

## EDITORIAL

### *Educational emergency. A need for democracy*

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The focus of the eighth issue of *Education Sciences and Society* is “Differences and Disabilities”. It fully embraces the most recent national and international reflections and research with the aim of fully and effectively realising an inclusive society.

The title chosen for this “Editorial” is “Educational emergency. A need for Democracy”. Our increasingly globalised and populated world, where civil awareness is widely spread, is also effected by multiple and extraordinary “crises” that force us out of our national effective (“gardens enclosed”) and make us pay attention to all corners of our planet; even the poorest and the most distant ones. It brings to our attention the sometimes great needs of “vast groups”, which are often relatively “new” and, with them, the needs of the individual.

Therefore, the “news” is not out of context – with the underlying motive of the “binding” that links development, education and economy, in acknowledging the now “total” binds that exist among all nations. In the “ranking of the first 20 countries in terms of average growth of GDP between 1985 and 2010, a growth OF never less than 6% and often above 10%, we find not only China, India (that represents nearly 40% of the planet’s population), Vietnam, Myanmar and South Korea, but also Uganda and Mozambique. There is no Western country. The wealthiest 20% of the population owned 83% of the wealth, compared to 1.4% of the poorest. In 2009 – due to the huge, albeit contradictory development of such countries like China and India – the situation changed radically, reaching respectively 47.8 and 6.1%” (Amato, Graziosi, 2013, 183).

In addition to this, there were two phenomena of exceptional importance capable of overthrowing world scenarios, in economy and politics, culture and relations, in family life and the overall institutional structure: the continuous and consistent migration from Africa and the more deprived areas of the world to the West and North America (in its traditional

or extensive acceptance) at the same time, there was a steep drop in the birth rate, especially in the wealthiest countries even if they are now fully or partially on the wane.

This explosive mix of the new rich (such as Brazil and South Africa), the overthrowing of established and apparently sound regimes (North Africa), the formation of democratic movements originating from the bottom in regions alien to a recognised form of democracy (China, Turkey etc.), the movement of almost entire populations (to fully understand the impact of this we have to go back nearly 1600 years, to a limited geographical area namely the Barbarian invasions of Europe in the 4th and 5th centuries), – the crisis of the family or weakened family links, – the only child as a confused and worrying expression and interpretation of “affluence”; today incidentally missing or denied. This left behind the call to duty versus the season of rights, “setting free” the individual anyway, letting countless differences and disabilities emerge. For example, in the largest cities of our country, support teachers are not only assigned to hyperactive children (in exponential growth), but also to children of Roms and recent immigrants. These two emergencies are inter-connected: “differences” also result from a more democratic culture focusing on individuals and the new “social groups”, and to a wide variety of “disabilities”.

Therefore, this issue of Education Sciences and Society is particularly focused on meeting and understanding people with Special Educational Needs or disabilities. Likewise, it focuses on inclusivity, departing from the respect of the differences, potentialities and difficulties, should never lose sight of the full accomplishment of human and educational rights, to lifelong education and a dignified “quality of life”.

Therefore, it is clear why the “education emergencies” represented here and also accounted as expressions of a wider encompassing crystal ball, and as “differences” to be positively sheltered and promoted. This is a global interpretation of the difference as measure of our contemporaneity, that is badly damaged or historically suggesting wealth, or, yet to be discovered. However, it is surely to be pursued in the coming years and decades, asking for an unavoidable answer of increased world democracy and of “vast” civic and political mores to be spread and increased.

We would not like to ignore that we finally reached special pedagogy and the “treatment” (an old term, possibly to be changed) differences; after seven issues of Education Sciences and Society devoted to general and social pedagogy, didactics and educational technologies, neurosciences etc.

One ambitious and challenging vision that was launched by this Editorial, with the addition of a due from outside European respite, that includes in this issue (the European ones are in previous issues) the colleague Naira Franzoi of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) – it is not a coincidence that this contribution comes from an emerging country already mentioned above. It opens the way to a body of articles intended to “reimburse” the reader culturally, pedagogically and educationally, in the complexity of the Inclusive Education of the differences and disabilities, in a recurring game between local and global.

After a scientifically consistent start by Elisa M. Bruni, there was a call to re-think the question of training men with a systemic and scientific approach with a new reading of the profile of the Classical Greek education. In the “international respite” mentioned above, Naira Franzoi with Maria Beatriz Rodrigues (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul Brazil) and Catia Giaconi (University of Macerata) challenge the question of the differences departing from the current international documents, “descending” to the latest ministerial guidelines and conceptual movements on the Italian context. This outlines a common path for “training the trainers” as well as setting out the schooling and didactic practices which favour social inclusion.

Luigi D’Alonzo and Paola Molteni (from the Cattolica University of Milan) shift the focus to an especially complex condition; autism. The authors outline some very interesting perspectives for anybody involved in school projects and integration. The attention is turned towards teachers, to whom “best practices” advice is offered, to help their understanding of the autistic student, the managing of the classroom and the structuring of space and time in the school to create truly inclusive classroom.

The article by Simone Aparecida Capellini and Adriana Marques de Oliveira of the University “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” of São Paulo (Brazil), addresses “Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder” (ADHD), and contains fascinating research which investigates the functional or non-functional, use of cognitive meta-cognitive strategies with ADHD students in the teaching-learning process.

Roberta Caldin (University of Bologna) investigates the contribution of special pedagogy to the question of difference and diversity. The article refers specifically to the basic epistemologies and scientific reflections, which presently shape educational and didactical practises that mark an “ordinary” inclusion.

With Lefkothea Kartasidou of the University of Macedonia (Greece), the focus is on the question of Universities and other higher education institutions promoting differences and disabilities, paying special attention to the European project “Support and Inclusion of Students with Disabilities at Higher Education Institutions in Montenegro (SINC@HE)”.

The delicate question of inclusion in the work place is addressed by Liliana Maria Passerino, Ana Cristina Cypriano Pereira and Geraldo Ribas Machado of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) starting with a clever international perspective. Here the authors propose a lucid examination of the structural shortcomings and the possibilities of such an innovative and civil opportunity, taking in account the Brazilian political and juridical context, and offering some articulate solutions for a true job inclusion.

Maurizio Sibillo’s contribution further investigates “Didactic Corporeality and Different Abilities” with a rich and plentiful reference to the current researches by the University of Salerno. These allow a new important reading of the inclusive processes, departing exactly from the relationship body, abilities and educational-didactic effort.

Finally, Catia Giaconi focuses on the indispensable network between school and services. It highlights educational points of crisis with different lines of action and support of sustainable and connected paths of educational alliance in these fields, aimed to integral plans of inclusion. This issue concludes with the sections “Pedagogical Lexicon” and “Bibliographical Elaboration” – in which Flavio Bocci (University Rome 3) offers an insight into the terms “Differences and Disability” and their derived concepts. The same topics have also been elaborated on by the authors who contributed to this issue of the magazine and there are also some excellent reviews of recent publications, which are recommended to our readers.