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КУЛТУРА И КУЛТУРЕ: ЕПОХА МУЛТИКУЛТУРАЛНИХ ДРУШТАВА

Сажетак

Ово је рад у којем се износи став о култури као социолошком концепту, са циљем да се пронађу путокази за тумачење новог мултикултуралног облика друштава. Како бисмо то и учинили, посветићемо пажњу појму локалног развоја, фокусирајући се стога како на питања идентитета и друштвеног капитала која дефинишу одређену територију, тако и на изналажење начина како да их побољшамо у глобализованом свету који је довео до развоја мултикултуралног друштва: деконструкција се генерише упливом нових снага, као што је глобализација, а реконструкција захтева да се већ постојећи културни локални поредак, који је наслеђен из прошлости, промисли и поново осмисли захваљујући новим идејама, људима и моделима продукције који долазе „споља“. Нагласићемо на који начин се сама нација-држава може тумачити као локална реалност у глобализованом свету и указати на то да се њен развој заснива на унутрашњој дијалектици унутар/споља, која чини границе неопходним не би ли се осигурала демократија и успон отвореног, либералног, толерантног и плуралистичког друштва. Наш главни аргумент јесте тај да, будући да се култура ствара и учи, и да није нешто што се наслеђује, социјализација и њени агенси могу бити средство интеграције и реконструкције, под условом да се принцип плурализма – фундаментални елемент нашег друштвеног поретка – једнако поштује и да је признат од стране свих.

1. Culture and society, social capital and identity.

The starting point of every reasoning about Culture is the consideration that it is a social product. Although they are not equivalent, culture

and society are deeply interrelated, and complementary. Thinking of a society that does not produce culture is impossible as much as we could not observe any culture if we hadn't social relations to look at; hence, given that a unique model of society doesn't exist, every society is bearer of a cultural heritage which is shared and accepted by the members of a referent community.

This leads us to say that sometimes cultural change anticipates social change and sometimes the opposite. Moreover, social change is so much related to cultural processes that in sociological terms we generally talk about socio-cultural changes.

If we look at the semantical explanation of the concept of culture, we see that it includes all the values, visions and standards of behaviour that characterize people who share the same way of life. This is also the reason why the word "culture" has plenty of connotations evoking literature, music, art in general, museums, exhibitions – cultural artefacts.¹

Culture is a matter of continuous construction, continuous growing, hence it is both production and learning. The word "culture" identifies cultural production as a complex and articulated process, the collective creation of a product that cannot be anything but social, as Emile Durkheim thought, too. It is widely accepted that culture is everything, material or immaterial, that was created by the conscious and free action of individuals as members of a community, who share it as a set of values, norms, language, signs, definitions, symbols, role models, material things. As such, culture is the very foundation of both communication and cooperation, hence of every social interaction.

Individuals, as depositories, creators, innovators of cultural material and immaterial expressions accumulate this heritage, which is, precisely, their social capital, connoting the reference society.

From the individual point of view, social capital is to be intended as the set of direct and indirect relations that enable social actors to reach for their goals. The wider the network of relations and interrelations one has, the higher his individual social capital. The amount of social capital a social actor owns – Roberto Cartocci states – depends on the number of relationships he can easily activate and on the volume of economic, symbolic, cultural capital his contacts own.

1 C. Kluckhohn, *Culture and behavior*, New York, The Free Press, 1962

But individual social capital is only part of social collective capital, the latter descending from the sum of individual ones, hence form the sum of each one's networks.

The way one uses his social relationship is crucial in order to understand if and how social capital will be produced. Not every social relationship constitutes an opportunity, but, they may be obstacles for social actors: social capital is generated only if the individual's social network leads him to the achievement of his own goals.

World Bank proposes a collective vision of social capital, as it is considered as the set of rules and relations which are enrooted within the social structure, hence enabling individuals to coordinate their action, to cooperate, in order to reach for desirable goals, of which the group benefits: then social capital is a collective resource.²

This collective resource is to be subdivided into substitutive culture (the one constituted of cultural elements that can become obsolescent and be changed with more useful, valuable, effective ones) and non-substitutive (made of elements that do not get old and a society cannot get rid of). The latter is the foundation of identity and, hence, it is the centre of territories' revaluation and requalification processes, coming from the (social) development of (cultural, both material and not) resources and a renewed sense of belonging.

Such process is known as local development and it involves all the social actors belonging to the territory, and to the community that lives in there, institutions and citizens. In fact, local development and revaluation of a territory need to be founded on the so-called proximity principle, i.e. on the collapse of distances separating citizens from institutions, from the local context to the national one: to get closer to a territory makes the citizens' rights which are related to the territorial sphere fully recognized, as the place's competitive values are better understood, too. Identity is hence defined as the set of cultural roots, values, traditions, lifestyles connoting the territory: highlighting all these cultural elements not only allows the identifications of the common features of those living in a particular place, but the use of them as ties, able to build up a sense of belonging and to act as useful tools for the governance and enhance-

2 The World Bank, *The initiative on defining, monitoring and measuring social capital: overview and program description*, 1998.

ment. Even small territories have plenty of ethnical, cultural, social values; their identity is not isolated but it grows and interconnects with the others through citizens' networks.

2. Local development within the framework of globalization: the rise of multiculturalism

Within the above-mentioned process, a great influence is currently being exercised by the enlargement of borders and the economic and social globalization it implies. Local dimension is more than ever under the monitoring eye of Institutions who are in charge of indicating development strategies that can leave citizens free of choosing their desirable futures, and concrete policies. According to Rullani³, there are basically two effects being generated by the revaluation of a territory: de-construction and re-construction, as change arises from crisis.

The former is generated by the push of new forces, such as globalization, and requires that the pre-existing cultural local order inherited by history, is rethought and renewed with ideas, men and models of production coming from "the outside." Re-construction makes a territory able to produce economic value for the new global market, to be appealing and to attract production factors and processes, so as to be enriched with new original elements and specific resources – services, infrastructures, situational knowledge – abilities and a renewed identity.

While de-construction is kind of a systematic process involved in change, reconstruction is, instead, unsure, for it depends on the degree the vision is shared. Very strong cultural identities can resist change and be an obstacle to re-construction: this inevitably leads to decadence for novelty does not find room enough to settle down. Therefore, social actors who really want to preserve and save their original cultural features are called up to renew their competitive identity throughout innovation and a proper communication to the outside.

As globalization threatens previous cultural identities and pushes fort their renovation, it inevitably pushes, alongside the classical defini-

3 E. Rullani, (a cura di), *Città e cultura nell'economia delle reti*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2000.

tion of culture, that of multiculturalism, The latter is defined in its wider meaning as the coexistence of several cultures in the same territory.

In a historical moment crossed by profound social and cultural changes, such the contemporary one is, it is necessary to deepen the understanding of the conceptual categories needed for interpreting the ongoing processes, starting with a differentiated analysis of the concept of culture and the relationship between cultures within the multicultural society. Tackling the role that culture plays within social life necessarily involves the use of the term in a much broader sense, as that set of symbolic normative mediation characterizing a given social context, hence the set of representations, values, norms, patterns of behavior, rituals and social practices.⁴ We can then rely on the broad definition of culture as the set of reality definitions shared by people who have in common a specific way of life:⁵ the definitions of reality are made up of many elements, among which there are the above-mentioned values and norms, the ideologies they can build and the language that vehicle them. Given these characteristics, culture can be also defined as the set of lifestyles shared by the members of a society or by the members of its groups, including marriage habits, family life, ways and means of production, confessions, the way spare time is spent and enhanced.

All this implies the fundamental characteristic of culture: it is not inherited, it has nothing to do with genetic implications, but it is learned during the process of socialization that gives structure to our relational behavior, or social action. And if human behavior is not genetically programmed, what gives it a form? So Neil Smelser⁶ asked, adding that response could be partly found in the very concept of culture as expressed by Kluckhohn: the concept of culture is made indispensable by the documented plasticity of human beings. Newborn members of different groups are taught to follow the same acts in a nearly infinite variety of different ways: apparently biological processes such as sneezing, walking, sleeping, and other activities can actually be carried out in specific ways. If human beings can be taught to think, feel, believe, and act in certain

4 I. Crespi, *Cultura/e nella società multiculturale: riflessioni sociologiche*, EUM, Macerata, 2015

5 C. Kluckhohn, *Culture and Behavior*, New York, Free Press, 1962

6 Cfr. N. J. Smelser, *Manuale di Sociologia*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1984

ways that more or less the same within a community or small group of people, if entire social groups or societies learn to do certain things in a more or less uniform way, then we can draw a general conclusion: culture structures human life. Culture for human beings fulfills the same function that the genetically programmed behavior fulfills for animals.

Within this perspective, daily interactions play a very important role in the sociological discourse over culture. Everyday life is the place of habit, repetition, non-reflexive, automatic action and therefore it is more prone to the environment influences. It is also opposite to the strategic action oriented to utilitarian goals, that dominates other spheres of the social system, and it constitutes a realm of reciprocity, where it is possible to find behaviors inconsistent with the dominant social patterns. Turned upside down, then world of daily interactions is where individuals can find room for the autonomous expression of the self, as it is quite common that routines, common sense, representations and beliefs that characterize everyday life and are not put into question, tend to reproduce, in small, the same dynamics dominating the existing social order: therefore, they show how true it is that re-production is not a mere replica, but rather a reworking of traditional patterns through new meaning constructions within the framework of inter-subjectivity, or through a culture production process rather than a simple reproduction.

This world of daily interactions is characterized by a very high degree of symbolic production as the pushes and restrictions imposed to it by the outside world and everyday routines are transformed into resources for meaning construction, within: it is where re-construction begins. There are also ways in which everyday life interactions – primarily those between members of the same family or peers – contribute to the cultural production of society as a whole: an example is consumer behavior, that enables the predisposition of a series of dense conceptual maps that tell about one's identity, his\her own vision of the world, from the use of goods intended as signifiers of deeper signified.

3. Multicultural socialization within local social contexts

This outline of culture emphasizes the fact that it is created and taught. And, since it is not acquired by biological means, it must be re-

produced by every generation and transmitted to the next one through the process of socialization: values, opinions, norms, rules and ideals become part of a child's personality and contribute to guide his behaviour. If socialization did not succeed on a massive scale, culture would die: in fact, culture holds together social life. It generates the sense of belonging to the group because enables contacts with other groups and cultures. Members of the same cultural group will understand each other, they will feel trust and sympathy for each other more than they do with strangers; these common feelings are reflected in the use of gergural expressions, in the preference for particular foods, modes and other cultural traits.

But culture does not only generate solidarity, but conflict, too: it can explode within the group and between different groups. An example is language, which is one of the main elements of a culture: on the one hand, the ability to communicate helps to maintain cohesion among members of a social group; on the other hand, a common language excludes those who do not speak it, and even those who speak it a little differently. One could say that culture, society, and individual are mutually inseparable; that cultural values shape the personality of members of a society as well as the structure of society; that individuals create and transmit culture, and society provides the structures where this creation and transmission can take place. At the same time, however, one can also say that culture is something that transcends both the individual and the society: in fact, cultures are pluralistic because they do not represent mono-cultural systems but, instead, require a plurality of pieces to be put together in a sort of continuous exchange, that needs to be always respectful of the rules given or, however, self-productive.

Well, multiculturalism, understood as cultural plurality, did not actually lead to overcome cultural ethnocentrism, understood in the sense of the habit or tendency to interpret and judge other cultures according to the criteria of one's own culture, even though in different contexts we can observe higher or lower degrees of tolerance or relativistic attitudes⁷. Cultural coexistence is certainly a social fact due to the presence of intercultural and multicultural interaction, but it is not always a value, as in the structuring of cultural identity there may often be social traits that make coexistence highly problematic, such as, precisely, that of building

7 C. Seymour-Smith, *Dizionario di antropologia*, Sansoni, Firenze, 1991.

hypothetical scales of values in which one's cultural identity occupies the first place and all the others occupy lower positions.

If, as Gertz, Malizia, Scidà or Hannerz⁸ point out, the relationship between cultures always ripples between integration and assimilation, the first term is to indicate a process that presupposes both social and economic policies, as well as non-ethnocentric cultural models, respect and coexistence as cultural values, while the second term indicates the totalizing acquisition of a culture by *another* cultural system, with the consequent disintegration of the one its own. An integrative process is based on exchange and dialogue between different cultures, but it still presupposes a common cultural base ... at least a minimum. So, the attempt to explain society as the construction of overlapping layers and how this integrative process can be realized and realize a fully and positively multicultural society, this is the contemporary sociologist job.

Starting from the assumption that multiculturalism is often a mere definition rather than a process, and a factual reality rather than the result of a project, one must try to investigate the possibilities of building a society that doesn't want to be distinctively mono cultural anymore, and acknowledge its profound change in one multi-layer society. To do this we need to think more medium-range, focusing on some of the carriers of society itself, first in a disaggregated, theoretical way, then reflecting on transversal realities such as culture, interculturalism, identity, foreigners, citizenship, tradition retrieval, original identities.

Obviously we need to resume some conceptual categories such as multiculturalism, interculturalism, multiethnicity and interpret them in a polysemic way rather than contradictory, so that thoughts that may seem to be meant to promote the strengthening of individual or collective instances which are specific of certain societies or single cultures can perfectly become a model of participation rather than of detachment. It is just a different way of interpreting the social bond traditionally conceived and implemented as something not disconnected, taking Simmel back⁹; in

8 Cfr. C. Gertz, *Interpretazioni di culture*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1998; P. Malizia, *Il linguaggio della società*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 2004; U. Hannerz, *La diversità culturale*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2001; G. Scidà, G. Pollini, *Stranieri in città*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 1996.

9 Cfr. G. Simmel, *Sociologia*, Ed. Comunità, Milano, 1989.

other words it is a renewed need for society, not a further form of unbundled society. And this is possible insofar as the very concept of culture is re-examined on the basis of a logic of intensity rather than mere sociality, so that it will become clear that the negotiation of meanings coming out of it may be a key to becoming multicultural.

Alongside this activity of building a possible *common multicultural social space*, specific opportunities for all the social actors involved must open up; this means that it is necessary to think this social space as the place where social practices are located, as an autonomous space with its own characteristics made out of its being multicultural and constituted by a set of spaces, all meant to fertilize the situated factors characterizing a territory, thus increasing its social capital.¹⁰

All this leads me to point out how the so-built new social space should represent a re-elaboration of the cultural feeds of one single society in order to guarantee recognition to the various cultural expressions that make up its fundamental structure: in a word, no hybridism, but a new cultural form descending from the combination of distinct forms belonging to different cultural backgrounds, kind of a third culture that in some cases replaces the cultures from which it comes from, thus representing the confirmation that multiculturalism is not a process, although it is surely a factual reality implying a series of issues, when not tensions and deep social conflicts.¹¹

As Pierfranco Malizia rightly points out, sociology can strongly assist in framing, fully describing and outlining integrative approaches to different sociocultural realities in a ideal society that expounds and encompasses rights, duties, opportunities, respect, recognition, participation, but above all dialogue and, for – paraphrasing Ferrarotti¹² – one should not expect to communicate if the value of communication itself is denied; or, again, with Bordieu, “few areas more clearly demonstrate the heuristic efficacy of relational thinking than that of art and literature”¹³. The problem of coexistence and integration can be tackled by assuming the so-

10 Cfr. M. Belloni, M. Rampazi, *Tempo, spazio, attore sociale*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 1989; A. Semprini, *Il multiculturalismo*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 2000.

11 Cfr. J. Pieterse, *Melange globale*, Carocci, Roma, 2005.

12 F. Ferrarotti, *Oltre il razzismo*, Armando, Roma, 1988.

13 P. Bourdieu, *The field of cultural production*, Columbia University Press, 1993, pag., 29.

cio-diversity as distinctive of the human species, the same way the ecological movement has obtained that biodiversity of nature was assumed as shared wealth. This can lead to the overcoming of the intolerances of all kinds and of every nature in the name of an acceptance of different identities but to synergistically enrich the social systems. Within this framework narrative, oral or written, and the use of the tools available by socialization agencies¹⁴ become a fundamental moment for reconstructing our identity throughout the reference to all the the bricks that make up social arena, in a continuous deconstruction\ construction action of society as a whole, keeping in mind that accepted differences are – or ought to be – constitutive elements of our social essence.

4. Borders and cleavages.

The inside / outside cleavage, or fracture line, has been, in the history of civilization, a determining factor for the outline of both the social structure, and the political discourse, too. Looking at the process of the development of the democratic state, increasingly seen as a “local” dimension in the age of globalization (in which other localisms develop), Stein Rokkan emphasized in particular how the construction of external borders became a decisive factor for democratization understood as the process of removing internal borders.¹⁵ This means that the meaning, the value, the identity of a territory is defined – as all concepts are – by difference: alterity, in other words, is what makes it possible to circumscribe and to connote identity. And in the same way, those who are inside must respond to common rules and criteria that do not exert any coercive power on who is out: the social contract from which the modern state originates, in which the democratic and plural cohabitation takes shape, demands boundaries which delimit and, at one time, legitimize its sovereignty. That social contract that gives life to human institutions and with them to the positive law, still does not attribute to the sovereign – i.e. to the state – the right to retain the authority and the natural right of indivi-

14 Cfr. P. Malizia, *Produzioni e riproduzioni*, Aracne, Roma, 2000; D. Sideri, *La socializzazione letteraria*, Aracne, Roma, 2017.

15 Cfr. S. Rokkan e P. Flora, *Stato, Nazione e Democrazia In Europa*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2002.

duals, but the duty of guarantee it against every possible usurpation: with this thesis John Locke became the theoretician of modern liberalism, marking “the irrevocable end of the paternalistic conception of government and the triumphal start of the liberal and democratic one”.¹⁶

Therefore, the inside / outside cleavage is the fundamental element for the identification of the State as sovereign territory and reality, and is one of the two axes (functional and, precisely, territorial) that determine the social space, with its own conflicts or cleavages, inside. On the territorial axis, a pole is the cleavage between peripheral regions, linguistic or ethnic minorities, on the one hand, and elites, on the other; on the opposite pole there are conflicts internal to the elite, of both an ideological or organizational economic nature (resource allocation). On the functional axis, we find cleavages which can be defined transversal with respect to the territorial dimension and therefore tend to weaken the solidarity of local communities, separating them on the basis of other instances based on specific interests or different visions of the world, hence generating conflicts of an economic or ideological matrix.

According to Rokkan’s thesis, there are four fundamental lines of fracture that, based on the interaction between the two territorial and functional dimensions, have crossed and still cross western democracies: the state-church conflict (hence the secularization process); the center-periphery conflict, which is fueled by oppositions between central culture and subcultures or subjected cultures; the conflict between the interests of consolidated territorial élites and those of emerging classes (from which the traditional political opposition between conservatives and radicals emerges); the class conflict between owners of the means of production and workers-laborers-dependent (hence the ideological contrasts).

5. Globalization and new cleavages: pluralism and outsiders

Although it did not make traditional national borders fail, the process of globalization has changed the nature of the center / periphery conflict, and has also made it possible the church-state conflict, to be understood as a conflict between temporal and religious power, to re-

16 La definizione è di Norberto Bobbio, *Locke e il diritto naturale*, Giappichelli Editore, Torino, 1963, p. 170.

emerge. To understand how this has happened, one must look at globalization as a process that is primarily concerned, precisely, with the cultural and symbolic dimension rather than the level of production patterns and people's mobility.

It was the globalization of communications, the exchange of information about the cultural contents that connote different societies becoming global, to initiate the process of social and economic globalization, with the promotion of people's mobility, as professionals and tourists, and products – which are felt more needed, the more the information about their existence is spread and shared. But it has also produced a side effect, that of the so-called cultural invasion, which in turn triggered the mechanism of social envy to a different level, in which the comparative term is far, unknown, idealized or demonized: Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975), theoretician of cultural aggression, starts from the assertion that when two civilizations meet, the one with a higher radioactive power generates in the other a radical change in its mimetic attitude, which is directed from the inside towards the outside. As Pellicani pointed out, it is surprising that in the copious literature that has been produced over the last twenty years on Islamist fundamentalism, there is no trace of Toynbee's theory, which is the most powerful instrument at our disposal to understand the traumatic consequences of the imperialist intrusion of Western civilization in Dar al-Islam, with the new center-periphery conflict that comes from it.¹⁷

From the global perspective, the relativity of center and periphery concepts emerges in all its depth, highlighting how the center is the world conveyed by the means of global communication and the periphery the part which is invaded by the images that tell it, that can only offer a fragmentary and unambiguous reading, for the internal contrasts existing in the center are not perceived, while only the gap from the periphery of the world is emphasized. The aforementioned mechanism of social envy comes out of the industrial city that saw it rise and invests industrialized countries as opposed to those of the Third World, class conflict overlaps national boundaries and in the same way conservatism and radicalism essentially change their meaning, ending up one to defend the interests

17 L. Pellicani, *Dalla società chiusa alla società aperta*. Rubettino, Catanzaro, 2002; *Dalla città sacra alla città secolare*, Rubettino, 2011; *Modernizzazione e secolarizzazione*, Il Saggiatore, Torino, 1997.

of (small and medium) national companies and the other to abdicate it in the name of the every wall fall (paradoxically speaking up in favor of those who were once the “enemy”, the economic giants, who now have the shape of multinational corporations). Finally, the secularized, secular state is in conflict with the social order based on religion, in particular with the Muslim model founded on Sharia.

It is the open and plural society in comparison with the closed, totalitarian society¹⁸, but it is a confrontation that is now within the same boundaries: the post-colonial dynamics first, the encouragement of people 's mobility through supranational institutions and, eventually, the great migrations of the last decade which have severely compromised the effectiveness of the principles of national sovereignty and legality, have gradually, more or less inadvertently, opened the doors of open European societies also to subcultures closed and antagonistic to pluralism,¹⁹ without being able to stem their expansion but, indeed, by encouraging it because of the contextual clash of inner class and center-periphery conflicts.

If the open society is a liberal, tolerant and pluralistic society, it is absolutely necessary that it does not deny itself, compromising its own survival. The paradoxes that the open society brings about are the main dangers that can undermine its foundation and that it must be prepared to fight: to those highlighted by Popper - the paradoxes of democracy, freedom and tolerance - the paradox of pluralism must be added, as pluralism can be considered, as Giovanni Sartori points out, “the genetic code of the open society.” The central element of the vision of the plural world is neither consensus nor conflict, but rather the dialectic of dissent: pluralism consists of a debate which in part requires consensus and partly takes on intensity of conflict. Consensus is what is required at the level of fundamentals, at the level of the sharing of the essential principles, that is to say at the level of sharing the pluralist optic: by sharing the pluralistic viewpoint, one obviously believes in the values of dissent and diversity, so that dissent and diversity can fuel the consensus on the pluralist principle; sharing the pluralistic view means, in practical terms, mostly to share conflict resolution rules, which in essence, in open and pluralistic society,

18 K. R. Popper, *La società aperta e i suoi nemici*, Armando, Roma, 2002 e Massimo Baldini, *Introduzione a Karl R. Popper*, 2002 Armando Editore, Roma, 2002.

19 G. Sartori, *Pluralismo, multiculturalismo ed estranei*, 2000 Rcs Libri, Milano

consist essentially of the majority rule, while at at policy level dissent can and must, of course, be fully exercised.

If the founding value of the open society is pluralism, which its members share and for whom it becomes the identity marker, the distinctive, aggregating and identity factor, then society must be open until this openness implies denial of the value that inspires and defines that cultural context, that community: the question that Sartori poses is therefore “to what extent a pluralistic tolerance must be bowed not to “cultural strangers” but also to open and aggressive “cultural enemies”? In short, can pluralism arrive until it accepts its crushing, breaking the pluralistic community?”²⁰ The answer is, of course, no, because in the accidental case the essential element of reciprocity would fail: paradoxically, the benefits of pluralism would be granted to the anti-pluralist, to the pluralism’s enemy, who can, therefore, be considered foreign to it, an *outsider*.

6. Conclusions

In this paper we intended to offer a perspective on societal cultural aspects so as to broaden the field of vision from the local to the global: we then dealt with the concept and the process of local development, then inserting it into the global context we are called to interact with nowadays in order to produce its own renewal, and finally we have highlighted how the nation-state itself can be interpreted as a local reality in the global world. We have mapped out its development based on internal dialectics, which has made borders necessary to ensure the democratic state and the welfare state, and which today would like to disown its indispensable identity value in the name of multiculturalism: and then we clarified which way we think we should follow in order to found multiculturalism in the area, to integrate “the other cultural” into the socialization processes that characterize our cultural (local) being, to ensure pluralism as a fundamental element of our social order.

As long as they place themselves within the pluralist viewpoint, as long as they live in compliance with this logic, different cultures can coexist in plural society: this is precisely what it is commonly understood as a

20 *Ibidem*, p.49.

multicultural society, and we labeled this process of integration *multicultural*, too. However, it will be worth briefly expanding the point, at the of this work: in the Sartorian vision, the multicultural society is characterized precisely for its being anti-pluralist. In fact, multiculturalism acts in the sense of not integrating the other within an open and pluralistic context, but in the opposite sense of the affirmation of the other, of its appreciation and separation within the receiving context, such that multiculturalism ends with realizing a set of different and potentially antagonistic communities. From another point of view, debate on multiculturalism (Robertson, Giddens, Crespi, Bottazzi) highlights how the existence of a plurality of cultural groups within a given geographical area implies respect of Society intended as recognition of the value of Culture as intersection of cultures: precisely a plural society, granted by absolute equality and reciprocity.

As a consequence, effective and efficient integration should be sought for throughout the reduction of every culture's complexity. Hence, the call for not discriminating must be accompanied by the recognition of the limited and reductive character of every cultural form, so as to let individual freedom and solidarity be multiculturalism foundations.

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CULTURE AND CULTURES: THE AGE OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

Summary

This is a position paper tackling the topic of culture as a sociological concept, with the aim of retracing clues for interpreting the new multicultural shape of societies. In order to do so, we address the notion of local development, hence focusing on both the issues of identity and social capital that define a territory, and looking for ways to enhance them in the global world that led to the rise of multicultural society: de-construction is generated by the push of new forces, such as globalization, re-construction requires

that the pre-existing cultural local order inherited by history, is rethought and renewed with ideas, men and models of production coming from “the outside.” We highlight how the nation-state itself can be interpreted as a local reality in the global world, and map out how its development is based on internal dialectics inside \ outside, which has made borders necessary to ensure democracy and the rise of open, liberal, tolerant and pluralistic society. Our main argument is that, given that culture is created and taught, rather than being anything inherited, socialization and its agencies can be the vehicle of integration and re-construction, on the condition that the pluralism principle – the fundamental element of our social order – is equally respected and recognized by all players.