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ABSTRACT
        This paper presents a brief overview of education in the
Soviet Union during the Marxist era and states that one result of the
Communist system collapse in 1991 was that it became imperative to
democratize Russian society and schooling. The paper notes the need to
reevaluate the legacy of "international upbringing" along the line of true
humanism, to bring new multicultural and multiethnic dimensions into
theoretical discourses, and to educate the younger generation of Russia. With
"Soviet person" and "Soviet people" identities gone, education remains a
powerful tool in assisting Russian people in their difficult searches of new
racial, ethnic, political, ideological, gender, and other cultural
identities. The paper is then organized into sections on race; racism and
discrimination; ethnos, nation, nationality, ethnic, and national identity;
ethnocentrism; biethnicity and multiethnicity; cultural shock; and children
of refugees and migrants from the republics of the former USSR. The paper
concludes by offering teaching strategies, discussion questions, and learning
activities on the topic. Contains both Russian and English references. (BT)

Ethnicity and Culture in Russian Schools.

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## Ethnicity and culture in Russian schools

Multicultural education is a new phenomenon in Russian education in the post-Communist era. However, it would not be quite accurate to state that none of the issues discussed today by the multiculturalists around the world were researched or practiced in schools in the former Soviet Union. The field of educational theory and practice that dealt with ethnicity, race, relations between nations, solidarity with the working and colonized, oppressed people around the globe, was known as an "international upbringing" ("internatsional'noe vospitanie"). Teaching "international upbringing" was an integral part of teacher education programs in the universities and colleges, research agendas, and daily practicies in schools. Many world known educators of the Soviet period (A.Makarenko, 1983; V.Sukhomlinskii, 1984) and especially practitioners do deserve credit for developing theoretical frameworks and applied techniques on teaching respect, friendship, solidarity with working people, and intolerance towards the oppressors in the capitalist countries and in their colonies. However, being shackled by the ruling Communist ideology, Soviet teachers were allowed to implement "international upbringing" exclusively in the spirit of Marxist ideas and ideals of class struggle and class solidarity. For example, schooling promoted solidarity not with all people but only with the manual labor working class around the world and especially with those who actively fought against "world capitalism". Since the Communist parties were the "vangard" of proletariat and the most influencial leaders in the working class movement in the first half of the 20th century, the official educational authorities saw to it that "international upbringing" promoted solidarity mainly with the Communist parties, Communist youth movement, and leftist organizations around the globe. Thus, ordinary humane solidarity

and friendship with diverse cultural groups (housewives, elderly people, teachers, children, students, etc.) was recognized as insignificant for it "diverted the attention of Soviet people from proletariat class solidarity" (Lysyanski, 1957). Therefore, it was excluded from the scope of inquiry and school practices. As the system of the Socialist states got enlarged after World War II, "international upbringing" widened its boundaries encompassing solidarity with all people living in those countries. With regard towards "domestic arena", "international upbringing" focused primarily on sterealized teaching of idealized friendship among various cultural groups, silencing, for example, real issues, problems, and conflicts in the past and in the present of interethnic relations, and glorifying the Communist Party for "final solution of intercultural and interethnic conflicts" (Lysyanski, 1957).

"International upringing" excluded some multicultural issues, like religious culture, the culture of political dissidents, and the culture of people with alternative sexual orientation. The first was excluded because of the intolerence of Communist ideology toward any religion based on K.Marx's doctrine that any religion is an "opium for the masses" (Marks, K., 1968, 234). The fears of the collapse of the system made its rulers outlaw the culture of any political opposition. People with alternative sexual orientation were considered to be "perverts" corrupted by the capitalism or were viewed as the "remnants" of the "dark capitalist past" of Russia.

As a result of the collapse of the Communist system in 1991, it became imperative to democratize Russian society and schooling, to reevaluate the legacy of "international upbringing" along the line of true humanism, to bring new multicultural and multiethnic dimensions into theoretical discourses, and to educate younger generation of Russia. With "Soviet person" and "Soviet people" identities gone, education remains a powerful tool in assisting Russian people in their difficult searches of new racial, ethnic, political, ideological, gender, and other cultural identities.

**Race**

The history of civilization knows numerous classificiations of people, based on those criteria which were the most prevalant in scientific, philosophical, and social thought at a certain historic period. One of them, suggested by C. Linnaeus, Swedish biologist, divided people into three races (Mongoloid, Negroid, Caucasoid). Anthropologists have used the concept of race believing that it would help them put people into certain categories based on their apparent physical characteristics, mainly the color of their skin. The interpretation of the concept of race varied in the past, with no consensus ever reached among scholars. Modern scholars are not an exception. According to another classification, accepted in the USA at the beginning of the XXth century, Jews were considered belonging to an Arab race, and Egyptians were classified as Africans; while nowadays the first are classified as Caucasians and the latter as Arabs. In the XXth century, Mexicans were called Whites and Chinese - Indians. The Russian school textbook "General Biology" (Polyansky, Y.I., 1992) enumerates 30 races, singling out four as the major ones - Australoid, Negroid, Europeoid, and Mongoloid. An American psychologyst A.Woolfolk (1997) counts 300 races living on the Earth. In the USA, many official papers which have to be filled out by candidates seeking employment in state or federal agencies, recognize five races, providing a line "Other." Thus, the emphasis in this case is on giving an individual an opportunity to determine his/her race the way he/she chooses. It is done so, as many believe, to observe and affirm the principle of justice and equality for people no matter what their racial background can be.

So, it becomes obvious that the concept of race is not a stable category, nor is it reliable and adequate. Historically, it depended upon how people viewed differences among themselves and which of them they considered more important and essential. How inaccurate and artificial modern classifications are, one can judge by seeing diametrical opposition in a group of Caucasian race people in which one can find blond, blue-eyed Norwegians with straight hair and dark-skinned Dagestanian (an ethnic group living in the Caucasus

mountains - G. D.) with curly hair and dark eyes. The question also arises about how to identify the race of a daughter of a Russian and a Yakutian, a Ukrainian and a Nigerian. In some countries, one would qualify her as a "mixed race" depending on which characteristics prevail in her (more often the skin color is taken into consideration) or may be some other criteria. Is that a correct and perfect way of dividing people ? The questions brings more doubts than answers.

The social historians remembers numerous times when the classification of people into categories led to the discrimination of certain racial groups, to dividing them into superior and inferior races (for example, Hitler fascism in Germany and apartheid in South Africa), toward slavery (USA), toward suppression of one race by another (colonies), to the creation and propaganda of inhuman theories of racial inferiority and social Darwinism. Many supporters (Bennett,1999; Grant & Sleeter,1998)) of multicultural education adhere to the idea that the concept of race is irrelevent in identifying the social and biological nature of human beings and therefore, they recognize only one race - the human one. Such a definition to greater extent enhances humanistic perspectives, for it promotes an awareness by humankind that all people have the same human essence; it unites them and creates a more fruitful background for greater concordance among them. For example, at the peak of the Cold war in the 1980s, many politicians, educators, philosophers, psychologists, and social activists around the world who were concerned about the threat of total nuclear death of anything or anybody living on the Earth, used the following or similar phrases in their calls for mutual survival, "Nuclear weapons threaten the very existence of human race", thus trying to bring to the consciousness of humankind the thought of the "sameness" of the fate for all people. And this message really brought masses of people from all countries closer together and raised their consciousness to a new level of understanding of "oneness" of the human race.

## Racism and discrimination

These two concepts have evolved as culture itself evolved in the course of time. In the period when specialists tried to find an adequate classification of people based mainly on the color of the skin and on other physical traits, racism, discrimination, and segregation were mainly linked to the concerns about the so called, "people of color." Such visible samples of racism and discrimination one could see in the warnings "Only for whites" and "Only for blacks" in public and government places in the USA, South Africa, and in some other countries. The Black people were barred from prestigious jobs; the laws prohibited education of Black and White children in the same schools. The traces of White racism could be found in acts, court decisions, laws, and policies of social institutions which often led to acts of violence, lynching, discrimination, and opression of people belonging to different race. However, the concept of racism and discrimination can also be applied toward similar acts among Whites (for example, ideology and actions of German fascists against Slavic people and Jews), or among Blacks (some light dark people might be racists toward deep dark people, or vice versa). As for Russia, there was never any institutional racism toward people with black skin, however, cultural racism was and is present in the country both towards people from Africa or toward people with yellow skin (in Russian culture, "yellow skin" is more often used while in the USA, "brown skin" is more common - G. D.). Probably, because of a very insignificant number of people with African background and tough anti-racism laws, violent conflicts were almost nonexistent in the Soviet Union however, today as Russia heads back to capitalism dislike and animosity towards them gets stronger. Capitalist Russia breeds new categories of its own "Blacks" (people from southern and northern parts of the country; illigal immigrants from Afganistan, Sri Lanka, China) who are viewed sometimes by white Russian population as stealers of their jobs, wealth, and well-being.

In the multicultural world which shares an understanding of race as one human entity, the concept of racism can be applied to describe any type of

negative attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors toward an individual with "otherness": ethnocentrism (supremacy of one ethnic group over another), sexism and homophobia (negativeness towards a person of opposite gender, sex or sexual orientation), classism (negativeness towards people with different socioeconomic status), linguicism (negativeness towards people speaking different dialects or with an accent), anti-Semitism (negativeness towards Jews), Russophobia (negativeness towards Russians), ageism (negativeness towards people from another age group), ableism (negativeness towards people with disabilities in certain areas), and other types and kinds of racisms.

The consequences of racism are too difficult to overcome. They destroy the tender fabric of trust between people; they threaten their peacefull coexistence; they give individual and social privileges and advantages to some cultural groups while depriving others an access to them.

### Ethnos, nation, nationality, ethnic and national identity

According to the Encyclopedia "Peoples of Russia" (1994), there are over 150 ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation. As a result of the migration and re-settlement processes, cross-ethnic marriages, transfer of young people to the institutions of learning, participation in "great socialist construction projects" in Siberia and in the Far East, and other socio-political and economic phenomena, each oblast' (an administrative unit in Russia - G. D.), autonomous republic, district, or okrug (administrative ethnic unit - G. D.) in the country became ethnic heterogeneous. For example, the 759.500 population of Kabardino-Balkaria Autonomous Republic in the North Caucasian region is represented by 54 ethnic groups: Kabardinians, Balkarians, Russians (Russkis - Slavic people - G. D.), Ossetians, Avaris, Udmurtians, Buryatians, Jews, Koreans, Persians, Tabasaranians, and others.

The culture of any ethnic group is intertwined with other ethnic cultures in multiple intricate and sometimes almost invisible ways. Unfortunately, today the process of harmonization of relations, both at the level of individuals

and at the level of ethnic groups in the Russia, is derailed. Most probably, overall there always will be problems in inter-ethnic relations as long as people exist on this Earth, however our main task as educators is to teach them to resolve their problems and conflicts in non-violent ways.

Who has not heard among both adults and children such derogatory and humiliating labels as "inorodets", "hohol", "moskal'", "chuchmek", "katsap", "zhid parkhatyi", "churka" (ethnic labling and name calling in Russia - G. D.) and many others which are rooted in ethnic differences ?

When in an elementary and a middle schools, I was a maverick among the Ukrainian children who were an overwhelming majority because of my Chuvash ethnicity and the native language of my parents. In the 9th grade, I studied in the school in the Far East and there was a smart and cute Korean girl in the same grade who was also a maverick, or "natsmen" (a derogatory word for "ethnic minority" - G. D.). It would seem only now logical for me that I should have had a much better understanding of her feelings and emotions than anybody else, but, unfortunately, I joined those who called her names. Such a behavior when a victim becomes a victimizer is described in educational literature as not uncommon among children. It is not uncommon among adults, too. Those who served in the army might recollect cases of hazing of the newly arrived conscripts by the "old" soldiers with several months of service. Today, it became publicly known as "dedovshchina" (victimizing young men as a "revenge" for their previous negative experiences).

In these turbulent years of changes, ethnic "component" became the focus of educational policies, political parties' platforms on education, parents' concerns, and school curriculum. The hotest debates take place around the latter, for the textbooks remain the main resource material for teachers. There are some nationalist educators who consider that in the ethnically homogenious places of Russia the visual texts in schools textbooks should include the pictures only of people belonging to that ethnic group and in the textbooks for nation-wide use, the pictures should be abstract. In other words, a textbook *Geography of Yakutiya* approved by the Ministry of Education of

Yakutian Republic should include pictures only of Yakutiyans, and a textbook *Mathematics* approved by the federal Ministry of Education for the whole country schools to use should be specific-ethnic free to avoid bias and/or preferential treatment of some ethnic groups. Such an approach, which unfortunately has been applied in some parts of the country is counterproductive because it fails to teach students about what unites people and creates commonalities in Rossian (Rossiiskaya, not Russki) culture. The analysis of the Russian school textbooks (they are analyzed in chapter 3 from the perspective of portraying sex and gender in them) (the following textbooks are mentioned in chapter 3: *Algebra* (Telyakovsky, S.A. Algebra, 1993), *Physics* (Peryshkin A.V. & Rodina, N.A., Fizika.1995), *Chemistry* (Rudzitis, G.E. & Feldman, F.G., Khimiya. 1993), *Geometry* ( Aleksandrov, A.D., Verner, A.L., & Ryzhik, V.I., Geometriya. 1991, *Literature* ( Polukhina, V.P., Literatura.1992), *Biology* ( Polyansky, Y.I., Biologiya. 1992) - G. D.) from an ethnic perspective provides substantial amount of evidence to make a conclusion about strong bias and the lack of divese ethnic representations in their visual texts. None of the pictures showed a Russian Eskimo, Russian Asians, or people from the Caucasus; they were all white people from the West-European part of Russia. Therefore, it is important for a teacher to be constantly aware that there may be and should be other ethnic perspectives alternative to the position of the author(s) of the textbook. A creative teacher would always look for addition resource materials that might tell students about contributions of various ethnic groups into science, arts, literature, social thought, and other spheres of life of Russia. If a teacher wants to develop curriculum into a multicultural one, he/she should always care about adding a multiethnic component into it, too.

Russian scholars and politicians have (as well as Soviet one had in the past) long discussions on such concepts as nations, nationalities, peoples ("narody"), ethnos. Many researchers believe, and this point of view is quite widely accepted, that a nation denotes a person's state affiliation, or citizenship. When one talks about National opera or National Academy of

Education, one implies that these social institutions, first, belong to the whole nation and to all nationalities of the country and, second, they unite singers and scholars who are citizens of this country but not specific nationals. By the "national market" the world economy understands the economy of the whole country, not of any specific national (or ethnic) group in the country. Likewise, under "national priorities" one understands the major goals, concerns, and interests of the state. There is a debate on what defines Russian (more accurately, Rossian, not Russian - in Russian: "russkii") nation and whether one should identify a small ethnic group (some of them are not more than 1000 people only) within Russia as a nation, nationality, or "narod." I believe, the answer to these questions was provided by Peter the Great as early as in 1721 who changed the name of the country from *Russian State* to *Rossia, or Rossian Empire*, for the country became multiethnic as more territories were added to it (unfortunately the change of the letter -u to the letter -o was not reflected in English, therefore Americans call all ethnic people living in Rossia as Russians, the phenomenon some ethnic non-Russians resent - G.D.). Since those days of the Tsaz's decision, the national or state identity of a citizen of Rossia is described as Rossiyanin (Rossian) which means that a person is a part of Rossian nation. The debates around these concepts are usully initiated by politicians, leaving people to think more about their daily life problems. As for Russians (Russkii) who make the majority of Rossian people, Academician Tishkov (1997) writes, that "since this question is raised by today's political entrepreneurs, they do not mind being called as Russki narod (a Russian people), not as a Russian nation. Many individuals from other ethnic groups do not mind being called narod (a people), either because it unites people of Russia and not separates them from one another, the position that disagrees with some politicians who use the word manipulation in their selfish financial interests" (125).

Multicultural education embraces the world practice in determining the concepts of a nationality and a nation. For example, when travelers from the multinational, multiethnic countries, such as India, Spain, and Nigeria cross

the border check-point with another country and hear from the passport control officer the question "What is your nationality? they know that he expects an answer about their citizenship identity. No matter how ethnically diverse these countries are (they might be Urdu, Basques, or Yoruba from those countries) and despite the deep conflicts between them, they call their nationality according to the name of the countries which citizens they are. At the same time, I heard many times in international airports awkward situations in which my country fellows found themselves when they insisted in vain that they are of the Tofolarian, Buryatian, Karelian, or Udmurtian nationality while a bewildered officer almost with a red face tried all his best explaining that there is no such nationality mentioned in his official instructions which mention only Russian nationality. There is a simple way out of this situation. If someone from an ethnic minority in Russia does not want to be called by an English word "Russian", or German word "Russisch", or French word "Russe" all of which have the double meaning of a "Russian" and a "Rossian", then when asked about nationality, they should answer: "Citizen of Russia." I would tend to agree with the Director of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academician Tishkov (1996) who states that since the concept of a nation is not stable yet, it would be a common sense approach to give people (whether they are Ukrainians or Gypsies, Kirgizians or Nanayans) an opportunity to make their own decision to call themselves a nation or not, but the concept of a nation should not be constitutionalized or strictly defined in scholarly terms. It would not be unexpedient, if a Bashkirian will refer himself/herself as bi-national, i.e. consider himself/herself a member of both Rossian and Bashkirian nations.

It is important for educators to teach students to be sensitive towards terminology, to develop understanding that such remarks as "What kind of a nation you are, if you are only 800 people?" - the reaction one may hear quite sometime - lead not to consolidation, but to division of Rossians and to the destruction of the country. By the way, all these three Russian words: "etnos"

("ethnos"), "natsiya" ("nation"), and "narod" (people) have the same meaning, though the first one is of Greek origin ("ethnos"), the second - of Latin origin ("natio"), and the last one - of Russian origin. Since some of these concepts may and do lead to cultural conflicts, multicultural teaching should regard them as the working instruments or tools whenever students, teachers, or parents hear, read, or use them in communication.

Some scholars and politicians from small ethnic groups are very sensitive about calling their group of people in ethnic but not national terms for fear that it may lead to disappearence of their ethnicity from the surface of the Earth but when they are called a nation that provides them more opportunities to stay together, create their governance bodies, and/or even create their own state. One can understand their concerns and sensititivity, though the history of once great and mighty Inkas, Azteks, Byzantians and some other nations, ethnos, and peoples suggests us that there are more powerful factors that lead to the disappearence not only of some peoples, but empires and even civilizations. It is important to realize that the word "ethnic" does not reveal the true essence of human beings. One may be a Tartar but live all his/her life among Lezgins, totally "Lezginize", loose the original ethnic identity and adopt a new one (that's how it happens in reality very often). Besides, in the modern interrelated world very many people cherish and value their other identities (professional, personal, social) more than their ethnic ones. So, rather then politicizing the issue at school and in the bigger comminities and imposing ethnicity affiliation upon children and adults, in a democrartic society each individual should be given the right to self-determine his/her ethnic or any other cultural identity.

Multicultural teacher understands that ethnic homogeneity in today's Russia is often illusionary. Any ethnic group has various other ethnic "elements" and non-ethnic cultural groups to which individuals belong, some of which, as it was mentioned before, may be more significant in identifying themselves than their ethnic background, therefore each individual needs to be viewed without stereotypical judgements and criteria. Besides, ethnic groups

are not always solid and stable entities. For example, in 1990s an ethnic group Mordva split into two ethnic groups - Erzya and Moksha - making it now even more difficult for the members of these groups to determine their ethnicity. Discussions are not over the issue whether Chechens and Ingushis are one Vainakh ethnic group or they are two distinct ethnicities; similar debates about Basques and Spanish are under way in Spain.

In the XXth century, there was an attempt to create on the territory of Russia a Socialist nation (or Soviet people) rooted in ideology rather than ethnicity, but it turned out to be abortive because it was the Comminist Party that determined people's identities, not people themselves. The classification of people into nations and nationalities within one Soviet nation (since Communists were unable to totally supress ethnicity) turned out to be unproductive due the hierarchical division of Soviet people into nations (more significant), and nationalities (less significant) with different rights and privileges correspondingly. No wonder that such an inequal division was eventually rejected by the peoples of Russia and the sooner the country and its citizens get rid of this legacy, the less irritation and animocity among ethnic groups will be.

## Ethnocentrism

There is no unanimity among specialists about the concept of ethnocentrism. The Encyclopedia "Peoples of Russia" (1994) defines it as 'the system of views in which the life of other peoples is being considered through the lens of traditional mindsets and values of the ethnic group the members of which put themselves above the rest; however some groups degrade their own culture." The Oxford English Dictionary (1989) identifies ethnocentrism only as a negative reaction to the members of other ethnic groups: "Ethnocentrism - regarding one's own race or ethnic group as of supreme importance" (p.425). The American Webster Dictionary provides the similar definition. Despite the differences in definitions, such traits as oppositional patterns of thinking and

behaving toward others, rejection of another ethnic culture, conscious or unconscious separation, establishing borders, and magnifying its own characteristics mainly undergird this phenomenon. Unconscious or compelled separation may be caused by objective factors, for example by geographic conditions (thus, people on the island separated from the mainland may find themselves closed within their own culture). The conscious ethnocentrism often brings members of the ethnic group to "social narcissism" with its exaggerated sense of superiority, to glorifying real and imaginary advantages, to bragging about themselves, and to arrogance. There can be nothing judgmental about the love of one's own ethnic culture, however ethnocentrism has a lot of negative because it puts cultural blinders on people and prevents them from seeing the diversity and the value of other cultures, the "otherness" of mentalities and behaviors of people. An ethnocentric person often views his/her culture as the only correct, natural, good, and right and other cultures are perceived as strange, ridiculous, and unacceptable for a "civilized" person. The inability of a person to see another culture through the lens of that culture prevents him/her from effective functioning in that cultural group. The extreme forms of ethnocentrism are racism, genocide, and fascism.

It goes without saying that a teacher with a multicultural mentality and vision will not overgeneralize and suspect all members of the ethnic group in ethnic isolationism. He/she would give a specific evaluation of each specific case and understand that the preference of some members of the ethnic group to communicate more often with their groupmates is not a racist pattern of behavior "us vs. them". Discrimination occurs only when a person starts acting out of his ethnic preferences in hiring teachers and staff, admitting childern to school, promoting to higher administrative positions people of his/her ethnic groups (such cases are not isolated in Russia - G. D.). It violates democratic principles of equality and justice and divides people into "ours" and "aliens". Discrimination may take place in schools in recruiting members of sports teams, in appointing members to certain students' committees and councils, giving undeserved higher grades and rewards, and paying special attention to

the children of the same ethnic identity.

The ethnic jokes which are so often told on school campuses (and not only by students) might serve as a dangerous "fuel" material in some ethnic conflicts in schools. These jokes sound insulting to children and teachers with an ethnicity the jokes are about. Therefore, a multicultural position of a teacher requires to promote political correctness, to discourage individuals from telling them because they promote negative stereotypes, hatred, and animosity.

## Biethnicty and multiethnicity

Many children often come across questions about their ethnic identity and they find it difficult to give an answer to them due to the lack of life experience and knowledge about ethnicity issues. The question one hears more often from children inquiring about somebody's ethnicity is "What is your nationality?" whereas, for the Russian cultural contextuality the following versions seem to be more adequate "What is your ethnic background?" or "To what people do you belong to?" since the issues of "nation' and "nationality" are not resolved by adults, yet. Besides, in many cases children find in difficult to come up with an answer because of intesive assimilation processes and huge number of inter-ethnic marriages in Russia. A teacher can help them by explaining that some people have double or multiple ethnic identities. For example, in the situation when a mother is a Lezgin and a father a Tuvinian, a student may say that he has double ethnicity or he/she is bi-ethnic. In cases when a biological mother is an Orochi, a step mother - an Erzya, a father - a Bashkir, and grandparents - Kalmykians, a  student may say that he/she is multiethnic or just Rossian (not Russian - G. D.). In general, one might easily note that many Russian people have mixed ethnic genealogy.

As students broaden their multiethnic vision to the multicultural one, they overcome ethnocentrism; they develop tolerance, understanding, acceptance, and respect of ethnic and other cultures, and start feeling more

comfortable in a new culture.

## Cultural shock

Every year many Russian children change the school for various reasons and find themselves in a new ethnocultural environment. If a teacher wants to help these children to adapt to a new enviroment, he/she needs to know that a transfer from one culture to another is often accompanied by a *cultural shock* caused by the gap or distance between the previous and the new culture. The shock lasts sometimes for quite a long time and it can be represented in the form of a sine line; the up-peak of it signals about the total acceptance of a new culture by a student in the form of excitement, adoration, and desire to learn the language (or dialect) of the new ethnic group. The down-peak of it tell us about the days (or weeks) when an individual feels discomort with a new culture acompanied by the rejection of the new culture and its members, lack of desire to speak a new language, nostalgia for the former place of living and the previous culture. The cultural shock has a cyclic nature and can last from several months to several years.

People who were directly or indirectly forced to immigrate, migrate or escape from their former place of living as refugees, are among those who experience the strongest cultural shock.

## Children of refugees and migrants from the republics of the former USSR

The disintegration of the Soviet Union led to a rapid growth of the number of refugees and migrants into the territory of Russian Federation from the other former Soviet republics (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Armenia, etc.), Russian and Russian-speaking people making the larger part of their contingent. They were forced to leave their former places of living due to direct or indirect violence, to the growth of intolerence on the part indigenous ethnic

nationalists, to the political and social restrictions, cultural discomfort, and concern about their life perspectives and the fate of their children. The media extensively covered the ecomonic, socio-demographic, and psychological problems of migrants and refugees. However, less is known about how their children deal with these new, mainly ethno-cultural transformations in their lives. A very important goal multicultural education to study the culture of children, teachers, and parents who abandoned the former Soviet republics and found themselves in a new cultural environment and to help lessen their pain and integrate faster into new Russian environment and assist Russian teachers know how to deal with this category of students, teachers, and parents.

First, a teacher needs to understand the fears and psychological dramas children from refugee and migrant families experienced. Many of them were discriminated or fell victims of hate crimes, and their wounds are still bleeding. Some of them find it difficult to grasp the reasons why they had to leave their schools, teachers, friends, and homes behind them. Have they been deported to Russia or have they returned to their historic motherland? If they believe that they were thrown out of former places or they had to escape, they might feel guilt, hatred, anger, or unhappy. In case of returning and reuniting with their historic motherland Russia, they might experience joy and cheer.

Children and teachers of migrant and refugee origin brought certain cultural forms and norms with them (accent, manners, views, values, and habits) from those social contexts to which they belonged in the former republics. They experience great difficulties in their new settings because they have to adapt and reconstruct their culture, compare and contrast with a new and to great extent unknown to them, Russian, culture, eventhough they may be Russians. As a result, some of them reject certain language forms, drinking habits, and other traits of local people. Many young people are in painful search of their ethnic identity and the question "Who am I - Russian, Armenian, or Kazakh ?" is on the mind of many. Being born and raised part of his life, say, in Armenia, a Russian child might have assimilated into

Armenian culture and now he has more in common with an Armenian teenager than with a child from Orenburg (a city in Russia - G. D.), to where his family escaped. Even more painfully, the search goes for bi-ethnic children when one of the parents is Russian and the other has an ethnic background from the republic they escaped, because he/she and his/her non-Rossian parent might be chosen as a scapegoat for all misfortunes inflicted to the Rossians.

A culturally sensitive teacher understands that the refugee and migrant children have to adapt to many things, for example, to the local climate patterns which might be absolutely different from the ones in the old place of residency. If a child has lived in hot and dry Uzbekistan (Central Asia) and lives now, say, in Chelyabinsk (Ural mountains), then he must get used to the cold weather, snow, and ice. In winter, he might experience those difficulties which are none for indiginous Chelyanian children because he has never seen snow or ever skated or skied. Teachers realize how important good skiing and skills are for Chelyabian boys: the way you do it, they either accept you as one of them or they reject you and make you a maverick or a scapegoat, therefore teachers should encourage and inspire the newly arrived to look at their new environment as a challenge and not give up, and they also need to teach the locals about the culture their new classmates arrived from.

A young teenager from Dushanbe, a city among mountains and deserts of Central Asia, whose parents resettled to a small city in Siberia, might have never seen so much woods in his life. It might scare him or he might not be confident being in it, and it can cause a attitude on the part of his Siberian schoolmates that will put him in an embarassing situation. Or, he might react to the woods with an emotionality with which a Siberian boy would react seeing a camel, a palm tree, or a desert for the first time in his life. And again, he might be viewed by his peers as a stranger. If a teacher knows how to use the previous cultural legacy of this student to enrich the experience of the local children (for example, by having him tell the story about Dushanbe and its culture) or asks the local kids to imagine what it means to be in the shoes of the Dushanbe boy, then he/she can anhance mutual understanding among

children which is important, both for adaptation of the newcomer and his learning in a new school.

The children from migrant and refugee families are not homogenious. Much in what they are depends upon the ethnocultural group he/she belonged to before the exodus to Russia and upon the ethnocultural environment they joined. The result might be an easy integration into a new culture of the Russian society, or a conflict with its bearers, i.e. teachers, staff, students, community people. Researchers Vitkovsky, G.S., Komarova, O.D., Stepanov, V.V., Sussokolov, A.A. (1997) provide with new data about the cultural distance between refugees from Baltik states, Central Asia and their present culture. According to their survey, over 50 per cent of respondents among local people noticed considerable difference between Russian refugees from Uzbekistan and local Rusian people in Ivanovo oblast. In the city of Pskov, only 12 per cent of respondents acknowledged dfifferences between the local citizens and the refugees from the Baltic states.

The research of Tishkov, V.A. (1996) found that 70 per cent of the migrated people (more then 80 per cent of migrants from Central Asia region) who resettled from the post-Soviet republics to Russia came from the urban areas, very often from the capital cities. They have higher than the average level of education in Russia. One may presume that the children from this cultural group have mentality, social views, life habits, manners, and outlooks quite different, more cosmopolitan than those in local groups from small cities. Tishkov writes, that sometimes these differences cause conflicts and problems in relations between individuals.

For teachers migrant and refugee students might often provide an opportunity to help them educationally enrich local children. Sociologists who study the issue of recent migration and resettling processes state that these children are more hospitable, have better diplomatic skills, do not use foul language, have better manners, and work ethics (Susokolov, A.A., Filippova, E.I., 1997).

Migrant and refugee children might experience the loss of friends or

relatives, reduction of their status. They have to figure out the values of the local culture without violating its norms and rules. Filippova E.I. (1997,) argues that "children experience the loss of friends with greater pain than adults, and they also have poorer adaptability skills" (p. 56). This increases the responsibility of educators in helping these students reduce their inner stress, level of concerns; eliminate fears, and facilitate their smooth transition to a new culture.

Sometimes, it takes a lot of time to recover from the cultural shock and to adjust to a new culture, therefore, a multicultural teacher exhibits more patience and tolerance towards those children who undergo this process. He/she avoids forceful and rapid assimilation of migrant children into the dominant local culture and also carefully studies the level of tolerance among the local people. The latter becomes very important, as some sociological research (Filippova, E.I., 1997, for example) discovered a great amount of animosity and/or envy on the part of the local population toward migrants and refugees for fear that, "They want to live here better than we do" or "They demand to create the second Georgia for them here" (under the Communist regime, especially under Stalin who was partially a Georgian, Soviet Georgia had higher living standards in comparison with the level of living in the Russian Federation and that changed since Georgia became independent - G. D.). Children are aware of these hostilities.

It is important to note that the pace of acculturation is determined by the individual, to certain extent. Some children and parents want to maintain their previous culture; they do not want to adjust or find it very difficult to adjust, to a new environment at school and to a larger local community. That may cause immense internal stress and serve as a reason of some cultural conflicts. It is a teacher's task to be careful about an individual's wishes to integrate into a new culture or just accept parts of it.

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A multicultural teacher tries to stay open to ethnic cultures; he wants to become better acquainted with them; he wants to be cognizant about their norms, forms, and rules. Such a teacher would not consider ethnic traditions (which in many societies are looked down as something obsolete) as signs of backwardness, as something inconsistent with the modern age of technology and computer science. He is encouraged today, for gone are the days of official fight against "gypsiism in musical art", Russian balalaika, "church bells in the symphony", and other folklore traditions; young people are longing to return to their ethnic roots.

With regard to overcoming the Soviet legacy of the recent past in education which favored single ideological perspective, free from "ethnic component", there is an enormous interests toward reopening ethnic - Tartar, Jewish, Buryat and other schools in order to maintain original ethnic cultures. In discussions, one may notice however those who (see, for example Boguslavsky, 1997) favor the restoration of ethnic schools sometime deny Russians (Russkii) the right to implement their wishes under the pretense that Russkis are the "consolidating and glueing" factor of the Russian society. Several counter-arguments can be offered to that. First, in pre-Socialist Russia, Russki schools peacefully co-existed alongside with other ethnic educational institutions. Second, if we recognize the right of other ethnic groups to open ethnic schools for their children, would it be fair and democratic to deny Russkis children an opportunity to learn and preserve their culture? And third, in a democracy, every child has a right to attend any school, including ethnic one; likewise, any teacher has the right to work in any ethnic school, and not only in the schools of his/her ethnicity. Otherwise, the division of education into ethnic channels is fraught with the threat of disintegrating the educational system and the whole country.

A multicultural educator understands the importance of learning languages for living in the interrelated world. Traditionally, schools were oriented toward offering students programs of studying foreign to the country languages; the importance of learning languages of neighboring ethnic groups

in the country was neglected. For a Russki, living in Kalmykia, the knowledge of the Kalmykian language might be a lead to learning the culture of this ethnicity, doing more profitable business, and a means of creating a favorable living environment for himself and for other Russkiis in a Kalmykian cultural surrounding. The same can be referred to a Kalmykian living in Udmurtiya or in Tuva.

Ethnicity in the recent Soviet past was often considered as something exotic, curious, funny, and/or archaic. Schools which annualy held numerous ethnic festivals in the month of December to commemerate the birthday of the USSR in 1921 were not an exception. The ethnic clothes that students wore during performances - beshmet, cherkesska,papaha, shuba, unty (some ethnic pieces of clothes that do not have an English equivalent - G. D.) were not aimed by educators to teach students to transcend beyond the aesthetic exotics to understand functionality of ethnic designs which shape, form, or color can be explained by the geographic, climatic, and other contextualities; to accept different clothing traditions, to respect the right of every person irrespective of his/her ethnic identity to choose to wear clothes he/she wants, to support a desire of students for selfexpression (self-expression as an existentialist bourgeois "thing" was suppressed in the Soviet schools which imposed uniformity, including in children's clothes throughout the whole country) through clothing his/her identity.

If a teacher's hobby lies in the sphere of cooking, he/she can also use it to teach tolerance through learning about ethnic cuisines. Not about those that are accepted in Western culture and are not rejected by many Russians, but about domestic non-Russian ethnic cuisines which are sometimes treated with open repulsion and unacceptance. For example, drinking tea is a tradition in many countries, however what goes with it differs greatly. In some East-Asian parts of Russia (in Siberia), Buryatiyans, Tuvinians, Khakassiyans add fat (that gives them extra energy to endure cold weather) which differs from what some Slavic people like to add to their tea (fruit or berry preservatives). English like tea with milk. One may not like any of those "additives" but one

must definitely repsect the traditions and choice of various ethnic groups.

Interethnic conflicts in Russia, I believe, did not involve the mainstream population of Russia. It is important for educators, students, and parents to realize that ethnic anger or hatred are not inborn. In the present critical situation in the country, these conflicts are grounded first of all in the problems caused by the distruction of the planned economy and the transition to the free market system, accompanied by privatization and redistribution of state property. The ethnic card is mainly played by those politicians and nationalists who strive to seize the power and wealth. Sometimes, unfortunately, they succeed in their selfish aspirations by sowing the seeds of ethnic hatred among people.

The supporters of multicultural education in Russia have great confidence that schools, colleges, and other educational institutions can significantly contribute to bringing inter-ethnic harmory to Russia, however they realize that it takes time and cooperation with other social institutions and public organizations, and with parents and communities.

## Teaching strategies

- To recognize that migration of people from one region to another (on free will, forced, or compelled) takes place in many countries; that these are constant processes in human history and Russia is not an exception no matter how painful and humiliating they are for its citizens these days.

- To create in the classrooms the atmosphere, in which students are not afraid to tell about their problems, racist attitudes towards them in the society and at school, and share with their classmates how their feelings are hurt.

- To help students appreciate the historical experiences, economic, educational, artistic, cultural, and social achievements and legacies of

the peoples who live in Russia.

- To recognize that to certain extent each individual has prejudices at a time in his/her life. Having recognized that, it is important to teach students not to act out upon them.

- To teach students to have pride in their ethnic culture (traditions, language, folklore, customs, clothes styles, ways of cooking, legends, fairy tales and other forms) and appreciate other ethnic cultures.

- To incorporate multiethnic marerials into all school subjects and into out-of-class activites.

- To develop tolerance, understanding, acceptance, and respect of all ethnic differences.

- To get oneself acquainted with the culture and problems of migrant and refugee families.

- To introduce students to the laws of the Russian Federation, pursecuting for waging interethnic hatred.

- To teach students critically read media texts with real ethnic problems occuring in the country and discuss alternative ways of their interpretation and solution.

- To promote an idea of equality of all ethnic groups in Russia without singling out Russki group as a "stateforming" or "bringing cohesiveness to others".

- To teach student to identify stereotypes, lables, statements, evaluations, judgements in verbal and visual texts that lead to misunderstading,

hatred, and conflicts between people of various ethnicities.

## Discussion questions

- How do people create such negative stereotypes as "Ivanushka a foolish boy", "a greedy Jew", "a sly Tartar", "a stupid Chukcha", "a punctual German", "a Georgian, the merchant" ? To what negative consequences they often lead ?

- What feelings and emotions might a student have if he/she is insulted by a racist ethnic nick-name or lable ? How can it affect his/her choice of responsive actions ? What non-violent strategies can you offer to this student ?

- How does the cultural distance affect an adaptation of a student to a new ethnic group and his/her relations with its members ?

- What are some of the relations between ethnic and other cultures of a student ? How do they interact in a student ?

- What are some explicit and implicit differences between dominant and subordinate ethnic cultures at school ?

- What is an ethnic nationalism and how it can provoke conflicts among people ?

- What are some cultural obstacles that can prevent smooth adaptation of students from refugee, migrant, and immigrant families ?

- Compare and contrast multiethnic and multicultural education. Which of them, do you think, has more potentials in educating a humanistic

personality ? Defend your position.

- If a teacher and a student in the classroom have the same ethnic identity, do they have the right to speak their own language in the presence of other children ?

### Learning activities

- If you have ever been discriminated or insulted because of your ethnic background, tell the students in your class what happened in that situation and what feelings, emotions, and thoughts you had at that time.

- Imagine you have a new refugee student in your classroom. Make a program of how you might help him/her shorten the cultural distance between children. Make up a list of characteristics that make migrant and refugee children different from the mainstream of students. Discuss what common features they might have with the other minority children in the classroom.

- Sometimes a teacher can make judgements about a student basing on some ethnic characteristics of the student has and it may lead him/her to success or failure in academics and /or in socialization. Make up a list of those characteristics and discuss in a small groups how they can make a teacher biased.

- If you know your ethnic identity, describe it to the members of your group. How can your ethnic culture enrich them ?  What traits of your ethnic culture reflect common features of Rossian culture ?  What do you think people need to know to understand you and your ethnic group better ?

- Ask several students whose parents or grandparents have different ethnic background and try to find out the positive and negative aspects of having a multiethnic identity. Share your findings with your group.

- A conflict is considered to be resolved when both parties involved into it win. Suppose someone called you "chernomazyi", "obrezannyi", "uzkoplenochnyi", "moskal'", or "parhatyi" (negative ethnic name callings - G. D.). How could you resolve this conflcit without using violence so that both parties win ?

- Try to recollect if you, your friends or relatives have ever experienced simultaneously the feelings of pride and discomfort for their ethnic identity. Share with your groupmates what you observed in their behavior at those moments. Why and in what situations do people have such feelings ?

- Try to describe emotions and feelings of a person of a "Caucasian nationality" (a person from the Caucasus - G. D.) in your city and a person of "Russian nationality" in the Caucasus. If possible, interview individuals of these ethnicities about their experiences of being in another cultural environment in the country and share your findings with your groupmates.

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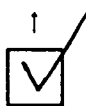| Corporate Source: | Publication Date: 9/20/00 |
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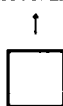| The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents | The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents | The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents |
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