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excellent work!

IMMIGRANTS AND "CULTURE SHOCK"

I am an Azorean immigrant living in The United States since January 1978, only a little over a year. So, I still feel very sharply affecting my whole being that hard sociological reality called "culture shock". That has been particularly hard for me for many different reasons, some of which I am now beginning to understand better since I started reading and studying Sociology. *great!*

First of all, I experienced the type of "culture shock" that any immigrant coming from the Azorean islands will experience: a radical difference in the type of society. As a matter of fact, the Azores are nine islands in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, small, primitive and ~~isolated~~ isolated from the rest of the world. Far away from the advancement of industrialization and lacking many of the essential means of progress, the Azorean society is economically poor and dependent ^{on} ~~from~~ Portugal, the main land. The main sources of subsistence are agriculture and fishery in the Atlantic. However, even in these activities, the Azorean are not advanced enough to take the necessary profit to support their economy. In fact, as the land is extremely divided and subdivided in very small properties, the use of heavy machinery is not possible. Industrialization is therefore almost ~~non~~ nonexistent in the Azores.

The Azorean type of society is thus mainly pastoral, agricultural and fishing. Evidently the social structure is deductible from such reality; that is, the basic institution is the family

and the strings of kinship are very strong. Of course, there are also other defined institutions but with not as much relevance as, for instance, in the United States.

Such economic, climatic, ecological and social environment has of course a very strong influence on the personality, character, ways of living and culture of the people.

After this very small introduction to the reality of the Azorean islands and its society, it is relatively easy to imagine the culture shock that such people (including myself) experience when they come to the U.S.A.

First of all, they face the terrible problem of the language which immediately constitutes an awful obstacle to communication and therefore to the adaptation to the new social reality and eventual resocialization.

Secondly, as there is hardly any industrialization in the Azores, there is also very little urbanization. So these people, used to live^{ing} in small villages in the countryside, will have to adjust to big and industrialized cities. That is a tremendous change especially for people who have reached a certain age and who have already experienced a strong socialization to the type of life and culture in which they were living before.

In the third place, the Azorean, who are sentimental, affective and warm people, will have to cope with a thoroughly different type of social relationships. In fact, if the new immigrant does not have folks in his new "habitat", he will find himself dealing with an extremely depressing sensation of "being

alone among thousands of people", feeling lost and abandoned. Even in the factory, or wherever he finds a job, he will experience mostly secondary relationships instead of the primary ones he used to have.

Another very important aspect of the shock that the immigrant from the Azores experiences when he first comes is the pace, the ~~rythm~~^{rythm} of life. Used to live in a peaceful, quiet and "slow-moving" society, the immigrant will feel "lost and pushed" by the rush and strict discipline of the hours and even minutes. He will have to learn that in America "time is money".

Above all, especially if he does not speak the language, the immigrant will feel "impersonalized", that is, he will feel the awfully sad sensation that he is no longer a person, but only a machine or a piece of a big oppressive machine.

These are to me the most important aspects of culture shock that an immigrant recently arrived from the Azores, experiences. There certainly are many more, but that could be the subject for a whole book. However I would still like to emphasize another aspect which I consider very important: the impossible relationship between parents - born and brought up in the Azores - and their children, born in America and thus exposed to the American process of socialization, especially the school and the peer groups. I will just point out this sad fact: they simply lose track of each other, including the communication in the same language (the parents speak only Portuguese and the children speak almost only English). Unfortunately these cases actually exist and there is hardly any means of solving or avoiding them. Of course, then, the parents

who ^{have} never ~~have~~ resocialized themselves, seeing their children completely integrated in the American youth's life style, will consider them deviant and perverse. That is another issue that would deserve long dissertation.

Nevertheless, I think I have left in this short and poorly written paper a few ideas of how abundant and how strong the immigrants' problems are. I hope that sociologists become more aware of them and find at least some hypotheses of solutions.

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