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# CONTENTS

# Mapping Cultural Identities:
# Translations and Intersections

# Black Hawk's Autobiography & American Indian Cultural Identity

## Roger NICHOLS [1]

**Abstract:** *In early 1833, Black Hawk, a Sauk Indian war leader, told the French-Canadian-Potawatami interpreter at the Rock Island Indian agency that he wanted to "Have a history of his life written." Based on my edition of his autobiography, this paper examines his views of the invading whites. It analyses issues related to creating the book, including its recording and translation into English, and the subsequent editing and rewriting to make it readable for American readers. The paper focuses on the issues of translation and ethnic and cultural identity addressed by this conference. During the nineteenth century almost no Indians produced autobiographical accounts and Black Hawk's 1833 narratives provides a rare chance to understand Natives. Its publication raised questions about its authenticity, but a careful analysis shows that it gives material unknown to whites at the time, that had to come directly from the disgruntled warrior. My analysis shows that neither straining the Sauk's narrative through the translator, nor editing the prose for publication, obscured the Indian's presentation of his cultural identity or his hatred for the Americans.*

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# 1. Introduction

The conference theme, "Mapping Cultural Identities: Translations and Intersections" encourages scholars to examine a broad range of issues and topics. The intense globalization that is occurring in societies around the world today has brought increasing attention to matters of differing cultures and identities, European imperialism in the western hemisphere and the settler colonialism that followed there and elsewhere, created societies in which the indigenous people often remained outside or at the bottom of the communities. In the United States, this describes the position of American Indian people today. Despite their efforts to retain their cultural values and practices during the past four centuries, many of them have been lost or modified. Few other Americans know much about them except as losers in the old Hollywood Western films or as protestors seen on television news. Until recently, Indians have not been considered as a major ethnic minority in society, and today, it is quite likely that most Americans may not be aware that they had ever seen a real one.

As this conference is hosted by the Faculty of Languages and Literature, I want to examine an Indian autobiography and its appearance in English as a way to understand past Indian societies. My thesis here is that in spite of having his ideas being translated and edited by others, Black Hawk's autobiography is a window through which we can look into an early 19th century tribal society to get a fuller understanding of Indian cultural identity, practices, and personal motivations. Autobiography was not a part of Indian culture prior to the whites' arrival in America. Certainly often, they returned home after a raid or during annual village celebrations, the men would describe their actions as warriors or hunters, but nearly always, they placed their accounts within a focus on their society. Most often, they identified themselves through their family, clan, or village, rather than as distinct individuals as the whites would have done at the same time. For example, one of my Arizona Hopi neighbors might introduce himself by saying "I am John Reynard of Second Mesa. My father is of the Eagle clan and my mother, the Thunder clan." He would base his identification of his home location and on personal connections to family members. Typically, Native people based ideas of self on where they stood within the group rather than speaking with the autobiographical focus on self, the whites used. (Krupat 4) Except for missionary-introduced writing and the Cherokee syllabary, before the twentieth century Indians remained non-literate. They presented their ideas orally.

## 2. Black Hawk's Autobiography & American Indian Cultural Identity

Nearly all of those who wrote autobiographies before the twentieth century were partially acculturated men. Many of them had accepted Christianity, had some education, could read and write English, and had some personal contacts with the settler society that surrounded them. David Brumble's bibliography, *American Indian and Eskimo Autobiographies,* gives a list of 577 of those. Black Hawk's account is of only a few that differ from most all of them. It was unusual because it gave the story of an uneducated, non-Christian man who could neither read nor write, and who had mostly negative personal contacts with Americans and their government. Rather than being on good terms with the whites, he led military resistance to American actions repeatedly. His story is unique in that it provides one of the few early nineteenth century accounts from an Indian point of view in existence. The rest came from a handful of leaders from the post-Civil War era.[1] Written to explain his actions and ideas, and based on his long antipathy toward white Americans, it narrates the events from the loser's point of view. It includes his complaints that the United States government had lied to the villagers, cheated them out of their land, and tried to disrupt their village culture, while the invading pioneers represented only violence and deceit.

The narrative begins with a typical multi-line early nineteenth century title *Life of Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak or Black Hawk... With an Account ... of the Late War ... and Travels Through the United States. Dictated by Himself,* was published in Cincinnati in 1833. (Black Hawk) A year later, four other editions followed. This statement gives an example of what Georges E. Sioui labelled "autohistory." That is Native history written from a base of tribal values. He claims that its central contribution is to highlight the importance of Native cultures and to demonstrate the roles Indigenous people have played in national history, and perhaps beyond. Sioui believes that traditional history reinforced the mistrust and

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[1] These include Frank Linderman, ed., *Plenty Coups, Chief of the C rows, 1848-1932,* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1957; Thomas Marquis, ed., *Wooden Leg, A Warrior Who Fought Custer,* Minneapolis: Midwest Co., 1931; L. V. McWhorter, ed., *Yellow Wolf, his own story,* Caldwell ID, Caxton Printers, 1940; John G. Neihardt, ed., *Black Elk Speaks* New York: Morrow, 1932; and R. Eli Paul, ed., *Autobiography of Red Clowd: War Leader of the Oglalas,* Missoula, Mt: Montana Historical Society Press, 1997.

misunderstanding between Native people and the settler society that arose in the US. His view is that history incorporates the idea of cultural evolution, which, in turn, devalues Indian ideas and practices. (x) Black Hawk's narrative provides an example of what Sioui proposes as an alternative to white historiography, the past from a villager's point of view.

To examine how this autobiography illustrates Indian cultural identity one must answer several obvious questions. First, "Who was Black Hawk?" and, closely related to that, "What can we learn about tribal culture from his account?" Black Sparrow Hawk, so named by his father, deleted Sparrow from his name as a young adult. Born in 1767 just four years after the Peace of Paris ended the Seven Year's War, he was a member of the Sauk Tribe, a central Algonkian people. Growing to adulthood in Saukenuk, a large village located at the junction of the Rock and Mississippi Rivers in northwestern Illinois, his life covered a period of great changes in North America. First, in 1763, the British ousted their French rivals from present Canada, and in second in 1783, the United States gained its independence from Britain. By that time, the westward moving pioneers and their tribal neighbors all considered the tribe to be belligerent as they Sauk fought repeatedly with the Kaskaskia and Cherokee to the south the Pawnee and Osage farther west, and the Dakota to the north. As a sixteen-year-old Black Hawk killed an Osage to gain the prized recognition as a warrior. That act enabled him to participate in the scalp dance to celebrate their victory once the war party returned to its home village. (Black Hawk 47) At maturity, he stood 1.75 meters tall, and had a medium build with broad shoulders and slender arms and legs. Like most Sauk men, he plucked the hair from his face and most of his scalp. Described as having a high forehead, an aquiline or Roman nose, a sharp chin, and a stern look, he became a recognized leader of war and raiding parties that left Saukenuk each summer. His narrative placed those events into the context of inter-tribal rivalries based on cultural imperatives.

Black Hawk's career included leading repeated attacks against Osage and Sioux villagers, as well as joining the British to fight against the Americans during the War of 1812. His success at defeating several US Army thrusts toward Saukenuk during that war led him and his fellow villages to consider the Americans as poor fighters. After that conflict, he participated in treaty councils with American officials, although only as an individual warrior, not a traditional chief. He joined many of the other villagers on their annual treks to meet British officials at Fort Malden across the river from Detroit so often that later frontier officials called his followers the British Band. After years of objecting to the questionable treaty of 1804, in 1831 American troops forced him and his supporters to abandon Saukenuk and move west across the Mississippi. The next year

he led Sauk and other dissidents back east into Illinois, hoping to be allowed to settle peacefully, but that action accidently set off the Black Hawk War. That led to disaster for the British Band as about 1,000 of them died of starvation or in the fighting that summer. (Black Hawk; Nichols)

Taken captive and imprisoned at Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis, in 1833 the government brought him and a few other Sauk leaders to Washington D. C. to meet President Andrew Jackson. Then, after imprisoning them at Ft. Monroe in Virginia, officials took the prisoners to New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia to show them American numbers and military strength, and hoping to persuade them to remain at peace. During their stay in the East, the prisoners sat for portraits by several artists, and those give us the only likenesses of these tribal leaders. Black Hawk apparently had several meetings with Thomas L. McKenney, the former Commissioner of Indian Affairs who was writing a book on his dealings with the tribes. While being taken to the big cities that summer the prisoners attracted large crowds and their movements drew lots of newspaper coverage. After their tour of the major eastern cities, the Sauks returned west. Once there Black Hawk reportedly asked for help to tell his life story. (Black Hawk 26)

An obvious question is how and why the aging warrior decided to narrate his autobiography, and the answer is not entirely clear. Some scholars have suggested that during his 1832 visit to the east as a prisoner of war several people suggested that he should tell his story. There is no way to verify that idea, but the resulting narrative represents what Arnold Krupat describes as a "triangulated textual generation." That is the *Autobiography* resulted from the efforts of an Indian narrator speaking to a mixed-blood interpreter/translator, whose work was put into suitable English prose by an English-speaking editor. (8; Black Hawk 26) The translator, Antione Le Claire, was the son of a French Canadian father and a Potawatomi mother, who spoke French and several local Indian languages. After the War of 1812, William Clark, Governor of Missouri Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the west, hired LeClaire as an interpreter and sent him to school to improve his English. By the 1830s, he had served as an interpreter at several multi-tribal councils, at nearby Fort Armstrong, and had come to know Black Hawk well. When asked about his role in producing the *Autobiography,* he claimed that the Sauk had told him that he wanted to tell his story and to explain why he had done things the Americans considered dangerous. (Black Hawk 34)

Today scholars doing oral history, work from an established set of questions. University and government regulations limit what may be asked, and assure that the interviewee will see and have the right to approve the final result. Clearly, that was not the case on 1833. Instead,

the narrative suggests that it resulted from a series of story-telling sessions rather than a carefully posed set of question. Still, when Le Claire finished his translation, he reported that Black Hawk had given him the information. There is no apparent reason why he would not have recorded the warrior's comments accurately, at least as far as he understood them.

John B. Patterson, the Galena, Illinois newspaperman who edited and published the manuscript, also claimed that the book was an accurate representation of what the aging Indian had told them. He had come to Illinois from Virginia to visit family the summer the Black Hawk War began. When the editor of the *Galenian* left the paper to take part in the war Patterson took charge of the paper. After that experience, he moved to another small town and opened a store. Years later, he published his own newspaper. He seems to have had no personal contact with the Sauk warrior before editing and publishing his autobiography. (Black Hawk 27)

So how accurate is this account? Black Hawk was no historian and he had no calendar or diary to guide his memory. As a result occasionally the manuscript places some events in the wrong year, out of historical order, or the prose is so vague that the chronologically is uncertain. For example, after relating the American take-over of Louisiana at St. Louis in 1804, the narrative discusses Lt. Zebulon Pike's visit to Saukenuk during that officer's trip up the Mississippi River. From the narrative it is impossible to tell that this occurred in 1805 rather than just after the U. S. claimed Louisiana the year before. Clearly, Black Hawk had to depend on his own memory. Despite minor lapses, the archival record shows that the old warrior remembered most events correctly and that battle narratives and much of the other material could only have come from him. Some of the errors may have been the result of either the translation or the editorial process. Given the narrator's age and his lack of any western historical consciousness, the tale is surprisingly accurate.

A closely related question is "How authentic is the narrative?" Both Le Claire and Patterson claimed that the *Autobiography* came directly from the aging warrior. On October 16, 1833 the translator certified that Black Hawk,

> "on his return to his people in August, last... express[ed] a great desire to have a History of his Life written and published, in order, 'that the people of the United States...might know the *causes,* that had impelled him to act as he had done, and the *principles* by which he was governed.'"

Le Claire went on to say that as interpreter, he "was particularly cautious, to understand distinctly the narrative...and [I] have examined

the work carefully, since its completion—and I have no hesitation in pronouncing it strictly correct...." (Black Hawk 2) Editor Patterson echoed that idea years later when he recalled that "after we had finished his autobiography the interpreter read it over to him carefully, and explained it thoroughly, so that he might make any needed corrections, by adding to, or taking from the narrations: but he did not desire to change it in any material manner." (Black Hawk 28).

Contemporary opinions about the authenticity of this version of Black Hawk's life varied and raised several questions. If he actually told the stories to Le Claire, why did they contain incorrect dates, or why was some of the chronology incorrect? One detractor, former-Illinois Governor, Thomas Ford wrote, "this work has misled many. Black Hawk knew but little, if anything, about it. In point of fact, it was got up from the statements of Mr. Antoine Le Clere and Col. Davenport, and was written by a printer, and was never intended for anything but a catch-penny publication. Mr. Le Clare was a half-breed Indian interpreter...." (Black Hawk 25) His last comment implied that he assumed mixed-race people could not be trusted to tell the truth. A more positive view of the narrative came from James Hall, the well-known author of a *History of the Indian Tribes*. He reported knowing Black Hawk and having personally discussed the book with him. According to Hall, the Sauk stated that the narrative was genuine. (Black Hawk 28)

Shortly after the *Autobiography* appeared, the *North American Review* gave it a positive notice. It accepted Le Claire's statement about how the narrative was translated and edited. The reviewer wrote, "That no one but a Sac Indian could have written or dictated such a composition. No white man, however great his ability may be, could have executed a work so thoroughly and truly Indian." It concluded, "We may say that the authenticity of the work is unquestionable."[1] The only issue the reviewer raised was Patterson's insertion of figures of speech and phrases such as "the vicissitudes of war" and related terms that certainly had not come from Black Hawk. Clearly, the editor added phrases to the author's version. For example, he included a dedication to General Henry Atkinson, the officer who led the force that destroyed the British Band. There, written in both Sauk and English, Black Hawk thanked the general for the "kindness I received from you whilst a prisoner of war..." Obviously, that came from the editor, not the Indian, because in the narrative Black Hawk complained bitterly about bad treatment by the soldiers who forced him to wear a ball and chain while he was a prisoner. (Black Hawk, 35-36, 142).

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[1] *North American Review* 40. 86 (1835): 68-87. Print.

Unlike most American autobiographies, Black Hawk's story gave little information about his family, rather most of the time it focused on the village and the tribe. He mentions that his father, Pyesa, was a warrior and the man who had the "great medicine bag" that had belonged to their ancestors. When his father died in battle, Black Hawk reported taking possession of it. Apparently, he used it to gain influence, but never as a shaman or in village ceremonies. He offered only a few off-hand references to his mother and siblings, as well as his sons, but rarely gave their names or told anything about them. The narrative focused on two things. First, it looked at village or tribal events and issues, reflecting the Native practice of placing one's actions within the broader tribal context. Second, from the start Black Hawk wanted to explain his ideas and to justify his actions. To accomplish that he narrated his military actions, discussed his responses to difficulties with federal officials and practices, and justified his actions and refusal to cooperate with U. S. demands.

In the account, he depicts himself as an ultra-conservative traditionalist, and his actions demonstrate the villagers' cultural practices. For example, when his father died, he "blacked [his] face, fasted, and prayed to the Great Spirit for five years," rather than the customary six months. (Black Hawk 49). In other places, he emphasized his cultural identity when discussing war or raids on neighboring tribes. This violence, he explained, was an essential part of Sauk culture. The military actions had several cultural bases. First, becoming a recognized warrior by killing an enemy fighter, brought prestige to each young man. Second, the practice of blood revenge motivated each tribe's actions toward its neighbors. If an outsider killed or injured any Sauk or stole or damaged their property, custom demanded a response. When tan incident happened in the village, the bandleaders usually could prevent violence by getting those responsible to offer gifts to "cover the blood." However, if a member of another tribe, particularly an enemy one, had committed the act, custom required the adult male relatives of the family to seek revenge. Others in the village could join to help accomplish that goal. Unfortunately, whenever Sauk men followed that custom, the other tribes felt honor-bound to retaliate, and so a cycle of raids and counter raids continued for decades. Much to the Indians surprise and anger, the whites rejected the traditional custom of payment for damages, or acts of blood revenge, and the US government tried to end this deeply rooted cultural practice repeatedly.

The *Autobiography* gives clear insights into Sauk village life as it describes their annual round of moves and economic actions during peaceful times.  Each spring they returned to their villages where they cleared and planted large fields of corn, beans, and squash, as well as

repairing and cleaning their vacant lodges. When the corn stood about knee high most of the men rode west to hunt buffalo. Often during the summer, they met hunters from other tribes, and each tried to prevent their rivals from entering areas they understood as their own hunting preserves. With most of the men away, some of those remaining in the villages went north into the lead mining region in northwestern Illinois or southwestern Wisconsin to mine and smelt lead from the surface deposits there. Others remained at home fishing and smoking their catch, or gathering reeds and weaving baskets and mats. By August, all of the villagers had returned home where they enjoyed, feasting, dancing, horseracing, ball games, and gambling. Then they waited for their traders to visit and bring the needed supply of new traps, munitions, tools, and household goods for the next year. During autumn, the people broke into small hunting groups, left their villages, and traveled west searching for fur-bearing animals whose skins they needed to pay the traders. His descriptions of important rites such as the Crane Dance, the National Dance, their ball games and feasts, illuminated local village customs.

   This idyllic description gave Sauk life before the tribe encountered the United States. At that point, the Americans were just a shadow on the eastern horizon. That changed in 1804 when the US took control of the vast Louisiana Territory, newly purchased from Spain. Black Hawk reported that the Sauk did not welcome this change. They had enjoyed good relations with the Spanish authorities at St. Louis, and in early March, 1804 they made their annual visit to the town. When they arrived the Indians described many of the people as looking "sad and gloomy," and they learned that "the Americans were coming to take possession of the town and country." The news made the Indians sad, "because we had always heard bad accounts of the Americans from Indians who had lived near them!—and we were sorry to lose our Spanish father, who had always treated us with great friendship." As they visited the Spanish officials for the last time, American army officers came to the front door of the house, and the Sauk "passed out at one door, as they entered another." (Black Hawk 51-52)

   The Indians left hurriedly and returned home. Their refusal to meet the Americans angered Captain Amos Stoddard who represented the government and in June, 1804 he complained that "the Saucks ... certainly do not pay that respect to the United States which is entertained by the other Indians, and in some instances they have assumed pretty elevated tone." (Nichols 22)

   The tribe's negative response to American actions grew directly out of their perception that Captain Stoddard, the local commanding officer, tended to favor their Osage enemies at Sauk expense. He appeared to have

given the Osages many presents and ignored them. The Sauk also objected to the American purchase of land from the Osage, because both tribes had claimed the area. Clearly, according to Black Hawk, the basis for their discontent grew from the perception that the newcomers favored the Osages at their expense. This seemed particularly true when the American authorities turned back a 300-man Sauk war party on its way to attack the Osage, and demanded that they release an Osage prisoner they held. Equally upsetting was the presence of American pioneers, illegally settled on Sauk hunting lands in Missouri. When the Indians asked Captain Stoddard to remove the pioneers he refused because the tribe still held the prisoner, giving them one more example of what they saw as the newcomers' anti-Sauk policies. (Nichols 25-26)

Tribal cultural practices for settling disputes with others came under attack from the Americans almost immediately. In 1804 continuing encroachments by pioneers led to frontier violence, as four young Sauk men attacked a pioneer settlement on the Quivre River, killing three people "in a most barbarous manner," and leaving the corpses "with their scalps taken off." (Quoted in Nichols, 27) The raid intensified the frontier tensions between the Sauk and their new neighbors. Black Hawk reported that the raiders rode back to their village and threw the grisly trophies on the ground in front of the chief, while taunting them to "go cry to the whites." (Quoted in Nichols 25) At this point the *Autobiography* shows the vast gulf between Indian and white ideas about justice and peacekeeping. Rightly fearing American retaliation, Sauk leaders reacted to the raiders' challenge quickly. To protect the women and children they moved four of their small villages farther from the angry whites, and then sent two chiefs and a trusted trader to St. Louis the calm the situation.

When the Sauks reached St. Louis they offered to "cover the blood" by making payments to the families of the dead, and were shocked to hear that the pioneers rejected that cultural practice as a way to settle disputes. Instead, the whites wanted to attack the nearby tribal villages and were gathering arms and recruiting men to retaliate. Federal officials told their Sauk visitors that it was only "with great difficulty, and upon promises of ample justice," that they had been able to prevent the whites from attacking. The Sauk delegates admitted that some of their tribesmen had killed the settlers, but explained that they had done that because the white men had abused some of the Indian women. When federal officials insisted that the chiefs turn the murders over to them for trial, the visitors had to admit they could not do that. They explained truthfully that in Sauk society the chiefs lacked any coercive powers like those the white authorities had. They could only ask the men to surrender, not force them to do so. American officials refused to believe this, assuming that it was

just an excuse for not taking action. Major James Bruff, then commanding US forces at St. Louis demanded that the two chiefs return home, seize the men, and return with them as soon as possible. (Nichols 25).

When they returned home and reported the American demands to the tribal council, the chiefs decided to send another small delegation to settle the matter and prevent a frontier war. They took one of the young men who was involved in the incident along to St. Louis, and the whites immediately imprisoned him. The chiefs wanted his release and so they agreed to meet with Indiana Territorial Governor William Henry Harrison, then in town to negotiate treaties with the nearby tribes. Harrison used the dispute over the prisoner as a chance to negotiate a land cession treaty with the Sauk visitors. He gave the Indians fancy clothes, fed them lavishly, and kept them drunk for some days. Then he persuaded them to sign a treaty that the chiefs thought was an agreement to keep peace and that secured their fellow tribesman's release from jail. Instead, the Treaty of 1804 surrendered all of the tribe's land east of the Mississippi River. (Black Hawk 53-54)

According to Black Hawk while the chiefs were in St. Louis, many of the villagers waited anxiously for their return. They worried about a possible war, and the family of the young man who had surrendered feared that he might be killed. Some painted their faces black in mourning while others fasted to get favorable results from the spirits. When the delegation returned in November 1804 Black Hawk reported, "They appeared to be dressed in Fine coats, and had medals! (*Autobiography* 53) From these circumstances, he remembered, we were in hopes that they brought good news." (Black Hawk 54-55) Unfortunately, the treaty they signed gave the tribe's homeland to the United States. The Sauk leaders had almost no concept of formal treaties or American ideas about land ownership. They seem to have thought that they had accepted a vague US claim of sovereignty over the region, similar to earlier French and Spanish claims. They even failed to get their kinsman released from prison in St. Louis, and, although President Thomas Jefferson pardoned the young man, guards at the prison shot him and then claimed that he had tried to escape. This treaty, conducted in secret, with a handful of minor chiefs not authorized to cede any tribal land, lay at the root of most of the difficulties between the Sauk and the United States for the next three decades. For Black Hawk it demonstrated that the Americans were terrible neighbors, and at one point, he asked, "Why did the Great Spirit ever send the whites to this island, to drive us from our homes, and introduce among us *poisonous liquors, disease, and death?* They should have remained on the island where the Great Spirit first placed them." (Black Hawk 61)

The Sauk warrior's narration offers examples of cultural differences that led to misunderstanding and inter-racial difficulties. Hoping to keep the tribes of the upper Mississippi Valley neutral in 1812 when it went to war with Britain, American authorities invited chiefs to Washington where they met President James Madison. He told his guests that the government would prevent British traders from supplying them, so they asked that American traders help them. The visitors understood Madison to say that the factor or trader at the US trading post on Rock Island would give them the essential credit for the coming winter. Clearly they misunderstood or had a poor translation of what the President had told them, because the Factor, or US trader, could not give Indians either alcohol or credit. (Black Hawk 62).

When the chiefs returned home, and harvested their crops, they prepared to go west for their winter hunt. Relying on what they understood as Madison's promise, they stopped at the government trading post and asked for credit. The factor explained that by law he could not give them any. When the chiefs protested that the President had promised that the trader "would supply us on credit, as the British traders had done," the factor could only repeat what he said earlier. The Indians went back to the village, and "few of [them] slept that night—all was gloom and discontent." They desperately needed food, clothing, and other supplies for the coming winter. The situation changed dramatically the next morning when a British trader appeared, gave them the needed supplies, and recruited many of the men to serve with the British army. Black Hawk reported that this incident ended their hopes to remain at peace. He explained the Sauk's willingness to join the British because they had "been forced into war by being deceived," about the essential trade goods by the Americans. (Black Hawk 62-64).

Between 1804, when they signed the treaty selling their land, and 1829 the villagers had few difficulties with intruding whites. The treaty had a clause saying that the Sauk could remain on the land as long as it belonged to the United States, and the Indians assumed that would always be the case. What they didn't realize was that once the land had been sold to pioneers it no longer belonged to the government, and their right to occupy it ended. Black Hawk's account relates many instances of violence between the incoming settlers and the Saukenuk people. In the late 1820s when the Indians returned to the village after their winter hunting they found that whites had moved into their lodges, fenced their fields, and threatened to drive them away by force. By that time, most of the civil chiefs, led by Keokuk, urged the villagers to move west into Iowa and start new villages. The tribal leaders had accepted the need to migrate across the Mississippi, but Black Hawk and a few others rejected their advice.

When Keokuk worked to persuade the villagers to leave Saukenuk, Black Hawk reported that I "looked upon him as a coward, and no brave, to abandon his village to be occupied by strangers." While the Indians told their agent about the white intruders, the pioneers complained to him that the Sauk were "intruding upon their rights! They made themselves out the injured party, and we the intruders! And called loudly to the great chief to protect their rights." He concluded, "How smooth must the the language of the whites, when they can make right look like wrong, and wrong like right." (Black Hawk 102).


## 3. Conclusion

Clearly, during the first part of the 19th century white and Indian Americans had many social, political, and economic differences. The settler dominated white society considered itself to be superior to the Native people in every way. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to push the tribal people they considered to be savage, backward, and dangerous out of the way. The government used a system of negotiated treaties to do this, but, as Black Hawk's account shows, treaty negotiations were rarely between equals. Often Indian negotiators lacked English skills, and that allowed white negotiators to miss-state what the agreement said. At times, crucial clauses were not explained, or tribal leaders were told one thing while something else appeared on paper. In some instances, the US Senate inserted or deleted material in the treaties without bothering to tell the Indians of the changes. Even had the treaties been clear and fair, often the surging pioneer flood outran federal surveyors and so illegal squatters overran tribal lands repeatedly. In disputes between Indians and pioneers, the government sided with the whites. Black Hawk's *Autobiography* discusses each of those issues. It gives the views of as traditional Sauk leader clearly, and explains what the Indians thought and how their society functioned. The narrative includes frequent examples of what the indigenous people saw as injustices they experienced when dealing with the invading Americans. As one of a very few Indian autobiographies written during the early 19th century, it gives us a tool which we can use to examine, and perhaps understand, Native American cultural values and their early ethnic identity.

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# A Romanian Approach to Developing Multicultural Awareness and Skills

## Lavinia NĂDRAG,[1]
## Alina BUZARNA-TIHENEA (GĂLBEAZĂ)[2]

**Abstract***: The political, economic, social, cultural and informational changes in the society can lead to geographical movements of the population. The world is a mosaic and requires a closer analysis of its contact languages and cultures. Our work reviews concepts related to diversity, pluriculturalism, multiculturalism, multicultural education, especially from the perspective of an EFL teacher. Other elements considered are the need to improve the curriculum, to facilitate knowledge construction and understanding of the elements specific to other cultures, to assist the newcomers' integration into the society, to discuss the role of extracurricular activities, parents and community in this process.*

## 1. Introduction

The constant increase in cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity has triggered new challenges as far as the efficient education of citizens against a pluralistic democratic background is concerned. For instance, in the United States, the enforcement of the Immigration and Nationality Act

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of 1965, enacted on June 30, 1968, entailed one of the largest wave of immigrants (originating mainly from Latin America and Asia), influencing the American social, economic and educational institutions. Consequently, schools and universities are trying to respond to the ethnic, cultural and language diversity they are now experiencing.

Since World War II, other Western nation-states, such as France, the UK, Australia and Canada, have also become more ethnically diverse. The ethnic minorities within these societies face problems like their American counterparts. Multicultural education has emerged within these nations to respond to the needs, problems and aspirations of ethnic minorities and to find ways of balancing diversity and unity.

According to McGee Banks and Banks (1995: XI), "multicultural education is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups". Multicultural education is also seen as *a reform movement* that aims at making significant changes at the curricular and structural levels, in schools and universities.

Iosef Huber, in *Intercultural Competence for All* (2012), makes a connection between *intercultural understanding* and *intercultural competence*, stating that cultural, religious, social or ethnic misconceptions and misunderstandings are usually entailed by discrimination, racism and hate speech. He also states that intercultural competence should represent a central prerequisite for all persons and a major element of mainstream education. In terms of knowledge, skills, values, norms, attitudes and behavior, he explains that intercultural competence implies the implementation of education policies within the society.

The challenges for education in times of social change, social tensions and conflicts stimulate heated and controversial discussions. In this regard, intercultural competence is highly influenced by issues such as the globalization of finance and of the economy (see Zamfir, 2013); the increase of various types of mobility (i.e. private, professional, etc.); the spread of migration entailing the constant development of minority groups. Nowadays, individuals from various cultures, nations, ethnic groups and religions are mixed dramatically, particularly in urban areas.

This great ethnographic mobility should lead to solidarity, enhancing the ability to overcome the negative effects of marginalization, individualism and social exclusion. Brembeck (1977) classifies the effects of intercultural communication into visible (such as works of art, dressing styles, food) and invisible ones, the latter being embedded into the subconscious area (values, attitudes). The same above-mentioned author defines diversity as the variation encountered in a larger group, with a

common basis involving elements such as openness, neighborhood, inclusion and acceptance. In its turn, otherness, which is associated to oppositeness, implies comparison and emphasis on difference, often materializing in various forms of prejudice, discrimination and even exclusion.

As far as *culture* is concerned, it includes many things, such as ethnic cultural values, traditions and customs, communication and learning styles, various relational patterns, with different consequences for the teaching and learning processes. For example, teachers need to know the essential components of culturally responsive teaching, presented by Gay, in "*Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching*" (2002: 107):

> "(a) Which ethnic groups give priority to communal living and cooperative problem solving and how these preferences affect educational motivation, aspiration, and task performance;
> (b) How different ethnic groups' protocols of appropriate ways for children to interact with adults are exhibited in instructional settings;
> (c) The implications of gender role socialization in different ethnic groups for implementing equity initiatives in classroom instruction."

The knowledge that teachers need to have about cultural diversity stretches beyond the simple and general awareness of and respect for the different values asserted and expressed by ethnic groups in various ways. Therefore, in order to develop an appropriate knowledge base underlying culturally responsive teaching, teachers should acquire detailed factual pieces of information about the cultural features of different ethnic groups.

Moreover, terms such as multiculturalism, pluriculturalism, diversity, otherness and interculturalism should be clarified. As already discussed above, *otherness* involves comparison, emphasis on difference, reference to *oppositeness*, and triggers various forms of discrimination, prejudice and exclusion. *Interculturalism* is viewed by Huber (2012: 24) as "the active dimension of diversity" that "presupposes the interaction of individuals, groups and communities", and that creates deliberately "situations of change, mutual influences and cultural cross-fertilization". It aims at building common projects, assuming shared responsibilities and creating common identities. He also asserts that, in its turn, *diversity* is the "variation within a larger group that shares a common basis" and

implies "neighborhood, openness, acceptance, inclusion" (p. 22). *Multiculturalism* is defined by Huber (2012: 23) as "the natural state of society" – diverse, multilingual, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, etc. – implying "the coexistence of different entities that may manifest themselves as such in a common public sphere". As far as *pluriculturalism* is concerned, the same author states that it "emphasizes the presence of various groups in a community and refers to the integration of aspects of other cultures by the individual" (p. 23).


## 2. The Purposes of Multicultural Education

Multicultural education mainly aims at reforming educational institutions and ensuring educational equality, irrespective of the students' race, ethnicity, religion or any other social features. In this regard, multicultural education is focused on the acquisition of the knowledge, competencies, patterns of behavior and attitudes that help the individual to interact, collaborate and communicate with persons from various communities or groups, against a multicultural and democratic background, and that promote the creation of a civic and moral spirit, focused on the common good (see Parsons, 2003). Therefore, excellent language and communication skills are also necessary when it comes to multicultural interaction (see Coroban, 2018).

It is noteworthy that *multicultural education* is underlain by the idea that ethnicity, race, culture and language diversity are important social and cultural elements, which play a positive role in the society. It can enrich a nation and develop the ways in which its people can identify and solve both personal and public issues. When people involve themselves in various ethnic cultures, they learn from the overall human experience and feel more fulfilled as human beings. Multicultural education attempts to acquaint each ethnic and cultural group with the unique cultures of other ethnic groups and make them understand that other ethnic cultures are just as meaningful and valid as their own (Husén and Opper, 2014).

Another major aim of multicultural education is to provide students with cultural and ethnic alternatives. It is widely known that historically, the American schools' curriculum has focused primarily on the culture of Anglo-Americans. This Anglocentric curriculum is still applied to different degrees in many American educational institutions, and it has negative consequences both for the Anglo-American students and the students of different ethnic origins, such as African Americans and Mexican Americans. For instance, by teaching Anglo-American students only about

their own culture, the school is denying them the richness of the music, literature and values of another culture.

Multicultural education is also oriented towards helping individuals gain greater self-understanding by viewing the world through the lens of other cultures, in order to reduce the discrimination (and its painful consequences) experienced by persons of different ethnicities, cultures or races in the schools and in the wider society. Some groups often deny their identity, ethnic heritage and family in order to assimilate and participate more fully in the social, economic and political institutions of their societies. Schools often force members of such groups to experience "self-alienation" (i.e. to reject elements of their ethnic cultures) in order to succeed, which creates problems for both individuals and the society.

Multicultural education is also aimed at helping students acquire and develop cross-cultural competencies. According to Banks (2001), there are four levels of cross-cultural competency. The first level deals with the individual experiences, with superficial and brief cross-cultural interactions, such as eating occasionally at a Chinese American restaurant. At the second level, the individual begins to assimilate some of the symbols and characteristics of the "outside" ethnic group, linguistic traits, communication styles, values, attitudes that are normative within the outside cultural group. When the individual reaches the third level, s/he is thoroughly bicultural and bilingual. Each of the two cultures is equally meaningful to the bicultural individual. As far as the fourth level is concerned, the individual is completely assimilated into the new ethnic culture.

Most multicultural education theorists do not see the first or the fourth level as desirable purposes of multicultural education. In this regard, Comer et al. (1996) drafted a structural intervention model focused on several modifications of the social and psychological school climate, such as making collaborative decisions (a process that involves principals, administrators, teachers and different school professionals), and involving parents in this process. According to Comer and his colleagues, this would contribute to the increase in the academic success of low-income students, in particular. Moreover, multicultural education also aims at giving students, irrespective of their gender, equal chances to benefit from mobility and educational achievement (see Sadker and Sadker, 1994).

The purposes discussed above reveal that multicultural education specialists want to highlight the ways in which race, ethnicity, gender or class influence education (Banks, 1997). Furthermore, it should be noted that despite the emerging agreement regarding the purposes of multicultural education, various perspectives and typologies from the literature underline that complete agreement has not been reached yet

(Baker, 1994; Banks, 1997; Nieto, 1999). There is general agreement that the successful implementation of multicultural education requires institutional modifications, involving the curriculum; teaching materials, strategies and styles; attitudes, patterns of behavior and visions; school objectives, rules, and culture (McGee Banks and Banks, 1995).

## 3. The Dimensions of Multicultural Education

The dimensions of multicultural education are aimed at helping the teaching staff understand various multicultural education elements and features and at enabling them to implement this concept efficiently. According to McGee Banks and Banks' article "Equity Pedagogy: An essential Component of Multicultural Education" (1995: 152), the dimensions of multicultural education are "content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, an empowering school culture and social structure".

*Content integration* is related to "the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline" (Banks and McGee Banks, 2009: 20). Moreover, in the perspective of the same authors, "the infusion of ethnic and cultural content into the subject area should be logical and not contrived" (p. 20). For the purpose of illustrating multicultural concepts, themes and principles and employing ethnic and cultural content, teachers can use the opportunities provided, for instance, by the scientific explanation of hair or skin color differences, or by the occurrence of certain diseases within different human communities or groups.

*"The knowledge construction process"* (McGee Banks and Banks, 1995: 152) involves an analysis of the methods, techniques, strategies and activities applied by teachers in order to help "students understand, investigate and determine how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed" (Banks, 2016: 9). This dimension plays a key role in understanding knowledge creation and the influences of the individuals' race, ethnicity and social class. For instance, for a better understanding of how knowledge is created and reconceptualized, teachers can provide students with several accounts of the same events from different perspectives, thus developing their ability to analyze critically various resources.

Regarding *prejudice reduction*, researchers have indicated that the students' positive racial and gender patterns of behavior and attitudes could be enhanced by efficient curricular interventions (Banks, 1995b). The last decades have been dominated by a number of researchers heavily influenced by Allport's (1954) theory focused on the idea that prejudice is reduced by interracial contact situations characterized by cooperation, equal status and shared goals. Such research showed (and analyzed) the ways in which cooperative learning influenced the students' academic success and racial patterns of behavior and attitudes. Furthermore, it was also demonstrated that cooperative learning activities influence in a positive way the academic results of the students of color (see Slavin, 1995).

In its turn, *equity pedagogy* helps the teaching staff increase classroom participation and facilitate the students' academic achievement, regardless of their race, culture, ethnicity or gender (Banks, 1995a), by modifying the teaching style and strategies and using various pieces of information and knowledge from the students' cultural and language strengths. Additionally, teachers can enhance their students' success by acquiring knowledge about their students' cultures, values, languages and learning features.

As far as "*the empowerment of school culture and social structure*" (McGee Banks and Banks, 1995: 152) is concerned, it is noteworthy that it entails the reorganization of the school culture and structure, in order to develop an educational environment underlain by the students' equality, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion or gender. For this purpose, the school culture and organization should be analyzed in order to decide whether (and to what extent) it encourages or hampers educational equity.

One can notice that the dimensions discussed above are tightly interconnected, and that the knowledge analyzed and mastered by teachers greatly influences their teaching methods, their interpretations of school knowledge and their use of the students' cultural knowledge. The typology of these dimensions creates a useful context for the categorization and interpretation of the extensive literature dealing with cultural diversity, ethnicity, and education. Therefore, the teaching staff should have the ability to identify and understand the implications and importance of these dimensions.

> "In order for multicultural education to be effectively implemented within a school, changes must be made in the total school culture as well as within all subject areas, including mathematics and science." (Secada et al., 1995).

This approach may be confusing; especially for those teaching subjects such as mathematics or science (this is usually considered a form of resistance to multicultural education). Therefore, the teaching staff should be able to understand the concept more widely and to accept it; for this purpose, the meaning of multicultural education should be better contextualized.

In the work entitled *Cultural Diversity and Education*, Banks (2015: 127) stated the following:

> "In the multicultural, open society envisioned by the multicultural theorist, individuals would be free to maintain their ethnic identities. They would also be able and willing to function effectively within the common culture and within and across other ethnic cultures. Individuals would be free to act in ways consistent with the norms and values of their ethnic groups as long as they did not conflict with the overarching national idealized values, such as justice, equality, and human dignity."

Multicultural theorists believe that the primary goal of the curriculum should be to help students learn how to function more effectively within their own community or ethnic culture, within the mainstream national culture, and within other cultural and ethnic communities. The multicultural theorist believes that the curriculum should reflect the cultures of various cultural and ethnic groups and the shared national culture. Therefore, students need to study all these cultures in order to become effective participants and decision-makers in a democratic pluralistic context.

The intellectual and emotional confrontations that ethnic studies require of teachers and students help them attain more humanistic views of ethnic minorities and break out their own ethnic encapsulations. Ethnic studies teach students that there are other ways of living and being, and that to be racially and ethnically different does not mean that one is inferior or superior. In this regard, Banks (1975: 460) explains that

"More humanistic views of other cultures are imperative within our increasingly interdependent and ethnically polarized world. Humanistic views of other groups and cultures may help to create the kind of racial and ethnic harmony that our society must have to survive in the twenty-first century."

Colombo '. Michaela (2005: 1), in her paper entitled "Empathy and Cultural Competence. Reflections from Teachers of Culturally Diverse Children", explains that, within a culturally diverse context, cultural discrepancies between teachers and their students can trigger distressing classroom experiences, because the latter "may feel like they are moving from one world to another as they go from home to school". Furthermore, apart from the differences in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, religion and language, there are other obstacles, such as various communication patterns and classroom expectations because teachers should share their students' cultures in order to furnish culturally compatible instruction (Moll, 1994; Dumitrascu and Maruntelu, 2010).

Colombo (2005) mentions several misconceptions that hinder the creation of enriching and responsive learning contexts that encourage and capitalize on the students' cultural differences: "Everyone is the same (children are children, families are families)" (thus, according to the author, "by not acknowledging differences, teachers may deny the children's cultural strengths") (p. 3); "Culturally diverse parents should know and conform to the expectations of mainstream schools" (this misconception refers to the "ways to increase the involvement of culturally and linguistically diverse families") (p. 4); "Families who don't participate in school activities don't value education" (p. 5); "If you want children to learn English, just speak English" (p. 6).

It is noteworthy that the classroom should not be seen as an environment enabling the promotion of political beliefs, but as one that supports and defends moral and ethical positions, as multicultural education is essentially focused on social change through education. Therefore, there are several teacher education programs aimed at helping teachers to become efficient cultural mediators and change agents, endowed with skills that involve "social science knowledge", "clarified cultural identifications", "positive intergroup and racial attitudes", "pedagogical skills" (Banks, 2015: 220).

After completing these training programs, teachers reach new insights in terms of multicultural teaching strategies. They are keen to implement them in their schools, in order to change certain traditional norms and perspectives toward ethnic and cultural diversity. However, without the support of their peers and the help of the administration of

their institution, these teachers usually give up and return to their previous traditional patterns of behavior and attitudes.

## 4. The Features of a Multicultural School

In order to implement the dimensions of multicultural education discussed in the previous section, educational institutions should be reformed, and all students should be provided the opportunity to learn and experience cultural empowerment, regardless of their social-class, race, gender and culture (Banks and McGee Banks, 1997). Educational institutions should also support their students to acquire democratic values, on the one hand, and the knowledge, skills, competencies, and patterns of behavior typical of cross-cultural functions, on the other hand.

According to Banks (2008: 36), a reformed school that implements the dimensions of multicultural education has the eight features focused on variables such as attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and actions of the school staff:

> "1. The teachers and school administrators have high expectations for all students and positive attitudes toward them. They also respond to them in positive and caring ways.
>
> 2. The formalized curriculum reflects the experiences, cultures, and perspectives of a range of cultural and ethnic groups as well as of both genders.
>
> 3. The teaching styles used by the teachers match the learning, cultural, and motivational styles of the students.
>
> 4. The teachers and administrators show respect for the students' first languages and dialects.
>
> 5. The instructional materials used in the school show events, situations, and concepts from the perspectives of a range of cultural, ethnic, and racial groups.
>
> 6. The assessment and testing procedures used in the school are culturally sensitive and result in students of color being represented proportionately in classes for the gifted and talented.

7. The school culture and the hidden curriculum reflect cultural and ethnic diversity.

8. The school counselors have high expectations for students from different racial, ethnic, and language groups and help these students to set and realize positive career goals."

The first feature refers to the fact that both the teachers and the administrators of a restructured multicultural school require their students to meet high academic standards, based on the premise that all students are able to learn (Edmonds, 1986). In this regard, they manifest positive attitudes toward their students and respond in a caring manner.

The second feature emphasizes the fact that, in most schools, the curriculum is centered on the majority's perspective (most concepts, events, and situations being presented from a mainstream point of view) (Applebee, 1989), marginalizing the experiences of minorities. On the contrary, multicultural education aims at reforming the curriculum and at presenting different events, concepts and issues from the perspectives of various races, genders, ethnicities and social-classes.

The third characteristic stresses the idea that, usually, many minority students have learning, cultural and motivational traits that are profoundly different from the teaching strategies and styles implemented in schools (Delpit, 1995). These students usually learn best in cooperative teaching contexts, when school rules, expectations and learning outcomes are made explicit and when students are granted the possibility to express their feelings, to interact with their peers and to express their opinions when multicultural issues are discussed (Stahl and VanSickle, 1992). Therefore, the multicultural curriculum requires involving, interactive, personalized and cooperative teaching strategies, implemented by a teacher that listens to and legitimizes the voices of students from different races, cultures and genders.

As far as the fourth feature is concerned, it refers to the fact that many students speak various languages and dialects, different from the standard national language taught in the respective school (depending on the country where the school is located). Although all students must learn the standard national language, in order to function successfully in the wider society, the school (i.e. teachers, administrators, board members, etc.) should acknowledge the students' first languages or dialects and apply linguistic pluralism policies, which would stimulate the respect for the languages or dialects spoken by other people within the respective country. Having in view the current context characterized by global interdependence and the promotion of linguistic pluralism, students

should learn other people's languages and dialects, in order to transform themselves into real citizens of the global village.

The fifth feature stresses the idea that a multicultural school encourages the reformation of instructional materials, depicting events from various ethnic and cultural perspectives. Unfortunately, even nowadays, many biases are found in textbooks and other instructional materials (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991), often marginalizing the experiences of minorities and focusing on the majority's perspectives. Identifying the appropriate materials requires time and careful selection, especially since they should accurately present the other ethnicities' perspectives, attitudes, and feelings, through strong ethnic characters, the interpretations of events and situations (universal to all cultures and groups), the description of settings and experiences with which all students can identify, accurately reflecting, at the same time, ethnic cultures and lifestyles. Moreover, illustrations should be accurate and ethnically sensitive, having in view that pictures often speak louder than words. The teacher should also pay attention to the use of words and phrases because ethnic materials should not contain racist concepts, clichés, phrases or words. Moreover, factual materials should be historically accurate and discuss major events and documents related to ethnic history.

The sixth feature is related to the fact that the IQ and other mental-ability tests often reveal that the students belonging to various minority groups are overrepresented in classes for mentally retarded students and underrepresented in classes for gifted and talented students (Patton, 1992). Mercer found that the school labeled more people mentally retarded than did any other institution. The school, as Mercer (1989) and other researchers have pointed out, uses criteria to determine the students' mental abilities that differ from those in their native and community cultures. In its endeavor to meet the needs of students with special abilities, the school should ensure that all students, irrespective of their social-class, culture and ethnicity have equal opportunities to participate in programs for academically and creatively talented students. Both excellence and equality should be major goals of education. In a restructured multicultural school, assessment techniques should allow a fair and just assessment of culturally and ethnically diverse students (Mercer, 1989).

As far as the seventh feature is concerned, it refers to the hidden curriculum (i.e. no teacher explicitly teaches it but all students learn it) and to the fact that the school's perspectives in terms of cultural and ethnic diversity are reflected in many subtle ways in the school culture (i.e. pictures on bulletin boards, racial composition of the school staff, fairness

in terms of discipline and assessment, regardless of the students' race, culture, ethnicity, gender, etc.). The multicultural education reforms performed in this field should send the message that cultural and ethnic diversity is valued and celebrated.

Finally, the eighth feature emphasizes the idea that an efficient multicultural school needs counselors that should help all students, irrespective of their culture, race, gender, religion or ethnicity, to make appropriate career choices. Furthermore, these multiculturally-oriented counselors should help and advise students in order to achieve their goals, exceed their limits and actualize their dreams.

The partnership between the educational institution and the community plays a very important role in the fulfilment of the school's mission, i.e. helping students to acquire academic skills and become effective citizens of a democratic society. The tremendous changes that shake the current society entailed the reconceptualization of the idea of parent involvement and of ways in which parents and the entire community can support the school. Therefore, schools should conceptualize and implement programs that involve parents in school, consistent with the changing characteristics of families, parents and society (Banks,1997).

According to multicultural educators, the implementation of the above discussed dimensions and features of a multicultural school as well as the appropriate restructuration of the school environment would enhance the students' academic achievement, regardless of their ethnicity, culture and gender; thus, their inter-group attitudes, patterns of behavior and beliefs would also become more democratic.

## 5. Teaching Strategies and Materials

Once a teacher has identified the key concepts and generalizations that can serve as a framework for a multiethnic curriculum or unit, s/he can then identify the materials and teaching strategies necessary to help students derive the concepts and their related generalizations. A wide variety of teaching strategies, content, and materials can be used to teach ethnic content. The teacher should determine the age level for which a particular book or teaching material might be appropriate. Moreover, selecting appropriate ethnic studies materials according to the students' interest and reading level, as well as the type of classroom situation should be considered. In addition, the teacher should decide on how s/he will use the resources.

For instance, when discussing immigration and migration in America, the teacher can use content related to the forced westward migration of the Cherokee (1838-1839), also known as "The Trail of Tears". When teaching about Puerto Rican migrants, the teacher can use such excellent books as Elena Padilla's *Up from Puerto Rico* and Stan Steiner's *The Islands: The World of the Puerto Ricans*. Oscar Handlin's compassionate and sensitive book, *The Uprooted,* and Irving Howe's *World of Our Fathers,* will give students useful overviews of the frustrations and problems encountered by the southern and eastern European immigrants to the United States. Vincent Harding in *There Is a River* describes the forced migration of Africans to North America. *Roots* by Alex Haley powerfully conveys the human dimension of the slave's journey from Africa to America. Simulation, role-playing, as well as other strategies can be used effectively to teach about immigration, migration and other key concepts.

Moreover, the information related to America's ethnic groups can be organized around key concepts and taught and developed at successive levels at an increasing degree of complexity, with different content samples. At each level, materials related to a range of ethnic groups should be used as content samples to teach students major social science concepts and generalizations (Banks, 1987).

To assure that every lower-level generalization identified in the initial stages of planning is adequately developed within a unit, the teacher can divide a sheet of paper in half and list the key concepts and generalizations on one side of it, and the strategies and materials needed to teach the ideas on the other half. For instance, for the key concepts "immigration" and "migration", the generalization (underlain by the idea that in all cultures, individuals and groups have moved voluntarily and forcedly to different regions, for better economic, political, and social opportunities) might include activities such as reading aloud selections from a certain book about migration/ immigration, discussing the characters' feelings (when families are split apart, for example), watching and discussing certain representative drawings from the respective book or other interrelated pictures.

However, scientific knowledge is necessary for reflective decision-making on ethnic and racial problems. To make reflective decisions, social actors must also identify and clarify their values and relate them to the knowledge they have derived through the process of inquiry. The school should play a significant role in helping students to identify and clarify their values and to make moral choices intelligently. Although the school has the great responsibility of helping students make moral choices reflectively, sometimes teachers fail to help their students deal with moral

issues. This usually happens when teachers deny the existence of value problems or when they use evasion strategies, such as changing the subject to safer topics. Additionally, the inculcation of values considered "right" by adults (such as fairness, honesty, truth, freedom), taught by means of legendary heroes, rituals, stories, and even patriotic songs, is also inconsistent with a culturally pluralistic ideology. Therefore, the didactic approaches to moral education do not help students learn *a process* for handling value conflicts and dilemmas, which are often interpreted differently by different individuals and groups in a democratic pluralistic society.

Consequently, students should learn how to identify, analyze and solve value conflicts and dilemmas. Moreover, they should be taught how to make reflective moral choices, justify their moral decisions and see how their values conflict with democratic values and ideologies. In addition, students should be able to understand and predict the possible consequences of their values.

A number of models and approaches related to value education have been developed so that teachers can use them to organize and teach value inquiry lessons. These include *the public issues approach* developed by Oliver and Shaver (1966) and Levin et. al. (1969), *the values clarification approach* (which is very popular with teachers) conceptualized by Raths and his colleagues (1978) and *the cognitive-developmental approach* developed by Lawrence Kohlberg (1975).

Keeping in mind that nowadays classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse, teachers must consider topics such as race, ethnicity, gender, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and homelessness. Due to this extremely diverse background, the development of a classroom community entails a lot of challenging work that has to be done by the teacher, in order to provide each student with space to develop specific skills and to experience a sense of inner balance and wholeness in a community with others, sharing feelings of belonging and acceptance. The adequate use of multicultural education requires schools to recognize and accommodate all students from all families that are commonly excluded from mainstream academia and offer them the occasion to excel regardless of their learning style or group. The teacher must be a good role model and must adjust his/her teaching methods, in order to encourage all students to become involved in the classroom community and benefit from the social and academic interactions that take place in a constructivist classroom, allowing students to raise their self-efficacy and self-esteem, as they become active members in an instructional setting.

# 6. Multicultural Education in Romanian Universities

Romania is a country where education occupies an important role in the society. Not everyone goes to university but there are many students in Romanian universities. The students that are part of the Romanian educational system come not only from this culture but also from other different cultures (Vasilache, 2014).

The term 'multicultural education' is practically new for the Romanian society but the aspects deriving from this concept are not disregarded by the people involved in the process of education. They have managed to improve these aspects constantly "in an effort to soften the solutions and eliminate the tensions and distinctions" (Calin and Dumitrana, 2001: 193). Romania is trying to reform the educational system, especially at the high education level, bringing it to a new and better level. The Romanian educational system has changed gradually after 1989 through several stages that started with the rejection of the communist ideology and searching for various alternatives (Szakács, 2011). An attempt to change the education is represented by the desire to reach another level: internationalization of higher education. This internationalization "represents the process of integrating intercultural and international dimensions in teaching, research and administrative services in a university" (Vasilache, 2014: 18).

Another modification that was made at the level of higher education after 1989 was a change that had as the main target the minority groups which needed help for a better integration in the society. This movement was needed in the Romanian society because the minorities existing here had a hard time during the communist regime in the educational field. For example, in the communist period Hungarian medium higher education was almost completely oppressed and this deficiency of educational institutions in the Hungarian language triggered a great number of Hungarians who suffered under-education (Veronesi & Nickenig, 2009).

The members of the ethnic minorities and their cultures create a layer in the Romanian multiculturalism by adding cultural richness to the country. Beside the existing cultures that live in Romania, there are also students that come from other countries, immigrants, who enrich the Romanian culture through their diverse origins.

In Romanian universities, there are many students who come from different cultures and although the number of foreign students has always been high, Romania still struggles with internationalization and multiculturalism. The universities "have developed their academic culture in a national context" (Vasilache, 2014: 20). In the communism period, the cross-cultural education did not exist even though it was needed. If the

cross-cultural education had been taught in Romanian universities in that period, the relations between cultures would have opened new horizons for every student.

After the communist period, Romania underwent some major changes after a long period in which the educational system was carefully controlled by the state. Over the years many things have been reformed on this level and many did not have anything to do with the educational process but to changes regarding the administrators of these institutions (Zajda, 2005: 226).

When we talk about these types of changes, we can observe that over the years the academic institutions became places where students can have large perspectives. Privatization or marketization meant that universities were allocating funds, time and other resources in order to attract students. The international commercialization represented the main step towards multicultural universities because their focus point was to create the best environments in order to attract foreigners.

If we consider the period of time after the revolution from 1989, we need to take into account that Romania was in a transition period where the higher educational institutions were focusing on widening the perspectives in order to create individuals well prepared for a new and democratic society (Eisemon et al., 1995).

One way of getting prepared for and well-informed about multiculturalism is the program "American Studies" (for undergraduate students), followed by "Anglo-American Studies (for postgraduate students), at *Ovidius* University of Constanta. The latter, besides the fact that all lectures and seminars are held in English, includes the course "Multicultural Education: Problems and Solutions", which develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The issues discussed are related to the main components of the teaching/learning process in a multicultural environment: family (functioning and influence, socialization, traits, phenotype, ethnicities, identities); school staff attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, stereotypes, expectations; curriculum, teaching methods and aids, learning styles; assessment (aims, purposes, advantages and disadvantages of its forms) disparity in academic achievement and graduation rates, parent involvement; how to reduce prejudice, discrimination and racism, what problems students (Latino/Latina, Asian American, African American, American Indian, Biracial, White, LGBT, with disabilities) encounter on campus.

## 7. Conclusions

In a drastically changing world, the need to foster global awareness among our students has become an urgent matter. Faced with issues such as immigration, intra-ethnic diversity, assimilation and acculturation, prejudice, discrimination and racism, the human race has to cooperate in order to solve these problems, some degree of cross-cultural understanding and competency being thus necessary.

Students should be encouraged to discuss the implications of the growing cultural and linguistic diversity in schools and in the wider society. They should compare and contrast various conceptions of culture and use ethnographic processes as tools for learning about a sociocultural community different from their own. Moreover, students should be able to identify, describe, evaluate, and use distinct kinds of resources for learning about or engaging with a socio-cultural group different from their own. They must examine their own cultural identity, including their racial/ethnic identity, how identity is expressed, and implications of their cultural identities for working with children and families who differ from themselves. Students also need to examine social institutions for racism, sexism, classism, and situate current issues within an analysis of wealth transfer within the new global economy.

To conclude, we can say that multicultural education helps both the members of the teaching staff and the students to perceive the surrounding world and to conceptualize it not just as in terms of content but also through the lens of various ethnic and cultural groups.

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# On the Need for Linguistic and Lexical Sensibility in Social Sciences

## Adriana SAVU[1]

**Abstract***: This paper addresses the aspect of lexical choices that social scientists make at different stages of their research, especially when conducting studies in a language that has never been considered "of science". It also refers to researchers' responsibility when using certain terms in public communication. Drawing on the author's research on singlehood, a comparison between the topic-specific terms in four languages is presented. It is argued that researchers who develop their linguistic and lexical sensibilities can understand better the relationships between social changes, public discourses and semantic developments.*

**Keywords***:* Language, Lexical Sensibility, Translation, Social Sciences, Singlehood.

## 1. Introduction

The following text is written from the perspective of a cultural space that was always at the periphery of an empire or another. The Romanian language bears the marks of the country's history and its geographical placement. The local elites have always looked outside the borders for models of social development and modernization. They spoke the language of an administrative, political or economic "center," even when they campaigned for the affirmation of the national language or the unity and independence of the state.

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This paper is also written from the perspective of a social researcher that became interested in a topic that is intensely studied and discussed around the world but is widely ignored in her own country, that of single and never-married people. In the process of the review of the literature, a couple of questions began to form and rise above the more specific research ones. How do social scientists from a non-Western, non-English speaking country, participate in a global conversation on a certain topic without losing in translation significant elements of the social realities that are conveyed within the local terms? How do we use the language when we communicate our findings to both local and international audiences, to academia and the public?

I cannot but agree with David Crystal and his belief in "the fundamental value of a common language" (xiii). At the same time, one must be aware of the Anglocentric dimension of many research studies that are undertaken these days (Ortiz), a feature that can be traced at the language level. One must think about the Lévy-Leblond's warning against what he calls "conceptual aphasia"[1]. In the current context of globalization, students and researches around the world are likely more willing than ever to use a language of integration, especially English, the new global "lingua franca". This creates the premises of a monolingualism that potentially leads to the adoption of theoretical models and concepts favored by a dominant cultural and linguistic community.

It is not the purpose of this paper to enter into a debate on the linguistic imperialism or the need for "rebabelization"[2] of science, but to underline that in social science language and lexical choices do matter, even more than in natural science. It matters for every step of the research, from choosing theoretical and conceptual frameworks and developing the instruments of investigation (questionnaires or interview guides) to communicating the findings. Social scientists study the Social, the Cultural, and the Individual and not all these are immediately or easily

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[1] In an interview published in a French review and conducted by Michaël Oustinoff, the physicist Jean-Marc Lévy-Leblond argued that "conceptualization in science depends on language" and that holding too strong on English language hinders the understanding of the need for a critical return on terminology. He also said that plurilingualism could prevent the fall into "conceptual aphasia", which means "thinking only in the context of a single language" (211).

[2] This is a term that Donald F. Lach used in order to describe the explosion of printing in vernacular languages, including the Asian ones, in the 16th century Europe (525-543).

translatable, if at all. The universalization of discourses is difficult to reach in social sciences because they are "too much tied to contexts" (Ortiz).

Social scientists know the language is not neutral. We work with concepts, analyze texts and contexts, but most of us are not trained in linguistics and translation[1]. We do not always pay attention to all the aspects of concept formation and the various overlapping degrees of denotations and connotations of specific terms within the languages we use. This inattention is more evident when the challenges of translation arise. Few of us are multilingual or even bilingual and the financial restraints rarely allow us to employ the services of professional translators.

The next paragraphs reflect the path that I took on the linguistic realm, which opened up when I started doing research on single and never-married people. It goes through topic-specific lexicons in four languages (English, French, Polish and Romanian) and ends with several examples of how metaphorical language can be used (or rather misused) in communicating research findings and how it can influence general perceptions and behavior. The publications in English were the first and most available ones and shed a lot of light on the global dimension of the topic I was studying. At the same time, many of the works written on non-English speaking cultures lacked the references to local terms that made difficult to grasp the specific articulations[2] of the cultures I was reading about. A subsequent search of references in French opened up new perspectives and gave a new dimension to the theoretical framework of my research[3]. It also set off a journey back in time on the traces of the studied phenomenon, farther than the English language might have allowed[4]. The French language is important for any Romanian researcher engaged in

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[1] For the purpose of this paper, linguistics, which, some may say, is also a branch of social science, is not considered here when generally talking about social sciences.

[2] Jonathan Culler said that "each language articulates or organizes the world differently" (22).

[3]  Many books and articles written in French are not available in English, the non-French speaking researchers missing important works in social sciences. On the other hand, the French linguists and scientists are among the most active in the fight against the monolingualism in science and they support the idea of publishing in local languages.

[4] Arguably, the first books ever written on secular celibacy was published in 1700 by the French moral philosopher Gabrielle Suchon. See the original text ("Du celibate..") or the compilation of texts translated in English ("A Woman..").

language issues because of its huge impact on the Romanian language, which took place especially in the 19ᵗʰ century and the beginning of the 20ᵗʰ century. Finally, the Polish language came into focus as the expression of a society that shares some common traits with the Romanian one, given their similar communist pasts, but differs significantly with regard to public and academic discourse on single people. Since I am not proficient in all of these languages, I used English as an intermediate language (Interlingua), a fact that might be in itself a subject of an analysis.

## 2. Official Vocabularies of Civil Statuses

The question of civil (or marital) status is among the most common ones required to be answered on a form whenever the personal life interferes with institutional settings, be that local churches or migration offices. It divides citizens into categories, according to the laws and customs of a particular country, and applies them one of the official labels. The United Nations, through its Population Division, keeps up-to-date information on the marital status of the world population, while recognizing the difficulty to provide comparable data based on so much heterogeneity. Therefore, a minimal set of categories regarding marital status was offered for the UN member states to use in national censuses and, since 2008, these are: (1) *single, in other words, never-marrie*d, (2) *married*, (3) *widowed and not remarried*, (4) *divorced and not remarried*, and (5) *married but separated* (United Nations, 2008). This set of options and the recommendation to at least distinguish between persons under the age of 15 and those aged 15 and above meet the UN needs.

In the UK, the options for marital status were modified at every census since 1971. The option of "single" from 1971 and 1981 censuses became "single (never-married)" in 1991 and stayed that way until the last census. The 2011 UK census included the new modifications of civil legislation stated by the Civil Partnership Act 2004 that addresses the same-sex relationships. The answering options to the question of "what is your legal marital or same-sex civil partnership status" were: (1) *never married and never registered a same-sex partnership*, (2) *married*, (3) *in a registered same-sex civil partnership*, (4) *separated, but still legally married*, (5) *separated, but still legally in a same-sex partnership*, (6) *divorced*, (7) *formerly in a same-sex partnership which is now legally dissolved*, (8) *widowed*, (9) *surviving partner from a same-sex partnership* (UK Data Service). In the United States, over the last decades, censuses and population surveys distinguished between *now married*, *widowed*, *divorced*, *separated* and *never married* (US Census Bureau).

However, the UK and especially the US researchers and media refer much more to the single population that includes the never married, but also the divorced and widowed.

In France, only respondents over 14 years old are asked to fill the census section that refers to marital and relationship status. Until the '60s, the legal marital status had largely coincided with "de facto" situation. Since then, this correspondence started to lose, more and more people choosing cohabitation over legal marriage (Buisson). Until 2014 inclusively, the French censuses and population survey forms asked the respondents, on one hand, if they lived in a couple, on the other hand, what was their marital status, giving the options of: (1) *célibataire (jamais légalement marié(e))*; (2) *marié(e) (ou séparé(e) mais non divorcé(e))*; (3) *veuf, veuve*; (4) *divorcé(e)*[1]. Since 2015 the question of marital status on census forms was reformulated as "are you....?" with the following answering options: (1) *marié(e)*, (2) *pacsé(e)*, (3) *en concubinage ou union libre*, (4) *veuf(ve)*, (5) *divorcé(e)*, (6) *célibataire*[2]. From the official standpoint, the word *célibataire* has changed its meaning from a person who has never been married to one who has never been married, did not sign a civil solidarity pact (PACS) and is not currently living with a partner. A new word entered the French vocabulary, *pacsé(e),* denoting a person who signed a PACS.

In the 2011 polish census, the respondents aged 15 and older were given four answer options to the question of legal marital status: (1) *kawaler/panna*; (2) *żonaty/zamężna*; (3) *wdowiec/wdowa*; (4) *rozwiedziony/ rozwiedziona*[3]. The official terms for never married people in Poland, *kawaler* and *panna,* have also the denotation, now obsolete, of *knight* and *maid*. They carry the connotation of youth and, in women's case, of virginity. The information about "de facto" civil status was collected separately on the household form. The English versions of the census questionnaires use the term *single* for both *kawaler* and *panna* (Statistics Poland). Over the last two decades, Polish media and academia have built the public discussion around the term *sigiel* which is the Polish equivalent for the noun *single* and needs the same amount of clarification.

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[1](1) single (never legally married); (2) married (or separated, but not divorced); (3) widowed; (4) divorced.
[2](1) married; (2) in a PACS; (3) in cohabitation or free union; (4) widowed; (5) divorced; (6) never-married. (The census forms named "Bulletin individuel" can be found on various Internet sites.)
[3](1) never married man/woman; (2) married man/woman; (3) widower/widow; (4) divorced man/woman.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, Romanian census forms offered four answering options for marital status: (1) *necăsătorit(ă),* (2) *căsătorit(ă),* (3) *văduv(ă)* and (4) *divorțat(ă)[1].* People of all ages are asked to answer the question that treats children and never-married adults equally. Since the 2002 census, "de facto" civil status was also recorded by asking the respondents whether they lived in a consensual union or not. The metadata available to the public does not always make the segment of never married adults easily identifiable. This might contribute to their social and discursive invisibility. The term *necăsătorit* is rather neutral. The English versions of Romanian census forms also use the term *single* without the clarification of *never married* (National Institute of Statistics).

The terms' legal meanings change over time according to laws and regulations or the needs of public institutions. A casual reader, even a statistician, economist or demographer might work around the issue of semantic complexities or word-for-word equivalency. Still, other researchers are forced to face more directly the challenges of translation, especially when working in multicultural settings or doing cross-cultural research. Hannah Bradby, for example, recalls the multiple phases of negotiations that her team of researchers and translators went through during a study on food preferences, health and identity within a Punjabi community in Glasgow. They looked for the right terms to be used in a structured questionnaire. They tried to find Punjabi equivalents for *partner* (as in having a life partner to whom one is not married) and *single* (as in never married), but what they came up with had different connotations than the English words. That was mainly because "until recently, marriage has been almost universal in Punjabi society" (Bradby 849). The confusion was avoided only because, within the demographic group surveyed, all the respondents were or had been married and the options of cohabitation, whatever named, were simply ignored since the mere idea of a "life partner" outside marriage sounded either "hopelessly romantic" or insulting (849). Unlike such instances where, right from the beginning of the studies, researchers have to define and translate terms and concepts from one language into another, there are many more situations where the studies are conducted within the researchers' own cultures and languages and the latter do not pay enough attention to the words they use.

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[1](1) unmarried [as in never married]; (2) married; (3) widowed; (4) divorced

## 3. The "Personality" of Lexical Units. Historical Changeability. Translatability.

> *"Social science discourse is also distinctive in that it communicates through concepts that are shared (or contested) within a specific community of scholars or groups—such as governmental and non-governmental organizations—sharing common goals. Concepts tend to take the form of technical terms, which in turn tend to be culture-specific. Their specificity may be linked to the period in which they originate as much as to ethnic or ideological characteristics. They may also implicitly incorporate historical assumptions, that is, concepts a given society takes for granted. Straightforward "dictionary translations" of such words may thus fail to convey subtle differences in meaning and mislead the reader."* (Heim and Tymowski, 4)

For several centuries, the English speaking communities referred to people over a certain age who had never been married as *bachelors* and *spinsters*. In England and Wales these terms were used officially on marriage licenses up until 2005 when they were replaced with the more neutral and all-including *"single"* (Eschner). *Bachelor* and *spinster* are frequently used in translation as equivalents for terms, with more or less negative connotations, from other languages. However, both of them are culturally and historically rooted in Medieval Europe and they went on different paths of semantic changes. Through their usage within the English language, they developed certain "personalities"[1]. *Bachelor* is a 13th-century import from French[2] and it went polysemic by the end of the subsequent century. Feminists researchers are keen on highlighting the process of pejoration that *spinster* underwent (from indicating an occupation - spinning - at the end of 14th century, to denoting an elderly unmarried and bitter woman by the beginning of 18th century), as opposed

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[1] In her coursebook on translation, Mona said that "the lexical meaning of a word or lexical unit may be thought of as the specific value it has in a particular linguistic system and the 'personality' it acquires though usage within that system" (12).

[2] From Old French *bacheler* (around 1100), meaning a young man aspiring to become a knight (Memidex; CNRTL).

to *bachelor* which underwent amelioration[1]. However, the historian Howard P. Chudacoff emphasize a time when, in American culture, the bachelors were portrayed as "misfits," "misanthropes," "degenerates, social outcasts, who were socially or sexually repugnant" (3). At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, women's magazines such as *Woman* or *Young Woman* were publishing articles about the *female bachelor*, the *bachelor woman* or the *bachelor-girl* (Liggins). More recently, since 2002, when the reality TV show "The Bachelor" was launched and then followed by several spin-offs, the word *bachelor* (and the feminine correspondent *bachelorette)* gained a new positive layer, of an eligible man (or woman).

In the last two decades, the topics of *spinsterhood* and *bachelorhood* were constantly kept under attention through the historical studies done especially by feminist researchers, but also by other non-fiction writers. In translations from other languages into English, s*pinster* seems to be preferred to *old maid* even though the latter has direct correspondents in many languages - *vieille fille* in French, *stara panna* in Polish, *fată bătrână* in Romanian, *staraia deva* in Russian, *alte Jungfer* in German, *(vecchia) zitella* in Italian. All these collocations seem to overlap more with *old maid* than with *spinster.*

In the English language, the discourse on unmarried people, including the never married ones, is centered around the word *single* which is a term of Latin origin (*singulus*) with equivalents in several languages. What makes it different from those equivalents is its polysemy and an extensive lexical family. It has the form of an adjective, like its Latin root word and many similar terms in other languages, but also of a verb and a noun. More often than not, the term *singles* includes the never married, widowed and divorced adults. Sometimes, it refers only to the first ones or just the ones who live alone. When writing about singles, the authors are bound to specify the meaning they refer to. The psychologist Bella DePaulo stresses the difference between *legally single* (not legally married), *socially single* (not in a romantic relationship) and *personally single* (thinking about oneself as single).[2] The lexical family of *single* has grown in the last several decades since the media and researchers' discourses went in sync with the demographic changes and the publishing on single people have flourished. They spread older and newly formed nouns such as *singleness, singlehood, singledom* and *singlism*. Some of

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[1] For a detailed analysis of the semantic change of *bachelor* and *spinster* see Niuwets.

[2] See the introduction to DePaulo's book "Singled Out" or the online article "What Does 'Single' Mean?".

these are familiar only to those specifically interested in the topic of single people. More people have heard and used the term *singleness[1]* than *singledom, singlehood, singleton* or *singlism.* While s*ingleton* is a polysemic word (Memidex) that has recently started to be used in relation to the lifestyle of modern singles who lived alone and preferred that way[2], *singlism is a word made up by Bella DePaulo to designate the negative stereotyping and the discrimination against singles ("Singlism"). The nouns formed with the suffixes -dom, -hood and -ness are very close in meaning. To some extent, they are used interchangeably with the meaning of "the condition or state of being single" (*Learn That Word*). It might be said though that singleness has a connotation of temporariness, while singlehood and singledom reflect a more permanent state. For a non-native English speaker, and sometimes even for a native one, it is difficult to differentiate between these three nouns. It is nearly impossible to find equivalents in other languages for all of them. The term singlism, with the meaning given by DePaulo, might be even more difficult to translate, although many languages have equivalent suffixes for -ism. Singleton, designating a playing card, is already used as a neologism in several European languages. In those languages, a semantic extension through the transfer of a new meaning from English might happen or not.*

In France, the public and academic discourse has historically developed more around the concepts of *célibat* and *célibataire* and more recently around *personnes seule* (single persons). *Célibat* and *célibataire* are of Latin origin (*caelibatus* and *caelebs*) and they can be found in many European languages[3]. The main difference is that in all other languages the equivalents of *célibat* and *célibataire* are linked to the idea of abstaining from marriage or sexual relations as an expression of religious convictions. Within the Catholic world, these meanings were fixated through the speeches and published works of the Church about priesthood and ecclesiastical celibacy. In today's English, the words *celibacy* and *celibate* are used in relation to sexual abstinence, without a direct

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[1] This may be because it comes from the adjective *single,* which has a longer usage history. It also means straightforwardness and assiduousness (Free Dictionary).

[2] The noun *singleton* partially overlaps with the noun *single*, but the first has a positive connotation of empowerment, freedom, and sufficiency, if not fulfillment.

[3] *Celibacy/celibate* in English, *Zölibat/zölibatär* in German, *celibato/celibe* in Italian, *celibato/célibe* in Spanish, *celibat/-* in Polish, *celibat/celibatar* in Romanian.

reference to marriage (Online Etymology Dictionary). In French, however, *célibat* means simply the state of being unmarried, no matter the reasons for it, and *célibataire* - a person who has never been married and, only by extension, a person who is not currently married (Bologne 417). The discourse on celibacy most likely gained a secular dimension since the publication of Suchon's book on voluntary celibacy and the life of women outside the confines and commitments of marriage and church ("Du Celibat.."). Jean Claude Bologne places the apparition of the word *célibat* in the 14th century when was definitely related to the church, and that of the word *célibataire* in the 18th century, although they both described a preexistent reality [10]. He stresses the differences between the official use of the term *célibataire* and the various historical and current uses. At the end of his book, "Histoire du célibat et des célibataires", he offers the readers nine pages of French words, including regionalism, related to the state of being unmarried, the meanings of these words and their usage throughout history (417).

Quick browsing on Gallica, the digital library of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, will show that the publishing on *célibat* and *célibataires* went on throughout the last three centuries. The French Revolution stirred up the debate on celibacy, both religious and secular, declaring the family a fundamental pillar of the new world. The bachelor was declared a traitor and became a subject of public mockery in the plays and novels of the time. Celibacy was considered contrary to nature, harmful to individuals and the Republic, and the marriage of priests was advocated (Perazzolo). In 1889, Garnier wrote that the *célibat* is one of the humanity's two options of going through life and that the word *célibataire* applies only to those of marriageable age as it was specified by the laws of different countries (1). He described the varieties of *célibat: (1) célibat volontaire, libre, choisi; (2) célibat obligatoire, forcé, imposé; (3) célibat par indifference; (4) célibat religieux; (5) célibat transitoire ou prolongé; (6) célibat par amour; (7) célibat à deux; (8) célibat faux, simulé, ou pseudo-célibat[1].*

English and French borrowed from one another many terms, but some of those terms developed in different directions and the challenges of translating them might be even higher since the differences are rather subtle. *Celibacy* is one of those terms. For example, in order to be close to the real meaning of Elisabeth Abbott's book title "A History of Celibacy,"

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[1] (1)voluntary, free, chosen celibacy; (2)obligatory, forced, imposed celibacy; (3)celibacy by indifference; (4)religious celibacy; (5)transient or prolonged celibacy; (6)celibacy out of love; (7)celibacy in couple; (8)false, simulated celibacy or pseudo-celibacy (Garnier 22).

the translator and the publisher of the French edition opted for "Histoire universelle de la chasteté et du célibat". On the other hand, in an article on single women in African villages which was originally published in French (Antoine and Nanitelamio,"La montée..") and later in English ("More Single.."), the authors, a demographer and a psycho-sociologist, used the term *single* as equivalent for *célibataire* and *celibacy* as equivalent for *célibat*. If translated more recently, the choice for *célibat* in the context of that article might have been s*inglehood*.

Poland is a country to which Romania frequently compares itself. They both share a communist past that shaped similarly their social environments. As far as languages go, they cannot be more different, but they have a similar and rather unique position within each of their language groups[1]. From the standpoint of the singlehood phenomenon, Polish society could be an important landmark in the European landscape. One of the theoretical frameworks that have been used in analyzing the demographic behavior in Europe was the so-called "Hajnal line", an imaginary line that goes from Sankt Petersburg in Russia to Trieste in Italy. It separated the Western marriage pattern from the Eastern one and pretty much from the rest of the world. Among the characteristics of the Western marriage pattern, as described by John Hajnal, are delayed marriage and a high number of people who never marry (1965). The Hajnal line goes right through the middle of Poland, which makes this country interesting as a sort of a "borderline" society. Even though the influence of Western models may have been stronger than in Romania, for both countries it can be said that "the practice of family lifestyle was the only functional strategy against oppressive or weak social institutions" (Zurek 55). Until recently, single people were uncommon and almost invisible to the public eye.

The Polish language is an example of how public discourse may shape the academic one. In Polish, the term *single*, as a noun, has entered in the '90s through media channels and was domesticated to single. It was firstly used by young people and then took over by social scientists. At the dawn of the new millennium, they began to study the phenomenon of *single* and *never married* people in Poland. In 2016, a collection of their studies was published in English under the title "Singlehood From Individual and Social Perspectives" (Adamczyk). The contributing authors make references to Polish terms and the social construction of the concept of the *single* in Poland, but they do this without mentioning any actual Polish words.

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[1] Polish is a Western Slavic language, Romanian, an Eastern Romance.

The research on single people in Poland started mainly from the models portrayed by American TV shows and newspaper articles; therefore, the focus of those studies was on urban settings and well-off, professional young people (Kawula qtd. in Zurek 56). Even the term *singiel* is only used for people under 40 years old. Previously, the words that designated unmarried women and men who were past marriageable ages were *stara panna* (old maid) and *stary kawaler* (old bachelor), both carrying negative connotations. The noun *singiel* received a Polish suffix, *-stwo*, resulting the new noun *singielstwo* which was used as equivalent for *singlehood*, *singleness*, *singledom* and, sometimes, even for *singleton*. A naturalization of the word *singlism* (in Polish, *singlizm*) was used by the editor of the book "Singlizm. Nowy styl zycia 'ponowoczesnym swiecie (Singlism. A new lifestyle in the post-modern world)", but the title suggests a meaning closer to singlehood than to singlism as defined by Bella DePaulo[1].

In 1990, before the fixation of *singiel* in Polish language, Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, a Polish sociolinguist wrote about the problems of synonymy and the difficulty of „establishing the boundaries between 'denotational' and 'connotational' aspects of meaning as well as the 'displaced' partial overlapping in cross-language equivalents" (187). She compared the concepts of *spinster*, *bachelor girl* and *single* with the Polish ones of *panna* (maid), *samotna* (solitary, lonely) and *osaba stanu wolnego* (a person of a free marital status). She underlined the fact that the bilingual and multilingual dictionaries cannot take all aspects of meaning into consideration (193).

In Romanian society, including and singling out the academic circles, there is a general lack of interest when it comes to the topic of singlehood. While the divorcées, single parents and even childless people have gained some attention from the researchers in the last decade, people living alone and especially the never married ones seem to remain socially invisible. As a result, research on this topic almost inevitably starts from the works written elsewhere, mostly in English; therefore, translation issues must be immediately addressed.

It is possible for the Romanian TV channels to have aired the same shows as the Polish ones. There are some online articles and forums where single and never married people (especially women) are talked about. Several dating sites and small companies offer socializing and travel services for singles. The latest two censuses do show that the population

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[1] This statement might be contradicted by a native Polish speaker, which I am not. I made this inference based on the translation of the title and the online descriptions of the book (Robotnikkwalifikowany).

of single and never married adults is constantly growing. Despite all of the above, the public discourse remains fixated on family and its transformations and the never married individuals have never gained a place into the spotlight.

However, when searching more into the Romanian lexicon, it shows rather unique affluence of terms designating the never married people, both young and old. For never-married men, Romanian language has borrowed nouns from Russian (*burlac*1), Slavic languages (*holtei*2), Turkish (*becher*3) and French (*celibatar*). All of the above terms are monosemantic and can be found in folk language and Romanian literature. They designate a man of marriageable age and older and, for emphasis, they can form collocations with the adjective bătrân (old) which add a negative connotation. Several Romanian linguistic maps drawn in the late '30s also showed the spread of several words and collocation of Latin origin (Atlasul Lingvistic Român - ALR I/II). The most common terms for an older boy who is yet to marry were: *flăcău, fecior, june, holtei*. In the case of a young girl yet to be married only one term was offered: *fată*. When the respondents were asked how they called a boy (young man) who never marries, the answers showed a great diversity over the Romanian territory. Besides the terms mentioned before *(burlac, holtei, becher),* several collocations formed with various adjectives were offered*: flăcău bătrân/ tomnatic/ rămas/ trecut/ stătut/ unguresc/ neînsurat4; fecior bătrân/ rămas/ stătut/ neînsurat; june bătrân/ nemţesc (ALR I/II h275).* The girl *(young woman)* who had never married was also designated by several collocations, the attached adjectives mostly mirroring those referring to men - *fată bătrână/ tomnatică/ rămasă/ stătută/ întârziată/ arăcită/ mare/ nemăritată5, and by the noun burlacă6 (ALR I/II h276).* The collocation *domnişoară bătrână (old Miss)*

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1 In Russian, the *burlak* was a worker from the 16th to early 20th century Russia who walked on the shorelines of the Volga River pulling along the ships. In the Pomor dialect in Northern Russia, also designate the newcomers, shift workers and military men (Wikipedia).

2 The Romanian dictionaries give several origins for *holtei*: from Russian or Ukrainian, *holostoi* (bachelor); from Polish, *hultaj* (bastard, rogue; in the Middle Ages, a mercenary).

3  In Turkish, *bekâr (bachelor).*

4 *Old/ autumnal/ left/ bygone/ stale/ Hungarian/ unmarried  boy (young man).*

5 *Old/ autumnal/ left/ stale/ belated/ tethered/ big [but with connotation of virgin]/ unmarried girl (young woman).*

6Feminine from *burlac.*

is more urban and upper class. Another word for a not-yet-married man is *cavaler,* which is a polysemic term1 with equivalents in many European languages. Even though most of the above terms and collocations are obsolete, they might be used as arguments for the continuity of the existence, however sparsely, of older never married people. During post-communist privatization, the media used the term *fată bătrână (old maid)* in relation to the state enterprises that were not finding buyers or investors.

The French-originated words *celibat* and *celibatar* are, most likely, later entries in Romanian language and they have been used mostly in urban settings and literature. They preserved the meanings of the originals and have rather neutral connotations. The debate on religious celibacy never reached the public discourse, probably because the Orthodox priests (representing the majority religion) are asked to marry before the ordination. The term celibatar was used by Romanian social scientists when they presented results of censuses and percentages of never married population, which usually included also the children.

In Romanian, the adjective unmarried has several equivalents - *necăsătorit(ă), necununat(ă), neînsurat/nemăritată*2. The term *single* has the equivalent of *singur(ă),* also from the Latin *singulus,* but only for its use as an adjective3 with the meaning of *only one, isolated, solitary, unique, alone, lonely*. The most common term used in translating the English nouns singlehood or singleness was *singurătate,* but the back translation of the latter will show that its meaning is more closely related to *loneliness, solitude, seclusion*. Public discourse on *singurătate* will definitely have different dimensions that one on singlehood. The problems of synonymy between Romanian and English terms must be acknowledged and better solutions must be looked for.

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1 Mounted soldier; knight; military or honorary order; chivalrous man; the best man at a wedding (*cavaler de onoare*).

2The adjectives ending in "*ă*" are feminine. *Necăsătorit(ă) means unmarried man (woman). Neînsurat refers to men; nemăritată stands for women; the terms are related to the residential movements: the man brings the wife in his own or parental house – se însoară, the woman changes her residency – se mărită. Necununat(ă) relates to elements of the Orthodox wedding ceremony.*

3As in *persoane singure (single persons).*

## 4. Singlehood and Metaphorical Use of Language

The results of censuses, surveys and research studies can be communicated in many ways to the general public. Some of these have more consequences than others. There is a growing interest in the use of metaphors in the public discourses. The metaphors themselves are discursive "acts" (Montuschi 49). We use metaphors in our everyday lives even without being aware of it; "human 'thought processes' are largely metaphorical" (Lakoff and Johnson 6). The way social scientists construct their public discourses can shed a light on the ideological frame their work from and it can influence general perceptions and public policies. The following paragraphs present some of the metaphors that have been used by local and international media outlets. They stand for never married people and many of them were coined by official representatives and social scientists from countries such as China, Japan, Italy, Australia or New Zeeland.

China has a huge gender imbalance as the result of its long-standing one-child policy and a strong cultural preference for boys. As of the end of 2017, there were over 32 million more men than women (Liu), many of them of marriageable age and from rural areas with poor economic resources. The national and international media refers to these involuntary bachelors as *guang gun* (bare branches), a late 17th century legal term (Sommer 97). Lately, they became the subject of books on international security issues. At the same time, there is an urban trend for the highly educated, career women to delay or forgo marriage. The derogatory term for these women was coined by All-China Women's Federation - *sheng nu*, meaning the leftover women (Hua). While there is not so much to say or do about the general numbers and surplus of men (other than maybe closing the eye to kidnapping and trafficking women across borders), the public denunciatory discourse in China has focused especially on these young urban single women.

The reduced marriage rates, low fertility and the apparent lack of sexual desire that characterizes the Japanese society are extensively talked about in the Japanese and international media. The pressure on young people to redress this course of things is expressed at linguistic level through many powerful negative syntagmas. In 1997, the Japanese sociologist Yamada Masahiro used for the first time the term *parasaito shinguru* (parasite single) to designate young people who were in their 20s and 30s, not married and still living with their parents, although they had a good education and good jobs (Japan Times). They have grown in numbers in the last decades and the term had made an international

career. In 2003, a women novelist wrote a non-fiction book entitled "Makeinu no Toboe" (The Howl of the Loser Dog) in which she described the lives of single women, like herself, living in Tokio and the term *makeinu* (loser dog) was further rolled by media and named the word of the year 2004 in Japan. The same year, a professor of reproductive health used a Japanese folktale about a female demon who attacks a boy – *onibaba* (demon hag) and she connected it to the image of a modern unmarried pre-menstrual woman who sexually assaults young men (Yamaguchi). Three years later, another expression - *sōshoku(-kei) danshi* (the herbivore/grass-eating man) - was launched by the sociologist Maki Fukasawa in a business magazine where she talked about young men who are not assertive or aggressive enough in their romantic conquests (Nicolae). Again, in 2009 the term was among the most buzzed words in Japan. Fukasawa later said that the term was misused by media (Khan).

Similar use of language may be found in other parts of the world also. In Italy, a former minister and economist used the term *bamboccioni* (from the polysemic word *bamboccio* -chubby kid; rag doll; simpleton) to refer to young Italians who live in the parental homes (Corierre dela Sera). The Italian and international media also wrote about *mammoni,* mummy's boys (Ewart). In Australia, the demographer Bernard Salt coined the term *man drought* in 2005 when he talked about the gender imbalance of the country. Since then, it was constantly used by Australian media. More recently, after the airing of TV reality show "The Bachelor" in 2015, New Zeeland's media took over the metaphor and started to back it up with demographic data showing that the country's sex ratio imbalance is high and the number of "extra" women, especially from the educated and fertile age group, went up. The patriarchal discourse gained a strong foot in New Zeeland's society with the representatives of academia and media giving advice for women on how to dress and behave in order to become more desirable and increase their "erotic capital". They suggested those women lower their expectations and "partner down" (August).

These are only a few examples of how researchers and media can join in using some less fortunate terms that embed themselves into the public mind changing social perceptions and, potentially, social behavior. They may construct new stereotypes or fixate the old ones. For someone who clear-cuts an unexplored territory in local research, the above lessons must be learned and the word choices must be carefully considered.

# 5. Conclusions

The vast territory of questioning the language is mostly left to linguists, and translators. The economists, psychologists, sociologists and other social scientists, when not focusing specifically on conceptualization processes or undertaking multicultural or cross-cultural research, do not pay enough attention to language. They use concepts and theories developed in specific historical and cultural contexts, usually within the Western societies, and design their studies from those perspectives, assuming, more or less unwittingly, a universality of social facts and interpretations. Often, the language is used merely like another tool in getting the data one looks for and communicating the results. It is forgotten that the elements of language carry themselves social information and the way we further use them may load them with new meanings.

The linguistic journey described in this paper was triggered by the need to clarify my own approach on single and never married people within the global context. I am also looking for explanations of the current social and discursive invisibility of the never married adults in Romania, despite the richness of folk terminology. The lack of local studies forced me to begin from elsewhere. The articles and books written in English on different cultures reveal *the histories and current evolutions of the phenomenon at the local level, but much less the Social embedded into the lexical units of the respective languages. That is because, most of the times, the authors do not offer or explain the terms from their own languages. The local terminologies are "domesticated" (or "foreignized") to English and potentially specific markers are obliterated. Although this strategy apparently facilitates communication, it also hiders the profound understanding of local cultures.*

*Beyond the official usage of the terms regarding marital and relationship statuses, which, at least partially, can be uniformized to correspond the needs of international institutions, the topic-specific vocabularies within each language are more diverse. The words have "lives" and "histories", "facets" and "personalities". A search for better or the best synonyms in other languages makes everything more challenging, but it may be a first step in understanding* the relationships between semantic developments, social changes, and public discourses. Another important step in this direction is understanding that language and the lexical choices made by researchers when they disseminate their findings are important in the subsequent construction of knowledge. The examples of the metaphors that social scientists and officials from

different countries used when they referred to social and demographic behaviors show that a constant awareness of language must be maintained. This awareness, which I rather name it linguistic and lexical sensibility, could be very well developed by training social scientists in the basics of linguistics and translation.

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# Contrastive Analysis in Translation Equivalence

## Mohamed M. BENOTMAN[1]

**Abstract:** *Translation is an important literary activity to reach to wider readership, breaking the barriers of an unfamiliar language. Although there are different methods of translation of a text from the source language to the target language, the contrastive analysis plays a key role in achieving equivalence in translation. CA is a linguistic enterprise founded on the assumption that languages can be compared. It is a sub discipline of linguistics, concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of languages, to determine the differences and similarities between them. Contrastive analysis has a link with translation theory. It introduced the notion of text as the actual manifestation of languages, since the basis of translation is the text in context. This is normally because people communicate by means of coherent strings of sentences, i.e. texts rather than isolated sentences out of context. Translation equivalence as established by a bilingual informant is deemed as a satisfactory starting point for CA. Thus, if we have a text in language x and another one in language z, we propose to contrast certain linguistic elements of language x with all those units of language z which function as their formal correspondents in translation equivalent texts. Mason states, "Contrastive linguistics may afford, at a level of language, certain generalizations which are sufficiently powerful to support rules of translation". CL can play a useful working role in providing guidelines for the trainee-translator working between particular languages. Thus, this paper focuses on the theory of contrastive analysis, its merits and drawbacks in order to guide the translators.*

**Keywords:** Contrastive Linguistics, Equivalence, Similarity and Dissimilarity.

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# 1. Contrastive Analysis in Translation Equivalence

Contrastive linguistics involves a variety of different approaches aimed at establishing similarities and differences between languages as well as explaining and predicting problems in the second language. The basic assumption of CA is that while languages are different, there is always a degree of similarity between them. Obviously, this view relates to the structuralism theory, which emphasizes the uniqueness of each language. To say that there is a degree of similarity between languages does not mean that they are identical; the similarity is always partial even with pairs of cognate languages. Nida stresses that:

One may define translation as reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the message of the source language first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style.
(Nida, 1969: 210)

As we mentioned above, CA is interested in language comparison. Hartmann argues that:

...all "contrastive linguistics" is "comparative linguistics", but .... it is comparative linguistics  with a purpose.
(Hartmann, 1977:1)

Translation and contrastive analysis are linguistic operations involving at least two languages. Translation can serve as a tool of CA, while the findings of CA - in addition to the many practical applications - can be applied in the training of translators, in pedagogical objectives and in composing a theory of translation. To carry out this comparison a complete CA based on translation methods requires a detailed corpus in both languages. Only a corpus constructed in such a way enables us to carry out a complete investigation of some phenomena in both languages.

The rise of the Prague school made research into historical relationships between languages popular. Consider, for instance, the sentiment expressed by Mathesius:

A systematic analysis of any language can be achieved only on a strictly synchronic basis and with the aid of analytical comparison of languages of different types without regard to their genetic relations.
(Mathesius, 1936: 95)

This postulate, however, does not solve all the problems associated with the comparison of languages. Even if we no longer ask the question of what criteria could be used to establish a linguistic relationship? (Or lack thereof), then the question of what is there to compare in two different languages still remains?

Consequently, translation equivalence as established by a bilingual informant is deemed as a satisfactory starting point for CA. Thus, if we have a text in language x and another one in language z, we propose to contrast certain linguistic elements of language x with all those units of language z which function as their formal correspondents in translation equivalent texts. We should remember that, when considering the employment of an original text as well as its translation as a source of formal correspondence for CA, any kind of correspondence that we can create would rely on the "genetic" and "typological proximity" of the two languages and the type of translation material on which the basis of correspondence is built.

As regards the model of equivalence, an often-used criterion at the sentence level is that of "translational equivalence". Marton explains the nature of this common criterion as follows:

The relation of equivalence holds between a sentence in one language and a sentence in another language… if each of them is an optimal translation of the other in a given context.
(Marton, 1972: 199)

James defines contrastive analysis in the following terms:

CA is a linguistic enterprise aimed at producing inverted (i.e. contrastive not comparative) two valued typologies (a contrastive analysis is always concerned with a pair of languages), and founded on the assumption that languages can be compared.
(James, 1980: 3)

Contrastive analysis has a link with translation theory. It introduced the notion of text as the actual manifestation of languages, since the basis of translation is the text in context. This is normally because people communicate by means of coherent strings of sentences, i.e. texts rather than isolated sentences out of context. Our interest lies in macro-linguistic CA, because it concerns itself with beyond the sentence level.

Thus, linguists working within a macro-linguistic framework believe that the study of differences between languages as envisaged by micro-linguistic CA will not produce promising results. Sajavaara states that:

> The main problem is the fact that contrastive analysis tends to result in parallel descriptions irrespective of approach.
> (Sajavaara, 1978: 55)

Linguists say, inter-linguistic contrasts can be observed more practically in a text, thus a better understanding of language is through contrastive studies of textual features.

It can be argued, the scope of contrastive linguistics should be widened to include the textual level since this is the level on which language use can be compared in either parallel or translated texts. It might equally be held that the comparison of texts translated from Arabic into English or generally from any source language into any target language falls in one way or another within the domain of applied contrastive studies. Yet since translation, and particularly literary translation, is a highly complex process where equivalence is the main objective and difficulty, the translator is inevitably faced with a bundle of problems. First, he ought not to concentrate on isolated linguistic features; he must render a text in all its complexity. Being tokens as well as reflections of communicative events, texts contain extra-linguistic as well as linguistic information. Neubert elaborates on the relationship between two texts in a translation as follows:

> They are the expression of a complex network of factors that are involved in the act of communication. Texts are therefore, never self-contained... they contrast with other texts and not with sentences or words.... The forces, which hold texts together, are rather to be found outside the text or rather beyond the level of sentence sequences. They are constraints imposed by the communicative situation upon the communicators.
> (Neubert, 1980: 23)

Second, the translator should not be concerned with similarity or dissimilarity of features; he must aim at adequacy and appropriateness in his TL version of the source language text. A translated text, as Neubert (ibid.) says, "Purports to be a replica of the original under the conditions of the target language and the concomitant communicative situation". In other words, a translated text is an attempt at a reconstruction of the

semantic and pragmatic potential of the SL text in the TL. The equivalence between the SL and the TL text is therefore approximate rather than absolute, since it is difficult to render the entire information contained in an SL text. There is the problem of ambiguities on the one hand, and the lack of equivalent terms on the other. The relevance of contrastive linguistics (CL) to translation has been debated recently by Mason, who questions:

Whether contrastive linguistics can in fact be of any practical help in the process of translating.

And who concludes that:

The contrastive approach has no relevance to translating into one's native tongue but may be useful in prose composition where the student is involved in a process of discovery of target language idioms.
(Mason, 1982: 21)

Mason (ibid.) goes on to say, however, "contrastive linguistics may afford, at a level of language, certain generalizations which are sufficiently powerful to support rules of translation".

Furthermore, Fisiak defines CL as

A subdiscipline of linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of languages in order to determine both the differences and similarities between them.
(Fisiak, 1981: 1)

The relation between contrastive linguistics and translation is somewhat lop-sided: CL draws on translations for its data and is therefore dependent on translation, but translation is not equally dependent on CL. The aim in translation is to transmit the message. Newmark claims that:

It is important however, not to overstate the claims of CL with regard to translation. CL can play a useful working role in providing guidelines for the trainee-translator working between particular languages, but for problem solving, he must look to translation theory.
(Newmark, 1981: 19)

The shortcoming of CA lies utterly in formal correspondence. Lee has pointed this out by saying:

Much of the comparison already carried out has been concerned with form rather than with the use of those forms refer to and cope with life. A language is not a collection of separable and self-sufficient parts. The parts are mutually determinative.

(Lee, 1968: 190)

This means that language in certain contexts of situation, and its structures and system, are meaningful only in a communicative context. Thus, linguists recommend "contextual corpus" as the basis of CA. Ellis (1966: 37) recommended translationally equivalent texts as an empirical base for CA, that text is necessary in CA and that contextualization is not a "pseudo procedure".

## Conclusion

Hence, a text-based CA will yield a more practical grammatical and lexical contrast between languages, and yield much concerning the textual organization of different languages. That is, a systematic contrastive text analysis will not only provide explanations, which translators find useful but also grounds on which the teaching of translation can be more meaningfully organized. As a result, we can build our textbooks on a fruitful basis that can cover those areas in which difficulties are predicted on the basis of contrastive differences. Clearly, translation cannot be equated with CA, and matching formal correspondents in a pair of languages does not create translation.

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# The Gardens of Translation[1]

## Rita Rousselle MATTA[2]

**Abstract.** *You probably have been to a garden in France or one right here in Romania. You probably realized that they are not all the same. I come from Lebanon, a small country overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Its weather is sunny most of the year and flowers bloom especially in mountainous regions; jasmine trees are quite common in both the city and rural areas. It is also common to find fragrant plants and herbs – thyme, basil – in old tin milk or biscuit boxes on the steps of the stairs leading from the garden to red tile houses. This depiction would carry you four thousand kilometers from here to my home country Lebanon and to its colorful, a-typical garden. However, all gardens are a-typical, are they not? Each is one of its kind. There may be common traits or features, common natural or even human features, but each garden will have its own smells, its own set of emotions that you will find nowhere else. It may be that you will be reminded like Proust – with his madeleine – of childhood memories or shared moments or special people. A garden remains a haven of peace, a moment of shared bliss with loved ones, family and friends.*

*This is exactly the feeling translation gives you: words are not enough to convey the immense bliss of translating text, so much that you no longer feel that the world around still exists.*

**Keywords**: Translation Theory, Translation Garden, Bliss, Uniqueness, Lebanon.

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[1] A talk given at "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University and Çankaya University 7th International Conference on Language, Literature & Culture "Mapping Cultural Identities: Translations and Intersections"; Bucharest, Romania; 25-26 May 2018,

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What I have tried to say in my thesis[1] is actually quite simple: that there have been translation theories for several decades now. These theories have become – for some – deeply entrenched in the teaching of translation methods so much that they have become unavoidable, indispensable, inescapable, monumental, and imposing, though perhaps not very useful. Actually, these edifices or monuments do not agree over the definition of translation studies related terms; they do not even agree over the definition of the basic term 'Translation'. Actually, translation theories have managed to divide students into groups, parties or clans, each being austere, thinking that his party, his theory, his school is the best.

Now, there have always been two means to translate: literal or word-for-word and non-literal or sense-for-sense; 'formal' and 'dynamic' with Eugene Nida[2]; faithful[3] or unfaithful though 'pretty'[4], respecting 'source language' or respecting 'target language'[5], etc. The debate about the visibility or invisibility[6] of the translator is one that adds up to the mayhem that the translation studies student has to face when trying to tackle the unfathomable abyss of Translation Studies.

So where do translators stand in this mayhem? What do they think among these cold and bleak cathedrals that tower Translation Studies, and how do they tackle the 'task' that Walter Benjamin spoke about[7]?

A bleak image of this task has been conveyed so far by Translation Studies theorists: some have considered the translator as a 'midwife' or a 'mediator'[8]; and for Jose Ortega ' Gasset, 'The reader must know beforehand that when reading a translation he will not be reading a literarily beautiful book but will be using an annoying apparatus'[9];

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[1] 'The Gardens of Translation: A Third Way to Translation Studies and to Translation'.

[2] Bassnett, 2014, p. 5-6

[3] Bassnett, 2014, page 6.

[4] Mounin, *Les belles infidèles*.

[5] Bassnett, 2014, page 3.

[6] Namely through the work of Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, *A History of Translation*, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, 353 pages.

[7] *In* Venuti, Lawrence, *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2000, pages 15-25.

[8] Nida, 1964, page 153.

[9] Ortega y Gasset *in* Venuti, 2000, p. 62.

whereas for Jean-Rene Ladmiral, the translator is 'doomed' to be free[1]. So much that one gets the impression that the 'task' the translator is about to embark upon is Sisyphean: he will roll the boulder to the top of the mountain only to find that it has fallen back and he is 'doomed' to start all over again. So, is this how the community of translators envisions the 'task' of translating?

In fact, the definition of a 'task' given by the Webster's is quite dreary: it is 'a usually assigned piece of work often to be finished within a certain time' and 'something hard or unpleasant that has to be done'.

This uninspiring image can be overcome; why should the translator be considered to say 'almost' the same thing[2]? Does he not say the same thing but in another language? Translation is, in fact, a joyful activity; it is blissful. It is an activity that allows you to overcome and forget the world around you in order to enter the bliss of the garden. Actually, this image of a garden conveys several thoughts: first to say that through translation you can change the world you are in[3]; picture yourself in a garden you like, right here in Bucharest, or a garden in a city you have been to the smells are not the same; the colours you see are not similar; the sounds you hear are not alike; and the sensations or impressions you get or feel are quite different.

Yet, the bliss of being in a garden is similar no matter what country or region in the world you go to a garden is a peaceful and calm place you

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[1] Ladmiral, 2014, p. 77-78 : « [...] « Nous sommes condamnés à être libres. » Là-dessus, la pratique est sans appel : tout traducteur aura dû opérer des choix à tout moment, dans la réalité empirique des faits et de la décision traductive à laquelle il lui aura bien fallu se résoudre. Traduire, cela implique non seulement que soit prise une option de traduction au niveau pratique de l'écriture traduisante – mais aussi déjà, en amont, au niveau « théorique » de la réception du texte-source, de sa « lecture-interprétation ». [...] Et l'ensemble de ces choix (théoriques et pratiques) ponctuels devra avoir la cohérence d'une stratégie globale définissant un *projet de traduction* ([...] en reprenant un concept mis en avant par [...] Antoine Berman). »

[2] Eco, Umberto, *Dire Presque la même chose,* Grasset, 2003.

[3] Desmond, William Olivier, 2005, p. 2 : « Vous avez soudain changé d'univers. Vous n'êtes plus dans votre appartement, ou dans le train, ou vautré sur l'herbe du parc par une belle journée de printemps, mais dans les mers du sud [...]. Voila de la vraie magie [...]. » (You are suddenly taken to another world. You are no longer in your apartment, or on board a train, or lying on the grass nonchalantly on a fine Spring day, but in the South Seas [...]. This is what true magic is about [...]."

go to at the end of the day or early in the morning before you set off to do what you need to in the day. It is a gathering place for friends and neighbours, for relatives and acquaintances. It is a place of sharing and caring. It is both open and closed: open to the sky and the environment it is, yet fenced because no one is to enter it without permission.

In fact, the rhythm and tone are the hardest to feel and you usually need to go through some time, several pages, in order to get into the rhythm. The spirit of the text[1] is hard to 'grasp'; sometimes you never do; yet sometimes, you and the writer are on the same wavelength; you understand and are able to reproduce the puns he has used, the 'strata'[2] he has created. Obviously, a text is not merely about strata, otherwise, the garden would be quite rigid and closed; it would be as stiff as the cathedrals and as the edifices of Translation Studies theories that have confined translation into walls and rules and regulations without ever agreeing on the same definitions or even on the same rules.

A garden is perhaps a true reflection of what societies are about since the gardener's work 'shapes nature and cultivates self, soul, and society'.[3] The garden is 'frequently invoked as a metaphor for language and literature [...]. Both language and the garden are products of nature and art [...]'[4]. Also, 'closely associated with rhetoric is the image of the book as a garden'[5]. Now, since the 'connection among the five or six senses was known and discussed even before Marcel Proust used his famous *madeleine* to illustrate the concept of involuntary memory'[6], the garden is the place where all five or six[7] senses are awakened. The only 'thing' that provides joy and awakening to the five senses today is translation: it provides you with the sensation of smell, your eyes are alert, so are your ears, fingers, and you can taste some herbs, fruit, vegetables, and feel the delight of that taste; a visual image alone can 'conjure up the sound of a

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[1] Desmond, William Olivier, 2005, p. 7 : « Il faut en général quelques dizaines de pages pour trouver le ton, le rythme, le bon niveau de langue ; [...] l'esprit du texte [...]. »

[2] Eco, Umberto, 2003, page 64 : « Par conséquent, nous devrons parler, certes, d'un texte comme phénomène de substance, mais sur deux plans, nous devrons savoir identifier plusieurs substances du contenu, c'est-à-dire différents niveaux sur ses deux plans. »

[3] Hyde, Elizabeth, ed., 2013, page 141.

[4] Hyde, Elizabeth, ed. 2013, page 141.

[5] Hyde, Elizabeth, ed., 2013, page 143.

[6] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 124.

[7] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 124 : 'Proprioception, a kind of sixth sense, is also capable of improving the way we see.'

waterfall'. In fact, a successful translation might be considered so, I mean if it provides – and I will not use the term reproduce since it entails some negativity– the original *dynamics of* the text to translate.

Now the workshop of the translator resembles a busy beehive: translation has managed to break free from linguistics, from literature, and from other topics that have kept it under their wings. Obviously, it is still striving to find its own terms, which justifies the fact that one may resort to other fields such as gardening and gardens in order to portray the work of the translator. Actually, a translator needs to know both languages he is using to translate a text fairly well. This is what most Translation Studies say; but if a translator knows more than these two languages – the source language and the target language – then, he may think of a word in this third language so that he can get closer to what the author attempted to say. The third way may be beneficial or even salutary. Also, culture remains an undeniable way too since the more a translator has travelled, the more he knows about a country, its traditions, its ways of living, its lifestyle and so on[1], the better he can tackle a translation.

However, no matter what skills and knowledge a translator may have, there remains alchemy – defined as a seemingly magical process of transformation, creation, or combination. This moment occurs after the translator has read the original passage; he tries to forget it; he no longer sees anything but the meaning, the image(s), the sensations, the atmosphere, the humor, the lightness, the author's will to sadden, to marvel, etc. The translator then resorts to a tank[2] where he finds supplies in order to understand what he has read; this is the translator's grey matter[3]. When the alchemy is achieved, the reader feels it; he does not feel the process through which the translation has been through: the writing

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[1] Desmond, William Olivier, 2005, page 17 : « L'aphorisme, *la culture est ce qui reste quand on a tout oublié*, ne s'applique à personne aussi bien qu'au traducteur. »

[2] Desmond, William Olivier, 2005, pages 19-20 : « Reste évidemment l'essentiel, l'alchimie. Comment s'opère cette transmutation [...]. Dans notre inconscient, [...] il y a aussi un vaste réservoir de choses [...]. Et quand j'ai saisi le sens de ce que j'ai lu, bien saisi ce sens, je suis à même de puiser dans ce réservoir. »

[3] Desmond, William Olivier, 2005, page 21 : " L'atelier du traducteur n'a au fond qu'un seul véritable outil, l'outil universel : la matière grise du traducteur. »

and re-writing, the perpetual readings and re-readings[1], the polishing up of punctuation, spelling, and so on.

Yet, the symbiosis that occurs between the author and the translator is not a fusion: the author remains an author and the translator a translator; the translator needs to vanquish words and replace them with his own – the author's? – in another language[2]. So much is done to say that the translator is a re-writer or a writer. In fact, the author and the translator are not adversaries or opponents. Each has his role and the world is great this way: each one writes or re-writes the text and the text survives; it is re-born each time through a different translator. This is perhaps what 'keeps literature alive'[3].

Nevertheless, in order to keep the works of literature 'alive' a translator needs to find himself in the very centre of the language[4]; he neither brings the reader to the writer nor the writer to the reader[5]. He brings both to a garden, the garden that gathers all parties together in order to celebrate literature and the art of writing for various reasons: for joy, to express sadness, part of a healing therapy, or simply to celebrate

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[1] Bassnett, 2014, p. 106 :"The Greek poet Nasos Vayenas sees translation as the most meticulous form of reading, claiming that translators are the very best readers […]. Gabriel García Márquez puts it rather more bluntly : 'Someone said that translating is the best kind of reading. I think that it is also the most difficult, the least recognized and the worst paid'."

[2] Desmond, 2005, p. 20: " Cette symbiose, cependant, n'a rien de fusionnel : il est lui, je reste moi. C'est une sorte de jeu étrange dans lequel le but n'est pas de vaincre l'adeversaire, puisqu'il n'y a pas d'adversaire ; si on doit triompher de quelque chose, c'est des mots que l'auteur a employés afin d'y substituter les nôtres, presque en catimini. »

[3] Bassnett, 2014, p. 108; she quotes Elliot Weinberg in his essay: 'Anonymous Sources: A Talk on translators and Translation' (2002).

[4] This is *contrary to* what Walter Benjamin says: "Unlike a work of literature, translation does not find itself in the center of the language forest but on the outside facing the wooded ridge; it calls into it without entering, aiming at that single spot where the echo is able to give, in its own language, the reverberation of the work in the alien one. Not only does the aim of translation differ from that of a literary work—it intends language as a whole, taking an individual work in an alien language as a point of departure— but it is a different effort altogether". Benjamin *in* Venuti, 2000, p. 20.

[5] Munday, 2012, page 46: 'Schleiermacher's preferred strategy is to move the reader towards the writer. This does not entail writing as the author would have done had he written in German.'

the fifth art, poetry. The garden welcomes all regardless of gender, nationality, religious or national roots; it respects everyone's differences. It opens the 'window' to let the light in; it breaks the 'shell' so that you can taste the 'fruit'; it lifts the 'curtain' so that you can see into 'the most sacred place'; it moves the 'cover of the well' in order to reach water[1].

Obviously, gardens are quite different from one another: a French Versailles is not the very British Kew Gardens and is not the German Heidelberg Castle garden; it is definitely not Bucharest Botanical Garden. What I am trying to say is that each garden is different from the other: the stereotyped image of the French garden is that it is meticulously organized, clear cut; the image of the British garden is that 'a garden [...] must stay closer to nature that to art'[2]; in Germany 'A love of forests and nature ha[s] run deep in German culture since pre-Christian times' and is reflected in German culture.

Yet, though gardens are different, they are often quite the same[3]: here in Romania, the Union ("Unirii") Boulevard has been modeled after Paris's Champs-Élysées, though a little wider; perhaps each garden, each landscape reflects a little the other. The question 'Why is it beautiful' is whether anyone is 'moved to a greater or lesser degree by the sweetness or strength of a composition'[4]. What we see as beautiful is the result of 'two sources of information': the first is the 'accumulation of knowledge acquired from early childhood which we apply to what we see to help us recognize it'. The second is a system of 'lateral' rules 'that the brain uses in a concomitant and incidental manner'. This can lead to 'create "the world

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[1] From the introduction of Antoine Berman. *La traduction et la letter ou l'auberge du lointain*, 1999 : 'La traduction ouvre la fenêtre afin de laisser entrer le jour, brise la coquille pour qu'on puisse goûter le fruit, écarte le rideau afin qu'on puisse plonger le regard dans l'endroit le plus saint, repousse le couvercle du puits afin qu'on puisse atteindre l'eau [...].'

[2] Turner, Tom, 2005, p. 304.

[3] Stuart, Rory, 2010, page 8: 'Many European gardens, for example, are variations on an Italian theme, occasionally with a few English modifications getting the upper hand. The characteristically French *broderie* parterre can be seen as an elaborate variation on the box plantings that are found in Italian gardens as far back as the days of Pliny. And in Germany the great parks of the astonishing Prince Hermann Puckler Muskau at Branitz and Muskau are heavily influenced by the example of the English designer Humphry Repton, and indeed by the work if Repton's son, Adey'.

[4] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 130.

in our own image"'[1]. This is why the meaning we attach to a particular object is a highly personal matter.

According to Jung, our functions 'can be divided into two groups of two: two intellectual functions (thought and sentiment), and two sensory functions (feeling and intuition). In each of these groups, one function is dominant; the other secondary'. Therefore 'people who are dominated by the sensory function will focus on scents, tastes, textures, and colors in their gardens, while others who are intellectual rather than sensory will find meaning in sophisticated compositions and in developed and highly symbolic geometry'[2].

Gardens can 'take on all kinds of meaning: gardens of the five senses, collectors' gardens, theatre gardens, [...] floral parks, theme parks. The number of possibilities is infinite [...]'[3]. 'The awakening of the way we see leads us to rediscover ourselves, to regain the use of our senses, to breathe naturally; and this in turn, improves the quality of our vision. Our eyes become again "the lamp of our body"'[4]. 'When we are touched by the harmony or the extreme beauty of musical creation, a work of art, a garden, or a natural scene, it makes our vision of the world grow and produces a song of happiness that we will continually want to share'[5].

So how do we share as translators? Through what I would call – and this is the first time I use this term – sensory translation: what I mean is that good translation involves all five senses not just for the translator but also for the reader and the writer who meet in the garden: actually, the translator receives the text and discovers it, he unravels it, disentangles it, makes intricate places clearer or leaves them ambiguous; he takes decisions. The reader discovers the text through this garden: he gets scents, odours, aromas; the reader may feel at home or not; what difference? You see, at this time of the year as spring is in full bloom, if you walk in the streets of Beirut, though a hectic, hustling and bustling city, you get at times, just when you least expect it, strong whiffs of jasmine, coming from a balcony, from a minuscule garden, from a grocer's who have decided to plant some. And you smile. Here is Bucharest ....

Sensory translation is the translation that is not going to pull you to the world of the author or try hard to keep your atmosphere, your world for you; it will create this garden where the author will look and be happy

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[1] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 130.
[2] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 133.
[3] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 133.
[4] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 139.
[5] Mallet, Robert, 2011, page 139.

that his text has been preserved in good hands; the reader will look and be happy as he is in good hands; and the translator will look at the outcome and feel happy and content as his translation is good. So, all three parties will be content; this is what this garden offers: an 'intersection' that unites rather than separates, binds rather than sets apart, brings together rather than tears to pieces. It will join the hands of all in a world that needs unity and 'intersections'.

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# 100th Anniversary of the Republic: Strategies and Language Tools for Constructing Austrian National Identity in Socio-Political and Mass-Media Discourse[1]

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**Abstract:** *This paper is devoted to the comparison of two medially different "texts"– panel discussion and the premium newspaper "Der Standard" – united by a common topic: the 100th anniversary of the Austrian Republic, in terms of strategies and specific language tools used to construct a national identity.*

*The author assumes that the set of strategies, in general, will coincide, since both texts are inscribed in the context of a broad public discussion about the fate of the country in the conditions of a post-national society. However, there may be differences in their implementation with the help of specific linguistic means, due to the medial and conceptual differences, different contexts in which communication takes place, etc.*

**Keywords**: National Identity, Strategies of Identity Construction, National Narrative, Panel Discussion, Premium Newspaper.

## Introduction

On the 12th of November 2018, Austria celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Republic. On this day one hundred years ago the First

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Republic was proclaimed, which was a turning point in the history of Austria. During the "Memory Year" (*Erinnerungs- und Gedenkjahr*) in Austria official events are held, dedicated to the most important milestones of the new Austrian and European history. On January 28, in Vienna Burgtheater, a panel discussion took place with the title: "What will our Republic be like in a hundred years?". In the following paper, the author compares this event with "Der Standard" newspaper, also dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Republic, in terms of strategies and specific language tools used to construct a national identity.

First, it is necessary to say a few words about the specific features of the newspaper "Der Standard" and the conditions under which the discussion took place.

The daily newspaper "Der Standard" appeared in 1988 as an alternative to the newspapers "Krone" and "Kurier". The newspaper positions itself as a left-liberal and independent paper. Its market share is 6.5% (https://derstandard.at). "Der Standard" is distinguished by the high quality of texts and comments of specialists. The main target audience are the people of Vienna (13.1% of the Viennese over 14), belonging to the middle and upper class. Among readers, there is a large number of young educated people – 15.3%: this is more than among readers of all other Austrian daily newspapers. "Der Standard" covers such topics as politics, economics, lifestyle, sports, with emphasis on politics and economics. Also of great importance is the section "Culture". All the mentioned allows to classify "Der Standard" as one of the quality newspapers, which are characterized by a significant personal contribution of journalists, a high degree of independence and, as a rule, a daily format (Gabler Lexikon Medienwirtschaft, 2004). In addition, premium papers are distinguished by their interregional nature, active international cooperation, the variety of topics, the availability of special inserts, including publications dedicated to specific regions (Raabe, 2006: 312).

Such papers, without any doubt, on the one hand, reflect the moods of the most educated and intellectual part of society, and on the other hand, contribute to the formation of a definite point of view on important social and political issues.

Since 1995, "Der Standard" is not only printed, but also an online paper (the first German-language daily newspaper on the Internet), which is one of the most widely read in Austria and invariably initiates an active discussion in the forums.

The panel discussion is a public exchange of ideas, with the purpose of informing the audience on a particular political, scientific or public topic. Several participants (as a rule, no less than three), answering certain questions, share their knowledge and experience, in a format that allows a

discussion. In addition to discussants, an important role is played by the moderator, who introduces the participants, asks questions and monitors the regulations. A distinctive feature of the panel discussion is the passive role of the audience. The participants of the discussion "What will our Republic be like in a hundred years?" were Austrian writer Anna Baar, government commissioner for the Memory Year in 2018, former President of the Federal Republic of Austria Heinz Fischer, former Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg and sociologist Harald Welzer. Lisa Nimmervoll ("Der Standard") took the lead. During the discussion, participants tried to answer questions about how Austria became the country it is today, what the country's future looks like in the light of the achievements and disasters of the last century, what tendencies of political and social development can be observed now.

## 2. Demonstration

Comparing the ways of constructing a national identity within the framework of discussion and newspaper articles, it is important to consider the following differences:

1. Different types of discourse: socio-political in the case of discussion and mass media in the case of newspaper publications.

2. Medial differences: panel discussion is an oral genre, and a newspaper article is written.

3. Conceptual differences: the discussion is a conceptually oral text, but with elements of conceptual writing (the official communication situation, the participants prepared a speech in advance), the analysed newspaper articles are conceptually written texts, but with elements of conceptual oralism (change of the register of communication within one text, usage of colloquial and dialectal expressions, appeal to readers, etc.).

4. The different context in which communication with the audience takes place: static in the press and dynamic in the panel discussion. Newspaper articles, unlike a discussion, are not a product of spontaneous communication: they are created according to a certain plan, are edited, they can be changed until a certain moment – until the newspaper is printed. In addition, a newspaper article, as a rule, has only one author. A panel discussion is a text that is constructed by several "authors" in the "here and now" mode, under conditions of an ever-changing context. Hence, the greater spontaneity and inability to make changes at the end of the discussion.

5. Different audience: in case of a discussion, this is a limited circle of people, usually interested in the topic and having certain knowledge and

own opinion on this issue. The readership of the newspaper is potentially unlimited and differs by its heterogeneity in terms of the level of education and interests, which the author of the article should take into account.

However, along with the differences, it is necessary to mention the similarities of both texts:

1. Both the discussion and the newspaper are included in the context of a broad public discussion about the fate of the country in a post-national society.

2. The target audience in both cases is primarily the citizens of Austria.

3. The audience is represented mainly by the inhabitants of Vienna.

Based on this, it can be assumed that the set of strategies, in general, will coincide, but we can observe some differences in their implementation with the help of specific linguistic means.

In describing strategies, I rely on the theory of discursive construction of national identity developed by Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl, Karin Liebhart, Klaus Hofstätter and Maria Kargl. The authors use historical, political and linguistic approaches, the method of discourse analysis and conduct research based on five different corpora. The themes that the authors consider are the language construction of the concept "Homo austriacus" and "Homo externus", historical narrative and the confabulation of common political history, the language construction of a common culture, the common historical present and the future, and the "national body (organism)". At the same time, the authors identify a number of strategies that respondents use: relativizing strategies, constructive strategies, conservation strategies, transformation strategies and deconstruction strategies. These general strategies are divided into more specific strategies (Zur diskursiven Konstruktion nationaler Identität, 1998). Each strategy is implemented by means of topos (rhetoric techniques), which find their specific expression in the language through various means, for example, comparisons, hyperbolas, direct and indirect speech, words with positive and negative connotations, and other lexical and syntactic means. Also for the construction of national identity in different types of discourse, references are widely used: an indication of persons (anthroponyms, personal pronouns, quantifiers); place indications (toponyms, geonyms, place pronouns etc.); indication of time (temporal prepositions and adverbs, noun constructions, semi-prefixes with temporal meanings).

Let us start with mass-media discourse. The subject of the analysis are articles of the daily newspaper "Der Standard" dated January 27-28, 2018, taken from the main part of the newspaper, as well as sections

"Interior News," "Album," "Culture" and "Lifestyle," which, in my opinion, reflect the public debate to a larger extent.

Let us consider the main strategies on which the narrative "The 100th Anniversary of the Republic" is based.

The first group is the strategies of *relativizing, denial of guilt and responsibility*. With reference to the narrative under study, they are directed, mainly, on the opposition of modern Austria and Austria to the times of the First and Second World Wars. This group includes the strategy of emphasizing dependence on the foreign will and the victim role: *Als Fußnote wäre anzumerken, dass die deutsche Armeeführung Wien längst misstraute und im Fall eines Separatfriedens – die Akten belegen es – Österreich blitzartig besetzt hätte. Was im März 1938 ja auch nachgeholt worden ist* (As a footnote it should be mentioned that the German army leadership mistrusted Vienna long ago  and in the case of a separate peace - the records prove it - Austria would have been occupied in a flash. What ultimately happened in March 1938) – a parallel between the two historical events*;* a figure of silence, based on the fact that the reader has sufficient historical knowledge to restore a further chain of events, as well as a strategy to emphasize the differences between the historical past and the present, topos "history as a teacher"*: Wir haben noch zu wenig gelernt, wie sehr wir in Europa alle in einem Boot sitzen* (We have not learned enough yet how much we all depend on each other in Europe).

*Constructive strategies* aim at building a national identity both on the basis of the commonness of certain traits, values, features of historical development, and on the basis of differences from other national groups. This group consists of the following strategies:

1. The strategy of singularization (emphasizing the national identity): brüchige, *vielseitige und multiple Heimaten und Identitäten, (die Fusionsküche) des Vielvölkerstaats* (fragile, diverse and multiple homes and identities, the fusion cuisine of the multinational state).

2. Assimilation strategy (emphasizing not only national and regional but also European identity): *weil Europa sonst gegenüber anderen Teilen des Globus zurückfallen würde; Ich bin Europäerin, Österreicherin, Wienerin* (Julia Rabinowich (because Europe would otherwise fall behind other parts of the globe; I am European, Austrian, Viennese).

3. The strategy of dissimilation (emphasizing differences from other national groups, in particular, the Germans): *der Herr Deutsche; auftrumpfendes 70. Thronjubiläum gegenüber einem bloß 30-jährigen in Berlin* (Mister German; thrilling 70th throne jubilee compared to a mere 30-year-old in Berlin).

4. Unification strategy, emphasizing the factors that unite the nation: *die Alpenrepublik; das Land der Berge; Skiheldinnen und Skihelden* (the Alpine republic; the land of mountains; ski heroes and ski heroes).

5. Strategy of autonomization: *Österreich kann energiepolitisch auf eigenen Beinen stehen* (Austria can stand on its own feet in terms of energy policy).

6. Positive self-presentation: *kleines Land wie Österreich – arm an Bodenschätzen, reich an Gehirnschmalz* (small country like Austria - poor in mineral resources, rich in brains).

Another group is *conservation strategies* that aim at underlining of the positive nature of the historical process: *Die Bereitschaft, Kompromisse anzubauen, verdankt sich den Erfahrungen in der Ersten Republik* (The willingness to make compromises is due to the experience of the First Republic).

*Transformation strategies:*

As one would expect, the main aspect of the narrative "The100th anniversary of the Republic" is a positive assessment of socio-historical changes. Temporal references are used to implement it, reinforcing the contrast between the old Austria (Empire, the First Republic, fascist Austria): *heute ist das anders; früher, in der Vergangenheit* - in comparisons in favor of modernity: *Früher ... ein Führerkult stärker ausgeprägt war; Damals hat man die Frauen diskriminiert. Man war als Frau schon zweite Wahl; Vor 30 Jahren haben wir ins Ausland geschaut, heute merkt man, dass immer mehr Leute, die sich für Essen interessieren, überrascht sind, was es in Österreich gibt*, etc. (It's different today; earlier, in the past; Earlier ... the Führer- cult was more pronounced; At that time, women were discriminated against. One was already a second choice as a woman; 30 years ago, we looked abroad, today you realize that more and more people who are interested in food, are surprised what we have here in Austria).

*Deconstruction strategies are represented by following groups*:

1. The strategy of heteronimization, emphasizing the dangers to which excessive dependence on external factors, in particular the EU, can lead: *die Südtiroler, die Serben, Bosniaken, Türken, Syrer und, ja, auch die quasi bei uns resozialisierten „Piefke" bestimmen, was Österreich in einer internationalisierten, globalisierten Welt in Zukunft sein wird* (the South Tyroleans, the Serbs, Bosniaks, Turks, Syrians and, yes, also the "Piefke" who are quasi resocialized with us determine what Austria will be in the future in an internationalized, globalized world).

2. The strategy of negative self-presentation aimed at criticizing certain aspects of national identity, in particular, criticism of nationalist moods and opinions in modern Austrian society and right-wing political

forces: *diverse rechtextreme Sauereien; die Burschengschaftelhuberei*, etc. (various extreme right-wing rotten acts, student league hubbub, etc.)

It should be noted that this strategy is characterized by the greatest variety of language means.

Among the language tools used to implement the strategies listed above, a large number of tropes (metaphors: *„Nichtangriffspakt"* (non-aggression pact) – a military metaphor transferred to the sphere of sports: about a football match between Austria and Germany, which ended in Germany's 1-0 win, but was conducted without much enthusiasm, because both teams went into the next round; *Die Zukunft erscheint uns so strahlend, dass wir am besten Sonnenbrillen aufsetzen* (The future seems so radiant to us that it's best to put on sunglasses); antithesis: *Die „Schande" von Gijon wirkte wie ein Unentschieden, bedeutete sportlich einen Sieg und war moralisch eine Niederlage* (The "disgrace" of Gijon felt like a draw, meant a sporting victory and was morally a defeat); irony: *Während der insgesamt nur zwei Strophen macht man sich dann ein Speckbrot und steckt ein rot-weiß-rotes Fahnderl hinein* (During the total of only two verses one makes a bacon bread and puts a red-white-red "Fahnderl" into it) – about national anthem; *comparison: Menschenwürde als Versatzstück, das man je nach Situation und Nützlichkeit einsetzt* (human dignity as a set piece, which one uses depending on the situation and usefulness); epithets: *zart umstrittene Liedersammlung einer germano-austriakischen Burschenschaft* (slightly controversial song collection of a germano-austrian fraternity); metonymy: *Leider wollen viel zu wenige Köche frische Kaiserschmarren aus den Tiroler Pfannen kratzen* (Unfortunately, far too few cooks want to scratch fresh Kaiserschmarren from the Tyrolean pans – about tourism); generalization: *die Fähigkeit des Österreichers, sich jeweils nach Erfordernis nach allen Seiten zu verbiegen und dennoch ganz bei sich zu sein* (the ability of the Austrians to bend over as required to all sides and still to remain themselves); language game: *Hierzulande ging es schon immer bergab* (It has always gone downhill in this country – language game with a direct and indirect lexical meaning); allusion: *Hier werken nicht sinistere Strategen an der Errichtung einer Dritten Republik* (Here not sinister strategists are working on the establishment of a Third Republic –an allusion to the Third Reich). The first place in frequency is occupied by metaphors; written discourse and static context allow authors to create complex metaphors: *Die Flagge dieser Nation ist und bleibt rot-weiß-rot. Kleinkariert auf Tischtuchgröße. Gut geeignet für eine zünftige Jaus darauf im original-alpinen Zirbenstüberl vom in Schwellenländern produzierenden Möbelriesen aus Steuroasien* (The flag of this nation is and remains red-white-red. Squared as a tablecloth. Well suited for a table from some Asian furniture giant producing in emerging countries ideal for a hearty Jaus (brunch) in the original alpine

Zirbenstüberl (wooden alpine house)). Also, in all strategies, words with negative and positive connotations (*Ösi-Ego; Nazigeträller; Kakanien; Skiheldinnen und Skihelden* (Austrian ego; nazi-"trilling"; ski heroines and heroes) ) are widely used, as well as citations, including those that have been intentionally changed (Thomas Bernhardt: „*Wenn man die Gemeinheit der Bewohner mit der Schönheit der Landschaft verrechnet, kommt man auf Selbstmord*" (If one balances the meanness of the inhabitants with the beauty of the landscape, one starts to consider suicide); *(Österreich) ist angeblich für das Schöne begnadet*) and stylistic figures, for example, personal address (*Meine Damen und Herren! Diskutieren wir über Leitkultur* (Ladies and gentlemen! Let's talk about dominant culture)), repetition (*Es ist Zeit, die Würde dieses Hauses, die Würde dieses Landes, die Würde dieser Stadt ernst zu nehmen* (It is time to take seriously the dignity of this house, the dignity of this land, the dignity of this city)), ellipse (*Patriotismus ja, Nationalismus, nein* (Yes to patriotism, no to nationalism!)) and others, which bring in the written text the features of conceptual oralism. Separately, the use of graphics in the implementation of the strategy of dissimilation should be noted (to create the effect of distance): "Volksdeutsche", "Gastarbeiter", Einwohner mit "Migrationshintergrund", "Ziegelböhm" (laborers from the Czech Republic (laborers from the Czech Republic), "Islamisierung", Tschechen und Slowaken kehrten wieder "heim"; "Jugo"; "Muslime", etc.

A special mention deserves such tool as „code-switching": change of the register of communication, transition from standard to non-standard variants or vice versa. In the analysed newspaper, dialectisms and colloquial expressions perform the following functions:

1. Ironic assessment: Zirbenstüberl; „Hoch wern ma's nimma g'winnen"; irgendein Textbücherl; die Burschengschaftelhuberei; Fahnderl;

2. The characterization of a person and the creation of a certain colouring, atmosphere, at the same time the consolidation function: irgendein nebbicher Erzherzog; Das sollten S'noch reinschreiben; eine Hetz '; Ich war beim Kaiser seinem Begräbnis; Aber bin i a Böhmin?; bis heut 'net; Schweindln;

3. Reduction of the social distance: nackert, grantig (süddeutsch, österreichisch umgangssprachlich „sulky"), das Jeiern (öst. „moaning", in Duden absent), das Geldtascherl;

4. Expression: urschiache (schiach = niederöst. „ugly") Hochhausprojekte.

Within the framework of the socio-political discourse presented in this study by the panel discussion, it is possible to single out similar strategies.

I.      Relativizing strategies:

1. History as a teacher: *aus den Fehlern der Urgroßeltern lernen; wir haben aus der Geschichte gelernt; aus den Fehlern der 1. Republik lernen* (learn from the mistakes of great-grandparents; we learned from history; learn from the mistakes of the 1st Republic);

2. Euphemism*: unsere spezifische Vergangenheit, das zentrale Ereignis des 20. Jahrhundert* (our specific past, the central event of the 20th century – about the Second World War).

II. Constructive strategies:

1. The strategy of assimilation and inclusion, which is built on the frequent use of lexical units with the meaning of community: *Europa des Miteinanders; bei dem vereinigten Europa mitmachen* (Europe of cooperation; join the united Europe).

2. The strategy of singularization aims at emphasizing national pride in the achievements of the Second Republic (*unsere Republik, diese Republik, Errungenschaften unserer Republik, Ich bin gerne Österreicherin*), the importance of national and regional, including complex identity (*Ich bin ... Kärntnerin, Österreicherin, dalmatinischer Inselmensch, (Nation als) identitätspolitischer Anker*), the importance of the national language for the preservation of national identity (*Ich versuche in meinen Büchern, die Austriazismen mit Zähnen und Klauen zu verteidigen*) (this republic, achievements of our republic, I like to be an Austrian; In my books I try to defend Austrian words with teeth and claws, etc.).

3. The strategy of dissimilation aims at distinguishing between us-Austrians, they-Germans: *unsere bundesdeutschen Nachbarn, deutsch-deutscher Sprachgebrauch* (our German neighbors, German-German language usage), and we-German-speaking residents of Austria, they - migrants: *so zu sagen biodeutsche Familien* (so to speak bio-German families).

III. The main aim of the conservation strategy is emphasizing the positive nature of the course of history and the importance of historical continuity for the development of the country and the European community as a whole. To implement this strategy, lexemes with the continuation meaning are used (*nach wie vor, weitergeht* (still, continues, and others)).

IV. Among the transformation strategies, as well as in mass-media discourse, the strategy of emphasizing the positive nature of socio-political changes is especially widely represented: *ein großer Schritt unserer Republik* (a big step of our Republic).

V. Deconstruction strategies:

1. The strategy of assimilation aims at denying the national identity and the characteristics of national thinking as a disadvantage in

the conditions of a new, post-national society: *Befreiung vom Kleindenken; globales Denken anstatt nationalistischen Denkens;* (names of countries) *sind Begriffe aus der Kulturgeschichte, aus unserer Entwicklungsgeschichte; Nation als Hindernis* (liberation from small thinking; global thinking instead of nationalistic thinking; (names of countries) are terms from cultural history, from history of our development; term "nation" as an obstacle).

2.   Negative self-presentation is represented by criticism of several aspects of modern European society:

1) The threat to democracy from the right and left radical political forces: *wachsende Toleranz gegenüber der skandalös falschen Begrifflichkeiten und der skandalös menschenfeindlichen Haltungen* (growing tolerance of the scandalously wrong terminology and scandalous misanthropic attitudes);

2) The threat of loss of historical memory: *Fehler der Erinnerungskultur, in Ritualisierung zu erstarren; Hollywood-Bilder in der Holocaust-Erziehung* (mistake of the remembrance culture to freeze in ritualization; Hollywood pictures in Holocaust education);

3) The threat to democracy from the massive use of digital technologies: *Massensuchtphänomen; sich wegbeamen* (phenomenon of mass addiction, to "beam" oneself away);

4) The threat to democracy from an overabundance of material goods:

*Die Menschen leiden unter Konsumzumutungen, dass sie ständig Kreuzfahrten unternehmen müssen* (People suffer from consumer concessions that they have to do cruises all the time).

3.   The strategy of dissimilation (negative presentation of Germany): *die sogenannte Flüchtlingskrise; „Absolute Katastrophe"*(the so-called refugee crisis; "absolute disaster" – citation of German politicians).

4.   Prophesy doom strategy:

*Wenn das verloren geht, werden wir … ein Ausflugskontinent, wo Touristen aus China, Südamerika und Indonesien kommen werden* (If that gets lost, we will … become a continent for excursions where tourists will come from China, South America and Indonesia).

Thus, the main difference between the panel discussion is the predominance of the assimilation strategy (emphasizing the common present and the future with other European countries), as well as the presence of prophesy doom strategy among deconstruction strategies.

It is interesting that in the discussion there are practically no nationalities as references to individuals. Instead, lexemes such as *Bürgerinnen und Bürger*, *Demokratinnen und Demokraten* are used. The

personal pronoun "wir" is much less likely to include representatives of previous generations, in contrast to the narrative of the newspaper "Der Standard". Besides, it more often can be understood as we-Europeans, and not we-Austrians. As local references, the most common are the following: Europa, in Österreich, in der Bundesrepublik, in Deutschland, Republik, unsere Republik, diese Republik, hier in Österreich, bei uns (in Kärnten), and the first place in frequency is occupied by "Republik" and "Europa". Consequently, in the socio-political discourse, the place of topos is occupied by a state with a democratic form of government.

Comparing the language tools used in newspaper publications and in the discussion for the implementation of certain strategies, it should be noted that in the discussion there are considerably fewer tropes, which can be explained by the spontaneous character of speech, but practically equal number of stylistic figures (repetitions, gradation, parallelism, rhetorical questions and others). In addition, the discussion participants use more quotes, literal and creatively changed. They also more often explicitly express their opinion (Ich denke, ich glaube, ich bin der Meinung, aus meiner Sicht, Es ist ein Irrtum, zu glauben ...) and an assessment of events (Was ich mir wünsche ... Ich habe große Sorgen (um die literarische Bildung)). It is important to highlight that the oral speech of the discussion participants is more colloquial and expressive, despite the official communication situation: Totaler Schwachsinn! Scheiße! Wir verdienen sehr viel, aber wir verputzen es alles. However, with regard to dialectal expressions and colloquial austricisms, their usage is noticeably less frequently than in newspaper texts: bisserl, fadisiert (boring), einschauen.


## 3. Conclusions

Let us summarize the results discussed above:

1. The narrative of the "The 100th anniversary of the Republic" is based mainly on transformation, deconstruction and relativizing strategies, both in the mass media and in the socio-political discourse. An important place in the panel discussion is occupied by the constructive assimilation strategy, which can be explained by its inclusion in the context of the broad public debate "Europa im Diskurs".

2. Strategies for constructing the narrative "The 100th anniversary of the Republic" are based on references to individuals, local and temporal references, tropes (mainly in the mass-media discourse) and stylistic figures (mainly in the socio-political discourse). The language boundaries between medial oral and written genres become more and more unsteady and blurred

due to penetration of elements of colloquial speech and even dialect into written journalistic texts.

3. The main aspects of the narrative "The 100th anniversary of the Republic" are: national pride in a democratic state, recognition of past mistakes and the need to draw conclusions from history lessons, the desire not to make previous mistakes and condemnation of nationalist demagogy, fear of loss of national identity in post-national Europe, preservation of cultural identity and, at the same time, awareness of the need to be a part of the united Europe, the national Austrian variant of the German language as one of the foundations of the Austrian national identity.

4. The standard Austrian variant of the German language with the inclusion of non-standard elements (colloquial language, dialect) is used as a tool for constructing narrative (mainly in written texts of journalistic style) and, at the same time, as its object.

5. The strategies for constructing narrative reveal the fact that the "nation building" process in Austria continues. Besides, along with the national identity, the residents of the Second Republic have one more identity – European identity, which is often put on the first place by the most educated people.

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# Le motivazioni dell'insegnare letteratura, fra atto culturale e spirito critico

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**Abstract*:* *In the field of Glottodidactics, in general, and of Didactics of Italian language, in particular, Italian as a subject of study occupies a place of reference. According to this statement, the teaching of literature is not only a sub-discipline of Didactics itself, isolated and perfectly autonomous, but takes the shape of a fundamental deepening of the L2 language (the language as the object of study, so, in our case, Italian). The researchers in the field of Didactics usually consider that three main human motivations are identified in the learning process: duty, need and pleasure. This work is meant to explain such components of the bidirectional teaching-learning process and some forms of their impact on cultural elements and on the spirit of criticism.*

**Keywords*:* Didactics (Glottodidactics), Study of Literature, Motivation for Studying, Culture, Spirit of Criticism.

**Abstract:** *Nel campo della glottodidattica, in generale, e della didattica della lingua italiana, in particolare, la letteratura italiana quale materia di studio occupa un posto di importantissimo rilievo. Considerato in tal modo, l'insegnamento della letteratura non è solo un campo della didattica in sé, isolato ed autonomo, ma prende la forma di un ramo di approfondimento fondamentale della lingua L2 (la lingua oggetto di studio, quindi nel nostro caso l'italiano). Gli studiosi della didattica, di solito, ritengono che nel processo d'apprendimento si individuano tre principali motivazioni umane: il piacere, il bisogno ed il dovere. Spiegheremo qui tali componenti del processo bidirezionale insegnamento-studio ed alcune forme del loro impatto con gli elementi culturali e dello spirito critico.*

## 1. La letteratura – tra il piacere ed il bisogno.

Nel campo della glottodidattica, in generale, e della didattica della lingua italiana, in particolare, la letteratura italiana quale materia di studio occupa un posto di importantissimo rilievo. Considerato in tal modo, l'insegnamento della letteratura cessa di rappresentare solo un campo della didattica in sé, isolato e perfettamente autonomo, e prende il contorno di un ramo di approfondimento fondamentale della lingua L2 (come viene genericamente chiamata la lingua oggetto di studio; nel nostro caso, l'italiano). Gli studiosi della didattica, di solito, ritengono che nel processo d'apprendimento si individuano tre principali motivazioni umane. Queste sono legate al *piacere*, al *bisogno* e al *dovere*. Rapportandosi al latino, il professore Paolo Balboni definisce la letteratura come "l'accordo tra *utile et dulce*, in cui la prima voce rimanda ai *bisogni* e la seconda al *piacere*".[1] Grazie alla letteratura possiamo coltivare l'immaginazione; essa ci aiuta anche ad arricchire il nostro lessico, a migliorare il nostro linguaggio per poter esprimere meglio e con maggiore forza le nostre idee e questo non può essere altro che un piacere, ma ugualmente anche una necessità.

La motivazione, come viene descritta da Paolo E. Balboni, "è condizione necessaria perché il meccanismo di apprendimento si metta in moto".[2] Questa affermazione mette in evidenza una caratteristica essenziale della motivazione: l'esistenza di un obiettivo raggiungibile.

Nel processo d'apprendimento si individuano tre principali motivazioni umane. Queste sono legate al *piacere*, al *bisogno* e al *dovere*. Fra queste, l'ultimo – il *dovere* – costituisce, secondo Balboni, una motivazione "temporanea e caduca"[3]. Il *piacere* della letteratura è una "motivazione stabile", che rappresenta la seconda finalità dell'educazione letteraria.[4] D'altra parte, il *bisogno* di letteratura non è una "motivazione stabile", e per sottolineare cosa rappresenta, Balboni spiega il concetto in una maniera molto precisa: "Far scoprire agli allievi che nella letteratura presente e passata possono trovare risposte, per quanto parziali, alle

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[1] Paolo E. Balboni, *Didattica dell'italiano a stranieri*, 3ª edizione, Università per Stranieri di Siena – Bonacci Editore, Roma, 1994, p.122.
[2] Ibid., p. 121.
[3] Ibid., p. 122.
[4] Cf. Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., pp.122-123.

grandi domande che sbocciano nella loro consapevolezza è una terza finalità dell'educazione letteraria".[1] In questa affermazione proveremo di individuare (nei sottocapitoli consecutivi) un possibile approccio concettuale di definizione della *letteratura quale forma culturale di cognizione*.


## 2. Il piacere estetico nei confronti del testo letterario.

Ci soffermeremmo prima però sull'aspetto del *piacere* come forza generatrice di motivazione sia per comportamenti umani in genere, sia per lo studio della letteratura, in particolar modo. Partiamo dalla premessa estetica, e cioè che il testo letterario è comunemente accettato come una forma di scrittura con intento artistico. Attraverso le epoche storiche, le correnti ed i canoni letterari, gli autori di sempre hanno generalmente scritto per un pubblico più o meno ampio, al fine di procurare a tal pubblico un determinato interesse ed un determinato piacere per la lettura dei propri testi.

Da un'epoca o una corrente letteraria all'altra, da un canone artistico all'altro, la natura dell'interesse o del piacere per la lettura è mutata fra certi aspetti dei contenuti di un testo letterario e ugualmente fra altri determinati aspetti delle forme di un'opera letteraria in genere. In un continuo va' e vieni fra lo scrittore ed il suo pubblico lettore, l'interesse ed il piacere si sono spostati dal tragico al comico, dalla presenza dell'eroe maturo di media età e piena forza fisica verso quello di apparenza debole, di età fanciulla o della vecchiaia, dall'eroe eccezionale a quello comune, dalla natura serena e protettiva con l'individuo a quella oscura e ostile all'essere umano, dalla classica descrizione "oggettiva" ed "esteriore" di paesaggi a quel romantico misto "soggettivo" di elementi naturali ed affetti umani e, non per concludere, dalla commovente empatia con la fine di un eroe tragico al diletto provocato da un happy-end, nonostante il suo spirito "commerciale" e "facile".

Esempi come quelli elencati sopra riguardano solo i contenuti letterari. Ma tali piaceri ed interessi hanno subito mutamenti anche nelle forme del testo letterario, dall'ampio epico delle epopee o dei poemi cavallereschi all'intima concentrazione lirica di un sonetto o di un'elegia, dal formalismo schematico della commedia dell'arte al monologo introspettivo del teatro moderno, dal romanzo fiume di specifico ottocentesco alla narrativa breve ed allo sperimentalismo formale postmoderno.

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[1] Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., p.123.

Insomma, la varietà stessa di forme e contenuti del testo letterario suggerisce l'interesse ed il piacere per la sperimentazione (intellettuale ed emozionale), specifici al comportamento umano di tutti i tempi. Vi troviamo anche una certa forma di *molteplicità*, forse proprio in un senso molto simile al concetto creato da Italo Calvino[1], nelle sue *Lezioni americane*. Possiamo dire pertanto che il piacere dell'avvicinamento al testo letterario (sia da autore che da lettore) venga dato anche dalla capacità infinita di espressione del testo letterario, che riprende in qualche modo la prospettiva infinitamente molteplice dell'esperienza esistenziale umana.

La stabilità che P. E. Balboni determina nella motivazione del piacere risulta dalla semplice ed evidente costatazione che tanto si sperimenta "il piacere di un buon testo", tanto "si desidera provare ancora un piacere simile", che necessita solo di "abilità di lettura" e di "tempo proprio".[2]

Ne risulta evidente una delle finalità dell'insegnante di letteratura, in genere (e di letteratura italiana, in particolare): far provare ai propri studenti il piacere del testo letterario. Quello che Balboni chiama "il valore aggiunto da parte dell'insegnante di italiano"[3] consiste in due aspetti principali. Il primo sarebbe quello di mettere a disposizione dello studente un corpus di testi letterari originali (eventualmente con le esistenti traduzioni). Il secondo è rappresentato dall'allargamento dell'offerta di tipologia testuale: non solo i libri o branni selezionati in forma stampata, ma anche canzoni, film italiani, teatro lirico. Agli esempi suggeriti da Balboni, aggiungeremmo una larga offerta multimediale di testi letterari rintracciabili in varie forme in internet o su vari tipi di supporto elettronico..

Ambedue gli aspetti dell'intervento dell'insegnante di letteratura italiana devono essere guidati dalla sua capacità di rigorosa e professionale scelta del corpus dei testi da studiare. Tale corpus – in nostra visione – dovrebbe essere costituito da un *corpus elementare*, stabilito in base al programma ed al curricolo ufficiali che regolamentano il processo dell'insegnamento nell'ambito delle politiche statali del settore educativo, e da un *corpus esteso* (anche parzialmente facoltativo), che potrebbe suggerire letture di approfondimento di certi capitoli concernenti epoche storiche, correnti letterarie, autori specifici.

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[1] Calvino, Italo, *Lezioni americane – Sei proposte per il prossimo millennio*, prima edizione, Einaudi, Torino, 1988.
[2] Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., p.122.
[3] Ibid.

## 3. Il bisogno ontologico nei confronti del testo letterario.

Accanto al piacere, di cui si è trattato precedentemente, ci sembra significativo il fatto che   P. E. Balboni individua una seconda ma ugualmente importantissima motivazione del comportamento umano, *il bisogno*.[1] Se il piacere ha le sue origini nell'area interiore e profondamente intima dell'individuo umano, esiste anche una zona motivazionale con origini esteriori all'individuo. In tale senso, Balboni, senza classificare le motivazioni secondo il loro punto di origine (interiore o esteriore), fa comunque una pertinente e decisa distinzione concettuale nell'area di origine motivazionale esteriore, fra *dovere* e *bisogno*, dando a quest'ultimo un'importanza essenziale che lo colloca (nella prossimità del *piacere*) alla base dell'insegnameno della letteratura, in genere, e della letteratura italiana, in particolare.

Fra i bisogni esistenziali prioritari di una persona in stato di maturazione (si tratta soprattutto dell'età scolastica adolescente, cioè dell'alunno di liceo) sta quello di comprendere la vita. Una tale persona ha un bisogno fondamentale di equilibrarsi fra le realtà concettuali del mondo circostante e quelle affettive/emozionali che sta provando. I rapporti interumani cambiano forma molto velocemente all'età adolescente, la visione della vita si sta trasformando ed il lato affettivo-emozionale dell'individuo diventa sempre più complesso, ma anche fragile. L'adolescente si dimostra da una parte molto aperto a ricevere informazioni dall'esterno, anche senza un filtro selettivo, ma d'altra parte anche predisposto a respingere tutto ciò che gli sembra inconveniente alla propria personalità, con una motivazione spesso poco evidente e di solito pregna di una grande soggettività. L'adolescente va continuamente in cerca di se stesso, ma anche degli altri, che sono principalmente i propri compagni di scuola.

Si creano così i nuovi rapporti di amicizia, oppure si rafforzano quelli anteriormente esistenti. Fra persone della stessa età e dello stesso gruppo, le relazioni acquisiscono maggiore e vario contenuto, si arricchiscono di sfumature nuove, che mancavano prima. Cominciano a crearsi le relazioni fra i due sessi, nasce e comincia a diventare manifesta la presa di coscienza del proprio sesso e la scoperta del sesso opposto. L'intimità affettiva diventa un bisogno essenziale dei giovani di tale età, che viene ad associarsi anche ad un altro bisogno fondamentale, quello di condividere con i suoi prossimi coetanei (almeno in parte) tale intimità.

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[1] Cf. Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., pp.122-123.

Si arriva a legare amicizia attraverso la condivisione di interessi, hobby, passioni, che diventano così una base comune molto forte dei rapporti interpersonali. La musica ascoltata insieme ma anche le letture comuni portano a stringere amicizie e fare delle scelte di socializzare. Una possibile difficoltà di comunicazione con l'altra persona oppure il desiderio di rendere tale comunicazione più sottile, meno diretta, più carica di sentimento e di spiritualità determina l'adolescente di scegliere, al posto delle proprie parole, un determinato testo letterario (sia una poesia che una citazione da un suo autore prediletto) per fare una dichiarazione d'amore, per trasmettere in maniera indiretta i propri sentimenti per la persona amata. Al suo turno, la rispettiva persona riceve il messaggio, così trasmesso, tramite la propria sensibilità e risponde al suo modo, creandosi così fra i due goivani il sentimento di affinità sentimentale ma anche spirituale. Tale sentimento è basato in questo modo anche su un fatto culturale: la comune conoscenza (manifesta in gruppo o in coppia) di elementi culturali, musicali, letterari affini.

Il modo di rapportarsi al sociale, di capire gli elementi che fanno funzionare una società civile dell'età contemporanea, l'interesse di capire il proprio presente attraverso una prospettiva culturale e storica sul passato, la voglia di immaginare le realtà del futuro mettono in moto la vita psicologica ed emozionale dell'adolescente.

I modi di rapportarsi all'universo, tanto in un senso razionale quanto in un senso emozionale, tramite una prospettiva scientifica, filosofica, di fede religiosa oppure artistica sono altrettanti bisogni esistenziali del giovane adolescente, che si trova all'età scolastica liceale, sogetto di un processo di insegnamento dedicatogli interamente e concepito apposta per i suoi bisogni formativi culturali e civili.

Per concludere, in un piano ontologico, il giovane adolescente ha la necessità fondamentale di sfruttare l'esperienza di insegnamento/studio in cui viene integrato con il sistema scolastico. L'insegnamento, in genere, si propone di gestire tale esperienza degli alunni; ma l'insegnamento della letteratura, in particolare, deve avere fra le sue finalità quella di rivelare ai giovani adolescenti che infatti l'intero campo della letteratura sia un insieme (infinito e "aperto" nel tempo) di esperienze emozionali e di sensibilità artistiche, da usufruire al fine di trovarci delle risposte, anche parziali, alle domande che questi si fanno sulla propria esistenza e su quella dell'universo circostante.

Non per ultimo, in un piano assiologico, il giovane integrato nel processo di insegnamento della letteratura ha bisogno di essere orientato e guidato nella percezione e nella scelta di valori, essendogli presentati e approfonditi vari sistemi di valori, sia quelli etici e pragmatici che quelli culturali, artistici e letterari, come anche i mezzi e gli strumenti di non

confondere fra l'uno o l'altro di tali sistemi valorici, fra i valori del mondo reale e quelli dell'immaginario e della fantasia creativa ecc.

Nonostante la sua importanza fondamentale fra le motivazioni comportamentali che riguardano l'insegnamento e lo studio della letteratura, il *bisogno* viene considerato da P.E. Balboni una motivazione instabile (a differenza del *piacere*), poiché, "soddisfatto il bisogno, i comportamenti da esso indotti cessano".[1] È invece possibile l'educazione dell'essere umano mirata a provare, notare, e sentire particolari bisogni, non sempre facilmente rintracciabili, come sarebbero quelli a cui abbiamo appena fatto riferimento prima, come anche altri ancora, che ne derivano (l'amore e l'erotismo, il potere e la giustizia, la paura ed il coraggio, la fede e la relazione con la società ecc.). Non sono altro che i grandi temi letterari, che corrispondono infatti ai maggiori "temi" della vita di ogni individuo umano. Trattando simili temi, anche in una maniera meno esplicita, sublimata ed estetizzante, i narratori, i poeti, i drammaturgi, i musicisti e gli artisti di tutti i tempi hanno provato, a modo loro specifico, di trovare risposte alle grandi questioni dell'esistenza umana.

Vi si tratta di un enorme tesoro di esperienza cognitiva e accedervi, tramite la letteratura, significa usare la letteratura stessa (come anche la musica, la pittura, la scultura, l'architettura ecc.) come strumento cognitivo, nonché trovare nella letteratura una forma di cognizione del micro e del macrouniverso.

## 4. Il dovere educativo e culturale nei confronti del testo letterario.

Come già accennato sopra, il *dovere* rappresenta, secondo Balboni, un tipo di motivazione "temporanea e caduca". La motivazione del dovere risulta temporanea poiché la sua durata si identifica esattamente con la durata del processo didattico proseguito nell'ambito e nelle forme del sistema scolastico, vi compresi i test, le prove di controllo e verifica, gli esami, i voti, la promozione dell'anno scolastico, i titoli di studio ottenuti ed i diplomi e certificati ottenuti ecc. Quindi tale caratteristica della motivazione del dovere viene in luce facilmente.

Meno palese si manifesta il tratto della caducità. Oltre alla durata determinata e piuttosto breve di questa motivazione, vi si aggiunge anche l'aspetto della precarietà, dell'instabilità, della fuggevolezza, quindi della mancata persistenza dei suoi effetti e risultati. La motivazione del dovere risulta così non solo esteriore alla persona stessa sottomessa al processo

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[1] Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., p.122.

formativo ed ai suoi interessi, ma anche priva di contenuto e consistenza. Inoltre, ha un carattere coercitivo che talvolta può prendere le forme dell'assurdo. Nel suo già citato studio, Paolo E. Balboni fa un'affermazione che riassume, in un'espressione graduale, le varie forme del dovere, della motivazione imposta alla persona soggetto del processo formativo:

"Perché dovrebbe dunque un adolescente o un giovane interessarsi di letteratura in generale e di letteratura italiana in particolare? La risposta tradizionale è: <<perché lo si è sempre fatto>>, <<perché è previsto dai programmi>>, <<perché la letteratura nobilita l'uomo>>, <<perché la letteratura è bella>>..."[1]

Le formule della banalità o della mancata spiegazione, prive della capacità di persuasione, vengono finalmente sostituite con la formula di un'autorità caduca presa dall'inerzia di una tradizione svuotata ormai di senso:

"...Una risposta ancor più diffusa, e mai espressa per la brutalità che essa contiene, è: <<perché se non studi letteratura io, professore di lingua e letteratura italiana, ti boccio>>."[2]

La conclusione di Balboni, alla fine dell'elenco di risposte possibili che dovrebbero creare la motivazione dell'apprendimento e che invece nascondono vari gradi di costrizione esagerando i limiti dell'assurdo, è una decisamente contraria a tali pratiche pseudodidattiche prive di ogni effetto motivazionale sull'adolescente integrato nel sistema educativo:

"Si tratta di risposte – e quindi motivazioni – non generatrici di acquisizione, quindi inutili."[3]

Per concludere con un'analogia fra contenuto e didattica della letteratura (quale materia di studio), l'atto di trasferire automaticamente il concetto del canone letterario in un concetto di canone scolastico potrebbe determinare una certa idea – piena di rischi – del "*si deve* fare,...*si deve* studiare,...*si deve* conoscere" ecc., terminando persino con un assurdamente estremo "*si deve* piacere!".


## 5. La letteratura quale forma culturale di cognizione.

La letteratura è strettamente legata alla cultura ed alla civiltà di un popolo. La letteratura potrebbe essere considerata anche un modo di riflettere la lingua generale e lo stile individuale di un'epoca, di una personalità, ma anche la cultura di un popolo, di un periodo storico, la civiltà nelle sue più

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[1] Ibid., p.121.

[2] Ibid., p.122.

[3] Ibid.

varie forme, nei suoi aspetti più generali o più particolari. Dal lungo tempo, gli studiosi hanno elaborato diverse definizioni per esprimere ciò che si dovrebbe intende con termini quali "cultura" e "civiltà".

## 6. Cultura e glottodidattica.

Secondo Claude Lévi-Strauss[1], per *cultura* si intende tutto quello che non sia *natura*. È la natura quella che fa nascere certi tipi di necessità, di bisogni, come sarebbero: il bisogno di nutrirsi, di ripararsi dal freddo, dal vento, dalla pioggia, il bisogno di riposare, il bisogno di procreare ecc. Identifichiamo varie culture secondo il modo proprio di impostare vari *modelli culturali*, fra cui il modo di procurare, di preparare oppure di distribuire gli alimenti, il modo di concepire forme e strutture di abitazione (modi e stili architetturali), il modo di creare e trasformare l'abbigliamento (gli stili della moda), le regole del fare conoscenza oppure del fare la corte, la struttura normativa della vita familiare e quella della vita sociale, e così via.

     In simili situazioni, ci troviamo di fronte a regole e norme non tanto evidenti come ci possono risultare quelle linguistiche. Ciò nonostante, non sono di importanza secondaria nell'atto comunicazionale. Trascurate simili norme, il messaggio che si voglia trasmettere potrebbe essere frainteso, dislocato, danneggiato, correndo il rischio di sostanziali ostacoli nella comunicazione interculturale.

     Quindi per farsi capire con un parlante di madrelingua italiana, un parlante di madrelingua non italiana deve fare molto più del semplice trasferimento di un codice linguistico diverso dal suo nel proprio sistema di conoscenze, attraverso lo studio dell'italiano. Lui deve studiare ed analizzare comportmenti, costumi di vita quotidiana, tradizioni storiche e presenti, espressioni del viso, modi di vestirsi, toni della voce, gestica e così via, per poi mettere tutto questo bagaglio di "informazioni" in un contesto mentale che gli conceda il *paragone* fra simili dati e dati corrispondenti della propria matrice culturale di origine. È un motivo per cui spesso P. Balboni ritiene necessario fare la differenza fra una *componente culturale* della glottodidattica (vista nella sua natura interdisciplinare) ed una *componene interculturale* di per sé.

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[1] Cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale,* Plon, Paris, 1958 (réimpr. 2012); *Antropologia structurală*, cu o *Prefață* de. Ion Aluaş, trad. din limba franceză de. I. Pecher, Ed. Politică, Bucureşti, 1978.

Per poter fare alcune distinzioni, consideriamo utile tornare ai dizionari. Il *Treccani Vocabolario* specifica una ricca semantica della parola "cultura"[1]:

> **cultura** s. f. [dal lat. *cultura*, der. di *colĕre* «coltivare», part. pass. *cultus*; nel sign. 2, per influenza del ted. *Kultur*]. – **1. a.** L'insieme delle cognizioni intellettuali che una persona ha acquisito attraverso lo studio e l'esperienza, rielaborandole peraltro con un personale e profondo ripensamento così da convertire le nozioni da semplice erudizione in elemento costitutivo della sua personalità morale, della sua spiritualità e del suo gusto estetico, e, in breve, nella consapevolezza di sé e del proprio mondo: *formarsi una c.*; *avere, possedere una discreta c.*; [...]; *gli uomini di cultura*. In senso più concr. e collettivo, *l'alta c.*[...] **b.** L'insieme delle conoscenze relative a una particolare disciplina: *avere c. letteraria, musicale, artistica*; *possedere una ricca c. storica, filosofica*; *c. classica*, che riguarda la storia, la civiltà, la letteratura e l'arte dei popoli antichi, soprattutto greci e latini. [...] **c.** Complesso di conoscenze, competenze o credenze [...], proprie di un'età, di una classe o categoria sociale, di un ambiente: *c. contadina, c. urbana, c. industriale;* [...] **d.** Complesso delle istituzioni sociali, politiche ed economiche, delle attività artistiche, delle manifestazioni spirituali e religiose, che caratterizzano la vita di una determinata società in un dato momento storico: *la c. italiana del Quattrocento*; *la c. illuministica* o *dell'illuminismo*; *la storia della c. di un popolo.* **2.** In etnologia, sociologia e antropologia culturale, l'insieme dei valori, simboli, concezioni, credenze, modelli di comportamento, e anche delle attività materiali, che caratterizzano il modo di vita di un gruppo sociale: *c. primitive, c. evolute*; *la c. delle popolazioni indigene dell'Australia*; *la c. degli Incas.* **3.** In archeologia e storia dell'arte, *c. materiale*, tutti gli aspetti visibili di una cultura e di una civiltà, quali i manufatti urbani, gli utensili della vita quotidiana e gli oggetti artistici. **4.** Con ulteriore ampliamento della semantica, e conseguentemente degli usi lessicali, [...] il termine stesso è passato a indicare genericamente, nella letteratura, nella pubblicistica e nella comunicazione di questi ultimi anni, l'idealizzazione, e nello stesso tempo la scelta

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[1] *Civiltà* in *Vocabolario Treccani*, *Treccani.it*. N.p., 2018. Web. 21 Genn. 2017.

consapevole [...] di un sistema di vita, di un costume, di un comportamento, [...] di una sensibilità e coscienza collettiva di fronte a problemi umani e sociali [...]. [...] Si parla, così, di una *c. della vita* ma insieme anche di una *c. della morte*; di una *c. del lavoro*, e insieme, ma con ottica diversa, di una *c. della povertà*, o di una *c. dell'assenteismo*; di una *c. della pace*, *della solidarietà*, *dell'altruismo*, *del dialogo* (per es. tra le diverse religioni) e all'opposto di una *c. del profitto*, *della tangente* o addirittura *della mafia*; [...]. Esempi, tutti questi, che possono essere classificati sotto la triplice ripartizione, che talora viene enunciata, di una *c. ideologica*, una *c. materiale*, una *c. comportamentale*. **5. a.** Coltivazione, allevamento [...] **b.** *C. fisica*, [...].

Abbiamo riportato qua solo in parte la complessità larga e profonda del concetto di *cultura* nell'esistenza umana individuale e sociale. Anche soltanto da questa rete di significati ed accezioni in continua evoluzione, potrebbe risultare evidente il rapporto insolubile fra i concetti di *cultura* e *linguaggio*: il primo sarebbe un prodotto complesso del secondo, nascente in determinate condizioni di esistenza dell-uomo come essere sociale, non può esistere all'esterno dell'atto comunicazionale; mentre il secondo si manifesta spesso come un riflesso del primo, essendogli nel contempo supporto, matrice e veicolo.

Il concetto di "cultura" lo dobbiamo riconoscere alla Grecia antica, dove nacque nel VII secolo a.C.. In quell'epoca remota, la poesia lirica dei poeti ionici fu un'espressione del trasferimento delle loro esperienze individuali ed intime in un fenomeno sociale, di modo che l'essere umano cominciasse ad essere ritenuto come "persona". Fu il momento in cui venne sviluppata la "téchne" (dal greco τέχνη, "arte" nel senso di "perizia", "saper fare", "saper operare"), il complesso delle regole e delle norme applicate e strettamente seguite in un'attività, tanto in quella di tipo esclusivamente intellettuale quanto in una di tipo manuale.

Vi si tratta di una forma di "arte della manipolazione e trasformazione, del formare e dello strutturare", che mise gli antichi Greci "in grado di agire su ogni cosa, compresa la personalità umana"; tale abilità – considerano M. Pichiassi e G. Zaganelli[1] – "li mise in grado di

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[1] Mauro Pichiassi, Giovanna Zaganelli, *Lingua e cultura: loro dimensione nella didattica dell'italiano L2*, in: Katerinov, Katerin; M. Clotilde; Boriosi Katerinov; Laura Berrettini; Mauro Pichiassi; Giovanna Zaganelli (a cura di), *Quaderno N. 5. L'insegnamento della cultura e civiltà nei corsi di italiano L2*, Edizioni Guerra, Perugia, 1991, pp.15-16.

agire su ogni cosa, compresa la personalità umana. Essi videro che poteva essere *coltivato* non solo il mondo naturale ma anche quello dello spirito". Per i Greci, l'idea di "cultura" veniva identificata con il concetto di *paidea*, cosa che vuol dire "educazione proveniente dalle arti", quali la poesia, la filosofia oppure l'eloquenza, tutte in grado di nutrire nella persona appunto quello che questa è in realtà oppure lo dovrebbe essere. Così si fece una distinzione – a seconda dei "beni" che, insieme e in correlazione, definiscono l'esistenza umana – fra "cultura materiale" (una sorta di "patrimonio materiale" di oggetti e strumenti) e "cultura spirituale" (i "prodotti" della mente umana, nella loro forma ideativa, generativa di concetti e ragionamenti, capaci ulteriormente di concretizzarsi anche materialmente o di persistere ed anche evolvere nella loro forma originaria concettuale).

Dall'altra parte della classicità antica, i Romani stabiliscono la propria idea di cultura nel concetto di *humanitas*, con origini ugualmente nobiliari ma anche del realismo naturalistico. Tale concetto elimina dal proprio contenuto l'agire a fini puramente utilitaristici (le arti, i mestieri, ogni attività di pratica manuale), come anche il legarsi profondamente alla vita terrena, con i suoi utili materiali ed i condizionamenti temporali.

Il Medioevo fa assumere alla cultura il suo attributo aristocratico, definito concettualmente con la *cultura mentis*, essendone eliminato il lato naturalistico. Pertanto le arti del trivio e del quadrivio divengono uno strumento spirituale tramite il quale l'essere umano evolve verso la cognizione dell'esistenza utraterrena. Così la filosofia apre la via all'uomo verso la forma religiosa della verità. È su questo aspetto spirituale medievale che si è insistito tanto a commentare da parte della posterità critica (e spesso con posizionamenti esageratamente limitativi) il cosiddetto "misticismo" medievale.

Il realismo naturalistico della classicità greco-latina viene rivalutato e così in misura somma recuperato dall'epoca rinascimentale. Il Rinascimento rivela l'ideale classico della cultura nel suo complesso. Due contrari apparentemente irreconciliabili – spiritualità e la manualità – danno insieme in questo punto della storia della cultura l'ideale dell'*homo faber*, autore del proprio situarsi nell'Universo, quindi del proprio destino. Si direbbe che così la cultura assumesse "una connotazione fortemente aristocratica"[1]. Solo che l'essenza aristocratica della cultura ci appare non tanto una di sangue, ereditaria, bensì piuttosto una di spirito, che viene acquisita con ingegno e dedicazione, con i gradini dell'apprendistato, attraverso lo studio e l'insegnamento continui nelle loro varie forme.

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[1] Ibid., p.17.

L'Illuminismo venne a "togliere alla cultura questo carattere aristocratico – secondo Pichiassi e Zaganelli – e a darle il senso di strumento di rinnovamento della vita sociale ed individuale"[1], con la somma espressione di tale tendenza, concretizzata nell'*Enciclopedia* degli illuministi francesi. Con nuovi valori, più diffusi e "borghesi", con nuovi campi aperti alla scienza, la cultura sarebbe andata a estendersi e ridefinirsi in cerca di fini esistenziali più ricchi, raggiungibili in seguito ad una formazione educativa della persona sui fondamenti più stabili della ragione umana.

Il Romanticismo, in opposizione all'Illuminismo classico, affermò l'incapacità essenziale della ragione di raggiungere il più intimo nucleo della realtà, e fece contrapporre ad essa concetti come quello del sentimento e dell'istinto, con l'apparenza di togliere qualcosa di importante dal peso dell'insegnamento nel percorso formativo della persona.

La filosofia dell'idealismo di Hegel, invece, si proponeva di raggiungere l'assoluto tramite una particolare idea di "razionalità" intesa, in Hegel, come espressione del cosiddetto "spirito immanente alla realtà".

Il concetto moderno di "cultura", in opposizione alla filosofia romantica dell'epoca, si ritiene fondamentato da Gustav Klemm. Questo fu il primo (verso la metà dell'Ottocento) a considerare "cultura" qualsiasi cosa risultata dall'azione umana, e non più un monopolio limitato di "prodotti" risultati in seguito ad una "selezione" della ragione umana. La teoria di Klemm fu ripresa da Edward Burnett Tylor, uno dei fondatori dell'antropologia moderna, e riformulata (nel 1871, in *Primitive Culture*) nei termini di questo nuovo campo di studio scientifico: tutto quanto l'uomo ne aveva aggiunto alle forme naturali dell'esistenza veniva considerato "cultura". Tylor scriveva: "La *cultura*, o *civiltà* (ns.sottol.), intesa nel suo ampio senso etnografico, è quell'insieme complesso che include le conoscenze, credenze, arti, legge, morale, costumi e di ogni altra capacità e abitudine acquisita dall'uomo in quanto membro di una società."[2]

Oltre la definizione, sarebbe importante osservare il fatto che Edward B.Tylor vi menziona il concetto di "civiltà", che usa a volte quale sinonimo di "cultura", altre volte in un senso specifico. Insomma vi sono designati con il termine "cultura" due fenomeni diversi, che potremmo distinguere così:

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Murray, London, 1871; trad. ital. in *Il concetto di cultura*, a cura di P. Rossi, Torino, Einaudi, 1970; cf. Mauro Pichiassi, Giovanna Zaganelli, op.cit., p.17.

- la cultura quale soggetto dell'evoluzione umana in prospettiva storica;

- la cultura quale specifico patrimonio collettivo appartenente ad un gruppo umano.

Il termine "civiltà" viene utilizzato nello studio di Tylor con il significato di un processo di evoluzione culturale dell'umanità. Vi si ritrova l'influenza dell'idea di Herbert Spencer, di un processo unilineare di sviluppo, dal semplice al complesso.

Mentre invece il discorso cambia orientamento verso ambienti più ristretti e specificamente locali (una tribù, un gruppo etnico, un popolo), Tylor ritorna al termine di "cultura".

Dal momento in cui una persona appartenente ad un tale ambiente sociale (per varie ragioni educative, utilitarie o spirituali) prova di entrare in contatto comunicazionale linguistico con gente appartenente ad un ambiente sociale estraneo, diverso anche linguisticamente, si deve subito costatare l'importanza fondamentale della comprensione profonda degli aspetti esistenziali relativi alla cultura dell'ambiente di "destinazione", così come quella della comprensione quanto più esatta delle diversità e delle somiglianze nei confronti della cultura dell'ambiente di "origine". Tale comprensione non-linguistica dell'"altro", dello "straniero", dovrebbe (idealmente) seguire un percorso formativo, non parallelo, ma incluso ed integrato al percorso glottodidattico, al fine di assicurare alla persona le condizioni ottime di profonda e complessa comunicazione non solo con parlanti di madrelingua diversa dalla propria, ma con l'insieme della società e della civiltà di questi. Sarebbe a dire: trasformare infatti uno spazio, una società, una cultura "straniera" in una ugualmente propria, che allarghi quella originaria.

**Civiltà e glottodidattica.** Secondo l'opinione di E. Sapir, la cultura è "l'insieme di pratiche ed opinioni socialmente ereditate che determinano il tessuto della nostra vita, o più semplicemente, ciò che una società fa e pensa".[1]

A partire da una simile definizione della cultura, ci orientiamo verso alcune osservazioni. Certi modelli culturali, fra cui quelli menzionati all'inizio del sottocapitolo precedente, si possono dimostrare più prolifici e creativi di altri. Sono essi infatti quelli che arrivano a costituire ciò che chiamiamo la *civiltà* di un popolo, concetto che, accanto a quello di *cultura*, si verifica essenziale nella didattica linguistica.

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[1] E. Sapir, *Language*, Londra, 1949, p.207; trad.it.: Einaudi, Torino, 1969, p.216.

Nei dizionari, la semantica che la parola "civiltà" assume è complessa nella sua molteplicità di significati e contesti. A menzionarne alcuni aspetti, possiamo citare il *Treccani Vocabolario*[1]:

> **civiltà** s. f. [dal lat. *civilĭtas -atis*, der. di *civilis* «civile»]. – **1.** La forma particolare con cui si manifesta la vita materiale, sociale e spirituale d'un popolo (eventualmente di più popoli uniti in stretta relazione) – sia in tutta la durata della sua esistenza sia in un particolare periodo della sua evoluzione storica – o anche la vita di un'età, di un'epoca. Sotto l'aspetto storico e etnologico, il termine è riferito non soltanto ai popoli socialmente più evoluti della storia lontana o recente (*le grandi c. del passato*, *c. egiziana*, *c. assiro-babilonese*, *c. latina*, *c. slava*, *c. dei popoli anglosassoni*, *la c. occidentale*, ecc.) ma anche ai popoli primitivi o meno evoluti, estendendosi a designare anche le varie forme di vita di popoli preistorici, ricostruite per merito della paletnologia e dell'archeologia (per es., *la c. acheuleana*, *la c. del bronzo*, *la c. del ferro*, ecc.). *Con questo sign. più ampio e più «neutrale», il termine si approssima a quello di* cultura *(che ha avuto peraltro nella letteratura scientifica definizioni più precise)* (ns. sottolin.). **2.** Nell'uso com. e più tradizionale, è spesso sinon. di *progresso*, in opposizione a *barbarie*, per indicare da un lato l'insieme delle conquiste dell'uomo sulla natura, dall'altro un certo grado di perfezione nell'ordinamento sociale, nelle istituzioni, in tutto ciò che, nella vita di un popolo o di una società, è suscettibile di miglioramento. È con questo sign. che il termine è inteso in espressioni quali: *portare la c.*; *il sorgere della c.*; *i principi, i frutti, la luce della civiltà* e sim.; in altre invece, con partic. qualificazioni, indica caratteristiche forme e livelli di organizzazione della vita associata: *la c. del benessere*, *la c. dei consumi*, *la c. tecnologica*, *la c. delle macchine*; *l'avvento della c. di massa*. **3.** In rapporto a un altro sign. dell'agg. *civile*, urbanità, cortesia, buona educazione: *trattare*, *parlare*, *comportarsi con c.*; *non hai ancora imparato le regole della c.* (o *della buona c.*); *quel che al notaio parve un segno mortale, i soldati eran pieni di civiltà* (Manzoni).

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[1] *Civiltà* in *Vocabolario Treccani, Treccani.it*. N.p., 2018. Web. 21 Genn. 2017.

In tutti e tre i sensi individuati dal *Treccani*, l'impatto che i contenuti del concetto di "civiltà" hanno sull'elemento linguistico e sulla sua didattica ci sembra uno maggiore.

Etimologicamente, il termine veniva associato al verbo "civilizzare" (fr. "civiliser", ted. "civilisieren", ingl. "to civilize") nel senso del quale – come osservano M. Pichiassi e G. Zaganelli[1] – certi popoli si sentivano investiti con il compito del rendere "civili" popolazioni o gruppi etnici considerati "barbari" e quindi, in ogni caso, culturalmente inferiori. Solo successivamente si è passato al significato di "miglioramento della persona, delle sue doti e delle sue relazioni sociali".

Sia il senso iniziale, sia l'evoluzione del concetto portano Pichiassi e Zaganelli a considerare che, "a differenza di quello di cultura, il termine ci civiltà è generalmente connotato da atteggiamenti valutativi" e da un'accezione "fortemente critica"[2].

In origine, il concetto predisponeva implicitamente l'idea dell'esistenza di un'unica "civiltà", che rappresentasse "il tipo di vita associata che si riteneva fosse la migliore realizzazione di valori unici e comuni a tutti gli uomini, contrapponendola a quelle forme di vita meno evolute considerate inferiori, o peggio ancora, barbare"[3]. L'originaria concezione dell'antichità greco-romana viene combattuta dall'antropologia e dallo storicismo contemporaneo, che hanno messo in risalto la diversità delle civiltà ed "il loro carattere autonomo e autosufficiente, espressione della particolare storia che ha contraddistinto ogni popolo"[4].


## 7. Letteratura e glottodidattica.

Così come abbiamo già affermato poco prima, *la letteratura* di qualsiasi epoca è infatti uno specchio della cultura della determinata epoca (e spesso anche delle anteriori)... Nella letteratura, il bisogno umano di *conoscere* si intreccia in un modo molto sottile con un altro bisogno generalmente umano, quello del *piacere*: dai più antichi tempi, anche oltre il classicismo dell'antichità greco-romana, il gusto del bello ha accompagnato la necessità dell'utile in quasi ogni gesto creativo dell'umanità.

Non di minore importanza è anche lo studio della storia, con le sue prospettive sulle varie epoche e sui vari costumi civili e culturali. Con simili

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[1] Cf. Mauro Pichiassi, Giovanna Zaganelli, op.cit., p.19.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., pp.19-20.

[4] Ibid., p.20.

strumenti di approccio si dovrà spiegare, ad esempio, la presenza delle opere della trattatistica rinascimentale (se si pensa ad autori come Niccolò Machiavelli, Baldassar Castiglione, Pietro Bembo o Leon Battista Alberti, per farne solo tre nomi a caso fra i tanti dell'epoca) oppure di memorialistica, diari, lettere, biografie ed autobiografie ecc., nello studio della letteratura.

La letteratura, nel suo ampio senso, ha lo scopo di aiutare lo studente a creare un sistema di valori e modalità per analizzare e interpretare le opere letterarie e per formare l'atteggiamento giusto per i valori umani. La strategia per lo studio della letteratura si trova in uno stretto legame con i modelli operativi che possono essere adattati secondo il livello d'insegnamento. Le competenze di base specifiche allo studio dei testi letterari sono la formazione del gusto letterario, l'educazione artistica, morale e la responsabilità per quanto riguarda i problemi della società.

La prospettiva didattica moderna nello studio della letteratura, nella visione di Alina Pamfil, dovrebbe orientarsi in due direzioni fondamentali: "il primato della *visione*" e "il secondo luogo attribuito all'*espressione della visione*"[1]

La prima sarebbe rappresentata dalla capacità della letteratura di estendere la comprensione. Questo fatto si produce tramite i mondi e/o le esperienze la cui espressione è il testo letterario.

Tale situazione cambia anche a seconda dell'appartenenza del testo ad uno specifico genere letterario. Il testo narrativo, per esempio, sta generando mondi della finzione a partire dal modello del mondo reale (il modo realistico), in contrasto con questo (il modo fantastico) oppure in distacco da questo (il modo fiabesco). Il testo poetico, d'altra parte, trasmette le esperienze di un'intimità individuale, quella del poeta, "insegnando" al lettore di rapportarsi affettivamente ad una tale esperienza, dalla prospettiva della propria intimità. Indipendentemente pure dal genere del testo letterario, questo sta offrendo al suo ricettore dei modelli cognitivi ed i loro strumenti di uso.

*La seconda* direzione fondamentale di orientamento della prospettiva didattica fa riferimento alla capacità della letteratura di formare il gusto estetico. Nella rappresentazione dei vari mondi della finzione o nell'espressione delle esperienze intime di un autore, nella letteratura diventa essenziale la modalità di espressione, cioè in altre parole, la forma. L'aspetto della forma del testo letterario appartiene infatti all'essenza estetica della rappresentazione artistica. La forma

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[1] Alina Pamfil, *Didactica literaturii. Reorientări*, ed. Art, Bucureşti, 2016, p.37 (trad. ns.).

prevale nei confronti del contenuto, poiché l'arte è piuttosto interessata su *come* si fa/si esprime che su *che cosa* si fa/si esprime. Ci si arriva, a questo punto, al raffinamento della rappresentazione estetica (attributo dello scrittore/artista), che attira come conseguenza un certo tipo di formazione del gusto estetico (specifico al lettore/pubblico).

## 8. La lettura ed il testo letterario.

Il termine *testo* ha le sue origini nel latino – *textus*, che vuol dire "intreccio, tessuto" – e per sviluppare una possibile definizione, possiamo presentarlo come un insieme di parole organizzate in base ad una certa lingua con il fine di trasmettere *informazioni* (nel caso di un testo non letterario), oppure *emozioni* (tramite la letteratura), cioè comunicare al meglio cosa si vuol dire.

Il *testo letterario* dispone di alcune caratteristiche che lo fanno diventare molto più differente da un testo che usualmente possiamo trovare nelle situazioni della vita quotidiana, *non letterario*. Fra le caratteristiche più comuni del testo letterario, è utile indicare: rima, ritmo, sillaba, figure metriche e figure retoriche – tutte considerate, secondo Balboni e Cardona[1], "strumenti" che vengono usati da scrittori, con lo scopo di esprimere in una maniera artistica, e dunque emotiva, "le cose importanti di sempre" (l'amore, l'odio, filosofia, libertà e democrazia, borghesia, sacro e profano), ma anche "quelle significative di un certo periodo" (come ad esempio la lotta contro la pena di morte).

Il testo letterario è una creazione della fantasia dell'autore, che riesce a trasformare la realtà in un universo immaginario. La lettura di un testo di questo tipo ci fa rivelare un contenuto ricco di espressività, caratteristica correlata alla sensibilità dello scrittore.

La *letterarietà* è una questione tramite la quale un autore usa un particolare codice di comunicazione con l'aiuto di certe figure stilistiche, ricorrendo all'organizzazione del discorso oppure alle caratteristiche metriche di un testo (rima, ritmo, ecc.). Una qualsiasi comunicazione riesce solo se il lettore detiene quelle competenze che gli danno la possibilità di comprendere appunto il valore comunicativo di quel codice.

Diventa però un'abilità culturale basilare il fatto di individuare i confini del cosiddetto "testo letterario", nell'ambito dell'infinita molteplicità (reale o possibile) di testi. Il lettore comune (non necessariamente in possesso di una larga esperienza di lettura) sarebbe

[1] Paolo E. Balboni, Mario Cardona, *Storia e testi di letteratura italiana per stranieri*, Guerra Edizioni, Perugia, 2004, p.3.

piuttosto propenso a delegare al critico o all'editore la competenza di "scelta di cosa sia letterario e cosa no."

Nell'ambito istituzionale educazionale (scuola ginnasiale, liceale, università), tocca all'insegnante di guidare i suoi alunni o studenti nel crearsi un primo elemento di ciò che dovrebbe diventare, in una fase ulteriore, il proprio "spirito critico".

Lo studente ha una percezione, considerata "diffusa" da P.E. Balboni[1], secondo la quale un testo sia letterario tanto tempo che si possa trovare nei vari volumi di storia letteraria, nelle antologie scolastiche oppure venga pubblicato in collane letterarie. Vi aggiungeremmo anche la situazione in cui simili testi erano studiati nell'ambito istituzionale scolastico, mentre vi facevano l'oggetto di insegnamento del docente di letteratura. Quindi, si potrebbe considerare che in una prima tappa di familiarizzazione con l'oggetto di studio della letteratura, l'alunno ha nei confronti del testo letterario un approccio predeterminato da fattori quasi esclusivamente esterni, come abbiamo già accennato.


## 9. Lo spirito critico e l'insegnamento della letteratura.

Lo scopo elementare degli insegnanti di letteratura è quello di offrire agli studenti le migliori condizioni per l'apprendimento, avendo un grande impatto per il mantenimento d'interesse per ciò che si vuole trasmettere e allo stesso tempo contribuendo allo sviluppo di conoscenze culturali e interculturali.

Ad un livello di studio "superiore", il docente ha il particolare compito di sviluppare nello studente la "competenza testuale", che Balboni definisce come "la capacità di qualificare e classificare i testi, tra i quali ci sono quelli letterari"[2], accanto ad altri tipi testuali: scientifici, tecnici, speculativi, giuridici ecc. Il tema diventa così "pertinente al discorso glottodidattico" e ne risulta come oggetto complesso dell'insegnante non solo di letteratura, ma anche di linguistica, considerandosi intanto i registri linguistici, i linguaggi settoriali, la stilistica.

Finalmente, una problematica importantissima da prendere in considerazione sarebbe quella del rapporto fra *spirito critico* e *gusto estetico*. Essenzialmente, la differenza concettuale sembra risultare dall'opposizione fra "oggettivo" e "soggettivo". Ma il contrasto viene meno evidente nel momento in cui si parlerebbe di un certo "gusto critico" di

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Cf. Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., p.123.

un'epoca, di una scuola artistica o letteraria, di una determinata corrente ideologica e concettuale.

La natura dell'opera letteraria è comunemente collocata nell'equilibrio – spesso vago e inafferrabile – fra il contenuto (detto anche "senso") e la forma (intesa come "espressione").

Il più semplice ed immediato approccio al testo letterario è la lettura. P.E. Balboni considera, relativamente a questa costatazione, che "insegnare letteratura significa anzitutto insegnare a leggere testi letterari, cioè a cogliere ciò che li rende letterari".[1] La lettura diventa così un'esperienza linguistica acquisita ed anche un modo di vivere l'emozione estetica. Sul confine, spesso incerto e mutevole, fra la scoperta del testo e la commozione che ne risulta come effetto immediato, sta la componente cognitiva della letteratura, e cioè l'intuizione dei sensi inclusi e nascosti nella forma testuale letteraria. In tutte queste interazioni e interferenze, l'insegnante di letteratura sta guidando lo studente verso la meta finale: la comprensione del testo letterario.


## 10. Percorso di lettura guidata.

L'insegnante di letteratura, da emittente di messaggio didattico, verso un destinatario-alunno, deve avere in vista un percorso molto chiaro da seguire.

Inizialmente, il suo ruolo fondamentale è quello di *creare la motivazione* del comportamento nei suoi alunni. Questo succede in seguito all'*azione* dell'insegnante. L'alunno, sotto la diretta guida e l'influenza formativa del suo insegnante di letteratura, dovrebbe raggiungere quella predisposizione interiore – risultato tanto della propria ragione quanto della sua affettività empatica – di comunicare con l'insegnante in base ad un interesse, che gradualmente stia divenendo comune, per la lettura del testo letterario. Questo interesse per il testo di letteratura va trasmesso dall'insegnante verso il suo alunno.

Create le condizioni, nell'atto didattico, l'insegnante deve ottenere la *reazione* da parte dell'alunno: *mettere in atto la lettura* del testo letterario. Certamente, l'atto della lettura del testo letterario verrà iniziato in aula, sotto la guida dell'insegnante. Ma questo ha il difficilissimo compito di indurre nel suo alunno la determinazione di continuare l'atto della lettura anche fuori classe, e non solo come un compito impostogli da un'autorità pedagogica, ma come una sua convinzione intima. Evidentemente, una simile convinzione potrebbe destarsi nell'alunno

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[1] Paolo E. Balboni, op.cit., p.123.

soltanto come risultato della motivazione del piacere di leggere letteratura.

Formatosi il piacere della lettura, è sempre compito dell'insegnante *creare la competenza interpretativa* del testo letterario nell'alunno. Questo ha il bisogno di capire quello che legge – il testo letterario – nei suoi sensi più complessi e profondi.

Una volta raggiunti, i fini del processo didattico arriveranno ad interagire, a stimolarsi ed a fissarsi reciprocamente in una *forma mentis* del soggetto del processo educativo, che è l'alunno. Lui dovrà essere portato dall'insegnante a leggere. Però l'atto della lettura deve divenire una scelta libera ed autonoma del soggetto-alunno. Questo leggerà altri ed altri testi letterari perché gli produrranno il piacere spirituale. Tale piacere sarà determinato dal fatto di aver capito la moltitudine dei significati del testo letterario in genere.

Ma il piacere è una facoltà selettiva: ci fa piacere sentire solo una musica, non qualsiasi musica, vedere solo alcuni film, non qualsiasi film, stare insieme ad alcune persone, non a qualsiasi persona, quindi anche leggere certi libri, non qualsiasi libro.

Ne risulta un altro compito dell'insegnante nei confronti dell'alunno: *formare lo spirito critico* di quest'ultimo. Persino una facoltà profondamente intima, come sarebbe quella del piacere, potrebbe essere formata, educata: ne risulterà il gusto estetico, fondamentato sulla consapevolezza di un sistema gerarchico di valori. All'alunno si deve insegnare non solo come riconoscere un tale sistema di valori, ma anche come scomporlo e ricomporlo (attraverso la facoltà analitica), per assumerlo finalmente, renderselo intimamente proprio.

Finalmente, l'azione di guida che l'insegnante svolge nella didattica della letteratura si deve concludere (anche provvisoriamente, alla fine di un percorso, che però non dev'essere per forza uno completo e definitivo, ma soltanto una tappa formativa) con l'azione di *verificare l'impostazione della materia insegnata* nel destinatario-alunno. Questo succede attraverso azioni specifiche di verifica e controllo. Queste poi dovrebbero essere psicologicamente impostate dall'insegnante non come azioni di coercizione, bensì come uno strumento reciprocamente utile (a se stesso ma anche all'alunno) di valutazione del modo qualitativo e della misura quantitativa in cui i fini del percorso didattico vengano raggiunti o meno.

I modi, le fasi, le tecniche e gli strumenti per mettere in moto tale processo didattico e renderlo efficiente saranno argomenti dei capitoli seguenti del nostro studio. Ma bisogna prima stabilire un punto di partenza di una simile "architettura", o "meccanismo", che sia il processo educativo, non soltanto ma diremmo soprattutto nel campo della didattica

della letteratura: i fondamenti dell'intero costrutto formativo didattico sono infatti rappresentati dal rapporto *insegnante – alunno*. originality.

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## Sitografia

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# Augmented (Hyper) Reality in Movies: eXistenZ versus The Truman Show

## Paula Alice BĂLOIU[1]

**Abstract:** *This project revolves around the complex concept of hyperreality and a quote from George Carlin best fits as the description "The reason they call it the American Dream is because you have to be asleep to believe it."*

*In other words, what it is called 'reality,' it is in fact 'a dream' in which some are still trapped, but that doesn't mean the masses will not wake up sooner or later. Thus, the present article pinpoints the most important aspects of hyperreality, a summary of its origins and usage throughout time and, lastly, an explanation for the most common themes that convey terms – simulation and simulacrum and conveys one possible explanation of the complexity of American Dream Theory. In order to fully grasp the functions of this conceptualization, I will review some of the most relevant critical opinions formulated by famous literary scholars.*

*What seems to be in common between the movies "eXistenZ" and "The Truman Show" is that all represent a simulated reality; the ones who view it may or may not be trapped in the boundaries of hyperreality.*

**Keywords**: American Dream Theory, Hyperreality, Alternate Reality, Delusion, Simulation and Simulacrum.

## 1. Origin and Usage of Hyperreality

In Semiotics and Postmodernism, the term *hyperreality* stirred great interest and was defined as a way that allows the commingling of physical

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reality with virtual reality (VR) and of human intelligence with artificial intelligence (AI), respectively. (Tiffin 1)

The French sociologist Jean Baudrillard is considered to have founded the postmodern semiotic idea of hyperreality. He claimed that real life is not based only on performance in order to accept reality as whole, as he points out: "Abstraction today is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: *a hyperreal.*" (Baudrillard, 343 "Simulacra and Simulation"). In other words, it is a representation, a simple sign without any original referent.

His belief specifies that this term is in fact not only a way that confuses and fuses the real with the symbol which describes it as a whole, but more of a creation of signifiers which actually have a representation for something that does not necessarily exist: "a world that is in fact a copy world where we as individuals seek simulated stimuli and nothing more". (Baudrillard, 4)

Umberto Eco expresses and dissects this idea further on "by suggesting that the action of hyperreality is to desire reality and, in the attempt to achieve that desire, to fabricate a false reality that is to be consumed as real." (Eco 5)

Unlike Jean Baudrillard, Umberto Eco does not make any reference to reality as being omitted, but strictly underlines the fact that imitations - new or improved - are more likely to be accepted that their ancient and unavailable originals "the past must be preserved and celebrated in full scale authentic copy." (Eco 6)


## 2. Means of Applying the Notion of Hyperreality

The concept of *hyperreality* was discussed and thoroughly analyzed by many famous philosophers in order to lay out a basic rule for the people to understand it perfectly. Then, if we inspect the dictionary explication, we will find that in Sociology and Psychology, the term "hyperreality" is represented by an image, a stimulation or an aggregate of both that either distorts the reality it purports to depict or does not, in fact, depict anything having a real existence, but which nonetheless comes to constitute reality. (Collins English Dictionary)

Movies, for example, are easier to analyze because one of their strongest benefit is that of their features, mainly the fact that they come along with sound and visual that can express the emotional feeling of the character.

As an object prone for analysis they need to have a good story to be rated, meaning they need to be suitable to peoples' desire for action. For example, a character is set out to defeat the enemy and in every encounter, there is no visible fear expressed by their body language or facial expression.

However, sometimes the way in which the main characters set their goal is quite impossible for us, the ones from the real world and that is the trigger that will cause our imagination to activate in order to reach the point of hyperreality.

Hyperreality's leading purpose is to trick our consciousness into willingly detach itself from any real emotional commitment and instead focusing on embracing the artificial simulation of countless empty appearances.

Its relevance is distinguished in today's modern world and its effects are stronger than when it was first conceptualized: the distinction between what is real and what is not is erased, people will only see a crafted illustration, a figure of what they want to see, of what they desperately aspire to become or transform into, they will never let themselves see the flaws, only the perfect features.


## 3. Two of the most Important Elements of Hyperreality

The most common idioms that convey the meaning for hyperreality are those of "simulation" and "simulacrum," which lead to what Jean Baudrillard wrote about in his studies.

The terms "simulacra" or "simulacrum" means likeness or similarity, a representation or an imitation of a person or a thing (Collins English Dictionary). For the postmodern French social theorist this element serves as not a copy of the real, but the truth for what it stands for: the hyper real.

Jean Baudrillard envisions four stages of representation (faithful or distorted): simulacra "basic reflection of reality (first step of vision); perversion of reality (deconstruction of the real); pretense of reality (where there is no model); and simulacrum, which bears no relation to any reality whatsoever." (A Very Short Introduction)

The idea of "simulation" is bound to represent more the imitation of the evolution of a real world process or system over time (Collins English Dictionary). This entire act of simulation first requires the use of a model in order to fully reproduce the characteristics of functionality or behavior for the selected physical or abstract element.

Jean Baudrillard suggests that this concept has no usage in the physical realm, but is more used within a space not limited by physical boundaries (within ourselves or technic simulations).

Historically speaking, this particular world had rather pejorative connotations about this statement: "...therefore a general custom of simulation (which is this last degree) is a vice, using either of a natural falseness or fearfulness..." (Bacon 1); for Distinction Sake, a Deceiving by Words, is commonly called a Lie, and a Deceiving by actions, Gestures, or Behaviors, is called Simulation..." (South 525)

If we were to set a definition that encompasses the term *hyperreality*, we would have to make correlations with the term *simulacrum*: "an ending stage of simulation, where the sign has no connection to any reality whatsoever, but its own pure simulacrum". (Baudrillard 6)

Jean Baudrillard begins with "the real" by explaining it as rather becoming an operational process, an image that was first coded and technologically generated in order to be possible for perception. "From now on signs are exchanged against each other rather than against the real" (Baudrillard 7), so basically what is produced are signs that deliver other signs and what was once a system of symbolic exchange that reflected reality is now represented by hyperreality.

"The real is that which it is possible to provide an equivalent reproduction and the hyper real is that which is always already reproduced" (Baudrillard 73), more simply explained is that hyper real is a system of simulation simulating itself.

As specified, in order to define this concept, we need to take into consideration some theories and critical information so that we can comprehend what the debate has been about so far: Jean Baudrillard "A real without origin or reality" (p. 1); Umberto Eco "The authentic fake" (p. 43)

## 4. The American Dream Theory

If we are to explain this complex theory, we will find out that the essence of the dream itself dates back much further than the discovery of America. The simple expression that we all hear, "the American Dream", was coined in 1931 with the sole meaning and purpose to give a name to "the greatest contribution we have as yet made to the thought and welfare of the world". (Adams: 8)

After that, the expression has been used to try to define all that is happening, with regard to the life in America, may it be good or bad.

However, this well-known term, even if it began to forge a life of its own, there was no intention to remain written in any reference book that dealt with American history.

For example, there are some reflections upon these conditions. De Crèvecœur's highlighted the following idea "Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world" (Crèvecœur 12). The new American Dream declared "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" (Crèvecœur 20), making this statement become the ground for the rights given to individuals.

From then on, everything began to take the shape of "that dream of a land in which life should be better, richer and fuller for every man with opportunity for each to his ability and achievement" (Adams 374), all being applied in a perfect democratic society.

Jean Baudrillard's perspective on the "American Dream" focuses upon the country bearing that name, the unfulfilled myth, an "achieved utopia" where the impossible is said to become possible: "when I speak of American 'way of life', I do so to emphasize its utopian nature, its mythic banality, its dream quality, and its grandeur. That philosophy which is immanent not only…in the reality of everyday life, but in the hyperreality of that which, as it is, displays all the characteristics of fiction. It is this fictional character, which is so exciting. Now, fiction is not imagination. It is what anticipates imagination by giving it form of reality… The American way of life is spontaneously fictional, since it is a transcending of the imaginary in reality" (in "Fabricating the Absolute Fake: AMERICA IN CONTEMPORARY POP CULTURE"). Here the critic's hyperreality and myth overlap, as fiction takes the image of making the American reality, the so-called dream will only be an uncontested hyperreality rather than an idealized desire.

The safest statement to say about this concept is that it represents "one of the motivating forces of American civilization" (Carpenter 5), a mechanism that starts from the idea of a "holy commonwealth" and walks towards the idea of emerging "from rags to riches"; ("From Rags to Riches"). Because of this particular statement, this can be seen in almost any American life or thought reference.

In other words, the idea of hyperreality is not presented as a fixed notion, but rather something that differs from individual to individual. By applying their personal beliefs and desires, the majority of Americans are following the concept of the American Dream and considers it to be the truth, universal in nature and achieved from hard work.

"The American Dream is deeply embedded in American mythology and in the consciousness of its citizens" and that is exactly what gives the

American Dream its staying power, even in times when it seems as though it should surely die." (Hanson 7)


## 5. Final Confrontation in outer Reality: "eXistenZ" versus "The Truman Show"

We have been discussing the most important aspects of hyperreality in terms of origin, usage, meaning, and theoretical views and now we are going to apply this critical thinking on two set of movies that goes by the name of "eXistenZ" and "The Truman Show."

The first is a surreal film in which the player experiences first hand a video game within a video game in another video game, where the locations or time is categorized with the word "strange" and where few questions come forth needing to be answered: "Do we truly have free will? What is reality? What is illusion? Is there a true reality or only illusion?"

The essence of the second movie revolves around a man who initially is unaware that he is living in a constructed reality television show, a 24-hour day womb to tomb television drama, which is broadcasted around the globe for billions of people to see.

Taking a few glances, in the beginning of the first movie, we can see the "gristle gun," an object that was stolen and secretly introduced on the grand premiere of the video game itself. This element will soon become a recurring motif throughout the movie, but the most shocking part is that it was made by one of the characters that will soon enter the virtual world - Ted Piker.

There was a bit of confusion from these two scenes, if we take them apart and start analyzing every detail, we will start to question how is it possible for something that is meant to be placed and used in a future video game, be able to transport itself into reality before the game was even played? The most logical answer to this mind-blowing experience is that what the viewer thinks is "reality" is just another part of the same video game.

In the second film, the protagonist will grow suspicious of this manmade reality and sets out on a journey to discover the truth about his own life; the message that we can understand from this show is that we will have to stand up, rebel against the manipulators of television and news if we want to protect ourselves from the everyday absurdity and falsehood that surrounds us at every step or turn me make.

Millions of viewers stop their daily routine and focus their attention on Truman's life, the only person on set who is in fact living his life and not playing it by the script. Here Slavoj Žižek argues that in "the falsity of

the 'reality TV shows' (even if these shows are 'for real,') people still act in them - they simply play themselves."

One of the characters of the first movie, that interacted with the game itself replied that this experience has a "reality bleed - through" effect, so that the reality layers are only very weakly differentiated in any case.

Allegra Geller is one of the characters who will stand at the very end to find out that her existence is a lie; while being in the middle of a battle scene she finds herself wearing a rather strange set of clothes, very similar with the equipment you will use in game and this highlights the fact that she is indeed not the award-winning game designer, not a real person, but a non-playable character (NPC).

In Truman's case he is not acting up his own life, he is actually living and completing his routine with ignorance to the fact that each and every person around him is an actor in disguise. Similarly, we as individuals are small actors trapped in the falseness of our own real life and at the same time interact with more falseness presented by the people around us.

Beyond the unmarked layers of the first movie, we find an intense enmity between a group of "game players" and rebels known as "The Realists." The ones that have the name "Realists" have only one goal and one sole purpose to achieve: destroy the game and eradicate the game developers. They desperately want to put an end to the simulation and make possible for humanity to re-enter the world they willingly left behind.

What is in fact hidden from view seems to be a harsh joke because these group of people that call themselves "The Realists" are operating under the assumption that you are entitled to rip away all that links you to fantasy, but this "reality" that they defend is a place where nothing adds up to anything - it is existence - a hyper real place of the condemned, just yet another fantasy level in game.

In the second movie, it was much easier for the director to play God and exercise emotional power on young Truman because he was juvenile and impressionable.

Nevertheless, as he becomes a full-fledged adult, the creator is aware of the multitude of questions that even he cannot find a proper answer.

Therefore, the simulation starts to disintegrate itself as it is nearing the limit of fakery (the wall of the dome).

Most of what we have covered so far has dealt with the untrustworthiness of the senses and there have been throughout time certain philosophers that have taken this problem a stage further by asking the question "Is it possible to tell reality from a dream?"

The basic concept from which this question arose is quite simple: when we dream, we often believe that what we are experiencing is real and then another idea comes into our mind on how are we are going to be certain that what we are now experiencing is not a dream of some sort?

The idea of a continuous dream like state with no option of waking up has been the focus point for a vast majority of movies and so "Jacob's Ladder" will come up with an original twist to this sort of story.

The 1999 film by David Cronenberg, called "eXistenZ", uses the modern-day equivalent of virtual reality games, with the tag line, "Where does reality stop… and the game begin?"; or better said "Where does existence stop…and existenz begin?"

There are two different ways we can react to the simulacrum, as presented in the second film, we are presented with: either we fully absorb it and accept its forms for whatever they are, a position in which we fall towards the sense of complete ignorance, neither of which is dishonorable, but rather a helpful tool that fuels the augmented hyperreality or the second position to have a reaction towards this simulacrum and distance ourselves from everything that comes forth "examine its meaning and try to understand the intentions of its authors. This second attitude is what makes criticism - and freedom - possible."

In our movie, this idea is highlighted in the moment of decision when Truman begins to contemplate the second approach described above, or leave the hyperreality he finds himself living in.

Christof created Seahaven Island in his vision of utopia, a place that is made to be desirable and perfect in every way, but his idea of heaven on Earth is going beyond this definition.

He tells Truman that Seahaven is a better location of living than what already exists outside it, but Truman has not seen or experienced enough to make this decision on his own. Then Truman sets his mind up to the task of finding the truth about what lies beyond the horizon line and the answer that he comes up with is that he will do anything in his power to escape Christof's grasp.

Christof, on the other hand, sees himself as the creator of this utopian setting, a true God and has other plans in store for the main character, but the truth is that he is merely a despot. Therefore, Christof's utopia is Truman's dystopia (the opposite of a utopia - an environment or community that is undesirable or frightening).

"The Truman Show" is indeed a movie that raises incredible mind-blowing questions about the reality we are presented with and imprisoned under, so it is fairly simple to compare this with an outlined stage where actors are forced to enact everyday relationships and interactions using a hyper real way or our own internal "Truman Show."

The actors from Truman's world make great efforts and go to high lengths to keep the protagonist in the safe make belief reality of the studio.

That is why in our case Truman lives his own American Dream and Christof's creation is acting as a safety net, a protection from the "sick" outside world that has perverted the "American Dream", but in the end this blind and wild pursuit of an unrealistic experience is as fake as the place it takes action - the Seahaven Island.

What we need to understand is that the world portrayed in the movie "eXistenZ" is indeed a "virtual reality".

However, whether the whole idea of "virtual reality" is benefits us or not, I am unsure. However, I can say that in my case I believe that when we enter into a world that is outside of our reality, we could be giving something of ourselves that we don't actually know we are giving, and that insignificant and over looked gesture could turn us into people that we might not normally be. So, in the end, what makes you believe you are not part of a video game plot yourself?

The brilliant, multi-layered film, part comedy, part satire, part philosophical speculation movie "Truman Show," depicts us on the screen. We are the ones who take part and make this system of action - reaction come to life.

In other words, we, as well as the main character are the audience behind the television screen; we are the villains, the victims and the heroes of this "Truman Show."

Ultimately, the only illusions we need to escape from are not the ones that are being given to us through media means, the ones that we create ourselves are much scarier and difficult to evade from.

The element of both "simulated reality" as well as the "dream perception" are commonly seen it these movies: in "eXistenZ" the boundaries between real unreal are broken and mix together, creating a world of unknown while in "Truman Show" we have another simulated world in which the main character is desperately trying to escape from.

All in all, the world around us is full of influence and shapes us every day by implanting emotions or general thoughts in our mind, lets them grow roots and then explode into millions of other questions. Of course, there is simulated reality present, because of the greatness of modern technology that makes us ponder what is real and what is not, but you have to ask yourself: what if this is just a dream, like an illustration in a book and death is the one that wakes us up in the end - well you just have to be asleep to believe it then.

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# Migration as a Way to Say No: Iranian Migration to India and Malaysia

## Pär Fredborn Larsson

**Abstract:** *Over the last two decades, a sizable community of young Iranians has made its way to Malaysia and India. Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and Pune in India have become hosts to some of the biggest Iranian communities in Asia. In the 1980s, in the wake of the Islamic Revolution and during the Iran – Iraq war, waves of Iranians moved to the West. Many presumed that their stay in the West, mainly in southern California, but also in Germany, the UK, Sweden and France, would be temporary They had their bags packed during the first few years, ready to return back home as soon as things would calm down. The situation did not reverse however, and thousands of Iranians made the US and Europe their home. 30 years later a common topic of conversation in Iran is the ways available to leave the country. Moving abroad has become an obsession for the urban youth of Iran.*

*In the days of the Shah, it was easy for someone with an Iranian passport to visit Europe. Today, because of the political situation, it has become very difficult to get a visa for the Schengen area or North America – the traditional destinations for Iranians. The options for Iranians who want to emigrate are limited especially if they want to move to the West. During the last two decades, other destinations have emerged and thousands of Iranians have moved to Malaysia and India, mainly to Kuala Lumpur and Pune as mentioned.*

*In this article, the trajectories and perceptions of fifteen young Iranians who left for India and Malaysia are explored. Although they all have unique experiences, a few themes kept returning during my fieldwork. Most of them would prefer not to stay in India or Malaysia; they would like to move to the West. They are generally not keen on returning to Iran. Many feel stuck after a few years in India and Malaysia, not wanting to return to Iran, unable to move to the West, and not interested in staying in Pune or Kuala Lumpur.*

# 1. Introduction

In Tehran in 2011 – 2012 I was stuck by the large number of coffee houses that I had not seen during previous stays, and I quickly found a few cafes where I became a regular. Speaking to my new friends it seemed as if everyone was about to leave the country. One question then, became – what happens to everyone who migrates?

I have focussed on people who grew up in Iran after the Islamic Revolution in 1979. They left Iran as young adults, mostly after the summer of 2009. I will come back to as to why that summer was so important.

My material is quite anecdotal, and in the tradition of Clifford Geertz I´ve identified my task as to interpret the anecdotes and ethnographical data.


# 2. Short Historical Context

In 1979, the Shah of Iran was overthrown by a number of groups, from left-leaning students to religious groups that had had enough of the repression and the corruption. Soon the Islamic republic was announced, with its charismatic leader Khomeini, and opponents, including leftists that had been part of the struggle against the Shah, were silenced. Then in September 1980 Saddam Hussein and Iraq, invaded Iran and the war that followed would last for eight years and be among the bloodiest since the WW2. In the wake of the revolution and during the Iran-Iraq war there were waves of migration from Iran, typically to the US or UK, France, Germany or Scandinavia. Persian is spoken today by a fourth of the population in Beverly Hills! Many assumed that their stay abroad would be temporary and had kept their homes in Iran to be ready for them when the situation calmed down in Iran. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran remained, and many did not dare to return.

In 1998, the progressive Mohammad Khatami was elected president of Iran; he was popular among the young. Media became more open, and some old revolutionaries feared that the country was loosening its spirit of the Islamic Revolution. However, in the 2005 election the relatively unknown Ahmadinejad was, unexpectedly, elected, a hardliner who aspired to revive the ideals of the Islamic Revolution. He was widely despised among the urban young, and gained notoriety internationally when he organized a conference on the Holocaust. In 2009, there was

another election, for which there was a very vibrant campaign, engaging thousands of people in Tehran with the aim of changing the government in a progressive direction. That movement was to be known as The Green Movement. When it became clear that Ahmadinejad had been re-elected and that the Green Movement had lost, thousands of people felt they had to leave the country, quickly.

As compared to the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution, when thousands of Iranians fled to the West, because of the nature of the relations between Iran and the West today as well as the weak Iranian economy, many people chose other destinations, east of Iran. Two of the most common destinations were Malaysia and India.

This article is based on fieldwork in Tehran, Pune and Kuala Lumpur.

## 3. Relations between Iran and the US, Attitudes of Governments and People

The United States and Iran have demonized each other since the Islamic Revolution. The official attitude from the Islamic Republic towards the west is negative – it´s been labelled *the Great Satan*, while Iran has been called the *Axis of Evil* by an American president. In contrast, during the time of the dictatorship of the Shah, relations with the US were very close. In spite of the Islamic Republic´s official hostile attitude towards the West, large parts of the urban youth are, unsurprisingly, interested in, and not to say obsessed, with the West.

For example, a friend and I watched the American TV-serial Game of Thrones in the nights in his flat in central Tehran. "The signature melody is written by an Iranian!" I was informed. We watched many episodes of the popular serial. The Iranian state television would never air a programme with that degree of nudity. In order to be able to watch it, people need a VPN, to download it. One evening we were watching a football-game on the Iranian state television and soon enough there was a familiar melody – to the football game the state television were playing, in certain exciting moments of the match, the melody of Game of Thrones in the background!

The vibrant café culture in Tehran functions as places where young people socialise in a semi – private ambience. The cafés have names such as like "Prague", "Kafka", "Godot", Mortelle. Often they play western classical music, or at least western pop, and many of them have black and white photos of European authors: Beckett, Sartre. The cafés are relatively expensive (a cup of tea costs ten times more than in a simple place in the

park 100 metres away), and students come to hang out, dream, read and chat in an intimate and relaxed atmosphere.

One such place that I found was open until 9 in the evenings. The doors downstairs would shut then. However, anyone who wished could stay on. The cafe was from then on in the evening considered a private event, and other rules applied. There was a piano, and a few people would play and sing, and on the wall there was a large German romantic painting, and a bottle of a home-made alcoholic drink, made from raisins, would be materialized. That was a common scene in the cafés.

## 4. The Green Movement

The spring of 2009 Tehran was oozing with optimism, the election campaign being almost festive. Night after night tens of thousands of supporters of the reformist movement rallied. There were no policemen in sight as a sea of green clothes and banners was moving along Vali Asr Avenue, the major south – north axis across Tehran. Some women even took off their veil – unthinkable in everyday life in Iran of today ('.theguardian.com/world/2009/jun/14/iran-tehran-election-results-riots). On one side was Ahmadinejad and on the other was the Green Movement, the reformists, with demands for a more stable economy, more liberty and improved relations with the rest of the world (ibid.). Mir Hussein Mousavi was the reformists´ candidate, and although he was an insider representing the establishment and having worked for the Islamic Republic since the revolution, he was by many seen as someone new. He looked young for his age and managed to galvanize the powerful Green Movement.

The vital campaign, with demonstrations and manifestations, had begun during spring because of the upcoming election. Mohammad Khatami, the president between 1997 and 2005, had been popular among the young in Tehran and introduced reforms – life in Iran became more liberal, and some more music was allowed. The urban young aspired for more freedoms. In contrast to the relatively liberal years during Khatami, the ensuing era of Ahmadinejad was, for many, one of disappointments and crackdowns. After Ahmadinejad's first term, there were hopes that Mousavi, once he became president, would emulate Khatami and ease social restrictions as well as improve international relations (ibid.).

On the streets of Tehran, it seemed as if Ahmadinejad´s first term as a president soon would come to an end. The election of 2009 was the first time for many to vote; even people disillusioned with the Islamic Republic flocked at the polling stations. It was like a carnival, people were

waiving flags, and the spirit the months and weeks leading up to the election was festive. Everything pointed to the victory of the reformist opposition, and that its leader Mir-Hossein Mousavi would be the next president.

**When the results of the election** were announced on a Friday proclaiming that, contrary to expectations, Ahmadinejad had been re-elected for another term, another four years, "people flooded the streets, not speaking to each other", Ahmed, a young man in a café in Tehran, told me. "It was as if someone had emptied a bucket of cold water over you. People were shocked," Ahmed continued. The coming nights people gathered on the roofs, shouting God is great, *Allah o akbar*, echoing the Islamic Revolution from 1979 when the same shouts were heard but at that time against the Shah. *Allah o akbar* was heard all over Teheran in the nights in the summer of 2009.

People I have spoken to emphasise how dignified this silent protest was, when people walked the streets of Tehran. There was no violence. Then, after a few days, the police and the paramilitary forces, the *basij*, armed and on motorbikes, started to attack the demonstrators. Many were thrown in jail or expelled from universities. During his Friday prayer at the university in Tehran, the Supreme Leader, *rahbar*, made it clear that he would not tolerate any further upheavals. When the police attacked further violence followed. Many were killed, among them Neda Soltan whose death was filmed, spread on social media, and became a symbol for the Green Movement.

Individuals who affirmed the movement used to wear something green, a colour that had become a symbol of the reformists. Green is also the symbol of Islam, and of hope. It was a great irony that wearing the colour of green after the election became illegal in Iran – the green banner of the prophet being a visible reminder of the nature of the republic (Majd, 2010: 52).

According to many young Iranians with whom I have discussed, the Green Movement in 2009 inspired the "Arab spring" two years later. By contrast, the authorities in Iran claim that the events that took place in the Arab world during spring 2011 reflected the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. The Arab spring, a string of Islamic revolutions revolting against dictatorial secular governments, was similar as when the Iranian people overthrew the authoritarian and secular Shah, the Iranian authorities argue. But the young do not agree. "In 2009 we stood up against our dictatorship, just as the people of Arab countries revolted against theirs." "First the government of Syria, a close ally of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

will fall, and then the Islamic Republic," was a prediction that I heard from quite a few young Iranians in Tehran 2012.

Young people who took part in the revolts in the summer of 2009 took severe risks. Many were jailed, lost their governmental jobs, or were thrown out of university. "I have been studying for an academic degree for five years. If I am seen on the streets demonstrating it won't be worth anything. I cannot put that at stake". Those words, by a young man in Esfahan in 2009, echoed a common sentiment about the protests. Was it worth to go out and demonstrate if one risked to be kicked out of university or loose one's job?

**Shortly after I found the café in Tehran where became a regular, I met Ahmed**. He had a big beard, but not in the *basij* – the voluntary guards– style but more unruly and bohemian. He wore round glasses, and he was rolling cigarettes while not drawing in his notebook. He worked in a bookshop on the Revolutionary Street, called Horizons, and asked me to come for a visit the day after. He was a musician too, and loved to play jazz. But jazz wasn't tolerated in Iran, so he had to move abroad, he said. He had always wanted to work in a bookshop and was happy that he was able to do so before he left.

In the summer of 2009, Ahmed had been involved, as many of his friends, in the Green Movement, the *jombesh - e sabz*. Ahmed took to the streets upon hearing that Ahmadinejad had been re-elected. Thousands of people walked the streets. Ahmad emphasized how dignified they felt - something that I heard from many of those who participated. Ahmad and two friends walked to Vanak square. Police had been transported to Tehran from the countryside. Together with the voluntary forces, the *basij*, the police arrived to the square and started to attack the demonstrators. As a response, stones were raining on the police and people panicked. Ahmad and his female friends tried to escape, with policemen running after them, and he helped the girls over a door to a private yard. The police, on a motorbike, took Ahmed´s jacket and speeded away, throwing Ahmad on the ground. A police beat him with batons. They happened to be outside a pharmacy, and the owner, seeing what was happening outside, came out and asked the police to stop beating his son – he lied that Ahmad was his son. Ahmad took a taxi home.

He worked at a newspaper as a photographer. He was 20 years old. One day, a few days after the election results were made public – Ahmadinejad had been re-elected – the police arrived to the newspaper workplace. Tear gas was thrown into the building, which made the employees run outdoors where they were caught by the police and driven to the Evin prison. Those who stayed inside, despite the gas, were

eventually dragged out in chains by the police. Ahmad was in the prison for four weeks, first in a cell with other people, among others a mullah. Then he was transferred to a solitary cell where he spent two weeks. The guards told him that he was facing the death penalty but Ahmad knew that they were faking. They had caught thousands of people, and could not execute everyone, he reasoned. But some jailed teenagers broke down upon hearing that they were sentenced to death. In the nights, relatives and friends gathered outside the prison waiting for their loved ones.

When Ahmad was released eventually, he fell into a depression and spent one month in a mental institution. Since then he has had some small jobs waiting for an opportunity to move abroad. Ahmad recounted this while we were walking. As soon as some official-looking person approached us, he silenced.

Experiences such as Ahmad's were recurrent among the young in Tehran – often I heard similar stories.


Although everyone had their own individual experiences after leaving Iran and reasons for moving abroad, there were a few themes that were returning over and over again to me during fieldwork in Tehran, Pune and Kuala Lumpur. What follows are some such themes.


## 5. Transnationalism and Diaspora

Transnationalism can be used in describing the Iranian diaspora considering that many Iranians in Pune and Malaysia retain very close relations with Iran. Iranians in India and Malaysia have to be in regular touch with the Iranian authorities to extend their passports and the ones in Pune visit Mumbai and the Iranian consulate regularly for this reason. These links can be used for the Iranian authorities´ surveillance – the officials at the consulate may ask what the Iranians are up to, and interrogate them.

Almost all of the Iranians that I met abroad follow what is happening in Iran through Iranian media including the sayings of the Supreme Leader – after all, the situation in Iran affects both themselves and the lives of their relatives and friends in Iran.

The immigrants communicate frequently with relatives and friends in their home country, and are often supported economically by them. Money is being sent between Iran and India/Malaysia from exchange offices in Pune and Kuala Lumpur that make a profit from the sanctions on Iran and the fact that ATMs in Iran are not connected to the

international financial system. Thus, Iranians have to bring cash when going abroad and foreigners visiting Iran have to do the same.

All of my interlocutors said that an important reason why they had gone abroad were friends that were already there, or word of mouth. Networks play an important role when Iranians decide to go abroad – people in Pune or Kuala Lumpur influence their Iranian friends to come too.

The diasporic ties are in general pervasive. In Pune, the cliques of Iranians were mostly spending time with each other. They rarely had close ties with the citizens of their host country or with other Asians. In both Pune and Kuala Lumpur there were diasporic activities organized by Iranians, such as organizing a party for the Persian New Year. *Chaharshambe suri*, another Iranian fest on the Wednesday preceding the New Year, involving people jumping over fires, was also celebrated. The festivities, where and when, were announced through social media.

In Pune, there are shops that specialize in Iranian foods, and in both Kuala Lumpur and Pune there are Persian restaurants catering for mainly Iranians, even though there were more shops and restaurants in 2011-2012 when the number of Iranians in the two cities peaked. A major reason for the decreased number of Iranians is that the US dollar became much more expensive visavi the Iranian rial; consequently, plenty of people could not afford to stay – living expenses went up by several hundred per cents. Also, in Malaysia the visa regulations for Iranians suddenly became less generous. Before, around 2011 and 2012, Iranians were given a three-month visa on arrival, which meant that there was adequate time to enrol at university and get a student visa to be able to stay for longer periods. But in 2014 visas were given for only two weeks on arrival. Another reason that made the option of returning to Iran more realistic and attractive was when Ahmadinejad´s presidency was over and the more progressive Hassan Rohani came to power in 2013. At that point, many Iranians judged that it would be safe to return, at least for a visit.


## 6. Pride, partly Triggered by the Demonization of Iran by the West

Several of my interlocutors emphasised how strange and hostile conceptions Westerners in Malaysia and India had of Iran. The Iranians often found themselves having to defend Iran and convey that Iranians are not extremists, terrorists, or fundamentalist Muslims. These attitudes were not expressed, to the same degree at least, in encounters with Indians and Malays.

"You are Iranian? I thought Iranians would be different" a German woman told Amir in Kuala Lumpur. "Iran? Where are your suicide bombs", a British woman asked Mahnaz, in a café in Kuala Lumpur one evening. Similarly, Mahnaz recounts when she and a friend, also Iranian, met two men in a bar and were asked if they were terrorists. Mahnaz spent the whole evening with them discussing Iran. Many Europeans living in or visiting Malaysia as well as many Malays expressed such ideas. "I feel accused by just being Iranian", Mahnaz said. In Pune, Hussein explained to a European exchange student that cars existed in Iran – the European had assumed Iran to be very underdeveloped. That was something I heard in Iran too – among those who had visited Europe, a common experience was that people thought that Iran was extremely backward. "Do you have mobile phones in Iran?" a young Iranian musician was asked when visiting Budapest.

"I don't blame them. I blame my government for giving such a bad image of our country to the surrounding world", Mohsen, working at a restaurant, the Eastern Hut in Kuala Lumpur, said.

The experience that Westerners in Malaysia and India hardly knew anything about Iran and that Iranians therefore often had to explain and speak about Iran was commonly expressed by my interlocutors in Malaysia. By contrast, none of them uttered anything similar about the Indians and Malays. "People know about Iran here" Hussein in Pune said. This may seem logical considering that Iran and India, unlike Iran and Malaysia, have been in close contact over the centuries and have an overlapping history; they are also closer geographically. The Parsis, who are Zoroastrians, in Bombay and Pune, for example, have made the "Iranian" aspect of life in India more entrenched. In Iran, Malaysia is sometimes seen as a pleasant tropical country whereas India often is regarded as dirty and poor – but the exile Iranians typically do not face the negative attitudes in India as they sometimes do in Malaysia.

In India, Iran has long been thought of as a country of poets and sophistication having a language similar to Urdu, which was the language used by the poets in Delhi during Moghul times, until the British banned the language in 1835 after having occupied India in the 18th century. At that time the court language in India was Persian – the language of court culture as well as of the administration. At the Red Fort in Delhi, these words in Persian language are engraved and filled with gold: "*agar ferdoos hast, haminjast o haminjast o haminjast*" (if paradise exists, it is right here, right here, and right here).

Cultural intimacy, as formulated by Michael Herzfeld (1997), expresses aspects of a cultural identity that may be considered a source of international criticism for the state, but are nevertheless used to provide

people of a particular community with a sense of comfort. For Iranians abroad a sense of superiority that has been nurtured in Iran can give a sense both of unity and comfort. On the other hand, it may easily be a source of ridicule and antipathy for outsiders. For example, in wide circles speaking of "Aryan genes" is accepted – the phrase "we are Arians" is commonly heard by a visitor in Iran – seemingly unaware that the term has not been popular in the West since WW2. There is a sentiment that on one hand Iran is being demonized in the world while on the other hand Iranians are more sophisticated than others are.

"Is Avicii Swedish?" Hussein asked. "He has an Iranian producer or manager", he continued. "Someone working with him was at least Iranian". In Tehran, while watching the TV-serial Game of Thrones, my friend pointed out that the composer of the signature melody was Iranian. That André Agassi, the tennis player, had an Iranian background was something I heard more than once. While many Iranians in Kuala Lumpur and, albeit to a smaller extent, in Pune feel defensive about Iran because of people´s ignorance about their home country it is also very common that they express a great pride of Iran and being Iranian.

"Iranians feel superior to the Indians" Siavash told me in Pune. There is a pride among Iranians in India and Malaysia and the idea that their own country is culturally superior is widespread. Remarks such as "Indians are dirty" *kasif* or "their (the Malay's) culture is low" (*bifarhang hastan / farhangeshon paeen ast*) were common, at least among Iranians who just had arrived. However, after a few years abroad many have a more positive image of the host country, and the feeling of being culturally more advanced typically becomes less pronounced.

Fieldwork has been a humbling experience – what aspects of the field to focus on, which questions to dwell on et cetera have been my own choices – and indeed, what has been overlooked? In contrast to a novel by a fiction writer, an anthropological field monograph would be discredited had the anthropologists only pretended to have been on fieldwork. However, the differences might be smaller than we spontaneously think – "from the first ideas to fieldwork, note-taking and monograph, there are value judgements and choices. The necessary selectivity, the omissions, the accretions and theoretical paradigms lead is to acknowledge that the monograph is also a product and construct of the anthropologist´s academic and historical time (Okely, in Ingold (ed), 1996: 37).

Anthropologists may be professionally trained and take a pride in being as unbiased as possible. Still, unfailingly, the conceptions we have determine which aspects of reality we observe and which we ignore (Hazan and Hertzog, 2016: 31). It is easy to project preconceptions into a text in the guise of established theories. We have to be constantly "drilling in the

hard rock of our mind in order to overcome our stereotypes and mental blocks" (ibid). We need to question the conceptions we have gathered through fieldwork to avoid getting stuck in commonplace knowledge created by us and by the people we study. There has to be a dialectic relation between our selective observations and tentative interpretation for us to reach closer to an understanding of a reality that so unwillingly let itself to be conceptualized (ibid).

As we have seen, pride among Iranians exist together with opposite, equally pervasive sentiments – the feeling of having to defend oneself and of being a victim of racism – a kind of superiority/inferiority complex – *ogedeh*. Iranians often have this complex, which is likely to affect their behaviour (Majd, 2010: 85). The superiority/inferiority complex may cause Iranians to see themselves as victims of the West but also be enormously proud of their culture and "sometimes too confident in an innate superiority" (Majd, 2010: 172). Iranians typically refer their superiority to the long history of a sophisticated home country that has had recognizable borders for millennia, while at the same time they suffer from feeling inferior because of West´s economical advantages (Majd, 2010: 172). *Ogedeh* was felt among Iranians I met during fieldwork – the feeling of being nobler than others while at the same time, especially when being among foreigners abroad, representing a country that is often misunderstood at least in the West.

Although Iranians abroad often left Iran because of disagreement with their government the Islamic Republic's version of nationalism sometimes confer with that of many of the country's migrants. The pride of the culture and history may join most Iranians together, but the Islamic Republic´s tendency to stress the specific Islamic history is often not shared by young students. Instead, the Iranians I met during fieldwork were often emphasizing Iran's pre-Islamic heritage, wearing necklaces with *faravahar*, a figure signifying Zoroastrianism, and having photos of Persepolis in their flats.

"Here's better to live than in Koregaon Park, since the houses are *newer* in Viman Nagar, Hussein said in a car while he drove through the area in 2016. In his flat, while he commented on a beautiful wooden sofa he had, he said that it had become *old*, implying that he didn't like the sofa anymore. These kind of comments were common and represent a concept I don't recognise from anywhere else. Are houses better to live in when they are new? Is not living in an old house desirable and associated with character and cultural capital? In Pune in March 2015, I interviewed Sara who had been living in India for a few years. She lived in Koregaon Park – by many regarded as one of the best places to stay in while in Pune although disliked by Hussein – but would prefer to live somewhere else,

where the houses were *newer*. I think that the insistence on things that are considered as new is an expression of being different. In the same vein, it was hard to find Iranians that liked spicy Indian food.

Donya, 25, and I walked around in Little India in Kuala Lumpur the week preceding *Diwali*, the Hindu celebration. We were supposed to stop and eat something, and we walked by a south Indian place. I ordered a *thosai* – a South Indian dish, similar to a crepe – in India called *dosa*, and asked if she would like one too. She has been living in Malaysia for over three years, and hadn't yet eaten in such a "simple" restaurant. "They are not clean", she said. In Pune, when we were to eat, my Iranian friends often drove spontaneously to Kentucky Fried Chicken or some other Western-style fast food joint, not any of the local Indian – and in my opinion much better – restaurants. Similarly, in Delhi, some years before, I had friends from Tehran who would not eat in any local restaurants since they didn´t considerer them "clean".

One way to interpret this emphasis on "clean" places and "new" houses is to think of it as a way to distinguish oneself from the local population. In the book Purity and Danger, Mary Douglas writes that "the ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating and publishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience" (Douglas, 5, 1966). And further, "if uncleanliness is matter out of place, we must approach it through order. Uncleanliness or dirt is that which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained" (Douglas, 1966: 50). The insistence on "cleanliness" – for what in this case is a different cuisine – can be an expression to keep the order of being different and distinguish oneself from the local population.

**Most Iranians whom I meet in Pune have dogs**. It must be incredibly inconvenient, and it was surprising to see to what extent the dogs appeared to govern so many people´s lives. "I still have not been to Goa, since I don't know what I would do with my dog," says Hussein. "And I would have considered going back to Iran in the summer, but it is so complicated to bring my dog. It might be possible, but it is very hard" he says. A few years later, we discuss whether it would be possible to bring the dog to Europe, since Hussein is thinking of continuing his studies in Germany or Sweden. But he would not make a move without the dog.

Once Hussein and I saw Golnaz and Homa on a scooter in the front of us. We drove faster to catch up. The sisters had a dog between them on the scooter, and Hussein had his in front of him. I did not suspect to see a small poodle with them. Another day, in the Yogitree café in Koregaon Park in Pune, the table next to mine was occupied by a group of Persian-speakers. After a while, I joined them. Under the table, I realised after

some time, was a resting dog, the same kind of poodle as both Hussein and Golnaz and Homa had. Poodles are not particularly common in India. If anything people have dogs as guarding houses. Why does one see so many Iranians with dogs in India? (To have dogs as pets is not particularly common in India, nor is it common in Iran). In Iran it is forbidden to have pet dogs – dogs in the street are shot by the police, and there are crack-downs on dog owners (Kamali Dehghan, 6 November 2014). The reason is that dogs are considered unclean in Islam. Having dogs can thus be seen as another way of making a point that one is not pro-regime. Alternatively, people might link having pets to a posh and western life-style – the dogs that are popular among Iranians abroad are in my experience small dogs that makes me think of celebrities' pets in Hollywood.


## 7. Surveillance and an Authoritarian Regime

What are the pull and push factors for the Iranians going to India and Malaysia? The push factors include what is thought of as the general oppressiveness of the Islamic Republic, which for many culminated and became unbearable and / or dangerous during the summer of 2009. The pull-factors for India and Malaysia are, arguably, not as strong as the push-factors. The totalitarian nature of the Iranian regime, with its morality police and forbidding culture, together with the high unemployment and economical downward spiral, has helped creating a culture of migration in urban Iran among the young. The culture of migration can be described as a non-movement in Bayat's sense, in the way the migrants are not organized albeit so many share the same plans.
It can be argued then that a lack of freedom of speech, and a stifling vibe caused by the authoritarian regime, together with the socio-economical context, has caused the culture of migration.

There is a seemingly contradiction between Bayat's non-movements, where people make quite passive choices while still being political, and Scott's strategies of the poor – everyday strategies people find in order to resist the hegemonic order. The two approaches are however not incompatible, and people can have several ways at work simultaneously in order to be able to live the life they want to live.

Connected to an authoritarian regime is state surveillance of its inhabitants – conspicuous in Iran. As expressed by many, and felt by myself, one consequence is an uneasy feeling – one never knows who is listening or what kind of behaviour that, for the time being, is considered as acceptable by the regime. The result can be self-censorship, possibly a goal of the totalitarian regime. The same mechanism is also valid abroad.

Iranians know that the Islamic Republic might have its eyes on them wherever they may be. If one plans to go back to Iran one might refrain from participating in any political activity that could be viewed as being hostile to the Islamic Republic.

Maryam, 26, from Tehran, was living and studying in London the summer of the Green Revolution. She, among hundreds of people, was demonstrating outside the Iranian embassy by Hyde Park. "They were filming the demonstrators", she tells me. Many in the crowd, the majority being exile Iranians, covered their faces so that they would not be recognized. Maryam didn't dare to return to Iran for several years. "Many used the occasion to apply for asylum in the UK. But it means that one has to give up one´s Iranian citizenship. And I was not willing to do that. Many of my friends managed to get permanent residency in the UK after that summer. Now it is hard for them to return to the UK. *They know everything, anyway*," she emphasised and laughed. It's easy to get paranoid when dealing with the authorities of the Islamic Republic – they are notoriously non–consistent. What is considered legal one day might not remain so the next day. Often, Iranians that were active in the protests during the summer or 2009 abroad – in London, Sweden or Toronto – was under the impression that the Iranian authorities were checking them.

The experience of being watched creates an uneasiness and fear. "Leaving Iran felt like coming out of a jail", said Fariba in Kuala Lumpur. "What I can't stand is their talk about morality – as if they would have any", she continued. Although Fariba compared leaving Iran with coming out of jail, implying that surveillance was not an issue abroad, many others were speaking about the control that the Islamic Republic exercised in Pune and Kuala Lumpur, checking on the activities of the Iranian students.

The categories "hegemonic culture", "traditional" and "counter culture", are of course, not clear-cut and always overlap to some degree. Still, for the sake of analysis, it makes sense to speak of them. What to make of the *basij*, the paramilitary youth, purportedly working for the ideals of the Islamic Republic? Less accessible for outsiders than the "counter culture" – youth, the revolutionary *basij* are less understood. How do they position themselves in the city? An article in May 2017 in Le Monde points out that they are as fashionable as anyone, and tries to renew their image away from the sombre outlook they are known to have. They are also known to have been ruthlessly battling the demonstrators on the streets the summer in 2009. Since 1979, the look of the *basij* has not evolved much – dark clothes, loose shirts. But this is about to change – the revolutionary youth takes part of foreign media as everyone else, and navigates between the ideals of the revolution and a global culture transmitted via social media and TV. Many appear, however, firm in their

ideals and are loyal to the Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, who wants the youth to challenge the West in its "cultural war" with "Iranian values" (Imbert, Le Monde, 23.05.2017). Still, the *basij* identities are of course as plastic as anyone´s and a common reason to become a *basij* is plainly the advantages a membership ensues – in terms of scholarships, entrance to universities, and employment opportunities.

*An ethnographical vignette.* "Who are the *basij*? Who would want to be one of them?" I once asked a young man after chatting for a few hours on a long-distance bus between Shiraz and Bandar Abbas. He looked perplexed. "Well, I am one of them. I cannot afford not to be. All the advantages, the scholarships, I can´t afford not to be a member", he said, while at the same time being frustrated with the government and life situation and dreaming of going abroad.

## 8. Conclusion: Migration as a Way to Say "No"

For an Iranian generation brought up after the Islamic Revolution, without memories of the Shah and the monarchy, the summer of 2009 often shattered hopes one might have had about the future of the Islamic Republic, and triggered a desire to leave the country. The demonization of Iran by the West ("the axis of evil", "a terrorist state" et cetera) has contributed to people being both anxious and proud about their nationality – anxious since Iran is so misunderstood in the West, proud because of the rich history and cultural heritage. In order to distance oneself from the Islamic Republic, many young Iranians in Kuala Lumpur and Pune emphasise the pre-Islamic history of Iran. Although every migrating story is unique, there are common themes that this generation share, such as the experience of the Green Movement, a marker of a generation.

The totalitarian regime of the Islamic Republic, as well as what can be the repressive social and moral norms, has contributed to a culture of migration – to migrate is widely seen a viable project for the future. To migrate is partly a rite of passage too, a way to grow up. Still, marriage remains a structure deeper than migration, and is more important as a way to reach social adulthood. Because of bounded agency, although most Iranians that I met would prefer to migrate to the West, many end up going to India or Malaysia. With performative agency, people navigate between the different worlds and realities that the complex Iranian context requires.

When abroad, and especially in a context that one has not entirely chosen by choice, it becomes important to distinguish oneself vis-à-vis the

local population. Related to cultural intimacy, this can take the form of emphasising and glorifying ones own culture, or a rejection of the local cuisine.

Iranians feel that the West has a negative image of Iran and they themselves typically despise the Iranian regime. In order to relate to an Iranian identity to be proud of many cling to a past that is assumed to be glorious.

Not agreeing on a political ideology can take many forms, including less obvious ones. When explicit political action is connected to real danger, or the loss of one´s youth (if one is jailed and sentenced to a decade in jail, which is a veritable risk), protest can take more subtle forms. Examples of this are not to collaborate, or to ignore public holidays and commemorations that the state highlights. Another example is migration – to aspire and decide to leave to another country, where the morals of the Islamic Republic are not valid. Migration can thus be seen as a political act of non-collaboration, a way to say "no" to the political and social circumstances one finds oneself in.


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# Unravelling the Hidden Facets:
## A Carnivalesque Approach to Theyyam

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**Abstract:** *Myth and variant beliefs have been an important thread that bound the fabric of Indian culture. Even though our country has forgone into the modern era, certain beliefs and art forms persist with its singleness. Among the Indian states, Kerala has a unique way of exhibiting its myth and heroes through classical and folk arts, Malabar bearing the crown of folk tradition. As we dive deep into this world of colors, the grandeur of Theyyam embraces us with all its glory. Rather than being a folk art, Theyyam can be seen as a blend of divinity, belief, and sadhana of the human mind. The present paper attempts to decode the ideology of Caste and Gender that is inherent in this art form. Carnivalesque mode of approach to Theyyam substantiates the mechanism of power reversal in the social order. The artist's body that evokes the deity is placed on a higher pedestal irrespective of his position in the caste hierarchy. When the artists adorn the magnificence of this art, they are elevated to a divine status despite their so-called 'devalued' stratum in the society. This can be seen as an epitome of the Carnivalesque mode of the subversion of the social order. This subversion is not just confined to caste but the concept of gender stereotype is also reversed. Theyyam is an art form that is embellished by mythical heroines who are worshipped as the 'deities' of the land. Kadangottu Maakkam, Muchilottu Bhagavati, Bhadrakali, etc. being few among them who carries the variant emotions of female mind. The remarkable*

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*moment that seizes our attention is that the divinity of these mythical heroines is being evoked into the male body. In addition, this blurs the distinction of gender. Apart from the visual brilliance it creates, Theyyam, as an art of liberation echoes an egalitarian culture that is deliberately left unheard.*

The art form of a place talks a lot about the culture, history and the prevalent myths. Malabar has got a unique way of exhibiting its local myths and culture; Theyyam being a text that explores the socio-cultural belief system. Art can be classified as classical, folk, pop etc. when life of the common people unifies with art, we call it 'folk art'. Once art reflected the class of people, allowing only the educated elite to decipher things, but on the contrary folk arts invited the liberal mind to invoke in them the feeling of liberty and equality, where things fall into every mind irrespective of caste, creed and gender they belong to. Mostly they talk about the emotions of human mind. Anxiety, anger, happiness, suppression form the core of these arts, which make it visible to the common mind. The vibrating dance steps of Theyyam shows liberation of suppressed feelings.

Theyyam is a ritual art form of worship of the north Malabar especially in the Kolathunadu consisting of Kannur and Kasargod districts. It exists as a living cult with rituals customs and tradition that succeeded the test of time and dates back to several thousand years. For the people of North Malabar Theyyam is a quasi-divine figure and for the lovers of heritage and folk arts, it is undoubtedly the most enthralling blend of chamayakootu and ancient legends. Historians claim that Theyyam dates back to the Neolithic ages. It is accompanied by musical instruments like *chenda*, *elathaalam*, *veekkuchenda* and *kurumkuzhal*. There are more than four hundred Theyyams with their own style, music, and choreography. Performances are held in village shrines and ancestral worship with proper rites and rituals beginning with vellattam or thottam.

Theyyam rather than being a folk art carries with it the very notion of belief, dedication, and divinity. They are considered as the deities of the land. What makes Theyyam different from other art forms is its way of presentation; the artists who present it, the myth it holds and the message it bears. They are performed in the open air where the performer interacts with the audience as deities. It is performed by people who are categorized as lower castes. Once they were considered as untouchables, but through folk arts like Theyyam, they got privilege and respect as a human even if it was for a day. Most of them are performed by Malaya and Vannan communities. In addition, all the mythical heroes they represent bear with them the plight of oppression, treachery, and discrimination. As divine

forms, they spread the message of fraternity and equality. Unlike classical art forms, folk art does not have a prescribed text or rule to follow. They are passed on visually and verbally from one generation to the next. Moreover, alterations and customary changes were done according to the up-gradation of society. Since they are not bound by any rules and goes beyond the structured patterns of art, Theyyam liberates itself from the shackles of conventions. Moreover, it is not constrained by spatial elements. Move beyond the structures is what it ruminates. One of the major turn that Theyyam makes as an art form is that the 90% of the rituals are controlled and carried out by Marxist Believers who neglects the existence of this world beyond the materialistic world. It's because, as Marxism believes in the liberation of the proletariat, Theyyam in Kerala as an art form serves this purpose.This paper analyses the caste and gender ideology that is prevalent in this art form; the sense of altered caste and gender order is what makes Theyyam an art of liberation and subversion. In addition, these subversion and liberation are explained in this paper through some of the Theyyam forms like Karanavar, Pottan Theyyam, Muchilot Bhagavathi and Kadangot Maakkam. Theyyam in a way shows the blurring of caste and gender distinction in a language that can be understood by common people.

Caste discrimination is still a burning issue in modern India. In such a scenario art forms like Theyyam speak for the suppressed mind. Here we can see people mingling with each other irrespective of the caste they belong to. All the Theyyam forms that are performed in sacred places were once the people from lower castes were not allowed to step in, but once they attain the attire of these divine forms they are adorned and respected irrespective of the caste they belong to. Moreover, the subverted caste ideology and the irrelevance of caste in a society can be seen through this. Peripherally we see the invocation of divine power into a human body but actually, it connotes the idea that every human body is equally enriched with a divinity, which is called the 'humanity'. It teaches the lesson to respect each other as humans. The invoked divine powers are mostly ordinary people who were subjugated by the dominant caste.

The myth of Pottan Theyyam and Karanavar substantiate this concept. The word Karanavar represents the senior most member of a family. And this theyya kolam invokes the deceased ancestors of a family. The mightiness of these ancestors are sung through thottam paattu and it is performed by Malaya community. When they wear the attire of Karanavar, they are seated in the courtyard of the house, where once their touch was seen as a kind of pollution. The myth of Pottan Theyyam explains the irrelevance in following the caste order and relevance of the integrity of the human mind. The notion of 'integrity creates divinity' is

better explained by this folk art. The myth of Pottan Theyyam is associated with Sree Sankaracharya; on his way to climb Sarvagnapeedam Lord Shiva came to him as Pulaya Pottan seeing an untouchable on his way, he asked him to move out of his way, as he believed that even the sight of a lower caste pollutes his divine journey. Hearing Sankara's words Lord Shiva opened an argument asking Sree Sankaracharya what is the difference between them as it is only red colored blood that comes of their body if a cut is made'. Lord Shiva explains Sankara that education seems complete only if a person can hold the notion of equality and compassion to his fellow beings irrespective of the caste and gender he/she belongs to. Later this myth of Pulaya Pottan was adapted as a Theyyam form in an urge to spread the message of the irrelevance of caste order in society. In between the performance of Pottan Theyyan, the performer chants all the teachings and arguments in the form of Thottam Pattu.

Oppression and dominance were not just on the basis of caste and community. Double standards of society towards female and patriarchal dominance were also few among the issues. Theyyam in a way is a platform where depressed and oppressed female minds are liberated through a male body. The patriarchy that oppressed them invoked in their male body the mythical heroes who were the victims of their oppression. The Theyya Kolams of Kadangot Maakkam and Muchilot Bhagavathi are considered as mythical tragic heroes who were incarnated into Bhagavathi Kolam. Muchilot Bhagavathi is mainly the goddess of Vaniya community. She was originally a Brahmin woman and was intelligent and talented. Since during her days it was generally believed that women did not have the capability of being intelligent, she faced many oppositions and hurdles from various sides. People of her community did not allow her to nurture her wisdom and through foul play, she was expelled from the community. Disheartened, she asked a person from the Vaniya community to bring her oil and pouring the oil into the pyre; she committed suicide and turned into a divine figure. The plight of Kadangot Maakkam is also no less tragic. Being the only sister for her twelve brothers, she was spat by her sister in laws. Through false means, they made their husbands believe that she committed adultery with a person from a lower caste and without looking for any explanations she and her children were brutally killed and the bards say that her family became the victim of her divine wrath. All the female characters in Theyyam show the liberation of their emotions which were once restricted. The female mannerisms are adorned in a male body which when appear in real are often seen as a derogatory happening. Here we see a subversion of gender ideology were a male invokes in him the 'feminity'. There exist many critical commentaries on Theyyam that it is an art form where the physical presence of women is absent, Devakooth

being the only Theyyam form done by females, which in effect is seen as a blend of classical dance that appropriates to the constructed mannerisms of women. However, when we think deeply on this issue, instead of blindly criticizing Theyyam as a patriarchal representation we should see it as a form that justifies the existence of man in women and women in man. 'Othering' is a common tendency in society. The thoughts of humans are also programmed according to the socially constructed gender ideology, shifting away from it makes him/her the other. Even the walk, gestures, expression, postures are categorized as feminine and masculine and people are expected to conform to either of these attributes. The existence of such conditions rules out through Theyyam where the invoked divinity becomes feminine. Here the socially constructed notion of gender ceases to exist and uplifts the ideology of 'being human'.

Great stories of Kerala are often told through art. It is here that our legends become known. The lives of those who were oppressed and mercilessly expelled from society are perceived in a new way. Through Theyyam, their divinity is now worshipped and respected. The unheard cries and voice of these subjugated folks found a place among the higher pedestal of Gods and Goddesses and we worship them when they come alive through Theyyam and we listen to what they say with awe and respect. Their legends are spread throughout the land that once condemned them and their suppressed voices are now heard by millions of people through this magnificent art form Theyyam.

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# Mapping Cultural Identities:
# Translations and Intersections
*Conference Report*

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The two-day *International Conference Mapping Cultural Identities: Translations and Intersections* is the seventh of the series of conferences on Language, Literature & Culture, organized by Çankaya University, Ankara, Turkey and hosted in 2018 by the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures and the Center for Linguistic and Intercultural Research, at "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University in Bucharest, Romania.

The scientific international event brought together over one hundred scholars and graduates from various countries[3], researching the intersections of cultural studies, imagology and translations. *Translation Studies* were approached from multiple perspectives, from Translating Cultures to Cultural Translation of Poetry and Translations in Drama, from Feminist Translations of the *Other* to Translations and Literary Images.

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The theme of *Otherness* was exploited from ethnic and social perspectives in narrow objective focused panels as Indian Cultural Identity and Memories, African Cultural Images, Irish Cultural Images, and French Cultural Images, while *Images' Construction and Cultural Images* were framed in Post-Colonial Identities, Media, Movies, Language & Literature and in East–West Channels.

The frames for discussions and developments were set by the four keynote speeches *Black Hawk's Autobiography and Ethnic Cultural Identity*, by Roger NICHOLS, *An Intertextual Translation Venture From Cervantes to Tilkiyan*, by Günil Özlem AYAYDIN CEBE, *Unmentioned Cultural Iconography in W. H. Hudson's Fiction*, by Raúl IANES and *When Agency Becomes Impossible: Identity Politics, Bureaucratic Torture, and the Divine State*, by Smadar LAVIE.

Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Arizona, Roger Nichols discussed the issues of translation of cultural and ethnic identities, based on his last book *Black Hawk and the Warrior's Path* (Wiley: 2017). The talk on the "Intertextual Translation Venture: From Cervantes to Tilkiyan" of Günil Özlem AYAYDIN CEBE contributed to the field of studies on the translation practices in Ottoman literature, by closely investigating certain narratives (Cervantes's *La Galatea*, Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian's *Galatée*, Viçen Tilkiyan's *Çoban Kızlar (Shepherdesses)*, employing such concepts as inspiration, rewriting, interpretation, self-censorship, and authenticity. Professor Raúl IANES, Miami University, presented one of William Henry Hudson's fictional works *Ralph Herne* (1888), the only one that takes place in Buenos Aires and in an urban space, reflecting upon Hudson's cultural iconography through languages, spaces, readership, and cultures. Dr. Smadar LAVIE investigated the relationship between feminist of color protest movements in the State of Israel and the Israel-Palestine conflict, based on the Mizrahi feminists' case.

In the context of globalization, the issue of cultural identity has stirred increasing attention. Cultural Translation, as a method of cultural (de)construction, supports the cultural differences and enriches both cultural identities. Thus, the conference explored possibilities for a new breakthrough by examining current studies and considering new perspectives on cultural identity approach to translation. Analyzing different ethnic and cultural identities, such as African, Irish, French and Indian from cultural and imagological perspectives, exploring the new construction of a globalized world from a wider angle, measuring the literary reception, investigating different layers of cultural identities and revealing both self-images and the images of the *Other*, the scientific event offered an animated and excellent platform for knowledge sharing.