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Ființa umană și socializarea prin cultură

Rezumat

În lucrarea de față analizăm unele dintre cele mai importante procese de învățare culturală, enculturația și aculturația, încercând să identificăm efectele imediate ce pot fi semnalate la întâlnirea dintre două culturi, precum și riscurile declanșării unor procese de respingere atunci când strategiile de adaptare nu sunt viabile. Poziționările diferite în contextul relațiilor cu „celălalt" duc la apariția unor adevărate șocuri culturale ce se nasc, mai ales, ca urmare a percepțiilor diferite față de spațiu și timp ori față de credințele magico-religioase diferite.

Eliminarea tensiunilor și pozițiilor antagonice se poate face doar adoptând calea dialogului intercultural, soluție care duce înspre acceptarea și recunoașterea valorilor, a modurilor de viață, a reprezentărilor simbolice la care se reportează toate ființele umane. Atitudinea interculturală oferă șansa apariției unei sinteze de elemente comune, ca vector al comunicării și înțelegerii reciproce între grupurile culturale diferite, afirmând și punând în practică principii precum respectul, toleranța, egalitatea sau complementaritatea dintre valori. Numai în acest mod se vor putea fructifica diferențele spirituale și valorile locale astfel încât acestea să poată fi conectate la valorile generale ale umanității.

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The Human Being and Socialization Through Culture

Summary

In this study we analyze some of the most important processes of cultural learning, enculturation and acculturation, trying to identify the immediate effects that can be signaled at the meeting of two cultures, as well as the risks of triggering rejection processes when adaptation strategies are not viable. The different positions in the context of relations with the "other" lead to the appearance of true cultural shocks emerged, especially, as a result of different perceptions of time and space or different magical-religious beliefs.

The elimination of antagonistic tensions and positions can be done only by adopting the path of intercultural dialogue, a solution that leads to the acceptance and recognition of values, ways of life, symbolic representations to which all human beings are connected. The intercultural attitude offers the chance of a synthesis of common elements, as a vector of communication and mutual understanding between the different cultural groups, affirming and implementing principles such as respect, tolerance, equality or complementarity between values. Only in this way will spiritual differences and local values be brought to fruition so that they can be connected to the general values of humanity.

The Human Being and Socialization Through Culture

It is unanimously accepted that the human being is not just a biological being but, above all, a sociocultural one, as it results from the special ability that it possesses to acquire its capabilities to set up interests and to support a series of social values. For all this, a man goes through several sequences of cultural learning, a process that takes place gradually throughout its life. Among the processes of cultural learning, the most important is enculturation and acculturation.

Initially introduced in American anthropology[2], the term enculturation can be understood as the process of acquiring direct knowledge, a process that does not imply a deliberate, ordinate, planned learning, having, as an effect, the sensibility of a socially assumed intellect. Or, in another formulation, we could say that enculturation implies that mechanism through which, in the course of life, we absorb everything available and socially valued. Therefore, we speak about the mechanism by which an individual, born with certain significant behavioral potentialities, is oriented (directed) by the membership groups towards a structured, desirable behavior, which follows and respects their standards.

Specific forms of enculturation are, among others, expressive duplicity in the expression of emotions, the reaction of obedience to authority, favoring welfare symbols, etc. In other words, enculturation means that a specific process of a certain society whereby "a certain cultural group incorporates to the descendants the specific value elements in order to optimally integrate them into the community life." [3] The insertion of a person in the specific culture of the society in which it will be integrated takes place unconsciously, most of the time, without involving deliberate learning in the process. In the dynamics of enculturation through informal levers, an extremely important role is played by the cultural implicit, that is that complex of opinions and beliefs that will be indisputable and which (...) have the force of evidence and the virtue of the absolute.[4]

Socialization, on the other hand, involves the voluntary actions of social integration, summing up all the metamorphoses that appear as a result of the subject's relations with the environment and with himself, in the presence of the "other" and from the interaction with this.

The agents of socialization are, first of all, those from the closest circle of the individual subject, those who have relative power over this (the other members of the family who form the primary group), or those with lower influence (teachers, school colleagues, or members of the same religious community, etc., belonging to the secondary groups). In many cases, there are tensions, even strong disputes, between the individual subject and the socializing agents, the mediation between the two parties ending, frequently, with the symbolic victory of the socializing agents who stimulate acceptable behaviors on an

[2]   C., Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Basik Books, New York, 2001.

[3]   C. Cucoş, *Educaţia. Dimensiuni culturale şi interculturale*, Ed. Polirom, Iaşi, 2000, p. 118.

[4]   G. Zarate, *Enseigner Une Culture Étrangère, Hachette*, Paris, 1986, pp. 18-20.

individual level.

Enculturation undoubtedly has an adaptive composition, providing the subject with those identity strategies that will allow him to take action, when the life scenario requires, the most functional behavioral sequences, decisively helping the faster integration into the reference groups.

The second process of cultural learning, acculturation, involves a process by which a certain integrating culture imposes the members of a less influential culture, as a result of the actions of socializing agents and its defining models. We speak, therefore, of a fundamental cultural transfer, as a result of the interaction between two cultures. This means that acculturation causes lasting and profound transformations for the individual and collective personality. The absorption of the models of the grasping culture can be realized willingly or not and the ways of accomplishment can be very diverse: assimilation, integration, syncretism, disjunction.

Spontaneous acculturation can be signaled when there is permanent contact between the populations involved, there are certain channels of influence that ensure this process, for example: economic, commercial mechanisms, political institutions, etc. Change is a result of the contact game and it occurs in each of the two involved cultures, according to their internal logic.

Acculturation is a force when the pressure is imposed by the social-political context, but the acculturative modalities are tacitly negotiated by the groups involved. Often, economic or political migrations, in pluralistic societies, can perpetuate their institutions and traditions (before contact).

Acculturation is imposed in colonization cases, in which the rhythm and the methods of cultural assimilation are acquired through the levers of force. The effects that result from these types of acculturations are different, determined by their degree of flexibility.

Very important for our topic is to analyze, briefly, the five processes of acculturation: 1) reinterpretation 2) synthesis 3) syncretism 4) assimilation 5) anti – acculturation.

Reinterpretation refers to assuming the features of the dominating culture in the public space, keeping its cultural landmarks in the private space, a phenomenon reported in the case of the first generation of emigrants.

Synthesis can be mainly reported in children from the second generation. In this case, we may observe that they try new models of thinking and sensitivity, innovating with one or the other of the cultures in contact.

Syncretism denotes the emergence of a new culture, very heterogeneous compared to the previous cultures that caused it.

Assimilation is a negative process that illustrates an excessive way of transforming the previous value and behavioral model, with the risk of degenerating even into depersonalization. From a functional perspective, some authors consider assimilation as a "functional" adaptation to a new cultural climate.

Anti - acculturation is the process of brutally rejecting a culture that is disappearing (in a colonial circumstance in this case), producing a political mechanism and a return

to origins.

At the meeting between two cultures, certain adaptation strategies can be signaled that are used in relation to the so-called dominant culture. Four adaptation strategies were identified, which correspond to four types of acculturation.

The most widespread variant of acculturation is assimilation which implies the total abandonment of the cultural identity in favor of the identity of the dominated, integrating group. The phenomenon takes place within the perimeter of the identity and vital cultural characteristics (language, religion, customs, etc.). Assimilation is a one-way process, which aims at taking over the language, customs, values and, finally, the way of life of the dominant group of newcomers, which are, like so, included in the host society. This process is loaded with negative connotations, being associated with the notion of losing or giving up the original culture: the individual or group is integrated into the dominant culture, and the initial cultural identity is replaced by that of the superordinate group.

However, there are cases, where assimilation is superficial, assumed assimilation that frequently masks the "dissimulation", in other words, the adaptation strategies that lead to assimilation seem to be the most appropriate to reach acceptance by the dominant society of the subject involved. The individual keeps his original culture, rejecting his identity disintegration, which could be seen as an essential loss of something that is "innate". This masked conformism can also lead sometimes to "renouncing to one's identity." for example renouncing to one's name and surname, being, in reality, just a mask that could emerge from a need to hide or to conceal the differences, without abandoning them. This can be detected in the case of children who have a significant tendency towards conformity. Thus, they adopt the school rules, the language that is imposed on them, but in a superficial way, because they do not want to be considered "traitors" to their family environment.

Integration involves the preservation of a certain part of one's cultural specificity, while at the same time being part of some structures of the dominant society. This process is not one-dimensional, but multi-dimensional. Within it all the characteristics of an integral part are redefined by the newcomer, through a reinterpretation frequently encountered by the members of the first generation of emigrants, responding to both the individual's demands and the expectations of the community, and aims to establish links with other groups in the society. Integration leads to an identity redefinition in the context of new cultural landmarks.

Segregation or separation denotes either the individual's desire to preserve his or her own cultural identity or the establishment of strategies of refusal and rejection by the integrating society.

Marginalization, the fourth type of acculturation, is a process that symbolically rejects the social "target". Not being voluntary anymore, the dominant society plays an essential role in the practice of marginalization.

In all these types of acculturation, the individual subject has no free choice, indicating, in each of them, a tacit symbolic negotiation between the social participants involved. Integration into a new environment can trigger a series of very different reactions: frustration

or rejection, activation of resentment towards the insertion environment, disarticulation of identity, revolt and anger, generalized fears, surprise, or even fascination in the face of experiencing the new cultural context.[5] We speak, therefore, of some cultural shocks that appear as an effect of the different positions in the context of the relations with the "other". These shocks may be related to the different perceptions of space and time, or shocks caused by differences between roles within the family group. Also, there can be relative shocks caused by the different types of sociability (hospitality, mutual exchanges, etc.) or those that emerge from the different reactions from the request for help. Last but not least, cultural shocks can be reported as a result of contact with different magical-religious rites and beliefs or those related to opposite representations of cultural exchange.

When the contacts between the carriers of two cultures become antagonistic, it is necessary to establish areas of intercomprehension, that is, a meeting place having as basis the common values that allow the initiation of an acceptable dialogue and this interaction represents, in fact, an intercultural dialogue: the recognition of values, ways of life, symbolic representations to which humans report. The term intercultural therefore has a kinetic, dynamic dimension, sending in exchange, reciprocity, interdependence, request for decentralization, and the identification of some forms of dialogue.

In conclusion, we can say that only the intercultural attitude enables the emergence of a synthesis of common elements, as a vector (or vehicle) of the communication and mutual understanding between the various cultural groups. By upholding principles such as respect, tolerance, equality or interrelation between values, spiritual differences and local values can be harnessed, thus managing to be connected to the general values of humanity. Each authentic local value must be preserved by those who aspire to integration into the great world culture. These local values can represent for the culture of origin, true access bridges within the perimeter of the general values.

This type of approach is an urgency in a less and less homogeneous world, and the dialogue with the "other", with the local specificity and with the contextual nuance, must be assumed in a way that the dynamics of the individual and group identity can be understood. Interculturality is trying to respond to this objective by providing the ordinary man of the new world with the necessary skills that will help him integrate more easily into the current social realities. This implies that any member of the community should be prepared to perceive, accept, respect and experience the otherness so that there is no safe ground for meeting the "other".

As a result of globalization and the enormous multiplication of interconnections between people, a series of conflicts can be born, apparently economic, historical, social, etc. but which have, in the subsidiary, a cultural composition. In spiritual communicability, it triggers and maintains the other conflict or tension states. The necessary (even if not sufficient) condition for conflict relief would be that of identifying channels of communication in the spiritual plane, of balanced, open, flexible interpersonal reporting.

The future European space must be understood as a place of fruitful confrontation

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[5]   Constantin Cucoș, *Educația. Dimensiuni culturale și interculturale*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2000.

between several different cultural codes, which can sometimes have certain dysfunctions. This is why not only do people need to be prepared to integrate into these new realities, but institutions must also have the openness to receive people with different value codes.

Grup de spectatori; foto: Grigore SIMIONCA

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