

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION AN ISSUE WITH CRITICAL EFFECTS IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD. NECESSITY TO RECONSIDER THE INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

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*A major European crisis knocking at the gates of our times.
The emigration process crises that involving
the thorny issue of immigrants' integration
became a major issue of our days.*

Abstract: *The current and acute migration issue with its consequences on educational policy and, particularly, on intercultural education is the topic of this paper. The different types of migration together with their determinant factors are presented and analyzed. The double status as possible emigrants and host for immigrants are seen as milestones of developing an effective strategy of a new approach of the intercultural education. The importance of developing of an intercultural competency for each person of the world is presented. The paper intends to be a plea for a more consistent concern for this issue in these times when a new crisis knocks at the gate of humanity. The necessity of being aware that a global vision of the education became necessary is highlighted.*

Keywords: *intercultural education, intercultural competence, migration, migrant- immigrant status, educational policy*

1. The migration - a phenomenon which escalates. Causes of a stronger process of emigration – immigration. Brief theoretical approach

The unequal development of different countries of the world, together with the human being's thirst for knowledge, novelty, and adventure have determined for centuries a migration process. The last decades of the previous century and, increasingly the first years of this new millennium have stressed this phenomenon.

Theories about the main causes of the migration process have been developed. These theories distinguish between two main categories of determinant factors, called in terms of *push and pull factors*.

The first category (push factors) is considered mostly as determinants for the emigration side of the process of migration. Different specific aspects, within a particular country, act as determinants of people to leave their origin countries for other land. The most important aspect seems to be the economic state of the origin country and they determine the so called economic or labour migration. The impossibility to find a job or the significant difference in wage rates appear as motives of a number of people to try to find permanently or temporarily a job in another country.

There are non-economic push factors as well. Among them, persecution, abuse, bullying, oppression, ethnic cleansing or even genocide and risks of civilians during wars and dictatorship are enumerated as possible push factors. Some of them became over dimensioned in the last period and this is the topic of another chapter.

There are also pull factors that act from outside as a kind of attractiveness for people to go away, in order to find a new life, a dreamed well-being. The availability of jobs, even unequal paid or being under the solicitors' qualification, but anyway with higher rates of income compared with the origin country, are aspects that function as pull factors.

Non-economic pull factors are to be highlighted as well. Between them education seems to be the primary one. But, a clarification is necessary in this point: international students, with this specific status are not considered emigrants-immigrants. The wider possibility to accede to education can be a pull factor for emigration itself. A lot of families leave their origin countries with the dream to be able to offer to their children a proper level of education, more opportunities. But sometime their expectations versus the education level leads to disappointment. Some new trends are to be added in the last decade even in this area.

However this is only one side of the analysis. There are factors that can act as pull factors, in terms of attracting towards remaining in the origin country; they may be represented by the explicit and the implicit costs of emigration: costs of transportation and of the legal papers, and maybe more important, the community ties that are to be lost, and the cultural or the religious roots.

There are, as well, pushing factors in the world of the new land, in terms of determining a kind of self-rejection of immigrants. Immigration is a long and difficult process hardly understood before the actual moment of leaving the origin country but strongly felt as soon as the immigrant status is obtained. The "wonder land" turns progressively into an alien one, even after the immigrant is able to find a job, a better paid one than in origin country; sometimes it happens after a long and dramatic period, and often it does not correspond to the level of the solicitor's training. The reasons of this perception are extremely complex and dramatic. Between them the cultural

and religious roots with their implied values, habits and behaviors seem to be the most important. I have met Romanians with a genuine high level of life, with good jobs but strongly unhappy, probably because this job was not connected to their initial dream and their education level in the origin country. This unhappiness is expressed in very interesting ways. A strong tendency to appear as the happiest humans in the world, to describe again and again their difficult trajectory toward a success if not felt at least loudly declared appears as one way of expressing this. A strange envy against everybody is obvious; this is especially against conational considered somewhere inside as more successful. These kind of dramatic attitudes are revealed by almost all immigrants coming from different parts of the world. Informal discussions with them (within a language school context) showed clearly this reality.

The paradox is that sometime a significant number of immigrants start a process difficult to be decoded and understood. This comes even after an unexpected good integration as newcomers in a host society. They left their origin countries sometimes because of rejecting parts of perceived cultural and religious values and habits. Therefore, it is difficult to understand, in these conditions, their desire to re-build their origin world in the new land, even to impose their values and rules to their host or to other people with an immigrant status. These tend to become serious dysfunctions in the integration process and their deep springs are not enough considered and studied. A better understanding of them may be the starting point of avoiding difficult future crises.

The widely accepted theory of salad bowl does not stress enough the idea that the bowl itself was kindly offered to everyone to be a place to share and to live together. It is true that religious should be something personal, and the first place of celebration should be inside of a family. It must be a discreet celebration with deep feelings. But probably it is too much to ask to somebody who offered their own home as a new home to live in for immigrants, to be guests in their own countries. They definitely are not enough assertive when accept to have not a Christmas tree in school because there are other students who do not celebrate the Christmas. As long as all the yearlong the students with different religions are allowed to be dressed according to the requests of their religions it is too much to allow your host to celebrate several days in a year their own religious symbols?

Some examples of confounding the openness of host country with weakness may be presented. Thus, in Germany, all religious celebrations were banned to be publicly celebrated, including Christmas, on the grounds of "equal treatment". Something similar happened in some places in Canada.

A specific field of migration, but without being a genuine process which involves emigrants-immigrants, is represented by some specific types of activities and their actors: missionaries, people involved in diplomatic

service, transnational corporations, non-governmental organizations with their cohorts of volunteers. They are asked to work "overseas" for a while but they do not leave their origin countries in order to find an activity or a job. They are requested by an activity somewhere else for a definite time. For these category the payment conditions are equal if not better than the income of similar activities in the host country. This type of movement across the boundaries is more and more extended nowadays.

Some other peculiar reasons may determine the migration: transnational marriage, family reunification (as positive ones), avoiding arrest in the context of criminal justice (as an example of negative reason). These are more personal motivations

The migration process is a very difficult one. An in depth radiography of the psychological, social, and other sides of the phenomenon may be necessary. There are papers (Niculescu, R. 2013) and books with this topic, but the dynamic of the process requests a continuing analysis of causes and effects. They should refer to the diversified barriers to immigration,. These barriers become more and more diversified themselves, and the causes are more and more complex. Such a world, that involves these kind of phenomena with a wide impact on everybody needs much more attention aiming to be helped in its evolution. Unfortunately, the universal concern is to solve the moments of crises when they occur, instead to prevent them.

2. Migration process of the second decade of the third millennium

All the presented categories of migration determined by a diversity of push and pull factors have received nuanced specificities during the first decades of this millennium. Probably, an in depth analysis of them should be the topic of a research in the field. Several high-impact issues of the contemporary situation are highlighted, for the reasons of this paper; they are explicitly connected to the new way of designing and doing the intercultural education.

Nowadays a "new crisis is on the policy table". Immigrants from Muslim world knock the Europe gate to be received because of the tragedy of their country destroyed in an ongoing war. As human beings everybody understands and is empathetic with the poor families trying to save their lives, their children. But countries as ours or others being in a critical economical situation, are they able to effectively receive and to offer a genuine support for others? On the other side is real the danger to enter the exponents of terrorists in Europe using this wide wave of migration ? All these are questions with different possible answers but for sure with a strong impact on the humans ' feelings and on the mentality that passes an interesting process of transformation and evolution.

These are the new conditions of a multiculturalism coming from centuries, or being increased in these kinds of crisis. And they need a new approach of the intercultural education.

3. Romania a part of a dynamic world

Once upon a time, on this blessed land, rhythmically touched by the wet arms of the Black Sea, an ancient people lived here. The name of this people is Geto- Dacians. A long period of struggle for existence in peace was the defining feature of these people. Eventually Dacia was included into the Roman Empire for more than 200 years. In 271 A.D. the Emperor Aurelian was forced to withdraw its troops from Dacia. An important process of Romanization took place over these years and this left lasting mark in the Romanians' culture, language and their ancestral conscience. As long as Dacians are considered the direct ancestors of the Romanians this part of history can't be forgotten as the childhood cannot be ignored in the genesis of a personality.

Romania of today is an *island of Latinity* surrounded by predominantly Slavic linguistic waves in Eastern Europe. Developed as a country over a tumultuous history marked by dramatic defense moments of its own existence, Romania of today is the product of this history with everything it has positive and negative.

Romanian people have both Roman and Dacian roots. It is difficult to say which side of heredity is most valuable: the Geto –Dacians or the Roman one. I think that a genuine importance has this mixture that put together a lot of strengths which were light – points in our history. These ambivalent roots are probably the springs of a tolerant attitude along the history. An interesting and specific way of "living together" of Romanians with people belonging to other nationalities has marked the history of the land. Greeks, Turks, Tatars, Hebrews, Russians, Hungarians, Germans, Bulgarians, Armenians and others were brought in different moments of history on these lands and remained in peaceful coexistence with the locals. Not even the communism years have destroyed the peaceful nature of coexistence. They have only motivated those who had a chance, to leave for a democratic world. A very specific kind of multiculturalism has determined an interculturality with distinct features.

Nowadays a new challenge appears, within the already described world of immigration phenomenon. Part of Romanians tries to find their luck over their country borders in Europe or on other continents. But a lot of other people come in Romania following their dreams. The last events show that Romania probably will be a requested host for immigrants coming from Muslim world in their run from a destroying war. The requests come from two parts: the fugitives and European countries. A big political, economical, social and

educational question arise in front of this situation. This paper limits the analysis on the educational field.

4. Romanian education within a specific cultural context and the necessity to reconsider the intercultural educational approach. Curriculum implications

The issues previously presented are enough reasons for a more focused concern of Romanian formal and non-formal education for an intercultural approach. It must develop a genuine intercultural attitude, as future emigrants or as hosts for immigrants. This concern seems to exist but a consistent strategy cannot be detected. The manner of implementing an effective intercultural education should be improved. It is both a philosophy and methodology issue. The philosophy must be an open one, with a deep understanding of human rights and human power, of a decent and effective social behavior. (Niculescu, R.M., 2013). The educational methodology should be a more active and interactive one, genuinely understood in favor of learners' competences development. The developed competences have to be explicitly focused on the effective adaptation of the humans in a multicultural world.

As academic teaching staff we followed a strategy aiming to develop explicitly and implicitly this kind of competencies along more than twenty years.

The nature of the cultural context (multiculturalism with various degrees of complexity) represents an important factor for: (1) design of learning situations within formal and non-formal education; (2) the transformation process of learning situation into learning experience for each learner (3) specificity of hidden curriculum accompanying the formal or non-formal learning situations; (4) the specific influence of the informal learning situations.

Thus, the nature of the cultural context has an explicit and implicit influence upon the educational circumstances and on each involved actor. A very interesting issue is determined by the particularity of the multicultural context. The multicultural society with a long multicultural history behind faces problems that differ substantially from a multicultural society constantly fueled with new waves of immigrants. What it is genuinely interesting nowadays consists in the recent necessity to face this new hypostasis as well.

The unbelievable dynamic of the contemporary human society based on an incredible speed of information and technology evolution make the immigration phenomenon something impossible to be avoided. But, a special preparation of humans from their early levels of education for being a world citizen, for facing successfully the challenges of a natural movement of human

resources crossing the continents and the oceans it seems to become tremendously necessary.

Some important issues have to be discussed firstly with the teachers trainers, than with teachers and parents but the most important action must be done in the educational hard work with the students from early ages to young adults. The society as a whole must become a learning society in terms of interculturality. Values, respect and genuine understanding of other people's culture, connected to assertiveness and dignity as milestones of the social behavior both of the hosts and the guests are tremendously necessary. A reconsideration of the concept "politically correct" should be considered in order to transform the pretending behavior into a genuine respectful one. And all these are necessary because of the complexity of the new world.

The immigration process is unsuspected complicated. Opposite feelings focus on short time units, a damage of self - image itself appear. The confrontation with a foreign society that appears as being more hostile than it is in reality is a tough one. This perception is determined by the initial extremely high level of newcomers' expectations.

A core concern for all the educational systems may be how to face all these issues. The research should be focused on what kind of particularities must be stressed within national borders as a curriculum design issue and an important milestone for what educational reform should be. I believe it is time for overcome the national borders, for trying to put the national educational values in favor of training the necessarily new citizen of the planet. There are a significant number of projects with international participation that can develop this idea.

Some directions of action may be highlighted.

First of all the development of a genuine intercultural competence through all the educational means must be a concern of the educational reform and of the non-formal and informal education as well.

Secondly, the development of a core competence profile of teacher implying the necessary features for working everywhere in the world with all types of students, within different cultural and multicultural contexts.

Another necessity is to develop academic and even pre-university programs for training professionals able to work in different economical, social and multicultural conditions.

A serious concern for all these aspects should determine the existence of a long term, medium and short term educational strategy. This strategy must serve the humanity development through education. Education can be the strongest mean for evolution of humanity but the risk is that it remains an effective means of her downfall, if not headed in the right direction.

School and the educational climate should turn from "a cubbyhouse" (Munns, G., 2005) where the life is only pretending as real into a place able to

train the future adults and professionals as effective citizens knowing in depth what the real life is, with all its strengths, weaknesses, constraints and opportunities. And maybe also important is to open the gate of opportunities for a future with the values of **good** and **justice**, in all their genuine meanings, to be the king and queen.

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