

DIALOGUE BETWEEN DIFFERENT CULTURES THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Vittoria BOSNA

Department of Educational Sciences, Psychology, Communication, 'Aldo Moro' University, Bari, Italy

Abstract: *Throughout history the merging of cultures of civilization has resulted in different cultural practices, such as the exchanges on the Silk roads, or the imposition of cultural values through the wars, the various settlements or conquests. Today, in a world characterized by cultural diversity, one feels the need to propose new approaches to intercultural dialogue, overcoming the model of "dialogue of civilizations" to initiate new cultural interactions regarding an understanding needed in a intercultural world. The preconditions to ensure a better consideration of the cultural values that they have in common, shared goals, along with a list of the difficulties to be solved to overcome cultural differences. In addition to this there are the processes of globalization that have made possible regular exchanges, facilitating much intercultural dialogue.*

Keywords: *culture; history; dialogue*

1. INTRODUCTION

Probably in the course of history there has never been talk of cultural diversity since the beginning of the 21st century. However, the variety of debates, as well as cultural diversity, is such as to make the notion assume its changing meaning. In fact, for some, cultural diversity is considered positive because it evokes in itself the sharing of the treasures stored in every culture of the world. For others it is less because it is thought to make the sense of our common humanity lose and therefore be seen as a source of numerous conflicts; today this reflection has a strong proportional credit due to the fact that globalization has multiplied the points of contact between cultures exacerbating the identity issues.

2. WHAT WE MEAN BY CULTURAL DIVERSITY

2.1 Cultural diversity: which challenges

First of all, cultural diversity is a fact, there is a great variety of cultures that differ without difficulty in ethnographic observation, although what defines a given culture can be considered more difficult than one can believe. It can be said that the cognition of diversity has been so trivialized, because the knowledge of others has been facilitated by the globalization of exchanges and by a greater openness by the various

societies. The diversity of social codes has also rapidly contributed to making cultural diversity a real social issue. Faced with this diversity of norms and conceptions of the world, states find themselves inexperienced whether it is to respond to them, often urgently, or to try to profit from them for the common good. Here, with the UNESCO World Report dealing with this situation, we tried to propose a renewed framework for understanding the challenge represented by cultural diversity. To this end, it would be important to identify, beyond the very fact of its existence, the theoretical and political difficulties involved.

The first challenge will be oriented towards the examination of the various policies implemented without losing sight of the object of such reflection: cultural diversity and not the substitutes to which it is too often reduced.

A solution could be an extensive definition of culture (in the spirit of consensus established by the 1982 Mexico City Declaration) which has the merit of not promoting a too restrictive definition, without privileging a particular trait of a culture, for example religious, to the detriment of everyone else to define what characterizes it, but to encourage the union of cultures.

A difficulty in this sense could depend on the characterization of the constituent elements of cultural diversity and in this regard we can cite as an example the way in which UNESCO intends

the notion of civilization, refers to a process under construction, aimed at reconciling each individual culture of the world, on the basis of the recognition of their equal dignity within a continuous universal project.

A third and last difficulty depends on the relationship of cultures to change, and it took the first seven decades of the twentieth century for cultures to begin to be perceived as changing entities. One gets the impression that culture is better understood if one considers it as a process: societies change according to paths that are specific to each of them. The concept of difference is well aware of this particular dynamic by virtue of which a culture changes while remaining the same.

It is therefore necessary to define policies that give a positive inflection to these cultural differences, to make sure that the various groups can come into contact instead of entrenching themselves in closed identities, discovering in the "difference" a stimulus to evolution and change. It is a new cultural and social approach that could be used to accompany cultural change, helping them to live in the right way.

2.2 Cultural interactions. Cultures are not autonomous or static entities. This is one of the main obstacles to intercultural dialogue, after all Samuel Huntington has made important objections to the "clash of civilizations". Speaking of fractures to describe the differences between cultures is equivalent to ignoring the particularity of cultural boundaries and the creative potential of people.

The intermingling of cultures throughout history has translated into different cultural forms and practices, such as loans and exchanges (the ways of silk) or the imposition of cultural values through wars, conquests or colonization. However, exchanges also take place in the extreme context of slavery, due to the momentary processes of inverse acculturation in the dominant culture. Today the recognition of the universality of human rights allows us to reason in terms of "authentic exchanges" based on equality between all the cultures of the world.

The processes of globalization now make meetings, loans and exchanges possible. These new transcultural links can greatly facilitate intercultural dialogue. The awareness of history and the understanding of cultural codes are decisive factors for overcoming stereotypes and for making progress on intercultural dialogue.

2.3 Cultural stereotypes. Cultural stereotypes, while serving to distinguish one group from another, entail the risk that dialogue will fail in the face of differences. In fact, cultural tensions are often linked to conflicts of memory and opposing ways of interpreting past events, conflicts-values, particularly when referring to religious values.

When the desire to excel and manifest one's power does not distance the forms of dialogue, the latter remains the decisive solution to put an end to rooted antagonisms and to defuse political expressions that are often too violent. Today, today society must try to aim at recognizing and respecting the cultural peculiarities of all by seeking to promote universally shared values, originated by the interaction of cultural specificities.

In this way the tension between different identities can become the driving force of a renewal of national unity that rests on a new understanding of social cohesion capable of being able to include the diversity of different cultures.

2.4 Education. Education, considered in terms of transmitting knowledge and developing social and behavioral skills approaches, is the right solution. A pedagogical program determined by learning processes and standardized contents can not in any way respond to everyone's needs, any more than it corresponds to their living conditions. This is increasingly evident in a number of countries seeking to explore new roads within their educational path.

However, information on the types of education dispensed in the world and on what distinguishes them from one country to another has not yet been the object of a systematic analysis. In the name of quality education that is both well-conceived (in the sense of culturally acceptable) and flexible, ie adapted to an evolving society), program development must aim at increasing teaching relevance by adapting pedagogical contents, in addition to teacher training.

This means multicultural and multilingual programs based on multiple voices, on the stories and cultures of all groups in society. This approach, sensitive to the diversity of learning, should also include certain special measures to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable groups, and then try to improve the school and educational environments.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Cultural diversity, understood as a dynamic process whose dialogue, historical, religious and social can become a powerful lever for renewal, favoring the development of peace, based on universally recognized human rights. This diversity is at the heart of international cooperation and cohesion policies in line with the efforts of the international community to achieve global development.

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