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Multiculturalism and immigration

Criteria for Lasallian Schools

Foreword

It is a double pleasure for me to write the introduction for this MEL booklet. Firstly because I feel very close to its authors both in their pedagogical preoccupations and experience - they always speak to us from their direct educational experience - up to the limits of their dreams and their imagination. Secondly because I feel part of what they are doing after many years of shared work and friendship.

Responding to the educational needs of children and young people has always been a constant factor in our Lasallian history and it was not in vain that the Institute was created for this purpose. In recent years plans and projects have proliferated within our works, a very clear indication of our aversion to routine, mediocrity and letting things drift on in the same old way. From international, regional, district and local Lasallians authorities, our works have opted vigorously towards responding efficiently to new situations and have created plans and programs - at a frenetic pace - to counteract school failure, to promote education in values, to empower education for justice, to give priority to attention to diversity and others too numerous to mention. And in case the above was not enough, we have now to respond to multicultural situations and immigration…

In their introduction the authors indicate that they are providing *a first response* which is offered to *the directors and educators of the La Salle Centres of ARLEP*. They tell the reader that "this" response in the Iberian context comes at an opportune moment - that is neither too early nor too late - which offers guarantees of greater success, and I foresee that the booklet will always be useful, thought-provoking, inspiring and practical no matter what role you are fulfilling, or what geographical zone you are working in, provided you have a sensitive leaning towards education and that you are upset by social inequality. The banquet is served for you whether you are director, teacher, formator, educational worker, catechist, one who accompanies or social worker. Maybe we all are? Of course the context or point of reference is centred on the area of the European school and more specifically on that of Spain, but it is no less certain that the wise reflections which are found

throughout and the contents of the final chapters are valid for any activity and any milieu in which the gift of inter-culture exists or could exist.

To conclude, I would say that the booklet, written in simple and clear language, will help us to understand the existing models of integration, to avoid dangerous confusions, to opt for co-operative and collaborative models of learning, to transform our attitudes, to understand our own culture better in inter-cultural surroundings and to eradicate the false truths of the prophets of doom, which are centred more on cheap security or sponsored by exclusive socio- political tendencies.

<div align="right">Br. Alfonso Novillo.</div>

Preamble

Humberto Eco says that *the man of the twenty-first century will be more and more a man of mixed race, rich in identities and belonging to multiple groups*. It is well that he says this, since all of who are current inhabitants of developed countries choose diversity according to our preferences in the "supermarket" of culture and religion. Furthermore, we do not choose once for all time, but only provisionally.

We Lasallians from ARLEP (Region of Spain and Portugal), gathered together for the **Ninth Regional Assembly** in Irún during July and August 2003, noticed that we live in and educationally serve a society that is more and more plural and multicultural, as a result of the growing increase of the phenomenon of immigration.

Aware of the existence of these **new multicultural, multiethnic, multilinguistic, and multireligious scenarios in which we coexist**, and which are also present in schools, we formulated and we approved proposition number 15, inviting Regional Commissions on Pastoral Ministry and Education to study "criteria for action" which will specify what our "Character Proper to Lasallian Centers" includes about "multi-religions, multiculturalism and immigration" and so that in this way, they can provide precise guidelines to educational centers.

This first document, entitled, "**Multiculturalism and Immigration. Criteria for Lasallian Schools**" was written by the Regional Education Commission as a first response to this request. We would like, therefore, that administrators and teachers in Lasallian schools in ARLEP, find within its pages the precise guidelines to build an authentic pedagogy on multicultural issues which will promote relationships in solidarity with different social and cultural groups, to end instances of lack of support, discrimination, and racism that might be made manifest by our conduct.

With this first document, we want to be convinced that what Brother Álvaro Rodríguez, Superior General, states in his **Pastoral Letter of December 24, 2004**, is possible: to be convinced "that the Lasallian School ought to be the privileged place for putting into practice the mission of the Institute. That the school contin-

ues to be today the tool of evangelization within the multicultural, consumer and secularized society in which we live. That we must practice dialogue with cultures so that the Gospel enriches them."

1. Introduction

"Service in the public interest
The Lasallian school exercises its educational activity as part of the reality, culture, customs, and traditions in the place where it is located. This activity is offered, respectful of personal convictions; **it expresses its commitment to the social integration of persons from different cultures and religions who come to its classrooms**. It accepts the regimen of educational agreements to provide access to students." (Character Proper to Lasallian Centers, 1.3, page 8).

"To encourage working together
We promote mutual acceptance, teamwork, fraternal relationships, respect for opinions and for all creeds, ideas, or customs. In our **multicultural and multireligious society**, we give special importance to such aspects as: respect for the diversity and singularity of persons, participation in the democratic process, the growth of friendship, appreciation for one's own culture as a source of personal and group enrichment, never as a cause for exclusion." (Character Proper to Lasallian Centers, 2.2, page 9).

The present social climate promotes two contradictory movements. On the one hand, we are marching towards **globalization**, which also implies homogeneity, and on the other hand we demand our own proper identity in facing other ones, thereby supporting **nationalism**.

It is possible that we may not know which model of society is the desirable one, but we certainly are clear about **evils that happen to us**.[1] Institutional violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, and migratory movements are changing human geography; they

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[1] Rodríguez, T. (1998) *"Pedagogía de la indagación, existencia indignada: los estilos creativos con y por los movimientos sociales."* Documentación social, number 110, pp. 127-128.

remove all sense of security; they put various cultures into crisis; and the make us take a stand on phenomena that affect all of us, especially those **institutions** that are most sensitive to and committed to what is human.

In this context, **we ought to ask ourselves if education is having positive effects on immigration and multiculturalism**, without feeling as though we are being hounded by society which is always looking for educators to solve its conflicts. Should we dare to question ourselves within our teams of teaching personnel about what type of education can improve the quality of life of all cultural groups that are present in our society, and specifically within our school, whether or not there are immigrants present? We must reach a consensus, in response to our proper character, on the model of education that is most favorable to all, without exclusion. **We will need to promote a type of education that favors integration and the correction of inequalities**.

"The history of humanity is a history of migrations, movements of populations from one corner of the planet to another," [2] a history of relationships and confrontations between human groups that have different views of the world. Our recent history is still the history of an emigrant people, but neither this circumstance nor the trite expression that *"we have gone from being a country of emigration to being one of immigration"* do we need when we **become aware of the immigration present in our cities and in our classrooms**; of their needs, feelings, and the inadequate policies for their full integration. **Our educational centers**, because of their Christian orientation and for their being defined as Lasallian, **must be open to all, especially the needy**,[3] and immigrants are needy, which justifies our greater sensitivity to diversity and to problems involving the acceptance, adaptation, and integration of the immigrants.

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[2] Botey, J. (1994). *"Inmigració estrangera. Els conflictes de classe, els d'identitat i les actituds."* Interaula magazine, numbers 21-22, Barcelona.

[3] Documents of the 43rd General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, page 18 *"From its foundation, the Institute has defined itself as being called by God to the educational service of the poor. We need to remember, however, that the question of the educational service of the poor is closely tied to social, cultural and economic contexts, which vary greatly from country to country where the Institute is present."*

Multiculturalism examines the existence of two or more cultures in the same space, each with its own different styles and ways of living. Full respect for the rights of all cultures or for the enrichment of the cultural mix is not included in its postulates. The idea of **intercultural awareness**, therefore, **adds to multiculturalism the idea of the inter-relationship between diverse cultures** that exist in a society.

Our society is multicultural due to the fact that diverse manifestations of cultural identities live together within it, in addition to it being so due to immigration. Within the society, **school education should teach that cultures do not challenge each other but that they mutually complement and enrich each other.** We believe that our schools ought to play a crucial role in the encounter between majority and minority cultures, while collaborating in the fight against racism and xenophobia and against any type of discrimination. To do this and to construct a life that is more human and more in solidarity, we must believe in and develop a truly intercultural type of education. We must support the *Universal Declaration Unesco* that reaffirms the conviction that intercultural dialogue is the best guarantor of peace and living together, at the same time as rejecting the thesis of culture shock; we must support the same thought on intercultural dialogue and the evangelization of cultures of *John Paul II* [5] and of *Álvaro Rodríguez*, Superior General.[6] Above all, however, we must be consistent with our **Proper Character**, which **"considers that intercultural and interreligious dialogue is already a form of**

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[4] Universal Declaration of UNESCO on *Cultural Diversity*, adopted at the 31st Meeting of General Conference (Paris, November 2, 2001).

[5] JOHN PAUL II, *"Dialogue Between Cultures for a Civilization of Love and Peace."* Message for the 2001 World Day of Peace. In addition to offering enlightening guidelines we are challenged to be bold in intercultural dialogue, without giving up our own identity. He points out that dialogue leads one to recognize the richness of diversity and it provides the spirit for reciprocal acceptance, within the perspective of authentic collaboration, which responds to the original call for the unity of the entire human family.

[6] Brother Álvaro Rodríguez, Pastoral Letter to the Brothers, December 25, 2004. We are encouraged that our *"schools continue today to be an instrument of evangelization in a multicultural, consumer, and secularized environment."* He states that *"dialogue with cultures allows the Gospel to enrich them."* He invites us to *"assume... that in all cultures and through all religious expressions God is made manifest."* We are especially encouraged to realize an authentic *"inculturation in the world of the young."*

evangelization" and *"based on intercultural and interreligious dialogue we are invited to cultivate ethical education in our students in its triple dimension: personal, community, and social"* (Character Proper to Lasallian Schools, 3.4 and 3.5, page 11).

2. The phenomenon of immigration

"Because the Community is prosperous and because it is support-ed by a long-standing democratic tradition, the arrival of immi-grants will not cease, and, along with their arrival, there will con-tinue to be the need for the social immigration of immigrants. Because the Community is prosperous and democratic, it has resources at its disposal and it can develop a solidarity and a will that will allow it to respond to this demand"[7] The report on immi-gration of what was then the European Community concluded on this hopeful note. Today, the European Union publicly states that it needs immigrants to face the demographic decline from which it suffers and to cover two million jobs for unskilled workers. There are more than 20 million immigrants among us today. Furthermore, we are going to need 45 million immigrants by the year 2050. With them, we will maintain the balance of pensions and a stable growth.

It seems that **we need immigrants** if only for economic selfishness, and the problem is made manifest in the millions of illegal immi-grants. What to do with them? Legalize them? Close the borders? The only solution seems to be to integrate them, but that is some-thing complex. *"To maintain a market of hundreds of thousands of unregulated illegal immigrants is not, in the last analysis, to do anything other than to commit to an outbreak of delinquency, The current process of immigrant regulation, carried out by the Spanish government, is the only realistic and sensible option that there is to resolve a complex human, social and economic situa-tion..."*[8]

In spite of this evidence, **the European population** is divided over this issue and **it seems to hold two well-differentiated positions on the matter**:

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[7] COMMISSION ON EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (1992). *Immigration and employment.* (Working document from the Commission services). SEC (92) 955. Brussels, May 7, 1992, p. 8.

[8] EL MUNDO, Saturday, March 5, 2005, *Immigrants: Bring them on!*, Juan A. Herrero, professor of social ethics at the University of California, Opinión, pp. 4 and 5.

1ˢᵗ Immigration is Necessary

It is considered necessary to ensure generational replacement and to fill certain types of jobs. The February 6, 2005 edition of *El País* expressed this idea when it asked the question *What would happen if Madrid had no immigrants?* The same question was asked later on about a city in California and this thought was picked up in the Mexican film *"A Day Without Mexicans"* which opened in the United States in August 2004. In the case of Madrid, it was concluded that *"the 800,000 foreigners who have resided in the capital over the course of the past 10 years are essential for the daily life of the city."* [9]

2ⁿᵈ We Should Avoid the Arrival of Immigrants

Those who think and say this believe that immigrants take jobs away from us and generate many conflicts. Some sociological studies are related to this position, offering the excuse that two out of three young Spaniards may be racists or that it is because of immigration that delinquency has increased.[10]

The problem of these positions is that they tend to politicize **immigration**, and then it becomes an election issue, when **it is a matter of rights and duties**.

The distribution of **foreign residents** in Spain, by **Autonomous Communities in 2003**, was as follows:[11]

ANDULUSIA 208,523	ARAGON 39,015	ASTURIAS 12,730	Balearic islands 75,867	Canary islands 113,339
CANTABRIA 11,778	CAST.-LA MANCHA 36.540	CASTILLA-LEON 45.233	CATALONIA 383.938	VALENCIA 180.011
EXTEMADURA 17.123	GALICIA 37.522	MADRID 355.035	MURCIA 58.150	NAVARRE 22.681
BASQUE COUNTRY 28.600	RIOJA 13.621	CEUTA 2.184	MEJILLA 3.225	NOT STATED 1.896

[9] EL PAIS, Sunday, February 6, 2005. *What would happen if Madrid was without immigrants?* Spain, p. 17.

[10] CIS survey, June 2002, taken among young people between the ages of 15 and 29.

[11] Source: *2003 Results Government Delegation for Law and Immigration.* Data provided by CIDOB Foundation.

Immigrants in Spain make up a heterogeneous group that needs to be appreciated and treated according to their place of origin and different cultures. The number of low-paid immigrants resident in Spain in 2003 from the **ten principal groups**, was as follows:[12]

MOROCCO 333.770	ECUADOR 174.289	COLOMBIA 107.459	PERU 57.597	CHINA 56.086
ROMANIA 54.688	ARGENTINA 43.347	DOMINICAN REP. 36.654	CUBA 27.323	BULGARIA 24.369

EUROPE 75.504	AFRICA 58.561	NORTH AMERICA 3.864	CENT. AMERICA 12.782	SOUTH AMERICA 132.281
ASIA 13.674	OCEANIA 297			

PRE-PRIMARY 60.412	PRIMARY 133.310	SECONDARY 102.525	ESP./PGS 1.015	

2.1 The coexistence of various cultures.

It is not enough that an immigrant be "legal" to be socially integrated, we have to be clear that with immigration we not only are importing workers, but also persons with their own histories and cultures. Therefore, **we will be able to speak about integration when the immigrants who come to our country preserve their identity and establish socio-cultural contacts with our culture**.

On more than one occasion we talked about integration as concealing situations of *exclusion* or *marginalization* because what is really being achieved is their *assimilation*, which carries with it for immigrants the abandonment of their culture of origin and replacing it with ours, thus causing complicated and conflictive situations.

As regards immigrants who live among us we have to hope, as *Jürgen Habernas* pointed out, that they accept the legal and political principles of our society and acquire the commitment to involve themselves in the type of living together that they find. We are not talking about *assimilation* nor about *acculturation*, but about an **ethical-cultural integration that does not impose the**

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[12] Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Law and Immigration.* Various years. *Government Delegation for Law and Immigration.*

abandoning of one's own culture but that does respect the socio-political structure of the host country.

Social and cultural diversity, the identity of minority groups, should coexist, having good relations among themselves and with the receiving countries. The resultant multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, and multi-religious settings require integrated policies that include social, economic, and educational approaches.

To tolerate does not mean to put up with, it does not mean to allow others to live among us, **but it does mean to create a dialogue with others on the same level without setting up relationships of power nor inequality**.

2.2 The subsidized school and immigration.

Very often the media and even the *State School Board* like to contrast the *Public School* with the *Private Subsidized School*, pointing out that the first is a **"school for everyone"** due to its receiving immigrants[13], while the second is a "**school for the few"**, because of its scarcity or virtually nil capability for welcoming immigrants. To say this truth is not to say the whole truth, since one school model or another has its advantages and disadvantages when dealing with the granting of human and financial resources on the part of the various state administrations, in order care for immigrant students or students with special educational needs. The first only has to ask for extra resources while the second must devise ways and means with ordinary resources, which are always scarce.

This year, 2005, which has been a year of reform, educational institutions, unions, parents, and owners of centers have reached a wonderful agreement about the means that should inspire future educational law. In its reference to immigration, the accord says: *"Both the public school and the subsidized school should take on the commitment of integrating immigrants and be subject to the*

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[13] As an example, the EL PAIS newspaper in March 2004 published an article entitled *"Mixed Race Classroom,"* wherein it stated that *"67 per cent of the students of the Tirso de Molina public school in Madrid are foreigners." "Those students which others reject are welcome here..."*

same criteria for admission." "No public or subsidized school will be obliged to provide schooling for immigrants that exceeds one-third of the places available." [14]

Our school centers are open to immigrants, although some of them, due to circumstances beyond their control, do not have any in their student bodies. The admission norms for the different autonomous self-governing Regions oblige the subsidized levels to reserve a number of places for these students. In this way, some of our schools offer immigrant schooling to 25% of their populations; others, being integrated, have populations which comprise 10% immigrants of the total number of the population on all educational levels, when immigrants normally are registered only for primary, ESO and general education. Many of our centers, relying on the total ratio of classrooms to students, however, keep the registration open for immigrant students throughout the year, exceeding their ratio without increasing some resources. Furthermore, **in all centers under the leadership of the Guidance Department, a Plan of Attention to Diversity has been drawn up** which looks at welcoming and attending to immigrants according to their educational needs.

Nevertheless, any school that is open to immigrant boys and girls has seen an increase in problems to the extent that the number of immigrants has increased in the classrooms. This situation has not gone unnoticed for the faculty, who feel defenseless, unprepared and unsupported by the Administration. **Among the problems seen and solutions adopted, the following are worth mentioning**:

Problems	Solutions in our schools
The presence of different cultures: changes in customs, eating habits, or in ways of dressing.	**Menus** always offer alternative foods that respect cultural differences.[15] The wearing of **religious symbols** (crosses, veils, head coverings...) is permitted.
Late registration of some students: frustration is evident and studies are abandoned.	Some schools have **open regis-**

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[14] Published in EL PAIS on Thursday, February 10, 2005, Sociedad.

[15] The Ministry of Health, in March 2005, is to establish norms for alternative menus.

Academically challenged: these students come from simple families, with few financial and educational resources in their countries of origin and, in some cases, there had been no prior schooling.

Language challenged: especially on the part of Asians, Africans, or Europeans. Learning the language of instruction is a priority in order to avoid further academic challenges.

The makeup of a heterogenous classroom group: this complicates educational activity.

Discipline problems among students: this tends to be a special problem in secondary schools.

Little or no family involvement in school tasks: even when called by administrators or by tutors, these families do not show up.

tration throughout the year and they have drawn up a **Welcome Plan**.

Small groups are used to organize **educational bolstering or support**. Quite a few retired Brothers offer needed educational bolstering or support for these cases.

Some centers have established **"Linked Classrooms"** to deal with this situation. Others have defined an **"Intercultural Mediator"** to establish better school-immigrant family relationships due to language difficulties. Sometimes this person is shared with other centers.

Some teams of teachers have established a **"cooperative-collaborative"** method to deal with different levels within the group, based on diversity. Some centers have organized their instruction based on the **"Subject Classroom"** methodology in secondary schools to deal with heterogenous grouping.

A good number of Counselors and Department Heads have established guidelines for **"Conflict Resolution in the School"** and have established mediation groups among the students.

In many centers a **"Social Educator"** has been set up who, among other things, makes contact with these families.

Never like now has the school been part of what has been called the global village, that is to say, a space of communication and interchange that is usually called world awareness, and that tends towards universalism, integration, and globalization. The world has become a great square, also the classroom, where people from all races and cultures move about.

Those of us who are in the world of education **can build a much better society and school: one that is more supportive, more peaceful, more democratic, more tolerant, more hospitable, more intercultural**. There is no doubt that this will be difficult, but we must believe in this utopia and in that of the Gospel, since the utopias of today are the realities of tomorrow. *Helder Camara* said, *"When just one person dreams about a world that is supportive, mixed, good, devoid of war, it is a fantasy, a dream; but when many dream about it together, like we are doing now, the dream becomes reality."*

Questions

- What is the attitude of the teaching personnel as regards immigration?
- Describe the demographic situation of your school as regards immigration. Is your school open to immigrants?
- Do we have a Welcome Plan drawn up?
- Draw up two lists about:
  a. The positive side of students from different countries and cultures being together.
  b. Daily problems that result from this being together.

3. Multiculturalism and intercultural awareness

Two social organizational concepts are differentiated which determine different perceptions of educational work according to the way they are framed in social models that are marked by **multiculturalism or intercultural awareness**.

Limiting ourselves to the framework of the Council of Europe, it is obvious that we are facing two terms that designate an enormous variety of meanings derived from ideological approaches and from relationships that try to establish themselves among different cultures and the dominant culture of a particular country. **We can consider**:

Multiculturalism ("Multus," meaning "numerous") The 1960s.	The existence of various cultures within a territory, a society, a state, coming from the influx of groups that immigrate to a society which until then was considered culturally homogenous, from which derives a determined attitude in view of the plurality of cultures and determined *educational proposition* to confront, or to find a solution for the set of problems said phenomenon carries with it.

Intercultural Awareness ("Inter," referring to "placing in a relationship") The 1970s.	This is seen as the ideal of a plurality of cultures that communicate, seek, affirm, and share common basic principles, that are able to cause well-established coexistence in respect and in the possibility of the mutual enrichment of differences. To build a *pedagogy of intercultural awareness* is the great challenge if we want to see relationships of solidarity between the different groups, cultures, which will put an end to the lack of solidarity, discrimination, and racism.

Therefore, this is about a **social and educational option** where complementarity and compatibility are fostered among different

approaches to life and cultures and it is up to the school not only to not shy away from this, but to seek communication as a basic element and privileged instrument for socio-political and inter-cultural coexistence.

3.1 The social, multicultural model.

By "multiculturalism" the Council of Europe understands the social situation of the coexistence of various cultures in a con-crete space, each with its different lifestyles and ways of living. Accepting that definition, this would include the appearance of identity groups marked by the promotion of differences and approaches of control, if not of rejection. **This social model is established on ideas of**:

Cultural Juxtaposition	*that **seeks** a simple, peaceful coexistence, **but avoids** any kind of interaction between the different socio-cultural approaches.*
Fragmentation	*where each person goes along gathering pieces of an immense puzzle, always incomplete or partial, but with the **absence of a reference model** that would give unity to the different elements that make up the puzzle.*
Hierarchization	*whereby ordinarily **systems that control, impose, or overwhelm are in play**, rather than those which integrate or complement.*

The multicultural movement is, by and large, a political and social demand for human and civil rights on the part of groups who feel discriminated or marginalized. The birth and growth of these multicultural programs is due to specific social problems of different populations.

In many countries, Spain among them, **multiculturalism is relat-ed to immigration and insecurity, and there are more police pro-grams than educational ones that deal with it**. Resources provid-ed by the state and by Regional Governments that are available to educational institutions are scarce and they are inadequate.

3.2 The social, intercultural model.

The multicultural reality of our society obliges us to **go beyond the palpable acceptance of the existence of distinct cultures**, and that is why we need to look for interchange among them, equality, communication, dialogue, and reciprocity.[16]

This model comes from the idea and conviction that diversity and pluralism enrich the life of society and of the school, and it promotes the belief that *"cultural diversity is the principal patrimony of humanity,"* to the extent that it:

- Offers the **possibility of knowing and living with other cultures** without the need to leave one's own life environment.

- Contributes **new values and new world views** in the process of personal growth.

- Raises questions and **asks about aspects relating to our life views**: religion, economics, ethics...

- **Helps to open minds and offers new horizons** for existence, oftentimes closed in around exclusivity, if not in the feeling of being dominated by another.

- **Fosters civil behavior** that is open to solidarity, to intercultural dialogue, to welcoming differences, etc.

- Is built upon **respect for cultural and ethnic minorities**, avoiding attitudes of imposition and domination and creating, on the other hand, new spaces for interaction and encounter for mutual enrichment.

- Promotes new social situations where, in accord with human rights, **respect for human identity is fostered** as are other individual and cultural, indigenous or foreign qualities.

- **Regulates the boundaries of rights and duties** through respect for the law and, in addition, by how much we denominate human rights so that:
  - on the one hand, the welcoming culture is not damaged by encounter and dialogue with other cultures, presenting

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[16] FROUFE, S. (1999), *"Intercultural Education and a Pedagogy of Intercultural Awareness."* Inter-university Magazine of Social Pedagogy. Second Quarter, number 3, p. 10.

itself clearly and precisely in all its components and possibilities, and

– on the other hand, when we determine that elements of the culture of origin conflict with some of these rights or with the law, there is a call for - as country nationals - the fulfillment of such norms, even though it may represent or suppose the renouncing or the abandoning of indigenous cultural elements.

• **Knows how to function well in an environment of unquestionable complexity as regards human relationships and the organization** of social, financial, political, academic, religious structures and more.

• **Promotes a convergent world view**, while avoiding the imposition of any particular one, usually that of the receiving country which, no matter how good it may be, in the interest of achieving unity, all attempts at absorbing, eliminating or imposing a view or particular mentality are done away with.

• **Follows the perspective** of responding to reality, but always **with a Utopian view** that knows how to read history based on what it wants to sow, facing the society of the future, with an important increase in the number of immigrants and an inevitable process of integration on the part of "second generation" immigrants.

Intercultural awareness is neither integration nor assimilation, nor much less is it separation or marginalization.[17] Intercultural awareness as a method of instruction **not only respects the fact of different cultures but it values them as something positive** because difference is a principle of complementarity and dialogue and it is the means for understanding the values, attitudes, and customs of others.

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[17] LOPEZ HERRERIAS, J. A. (1999). *"Is Education in Intercultural Awareness Possible from Infancy?"* Inter-university Magazine of Social Pedagogy. Second Quarter, number 3, p. 74.

Questions

- What are the principal differences in the world views (life, celebration, religion, food, values...) between different persons from different cultures present in your center?

- Have you had occasion to witness a situation that seemed impossible as regards the coexistence of some students from a specific culture or origin? Please describe.

- What things which seem difficult for us as adults to reconcile are of minor importance for children or young people from different cultures?

4. The evolutions of european educational systems

When it comes to experience in welcoming immigrants coming from other cultures, Spain is a "young" country, but it has a great deal of experience in ethnic diversity in schools due to the presence of Gypsy children.

Neighboring European countries have more experience in how to deal with cultural diversity in schools. We need to look at the different approaches and the stages those countries have gone through in order to be clear as to what we need to do, after having learned from the disappointments of those first approaches.

Studies that set up the evolutionary phases in European educational systems have been numerous and uneven, and so we preferred to put forward the perspective of *Susana Tovías*, in the following chart:[18]

APPROACH	CHARACTERISTICS
Assimilative	*A unique culture is passed on, the "national" culture, for the purpose of avoiding inequality and to achieve adaptation on the part of minority groups. In this approach the learning of the official language is key to integration. **Difference is confused with inequality**. The different attempts at this approach have been failures and have even accentuated inequality.*
Compensatory	*Its objective is to "fill" the cognitive vacuums that make schooling difficult for minorities, accepting diversity, but treating it as a deficiency. This approach is essentially a linguistic one. The objective is to care for the handicaps that cause school failure among minorities.*

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[18] Tovías, Susana (1993). "Multicultural Society and Education." GUIX, Educational Activity, number 184 February 1993, pp. 4 - 8, Barcelona.

Multicultural	*This approach aims to have an understanding of school that is more flexible and which promotes diversity*, maintaining the mother tongue as the language for basic skills. It considers the school as the ideal place for inter-ethnic relationships, **but from a closed and folkloric perspective of cultures**, which runs the risk of ghettoizing different cultural groups.
Intercultural	This approach comes to terms with and critiques the "multicultural" approach. Its position on racism is clear. It tries to stop the school from being an element in system reproduction, fighting against relationships of dependence, facilitating participation based on different identities and the development of them. **It is aimed at all children and all schools, not only the ones where cultural minorities are present. The entire curriculum is rethought, based on an intercultural perspective.**

5. Possibilities for schools in view of multiculturalism

Today, in our country, multiculturalism is much more evident than in previous decades. The President of the INE (National Institute for Statistics) informed us that, as of February 9, 2005, the number of foreigners in Spain exceeded 3.5 million, which represents 8% of the total population. On the school level, not all educational centers are open to multiculturalism, but not because of that are they missing a true intercultural education, since their students and the entire educational community live in a multicultural society. The great majority of our educational centers are already considering, in different degrees, about having a significant ethnic minority presence coming from different places of origin. **We all need to see multiculturalism not as an obstacle, but as a possibility for mutual enrichment**.

Multiculturalism in society and in the classroom is a factor that is **changing the school panorama more than anything else. The school has tried to respond to this challenge as best it could**, since *"it has fallen upon it"* having little time to absorb it. First of all, it tried to become integrated by *"assimilation"* and now it is trying to offer *"multicultural education,"* but it needs to reach the level of *"intercultural awareness,"* for which it needs human and material means, new didactic resources and innovative proposals to achieve intercultural dialogue and recognition.

At the present time in our Regions, educational employers are tending towards homogenization, in historical continuity with the idea that the school ought to be an instrument of cultural unity in training, an instrument of normalization and assimilation which continues the dominating and majority culture of the employers, which is a significant obstacle for equal opportunity.

If the school did not come into existence for multiculturalism, at this historic time it has to adapt and decisively face this challenge, aware that this will be very difficult to put into practice, since teaching continues to be the most difficult and important task of our existence. Not to do this would mean that the school is kept as an *"uncontaminated bubble,"* isolated from society. Our

Proper Character states that we must *"encourage ongoing formation and creativity on the part of faculty **to respond to educational challenges** professionally, as a team, and with instructional effectiveness"* (Character Proper, 4.1).

In order that the school change its organizational structure and running, it is necessary that society change certain social structures, those that impede understanding, dialogue, and interchange between cultures. **Change must be aimed at society overall**, as regards parents, educational administrators and even publishers of textbooks. It is rather naive to believe that the school alone will be able to achieve authentic intercultural awareness.

This awareness should lead us to avoid placing *"Band-Aid solutions on cultural folklore,"* and to **modify our mentality and our pedagogy**. To do this, we ought to travel the following road:

- *Not to blame or cause undo worry among the teaching staff, especially the more sensitive ones.*

- *To keep up to date and informed (ongoing formation) about:*
  - Minority cultures (religions).
  - Change of personal and professional views (possible prejudices, ethnocentric and xenophobic views).
  - Successful inter-ethnic and intercultural conflict resolution.
  - Methods and procedures for operating a true intercultural education.

- *To continue to raise the question about educational objectives.*

- *To generate a new organizational model.*

- *To have an in-depth review of the curriculum, the Educational Project (this should be the general framework from which the necessary methods are designed to accommodate the immigrant population of the student body), classroom and material planning, the tutorial plan of activities, the plan for diversity, didactic materials, etc.*

- *To discontinue having a monocultural teaching staff, with the addition of teachers from some of the minorities who are present in the center.*

- ***To facilitate the interchange*** *of our professionals with those of countries who send immigrants. To promote twinning between educational centers.*

- ***To practice intercultural*** *education with all students, training them systematically in:*
    - The understanding of the cultural diversity of our society.
    - Increasing the ability to communicate between students (and adults) of different cultures.
    - The creation of favorable views about the diversity of cultures.
    - Increasing social interaction between persons and groups that are culturally distinct.

Intercultural education means much more than creating educational strategies and it involves the entire educational community in its objectives. **It means understanding one's own culture starting from the culture of others**. The intercultural school is possible when there is openness to other cultural models.

6. The minimum essentials for educational activity in the "La Salle" School network

Intercultural education rejects the predominance of one culture over others and it stands up for different groups that coexist in a multicultural society **so that they can obtain an enriching interdependence, based on appreciation and mutual recognition**. In order for this to happen, it is essential to provide the different cultures with the educational means and tools to transform multiculturalism into intercultural awareness. For intercultural education, **what is needed**, first of all, is **to create the initial conditions for acceptance and communication between cultures, to promote education for peace and for respect of human rights**.

To be committed to intercultural education, we should obtain active commitments from the students. **This would require the putting into practice of some minimum essentials for activity**:[19]

1st   *To recognize and **to guarantee the right of ethnic minorities to include** in the educational system **their own special, linguistic, religious, and cultural characteristics** without discrimination.*

2nd   ***To help teams of teachers to change their views as regards other cultures** as well as about the new role of the Lasallian School in the multicultural context.*

– To train them in a basic knowledge of the principal cultures and religions (religion is culture) that they find in areas where there are immigrants.

– To introduce multiculturalism and inter-religion awareness in the broader context of attention to diversity (developed in the Plan of Attention to Diversity).

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[19] GARCIA, A. y SAEZ J. (1998) From Racism to Intercultural Awareness. Madrid, Narcea. P. 214. AGUADO, M.T. (1991) *"Intercultural Education: Concept, Paradigms, Actions,"* in JIMENEZ, M.C. (Coordinator), Reading in Differential Pedagogy. Madrid. Dykinson. P. 90.

    – To raise their awareness that none of the problems that are raised due to ethnic and cultural diversity has a unilateral solution.

3rd *To incorporate **and respond to the educational problems and cultural identification of minorities** who have been displaced (emigrants and/or refugees).*

    – To structure a European intercultural model.

    – To review all components of the school context: curriculum, textbooks, norms for discipline and for working together, dining room menus, etc.

4th *To provide for special educational needs which come from human diversity within the same culture, that is to say, of marginalized minorities from each specific culture.* **To respond to the needs of new minorities.**

5th *To promote **respect for all coexistent cultures** and **to condemn assimilationist methods**.*

6th **To raise the question of intercultural education** *as a relevant subject **for all students**, not just for immigrants or for cultural minorities.*

7th **To develop transcultural concept maps** *(to be done by the "Mapping" procedure) to demonstrate in educational practice that knowledge is the common property of all persons, over and beyond a particular culture.*

8th **To integrate the "Lasallian School Network" in some movements** *that already exist, such as "Schools Without Racism," "Schools in Solidarity," etc.*

Intercultural education is not a panacea for the elimination of racial prejudice, but it **should be understood as an intentional, systematic, long-term process** which, together with other educational processes, academic and social, is aimed at enabling individuals and groups to face such prejudices and social manifestations.

Our *"Character Proper to Lasallian Centers"* talks about, on p. 13, **the cooperative and collaborative pedagogy of learning, as follows**:

> *"Students in Lasallian Schools feel involved in cooperative and collaborative learning activities in the solution of problems and conflicts, in decision-making, in activities that involve caring for their more needy companions..."*

This text shows that **we Lasallians believe that cooperative and collaborative work can be a wonderful instrument for intercultural learning**, given that we seek not only to form students but, fundamentally to educate persons. With work that is cooperative and collaborative we can make real the objective of educating social understanding, and that which is related to feelings and sympathies which are so important for persons of any culture who do not need so much to understand the world like the mind of others and its different manifestations, which will lead to a much better understanding of themselves.

Both *cooperative* and *collaborative* learning are based on the formation of persons, but there are significant differences between them. With the first one, students learn knowledge and basic mental processes in order to interact socially, afterwards extrapolating these abilities for use in other experiences, but it is only when a critical rationale and thought is applied that learning is collaborative, when the involvement of each group member has been at its maximum and, in the last analysis, when the group itself has been able to take control of the process and to share responsibility for it. Naturally, there cannot be collaborative learning unless there has been cooperative learning first.[20]

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[20] ESCARBAJAL F., A., ESCARBAJAL de H., A., (2004). *"Working With Intercultural Awareness,"* Diego Marín, Bookseller. Murcia, pp. 56-57.

7. Basic views of the intercultural educator

The formation of the student body for democracy and intercultural coexistence, in a world that is more and more globalized, **is one of the aims of the educational system**. To build a Europe that is open to other cultures and religions on democratic foundations, it is necessary to provide persons with a formation that includes approaches based on the perspective of education for European citizens and for intercultural awareness. **In accord** with these principles, **the teaching staff must facilitate a type of education that responds to these aims**.

For the *"Quality and Freedom in Teaching"* [21] Forum, **to opt for intercultural awareness in school**, without ignoring the inherent difficulties, **is possible by means of the following principles**:

1st *The commitment and approach of all groups **within the educational community** are in accord with the requirements of the chosen model.*

2nd *To respond to the requirements of the identity and social significance of the school: to take care of the most disadvantaged, to opt for integral development, openness to the social milieu...*

3rd *Initial and Ongoing Formation for the Teaching Staff.*
Ongoing formation as a supplementary effort, to construct new responses to new problems which come from the phenomenon of immigration and intercultural awareness in the school.

4th *Organizational Flexibility in the Schools.*

5th *Interdisciplinary Work: all areas of the curriculum contribute to:*
   – Encouraging firmly-rooted identities.
   – Promoting encouragement for knowing, understanding, respecting, and appreciating other cultures.

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[21] Quality and Freedom in Teaching Forum, "Educating in Intercultural Awareness," pp. 64ff.

- Encouraging the acquisition of a critical view.
- Appreciating diversity in positive ways.
- Giving attention to families.

6th Making the best use of human and material resources.

Highlighting those principles that refer more to the teaching staff, we want to respond to the question about the role of the teaching staff as regards the continuous changing nature of the school due to the fact of multiculturalism. If we ask teachers, we find out who does or does not feel prepared to face diversity and the presence of different cultures in the classroom. The great majority sense that the school or the administration do not give them the help they need to deal with the problem in a positive way and also, a percentage manifest their personal uneasiness and their personal difficulty to respond to this new reality satisfactorily.

Among the **views and practical propositions to deal with the new educational situation**, we would highlight the following:

1st **Have a broad view of education**, *identifying within it the cultural, political, and social traits (avoiding the practice of the assimilation of our culture).*

2nd **That the teacher come to a detailed knowledge of the students in the classroom** *in order to create the necessary strategies to take care of the diversity that arises.*

3rd **Enable teamwork among the teachers**, *to achieve greater collaboration in intercultural education, under the leadership of pedagogical coordinators or department heads.*

4th **Draw up a work plan from among all members of the educational community** *in which intercultural education and cultural diversity is clearly specified.*

5th **Empower the figure of the Teacher-Tutor** *(coordinated and evaluated by the Guidance Department),* **of the teacher in charge of Languages and Social Sciences.**

6th **Train teachers in pedagogy in all that pertains to intercultural awareness.** The *Advanced Center for Lasallian University Studies* offers post-graduate programs in *"Intercultural Awareness in the School Environment"* which we highly rec-

ommend.[22] There is a clear need for systematic training of the teaching staff in didactics, theory and methodology in content proper to intercultural education, offering them the tools, skills, abilities and the necessary knowledge to guarantee optimal intervention with a diverse student population.

7th ***Promote among the teaching staff activities which lead to the integration of the student in the school group***, *not to their being assimilated, but preserving the cultural identity of the immigrant.*

With regard to the teaching staff and the **steps to follow in this intercultural educational process**, some of the conclusions from the 2002 Seminar, *"Teachers in the 21st Century,"*[23] are relevant here:

Quality educational service and ongoing formation

*At the current time society is raising new and many demands to the educational system and to the school. Among them, we find: **the integration of all students who come from the world of immigration in quality educational service**, and a demand for **ongoing formation for active teachers** that will allow them to face the educational challenges of their daily work.*

Attention to diversity and development of a new teaching profile

*The fundamental challenge must be **to attend to the growing diversity** that we can see in the classrooms. This diversity **demands the ability to respond to and to restructure** what already exists which is oftentimes difficult to face. In order to do this, the teacher is an essential element, **going from being a teacher who applies programs to a teacher who is able to adapt to the circumstances of his students, to plan**

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[22] For further information, go to *http://www.eulasalle.com*. This program is organized in 6 modules: *1st Minorities and Immigration in Spain; 2nd Formal Education and Ethnic Minorities; 3rd Non-Formal Education and Ethnic Minorities; 4th Legal Aspects of Immigration; 5th Psychosocial Problems of Ethnic Minorities in Spain; 6th Intervention with Ethnic Minorities in Academic Settings.*

[23] For further information, go to *http://www.mec.es/cesces/clausura2002.htm* 2002 Seminar, under the direction of the State School Council, *"Teachers in the 21st Century."*

activities for them, to apply them and to assess them, to achieve the
integral development of the student and the person. This profile of the
teacher is not possible to obtain from an individual point of view, but
*can be achieved **only from a collaborative system**, in which the*
teacher is part of a team that reflects on and offers alternatives that will
allow them to attend to the diversity mentioned above.

Make more resources available

*From the point of view of **educational centers** the demands and needs*
*are fundamentally focused on the **need for greater resources**, not only*
*in the **financial realm**, but also in the human area which will guaran-*
tee the integral development of students and the management of cen-
ters by the educational community itself.

Enable tutorial activities

*To deal with the challenges cited, **a tutor is needed**, who must be a*
person specifically prepared for complex tasks such as conflict resolu-
tion, applying the techniques of group dynamics, facilitating school
and family orientation, or ensuring individual follow-up of students.

The demands that currently fall directly on education and on teachers also involve the transmission of concepts, the effort to create a framework for coexistence as a support for a society that demands equality. These demands can be covered by one of the curricular models which already exist, the intercultural model, which supposes the ideal of coexistence.

The personal and professional views of the intercultural teacher are as important as the learned strategies and methods. If there is to be advancement towards intercultural education in our centers, experimentation and implementation of operational models will not be enough, nor will courses on information and ongoing for- mation, necessary as these are for a change in basic attitudes. What must be empowered is the development of activities that favor the adequate handling of diverse cultures, a development that necessarily involves the experience of the teacher himself and how he deals with multiculturalism, and this leads the teacher to a change in his value system and, therefore, a change in his deeply rooted personal views.

Questions

- Is there a creative plan already drawn up to achieve cultural integration within the Center? Might this plan also affect the neighborhood, the town, the area...?

- Can you describe some idea that, in its simplicity, can be shared with other Lasallian centers as an idea or initiative that can be shared?

- Do all students in your Lasallian school get along well with one another, whether they are immigrants or not?

- What should we do to get to know the cultures and religions of immigrants within the center?

- Are we willing to see that our "monocultural" teaching staff is enriched with teachers from other cultures?

- Do we offer true intercultural education? What do we need to do to make this happen?

- Do we facilitate the cooperative-collaborative learning style, suggested to us in our Proper Character statement?

8. Conclusions

The annual meeting of the European Lasallian Education Commission (CLEE) was held from November 29 to December 1, 2002 in Brussels, Belgium on the theme *"Migratory Movements, Plurality-Pluralism and Multiculturalism"*[24] Dealing with a topic that is so current, we received many contributions and we proposed diverse guidelines for our schools, of which we would like to highlight the following:

Migration is the great challenge of the 21st century for lasallian schools

*Convinced that what leads to **migration** is due to many different reasons, and that this is what **constitutes the great challenge for schools in this 21st century**. In this area of existential insecurity that causes immigration is where to place the educational innovations that **Saint John Baptist de La Salle** achieved in his lifetime, to care for those most in need.*[25]

To respond to educational requests and ongoing formation

*That, as Lasallian educators today, we ought to feel called and moved **to integrate the effects of contemporary migration in the children and young people of our schools**, welcoming them as students, **and to respond to educational requests as a result of these effects**. To do this, it is important that we become familiar with the economic, political, social, cultural, and religious processes caused by migration and that we develop ongoing formation in this area for the teaching staff.*

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[24] See the *Report of the European Lasallian Education Commission* for the Brussels meeting of November 29 to December 1, 2002.

[25] *"In 1698, the Founder sensed this request as being Providential, for the educational service of another type of 'poor.' He housed some fifty Irish young people in a boarding school, as they had left their homeland with their relatives in order to live in France."* GALLEGO, Saturnino, Saint John Baptist de La Salle I, Biography, BAC, Madrid, 1986. Pp. 310 - 312.

> **To develop an intercultural pedagogy**
>
> *That, the **legitimacy of plurality**, both in society and within institutions, comes from the respect for individual freedom. This fact leads us **to conceive of and to develop in the classroom an intercultural pedagogy as a pedagogy of the meeting and coexistence between different cultures**, since this is shown to us as the ideal for our Lasallian schools and for the intercultural pedagogical achievement of Europeanism. To do this, **each Lasallian center must formulate and succeed in designing and developing a true intercultural education for all students.***

Our academic commitment is to guarantee education, and not just merely schooling, **to all students regardless of their origin, ethnicity, or culture. We are supported in this task by intercultural awareness**, as an educational reality that is possible, as we defend the most important value of human beings, over and above any race, nationality, language or religion. This intercultural education affects the entire educational community, including of course the teachers, who are the touchstone of intercultural pedagogy.

Questions

For reflection and sharing

1. (in an academic milieu): at the end of some sections the document provides questions which could be suitable if used with some adaptations.

2. (in other areas): What could we incorporate from the document into our present reality? (principles, lines of action, basic attitudes, etc.)

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