UNDERSTANDING MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION THROUGH MULTICULTURAL DOBROGEA

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Abstract: *An ethnic mosaic - this is the way Dobrogea has been described at the beginning of the XXth century. Together with the Romanian people, in Romania live other ethnic groups, each with its specific tradition, culture and religion. This article highlights the uniqueness of multicultural phenomenon, demonstrating the possibility of harmonious intercultural cohabitation as a model that can provide an algorithm for the interpretation of intercultural communication and cooperation. The psychological, sociological and historical interpretation provides an overview of the phenomenon addressed.*

At European level we search for solutions to improve multicultural environment. It is necessary that solutions be found just inside the European multicultural space and adapted to each scenario individually.

Keywords: *Co-ethnicity, multiculturalism, Dobrogea, social learning*

1. Introduction

There are many concerns about the issue of multi-ethnicity and relations between different ethnic groups today (Modood, 2013; Joppke, 2004; Parvin, 2009; Fesja, 2012; Otovescu, 2012; Nicolaescu, 2012) or networks of communication created during modern times (Mircea, R., & Dragoi, V., 2008; Vladutescu, 2012). Most authors report the problem from the perspective of multiculturalism in the European space and believes that current policies and approaches are required to state specifically the lack of cohesion due to existing ethnic mosaic. Possible solutions are advanced such as intercultural education, measures that will be addressed in this paper. Contemporary world is traversed by ethnic conflict and identity crisis and this is so obvious that it need not prove. Tragic events of September 11, 2001 fall on the same phenomenology.

Both Europe (Eastern and Western) have their common cultural sources in Greek literature, Jewish religion and Roman law. Rivers surging from a single parted, but to irrigate lands of spiritual and different histories, bringing to flow into two distinct life meaning two models.

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Even if critics of multiculturalism (such as Rubin, M., Watt, S. E., & Ramelli, M., 2012) may argue against cultural integration of different ethnic and cultural groups to the existing laws and values of the country, this idea cannot be a model of judging the whole phenomena. Alternatively critics may argue for assimilation of different ethnic and cultural groups to a single national identity but this is not the situation of imposing another identity but it is a matter of choice.

2. Communication and cooperation in Dobrogea – a model of understanding multiculturalism

To apply the concepts described in the concrete reality of intercultural relations in contemporary Romania is first necessary to more precisely circumscribe the content of these relations. In this regard, it stand out two fundamental dimensions that define polarized communities and intercultural relations in Romania: ethnicity, national membership actually ethnically, reflected by the concept of "national minority", and religion without the two dimensions that there is a total overlap. In terms of ethnic relations, can be observed three categories well differentiated: the case of relations with the Hungarian minority, the Roma minority and relations with all other national minorities publicly stated. In the interfaith relations, traditionally, on the one hand, the majority Orthodox church relations with other faiths in general and, on the other hand, relations orthodoxy - Catholicism, reflected primarily by the Greek-Catholic relations. Of course, this classification is inevitably simplistic but it is relevant to guide analysis of the causes and dynamics of intercultural relations, while recognizing the high degree of variability present within each of the categories considered. We further analyze each case from two perspectives: that of the majority and the minority. Findings set out are based greatly and performed by Intercultural Institute activities, media coverage of this issue and some empirical studies. They should be considered as starting points as hypotheses that require more rigorous validation.

Dobrogea is still a model of tolerance and ethnic diversity that can serve as a European model of intercultural communication.

Dobrogea is a historical region shared today by Bulgaria and Romania. It is situated between the lower Danube River and the Black Sea, and includes the Danube Delta, Romanian coast, and the northern most part of the Bulgarian coast. The territory of Dobrogea comprises Northern Dobrogea, which is part of Romania, and Southern Dobrogea, which belongs to Bulgaria.

In Dobrogea area cohabits members of 34 different ethnic groups. It is a unique situation that demonstrates the possibility of tolerance and intercultural communication. Dobrogea area is extremely generous in terms of space, resources and geographical location, being basically a link between the Balkans, Eastern and Western Europe.

Characteristics of ethnic acceptance are also co-ethnicity phenomena in Dobrogea area, not exclude it and related issues: ethnicity specific question, possibilities and ways of living, historical and socio-economic development of the common territory housing. "Coetnicity is the phenomenon of coinhabitation with all representations of a territory's economic, historical, psychological, biological and which operates with the notion of teaching sociology housing" (Păduraru, 2006).

Understanding the model of multiethnic coexistence of Dobrogea area is a successful model that can be recommended in any space for good coexistence and multicultural development in respect of the European values and principles.

A rigorous statistical analysis demonstrates the presence of different ethnic groups on a large and representative time period. Processing of such data is a challenge for any statistician, an analysis of intercultural communication instructions, assumes a statistical analysis but also historical linguistic, religious, demographic, cultural, educational, ethnological, anthropological and even psychological. "The major issue raised by the analysis of specific environments, is to ensure the data on which to make this analysis. The existence of such problem is easily justified if the inadequate quality of data used can completely cancel the positive effects of performance measurement methods and analysis models used" (Mihaila&Mihaita Niculae, 2012).

Recent research supports the fact that one explanation for the absence of major conflicts between different ethnic groups is found in the tolerance that is possible in times of prosperity and political and social positive environment. Ethnic communities are often characterized by traditionalism and closing, but the in the space of here Dobrogea, multicultural communication allows openness to other communities and sharing own values.

The entire region of Dobrogea has an area of 23,100 km² and a population of rather more than 1.3 million, of which just over two-thirds of the former and nearly three-quarters of the latter lie in the Romanian part.

Minority activism in Dobrogea has virtually nothing to do with numerical share of minorities in the demographic structure of the region. Refunds focused on the role of some ethnic minorities in the new political scene during 1944-1948, with doubts about the representativeness of the moment given the statistical records, the figures are exaggerated for propaganda purposes to illustrate a political representative.

This period with the post-revolutionary interesting symmetry appears as cloudy in the history of most country-wide and at the micro level of the various ethnic communities forced to adapt to the "new order" communist. A special chapter is the information about the nationalization of properties of the stalwarts of ethnic communities - refineries, factories, shops, etc.. - Entering the communist state with many heritage buildings that belonged to minorities (Nationalization in the Annex to Decree no. 92/1950 of 39 where he notes that 29 buildings belonging to members of national communities being affected families Avramide, Carvelas, Chiriachide , Grinberg, Hrisofi, Hasan, Jacobin, Margulis, Mustafa, Cernevski and others).

Moral and material reparations after 1989 is hard but the majority and minorities are involved in a project open society that restores the social memory of ideology trend, with significant gains and losses, each step following the recent past to distance the risk of losing all the time accumulations in an effort to adapt to the new paradigm of European integration, poles cultural change, the new legal framework, enhanced mobility and access to resources.

From a demographic perspective, a steady population can be observed in Dobrogea, as seen from the statistics below.

Table 1: The ethnic structure of the population
in Dobrogea area (1905 to 1913)

Ethnics	Constanţa County		Tulcea County		Dobrogea	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1905						
Romanians	93.806	59,9	54.047	37,7	147.853	49,2
Turks/Tatars	30.453	19,4	5.596	3,9	36.049	12
Bulgarians	12.345	7,9	33.932	23,6	46.277	15,4
Russians -Lipoveni	2.103	1,3	29.415	20,5	31.518	10,5
Germans	4.100	2,6	4.042	2,8	4.142	2,7
Greeks	5.198	3,3	4.278	3	9.476	3,2
Other	8.901	5,7	12.232	8,5	21.133	7
Total	156.906	100	143.542	100	300.448	100
1913						
Romanians	129.066	61,6	87.339	51,1	216.425	57
Turks/Tatars	35.142	16,8	6.300	3,7	41.442	10,9
Bulgarians	24.377	11,6	26.772	15,7	51.149	13,4
Russians -Lipoveni	2.349	1,1	33.510	19,6	35.859	9,4
Germans	5.580	2,7	2.117	1,2	7.692	2
Greeks	5.231	2,5	4.768	2,8	9.999	2,6
Other	7.806	3,7	10.053	5,9	17.859	4,7
Total	209.571	100	170.859	100	380.430	100

Source: Enachescu, V.A. (2013). Communication and cooperation in Dobrogea area – multicultural approach. Bucharest: ASE

As seen in the table above, there were variations on the ethnic structure of the population in Dobrogea, but ethnic groups have maintained the presence in terms of population, which show the presence of a climate of tolerance and cooperation even if there are some differences in terms of beliefs, traditions, individual linguistic domain and even from a psychological perspective. Free access to resources and security of individuals is a key factor in the continued presence thereafter allowing free expression of specific values of each ethnic group.

Even notice an evolution in terms of the main ethnic demographic constantly here so a clear climate of normality on inter-group relations. Permanent cooperation was possible not only as an element of preserving a common geographical space but also in terms of common interests either commercial purposes, occupational or basal - security.

Mutual understanding of ethnic groups in their interaction fosters communication process. The process involves knowledge-ethnic cultural patterns, the symbols, specific languages, experiences and practices of each ethnic group.

Table 2: Current ethnic structure of the population in Dobrogea area
(both Romanian and Bulgarian Dorogea)

Ethnicity	Dobrogea		Romanian Dobrogea		Bulgarian Dobrogea	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All	1,328,860	100.00%	971,643	100.00%	357,217	100.00%
Romanian	884,745	66.58%	883,620	90.94%	591[1]	0.17%[1]
Bulgarian	248,517	18.70%	135	0.01%	248,382	69.53%
Turkish	104,572	7.87%	27,580	2.84%	76,992	21.55%
Tatar	23,409	1.76%	23,409	2.41%	4,515	1.26%
Roma	33,422	2.52%	8,295	0.85%	25,127	7.03%
Russian	22,495	1.69%	21,623	2.23%	872	0.24%
Ukrainian	1,571	0.12%	1,465	0.15%	106	0.03%
Greek	2,326	0.18%	2,270	0.23%	56	0.02%

Source: Enachescu, V.A. (2013). Communication and cooperation in Dobrogea area – multicultural approach. *Bucharest: ASE*

Major cities in Dobrogea are Constanţa, Tulcea, Medgidia and Mangalia in Romania, and Dobrich and Silistra in Bulgaria.

Dobrogea has been a model of interethnic living since a long time ago. The reason for promoting it is the interethnic conflict but also confessional situation which have been extended in the Balkans and in the ex-soviet space, so close to us. As an example, „a Dobrogea model" can support getting away from history and politics accumulated in the Central and South-Eastern Europe.

The ethnic, religious and cultural mixture leads to different realities. First, it stands out interferences which assume transfers of strong elements which belong to two or more ethnic groups and confessional communities and second aspects of life are output through well preserved identities and particularized for every ethnic groups, sometimes living in the same region, other times far away from each other.

An ethnic mosaic - this is the way Dobrogea has been described at the beginning of the XXth century. This is why the Romanian writer, Nicolae Iorga, affirmed at Gotha in 1905 concerning its publication: „The history of Romanians" that: "Dobrogea is a very curious country geologically, which geographically doesn't belong to any of the Carpathians and Balkans, and whose people have been since the beginning of time as diverse as its ground's shapes and nature."

"Social learning theory seeks to explain human behavior in terms of understanding his need for social efficiency. Over time many theories have tried this approach by focusing more on individual actions behavioral type. Bandura proposes perspective causal analysis of individual actions. It has regard to the epistemological and methodological attributes the jump to detailed examination of internal and external influences of the individual" (Drămnescu, 2010).

Together with the Romanian people, in Romania live other ethnic groups, each with its specific tradition, culture and religion. The regions with the biggest number of ethnic

groups in Romania are: Transylvania, Banat, Bucovina and Dobrogea. In the areas with a reduced ethnic diversity, like Oltenia and Moldova, there is the thinnest opening of ethnic and politic pluralism. The worst perceptions about the Romanian Magyars are in the regions where they are few numerically (Oltenia, Muntenia, Dobrogea, Moldova), and the best perception about them is in Transylvania.

Dobrogea has been an interethnic living model for a long time, often invoked and quoted. The actuality of its promotion is motivated by the interethnic and confessional conflicts situation extended in The Balkan Peninsula and in the ex-Russian space, so close to us. Lifted to the position of model, "the Dobrogea model" can support the overtaking of the historical and political stress, accumulated in Central and S-E Europe.

Dobrogea, as a space of interference between cultures (Orient- Occident), between religions (Christianity- Islamism), between political and military areas (NATO - URSS, Russia), between regions and economical ensembles (E.U- CAER, CSI), carries the imprint of the different influences, adopted or imposed and which confers individuality and specificity.

Between the historical areas of Romania, Dobrogea is territorial and demographic between the smallest, representing about 6,5% as surface and 4,5% as number of inhabitants, reported to national level. But, with all this, Dobrogea is constituted in a geographical reality, both well marked and complex. To the geographic and geologic diversity it's associated an historical and demographical evolution, a succession of civilizations and cultures that left a geographical reality, previously mentioned which no matter how much it's studied it's far of being complete and exhausted.

Interethnic living in a confliction area made from Dobrogea a place similar to "West America", a beautiful territory, with good development perspectives, but also full of difficulties and dangers. In XX century, the affirmation and development of the Romanian country, the establishing of the population in parallel with its numerical increase took to strengthening and developing the areas, with variable intensities and different senses. In Dobrogea, was outlined a system of settlements, integrated in the national one, but with many particularities, consequences of the ethno-cultural diversity.

The dynamic of the ethnic structure of Dobrogea is dominated by several factors, such as colonization by moving of flocks and definitive migration for work of a Romanian population, the exchange of a serious number of Romanian people from the Cadrilater and their transfer in the old Dobrogea, the transfer of Bulgarian population from Dobrogea (60.000) to the gave away Cadrilater, the massive emigration of the Germans (10.000 only in 1940) to Germany, USA, Canada (1928-1941), of the Jewish People (1940-1943) and of a serious part of the Turks (in 1922-1930), a getting old tendency, accentuated at a few ethnic groups with low weights: the Armenians, the Greeks, the Italians and the Poles and also the forced evacuation to URSS of a part of the Germans (surprised in Romania by the Russian occupation) and the Tatars.

According to the 2002 census, 10,5% of the Romanian population represents another ethnic group than the Romanian one and 9% of them talks another language than the Romanian language. Today, 18 minorities have an officially deputy, and the Hungarian party (UDMR) has 27 deputy mandates (7.83%) and 12 senator mandates (8.57%), this

includes the ethnic groups with a population number bigger than 1000 persons. "It is useful to observe that the concerns inspired by the contemporary challenges are widely spread and shared, up to the global range, since most of the problems have been either created or amplified by the globalisation process" (Lacatus&Staiculescu, 2012).

3. Conclusions

Based on this study globalization may be endanger the integrity and authenticity of a successful model of coexistence by reducing the cultural diversity as a result of reporting to a common template and implicitly by constructing a new identity. "Besides the lack of existence of a common language, another important question that requires communication barriers at European level is low trust between experienced and new members join the EU. How could this capital gain confidence? Maybe by contact between citizens of different European countries" (Stavre, 2011). For this question the answer is clear from the understanding of the existing model of multicultural in Dobrogea, as a measure of tolerance and mutual respect towards cultural and spiritual values in the direction of preserving and promoting ethnic identity.

The limits of any research in this area range from issues of subjectivity of the author to variables such as time, resources or validity of the target group. However, as revealed from the literature pursuing multicultural phenomenon in Dobrogea area can be more than a simple indicator. It can be a model for the understanding of multiculturalism, and later to form a pattern of thinking. We appreciate Dobrogea model is marked primarily by uniqueness, being permanently connected to the realities of the contemporary world.

Even if Dobrogea multicultural space represents only a successful experience of cooperation from multicultural perspective, this might be considered as a potential solution to reach the multicultural ideal. Free access to resources, democratic governance, tolerance, freedom of expression and exploitation of the potential of each ethnic group are key factors present in Dobrogea area that can be adopted in any space to build a favorable multicultural cooperation. Conflicts can be removed just by preventing situations tension and encouraging ethnic group identity is a key factor in this respect.

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