultural membership and the difficulties in examining

the way in which our teaching is culturally constructed.

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**The Use of Power in Communication**

Power dynamics have been studied in every society since power is a pivotal issue in human affairs and in every life form. In this presentation I will illustrate some aspects of empowerment and disempowerment at the micro and macro level in present day society in the field of health protection and promotion issues in the field of psychotherapy and other helping professions. Some examples will be made on how the sociology of knowledge, epistemology, the neurosciences in general and the social neurosciences in particular, seem to bring new validations to the already existing large amount of research in the promotion of change at the micro and macro level on the effectiveness of approaches that are people-centered, promote the quality of the relationships and foster empowerment and resilience. The relevance of intercultural communication and understanding with some added evidence coming from the recent contributions of modern neuroscience, will be argued the need for some new social epistemologies and the construction of social neuro-ethics through the involvement of all the stakeholders.