

International Workshop

From Multiculturalism to Interculturalism in Education Policy: Which Role for Religion?

Friday, 1st March 2024

Meeting room, 2nd floor

Department of Sociology and Social Research

Verdi street, 26th – Trento



Highway and Byways, Paul Klee (1929)



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Interculturalism has emerged within the Council of Europe works as an alternative to both assimilationism and multiculturalism. While multiculturalism is blamed for emphasizing the cultural identity of social groups, somehow crystallizing their characteristics, interculturalism is based on a different understanding: it favors mutual dialogue and it assumes that the cultural identity of an individual cannot be equate to that of the social/cultural group to which he/she is assumed to belong. In the education field, according to the CoE, interculturalism policy implies a favour for a teaching *about* religion, i.e., a teaching focused on a cognitivist/non-denominational approach to the religious fact rather than on confessional aspects of a given religion, and citizenship/civic education. This paradigm shift entails a series of questions that the seminar, organised within the activities of UNITE (UNiversal design for education: legal perspective for a new conception of inTErcultural education) PRIN 2022 research project, aims to address: is intercultural education policy a tool for promoting the right to cultural difference or, rather, social cohesion? How does the cognitivist approach towards religious teaching impact on existing national religious education models? How is relevant in this framework the public or mixed nature of the national school system offer? Should religious communities' exponents be involved in the definition and teaching of the cognitivist religious curriculum? Should atheist and rational movements be involved as well? Or should impartiality in the teaching impose a neutral form of religious teaching? If so, would this neutral approach grant an effective and deep understanding of the religious dimension of the human being? What type of relation can it be envisaged between the spreading of civic/citizenship education in the education systems and the cognitivist approach towards religious education? Are they converging in their goals or can they be conflictual?

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UNiversal design for education: legal perspective for a new conception of inTErcultural education (UNITE) is a PRIN 2022 project financed by the **EU Next Generation program**. **UNiTE project** aims to verify the feasibility in the national context of a new meaning of intercultural education that we define as universal. Two guidelines are being followed. On the one hand, universality concerns the contents of knowledge and thus the idea that each subject - history, literature, law, religion - should no longer be limited to the transmission of culture and majoritarian words-views. On the other hand, intercultural education should include not only ethnic-linguistic culture, but must be extended to the life experiences and words-views of other groups such as persons with disabilities, LGBTI+ persons, religious minorities, minors with little access to educational and cultural opportunities.

Programme

9:00 - 11.15 a.m.

Daide Strazzari (University of Trento)

Welcome and Preliminary Remarks

First session

Chair: Rossella Bottoni (University of Trento)

Silvio Ferrari (University of Milan)

Religious Education in Public Schools: Problems, Trends and Perspectives in EU Countries

Roberta Medda-Windischer (Eurac Research-Bolzano/Bozen)

Civic Education and Common Values: Meanings, Criticisms, Reflections

Leni Franken (University of Antwerp)

Teaching into and about Religions: Current Trends in Belgium and in the Netherlands

Coffee Break

11.30 -13.00 a.m.

Second session

Chair: Matteo Nicolini (University of Verona)

Kyriaki Topidi (European Centre for Minority Issues – Flensburg Germany)

Religious Diversity Governance and Education in Modern Britain: the Model, its Impact and Limitations

Eugenia Relaño Pastor (University Complutense - Madrid)

Teaching about Religions and Education for Citizenship in Spain: a Long Confrontational Issue



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14.15 – 17.30 a.m.

Third session:

Chair: Cinzia Piciocchi (University of Trento)

Niels Valdemar Vinding (University of Copenhagen)

Confessionally Christian for Political Purposes? The Danish Cases of Right-wing Political Co-option of Teaching on Religion for Anti-Islamic Purposes

Blandine Chelini-Pont (University of Aix-Marseille)

Religious Instruction, Moral and Civic Education, Teaching on Religions: Historical and Legal Milestones of the French Complexity

Guillaume Silhol (University of Bologna)

The Pedagogic Politics of Neutrality: A Sociological Perspective on Teaching About Religion in French Education

Anna Parrilli (University of Trento)

Laiklik and Religious education in public schools: the compulsory teaching of 'Religious Culture and Ethics' in Türkiye

Debate

Final Remarks

Roberto Toniatti (University of Trento)