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Interculturality and trust

Abstracts

ABSTRACTS

Trust and mistrust

For a civilisation of trust

Burham Ghalioun

For the author, the world in disarray is the origin of mistrust: disarray in the social, political and economic aspect. Nevertheless, he sees a possibility for restoring trust through becoming aware of the importance of the concept of immaterial capital and its decisive role in the reproduction of the social and international system. A second element is the emergence, outside of the process of globalising integration, of a real, supportive world society. The failure of the system of international relations in the face of the challenges of globalisation, even if it means worsening the deficit of trust, gives rise to a hope of a better world and favours the development of a common, collective, transnational consciousness with supportive impulses and convergences of increasingly powerful interests.

Where is trust heading?

Edgard Weber

Edgard Weber thinks of trust as a process which places the individual in a position which does not only take into account his or her group, his or her direct environment or that of his or her interest, but rather all humanity, regardless of origin, race or social class. In other words, a process that departs from that which is particular and takes an interest in that which is universal, like a horizon that retreats the more we approach it and as a process constructed with the Other. In this sense, three conditions underlie trust: hope, love, and faith.

Trust and structures

Trust in the judicial systems of Islam and the West

Abdallah Gabsi

For Abdallah Gabsi, trust springs from the relationships we establish with others but also with ourselves, and it, in turn, is necessary for the success of these relationships. One can have trust in a physical person or in a legal entity (an association or a civil or commercial society) but also in institutions which are part of systems, such as, for example, the judicial system. Justice must be founded on trust in order to generate it, and all societies, whatever their culture may be, have the duty to provide their judicial system with all the material and immaterial potential capable of establishing trust as a reinforcement of that trust and to offer the conditions regulated for the practice of trust. Through the application of its rules, the judicial system imposes the conditions for the practice of trust, which, in turn, generates more trust. What conditions must be respected in order to nurture trust in the judicial system? Must the general environment of this system be taken into account to guarantee the necessary harmony for establishing trust? These are some of the questions which the author poses in his study of trust in the judicial system.

Beyond empathy, cultivating trust: keys for intercultural reunion

Gérard Marandon

The author is of the opinion that in the case of an intercultural encounter, the risk of disagreements increases due to intercultural misunderstandings, and the difficulty of reaching a relationship of trust arises. To achieve this climate of trust it is advisable to previously examine certain general, theoretical problems in communication, and, in particular, those posed by intercultural situations. First, he discusses conflict and distinguishes between cognitive and affective conflict, to then go on to the psychosocial conditions of conflict management. What are the factors that condition the success of intercultural exchanges? Communication theories must be reconsidered in such a way that they can explain intercultural interactions. For the author, an intercultural situation is produced from the moment in which people or groups do not share the same universes of meaning and the same forms of expression for these meanings. A proposal for communication as well as for conflict management can be found in the theory of a provisional culture (*culture tierce*), which allows temporary adjustments to achieve common goals. In the creation of this space, trust

plays a central role, since it is necessary in any exchange but, above all, it is crucial in intercultural situations, due to their complexity.

Trust and uncertainty

Trust and the change in the migration paradigm

Noureddine Affaya

Noureddine Affaya asks how the Maghrebi emigrant experiences his or her identity dialectics. To what degree has the identity obsession created distortions and misfortunes? It is a symbolic and existential crisis, a crisis of meaning and of values, in which language is the vector and the body, the space which incarnates this aspect of the crisis. In this sense, the immigrant manages his or her memberships, combining inherited registers (that which is familiar) and new experiences (that which is unfamiliar). Now, the problem which is posed in all cultures and subcultures, even within a selfsame culture, is that of recognition, and in relation to the immigration phenomenon, the unequal relationships between Europe and the Maghreb must be taken into account. Naming the Other is a cultural and political question. In this aspect, the countries of admittance have to become involved rather than being, as all too often occurs, an uneasy and even hostile spectator. How can trust be established in situations of complexity, in which the ritualisation of difference hinders the present interculturality? To answer this question, the author questions the role of cultural intermediaries and their responsibility for disconnecting spaces and reconnecting them.

Trust and diversity: a perspective of organisation

Ghislain Verstraete

According to Ghislain Verstraete, we have been deaf and mute too long in the face of the consequences and dangers engendered by our “society of risk”, which he calls the “second modernity”. For everyone (but not in the same way), this second modernity is complex, stimulating, conflictive, as well as provocative in our limited competencies. In the face of the crisis, two reactions are possible: one of a diffuse pessimism which gives rise to a defensive and reactionary attitude, limiting citizen action; another one, of an excessive optimism which takes on an offensive tone, generating more questions and more negotiations and opening a perspective

of empowerment. All the organisations have to position themselves in a permanent way in relationship to this defensive/offensive axis, not only in theory but also in practice. But, how can pluralism be conceptualised in this second modernity and how can it be put into practice?

Trust and language

Crisis in trust through the contemporary Lebanese novel

Naoum Abi-Rached

Naoum Abi-Rached wonders what foundations are necessary for being able to establish a dialogue and establish trust, bearing in mind that the references and the experiences one has lived through are distinct. What supports do language and ways of speaking need in order to overcome suspicion, establish trust and culminate in a dialogue that will not be a dialogue of the deaf? For Abi-Rached, trust does not have its own existence, and it is conceived only in the process of a relationship with others. This author prefers to define the I in interaction with the Other and not through the Other. But, who is this Other? Friend or foe? Through writing, an attempt is made at re-establishing the lost balance of a society threatened at its foundations. The violence that we find in these writings is sometimes a cry of pain or an interrupted dialogue, but the novels are constructed to refind the lost trust or to illustrate a trust which is being lost.

Trust in media information

Miquel Rodrigo

For Miquel Rodrigo, cultural diversity places informative discourse in a crisis because it needs new categories to explain reality, and these categories are not always shared by journalists and by those who receive the information. Instead of gaining an easy trust drawn from stereotypes, he proposes, as a better way of overcoming the crisis, fostering the existence of sceptical readers. The media interprets social phenomena with its personal and professional limitations. The sceptical reader is one who knows why the media says what it says and understands that its truths are not absolute, since all ways of seeing are ways of concealing. The relationship between scepticism and trust is that which opposes a blind, acrylic and capitulating trust.

Trust and learning

On the impossibility of educating trust

Francesc Carbonell

Dialogue, and also intercultural dialogue, is only possible between equals. For Francesc Carbonell, those who feel superior do not dialogue: they ignore, scorn, and give orders. The unrenounceable objective of intercultural education should be the conviction that we are more equal than different; an educational challenge, since if diversity is so obvious that one only has to approach it with curiosity and respect to discover it, equality is not so obvious, but rather it is the fruit of a moral conviction. To educate this conviction it is essential to have a project, a goal, that shows us the direction in which we should proceed. The author proposes, on the one hand, some lines along which to work on equality of opportunities in the centres which facilitate, visualise, and ritualise equality, and, on the other hand, which improve the representations of oneself, of the collective itself, and of the other through a mutual recognition. What role does trust play in all of this? An intercultural education is that which is able to deactivate the factors which generate mistrust and which facilitates the emergence of autonomous, critical, and supportive fellow citizens.

Trust and liberated time: active practices in intercultural education

Pierre Étienne Vanpouille

Pierre Étienne Vanpouille considers intercultural communication to be currently a strategic necessity to thus achieve that its multicultural reality will not be the cause of misunderstanding, conflict or incommunicability. He and his team have searched for theoretical, and above all practical, bases for a pedagogy of intercultural communication that has led them to focus their intercultural policy on time and school rhythms. A true policy of intercultural communication needs time. It is necessary to take time for re-mediation with the aim of establishing trust. And, as one student says: "It is important to communicate with the whole class (students and teachers) to get to know the opinion of each one of us. We have to have trust in ourselves, trust in the other, in order to be able to share our difficulties without any fears."