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MULTICULTURAL UNIVERSITIES

Lewis Purser

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Bilingual universities are the results of different linguistical traditions and contexts, the author of the study affirms; the origins of bilingual universities are mostly political, but one cannot neglect their social reason to exist. Their mission is closely connected to the social situation and needs of the region in which they are. The conference, organised by UNESCO-CEPES, held in Bucharest, between 16-17 of March 2000, on this subject is a promising start. The author of this study is analyzing the institutional case studies presented at this conference, goes over the history of several bilingual universities around the world, and among the missions assumed by these mentions: to promote both participation, coherence, a broader perspective for the university and its students, and to promote bilingualism more as an objective then a condition and to encourage the students to remain in the region. The analyse includes, also, the functioning of this type of universities, as some financial aspects of it. In conclusion, Lewis Purser underlines that the academic basis of a bilingual university has to be as solid as any other university and its activities has to be as excellent as elsewhere.

Michael Langner

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From 1848 Switzerland became a federal state with three official languages German, French and Italian; from 1938 the fourth official language became the Romansh. The city of Freiburg/Fribourg from its foundation has been bilingual in the presence of

German and French cultures. In this framework the author describes the structure of University of Freiburg/Fribourg (founded in 1889), the percentage of students studying in different languages and the structure of the curriculum. Michael Langner concludes: by multilingual education the professional chances are higher; the competencies in more languages are very strong arguments in professional career; this contributes to the promotion of the intercultural dialogue; the competencies in more languages are useful in understanding the technical and professional publications written in other languages.

Jean-Michel Beillard

Bilingualism in Canadian Higher Education.
The Case of the University of Ottawa

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The University of Ottawa has a very distinctive characteristic: it is bilingual. This makes it a truly unique institution, one which takes pride in describing itself as a reflection of Canada, where cultural diversity and bilingualism (French and English) are governmental policy and have constitutional protection. Clearly the University of Ottawa is not unique in promoting cultural diversity: all Canadian universities do. Nor is it the only bilingual university in Canada: Laurentian University, located in Northern Ontario, is also officially bilingual, and York University, in Toronto, includes a bilingual component, called Glendon College. The University of Ottawa is unique however, in that it predates Canada as a Confederation (1867) and thus was bilingual before French and English became Canada's official languages. It is today the largest bilingual university in North America, the only one large enough to offer, to both linguistic groups, the vast array of programs.

Sandra Campisi

Case Study of the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano, Italy

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The Province of South Tyrol, situated in the northern part of Italy, is being proud of the existence of an unique university, which reflects and adapts itself to the ethnic configuration of this area: a trilingual region, of which mother tongues are German, Italian and Romansh (spoken by 4% of the population). The aim of the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano, founded in 1997 (its programs has been launched in 1998) is to offer for the students a multilingual education based on practice, in order to be able to respond to the needs of the local and European labour-market. The author starts with presenting the geographical and historical context of South Tyrol and the first steps taken by this university. After, the linguistical models and faculties are enumerated, the proceedings of admission and conditions of studying and graduation both in the case of compulsory bilingualism and in compulsory trilingualism (regarding the Romansh model). The Linguistical Centre holds the key position in the framework of the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano, so necessary for the improvement of linguistical capacities of the students through the broad offer of language

courses. At the end of her case study, dr. Sandra Campisi concludes that there are chances for this model to prosper in a world, where the knowledge of languages, and not only of the English language, but of the widely spoken languages, has a vital importance for success, mostly in the economical field.

Olle Anckar

Higher Education in a Bilingual State: the Case of Finland

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Concentrating on the case of the University Åbo Akademi, a higher education institute of Swedish language in the bilingual Finland, this article underlines the problems of higher education institutes functioning in two or three languages in a state where 11% of the population speaks Swedish and 89% speaks Finnish, and a big part of the population is bilingual. The author describes the situation of Finland as a constitutionally bilingual state, its monolingual and bilingual universities and their mission in the field of minorities. It is being presented the administrative structure of the University Åbo Akademi, the requested linguistical abilities and the curriculum in this multilingual environment. As a conclusion, Olle Anckar shows: the best solution for a linguistic group is to benefit from an own university, if this is possible politically and economically, especially in moments of financial austerity.

DIALOGUE

Romania and Minorities — Ten Years After

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After more than a decade from the events of December 1989, the Intercultural Centre of the Pro Europa League, had organised in Cluj, a debate in the framework of the traditional Intercultural Forums (being at its 8th edition), dedicated to the retrospection on the national minorities' situation in Romania and to the relation between minorities and the majority. At the debate had participated the representatives of national minorities' organisations, of the state institutions, of local authorities, of non-governmental organisations, political analysts, mass-media, students; most of them very well-known due to their assiduous activity to educate the majority population to respect the rights of all kinds of minorities, to change the deeply rooted mentalities, prejudices etc. The conference has been a good occasion to go over the successes and insuccesses and establishing the objectives for further activities. It could be concluded: everyone is speaking about a united, federal Europe, basically different from the one during the period of inter-state wars, but from the whole East-Central European political debate it could be felt a stuffy air of the 19 century. It has to be transplanted the seed from which will rise the pragmatic mentality of the 21 century. This was the aim of these type of debates.

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ANALYSE

Klara Kiss-Kingston

The Hungarian Status Law

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On 19 of June the National Assembly of Hungary passed a "Status Law", or, as it is now being called, a Benefits Law, by an overwhelming majority of 92 percent. The law that will become effective as of 1 January sets out a framework for granting wide-ranging cultural, social, and employment rights in Hungary to ethnic Hungarians from Slovenia, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Ukraine, and Slovakia. Persons who want to receive these benefits must sign a written declaration claiming Hungarian identity. The law stipulates that on the recommendation by ethnic Hungarian organizations in the relevant countries, the Hungarian authorities will issue a Hungarian identity card to successful applicants. There are also clauses in the law that stipulate financial support in these countries for the establishment, maintenance, and development of institutions and accredited bodies of higher education that guarantee Hungarian-language education.

CASE STUDY

István Horváth & Marius Lazăr

The Dynamics of the Inter-ethnic Relations in the Last Decade

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The case study is dedicated to the evolution of the interethnic relations, especially between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority, due to the fact that the integration of the ethno-cultural diversity has been (and in many aspects remains) one of the difficulties of the Romanian democratization process. The difficulties faced during the last decade, analysed by the authors, are mostly connected to the mentality of the ceausist national-communism still very present after 1989; to the instrumentation (extended sometimes to paroxysm) of nationalism in the Romanian politics. The results of several public opinion polls are being presented regarding the minority-majority relations. István Horváth and Marius Lazăr complains the lack of seriousness and professionalism of some of the public opinion polls, also the absence of conclusions which could lead to some measures to be taken in order to deal with the sensitive issue of interpersonal relations which has created, for several times, tensions and also led to conflicts. The conclusion of the researchers states that the pronounced presence of the ethnicist discourse in public debates and even used by parties considered democratic (do not speak about the frenzied chauvinist rethoric of the extremist ones) do not has a major impact on the population. One cannot speak, at the level of majority, about the rejection, in generally, of the Hungarians; there is a segment of the population with negative attitudes regarding the Hungarians, but also an approximately equal segment of those who relates with political and democratic maturity to the issue of minorities.

DOCUMENT

- Recommendation 1333 (1997)
on the Aromanian Language and Culture 139

Comment

Renate Weber

- Ancient Populations, New Initiatives:
Aromanians in the Attention of the Council of Europe 141

In the last years the fate of the small number groups with distinctive linguistical and cultural characteristics, eventually with a different religious affiliation than the majority population of the country they are living in, ignored until now, starts to preoccupy the Council of Europe, more and more convinced that multiculturalism is one of the riches of the society which should be preserved by it being a factor of internal and regional stability and by this, a factor of progress. In this respect, the General Assembly discussed and adopted in its meeting in June 24, 1997 the Recommendation 1333 on the Aromanian Language and Culture. The comment by Renate Weber follows the procedures of the Council of Europe, the reactions rousen, the positive and negative attitude of certain states, insisting on the strongly negative attitude of Greece. Also, there are presented and commented the provisions of the Recommendation and the perspectives of its application. A success can be considered the recognition of the existence of these populations, but remains a deeply sad message regarding the lack of the necessary funds for putting into practice of the provisions of the Recommendation.

FACES OF EUROPE

Per Denez

- Breton, a Language Searching for the Future 147

Breton is a Celtic language. It is part of that language family which, after being extended on a broad region of the continent, nowadays are in the situation of being isolated in the North-Western part of Europe, with the exception of some minor "colonies" in Canada and Argentina. Besides grammar, the Celtic languages have other common characteristics: after being favorable elements of splendid civilizations, fully part of the European cultural heritage, they became, through the centuries, the target of destroying and assimilating politics. Only today the course of history is changed and it is a need for a new grass-root movement of selfidentification. In Ireland, Scotland and Wales the situation seems to be better. The future of the Breton language seems to be gloomy if the will of the French state to destroy it will not weaken and if

the most basic cultural rights of the Breton speaking population are not being recognized. In the defense of this language, Per Denez resorts to history, enumerates the positive and negative moments regarding the Breton language, presents the spiritual richness of Breton literature, music, theatre (orally and written) and shows the obstacles in the way of development, the present situation of the language and its speakers, but also the forms of cultural demands, institutions created by the Breton population in order to save what could be save from the cultural and spiritual heritage.

ECUMENICA

Karl Lehmann

Free in Faith

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The attempts of exaggerating the doctrinaire misunderstandings and the burden of an often bloody history, are numerous and as old as the breach between the churches. But the recent progress of theology as well as the concern for the ecumenical dialogue finally led to the signature in October 31, 1999 in Augsburg, of a Common Declaration regarding justification between the World Federation of Lutherans and the Catholic Church. Which is the difficulty and importance of signing of this agreement? Which is its significance, generally, for the future of the Church and for the ecumenical relations between the different religions and churches. This agreements, Karl Lehmann says, is fundamental but not total. A consensus has been reached regarding the fundamental truths of the justification doctrine, but not regarding the ensemble of the Christian theology This agreement stresses a hermeneutical problem: none of the Churches, Lutheran or Catholic, does not succeed to draft the truth in an adequate manner Unity does not mean uniformity: the two churches remain in their differences, but their fundamental is being brilliantly reaffirmed. The communion is expressed, in this case, thanks to a differentiated consensus. The last difficulty, Karl Lehmann shows, remains the pastoral application of this agreement.

ALTERA PARS

Smaranda Enache

An Academic Pact or Multiculturalism “for Real”?

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In the spirit of the main topic to which this issue of Altera has been dedicated — multicultural universities — the article analyses the delicate problem of the Babeş-Bolyai University, which, during its history of less than a century, has been successively amputated, renamed, displaced, sacrificed to the will of certain politicians and authoritative leaderships, became an object of double frustration, both for Romanians and Hungarians. After roughly going through of its turmoiled history, the author shows, that disregarding the political interference and tendentiousness in the academic society from Cluj, we are facing several possible options to solve the historical

problem, resumed as the following: 1) reestablishing the Hungarian monolingual university separated from the body of the actual Babeş-Bolyai University, solution widely promoted by the Hungarian academic society; 2) establishing an autonomous Hungarian section in the framework of the Babeş-Bolyai University; 3) the multicultural university, which is being at this moment the option of the Romanian liberal academic society, due to the openness, tenaciousness and professionalism of the former rector Andrei Marga. All of these three alternatives are analyzed presenting their advantages and disadvantages. As a term of comparison the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) is being shortly presented. Smaranda Enache concludes by expressing her hope that the university democracy, regardless of the adopted solution, will not be less, but more than the civic democracy.

REVIEWS

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