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CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
Cometences and Capabilities

CONTENTS

BULGARIAN ETHNIC MODEL – NATIONAL VERSION OF THE DIALOG OF CIVILIZATIONS

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The end of the Cold war and the fall of Berlin wall may be considered as a result and factor for building up a new international relations' system. The old international ideological antagonism "Capitalist West-Socialist East" has been replaced by world public opinion's striving for setting up a new social harmony and economic harmony. A formula for the ex-ideological camps convergence had to be found just for arguing the new world reality and the world leadership redistribution. Meanwhile, quite often the new strategists invented ideological patterns seeking their own identification and confirmation as new international elite. The strongly theorized matter had been constructed on two levels:

1. Officially and methodologically, all social theories are oriented to the world consensus motivation. In order to be more convincing they are realized by easy comprehensible logical means.

2. Instinctively and basically, the post- Cold War theories reproduce the established intellectual status quo of the world separation regardless of the classification criteria. The civilization values classification becomes most relevant thanks to the wide scope of practical steps. Instinctively the mankind is still bearing a sense of the mistrust and aggressiveness rather than loyalty and tolerance.[1] Human beings are still divided into developed and underdeveloped, poor and rich, Christians and Muslims, Northern and Southern, West and East Europe, etc….It is an intellectual heritage from the Cold War confrontation. May be the inertia of the past is still stronger than the efforts for a consensus future.

The above mentioned specificity shapes the dialog of the civilizations as a global social theory aiming at a mutual understanding and common prosperity. Huntigton's theory implements a huge impact on the matter because he conceived the idea of the main strands of the coexistence between human groups that he qualified as civilizations. Huntingon's very important contribution is the conclusion that new leading subjects of the international relations' system had been appeared.

Basically, the civilization community is gathered on religious criteria and after the end of the Cold War stroke as leading subject within international relations' system. Thus, it appeared some of the main civilizations such as Western, Islamic, Christian Orthodox, Christian Catholic, African, etc…[2]Religious identity faces the diversity of coherent filters in the civilization building process. The religion plays the role of common dominator. It is no accident that the dogmatic system of all monotheistic religions contents the notion of God's unity. God is one for all practitioners. It is to be represented by different prophets who used their people's language. No religion claims violence. However, there are unscrupulous clerics or some translators who falsify the Holly Books. Basically, they cut across the main

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[1] See Thomas Hobbes' interpretation of natural law, social contract and State-building process, Goyard, V-Fabre, S., Le droit et la philosophie de Thomas Hobbes, Paris, 1975; Lawrence, K., Thomas Hobbes and Political Theory, University Press of Kansas, 1990.

[2] Huntigton, S., The Clash of Civilizations and the Remarking of World Order, translation in Bulgarian R. Radeva, Obcessian, 1999, p. 52.

principles of their own religion, they contradict the psychological model of the dogmatic system they practice and unconsciously quit their religious identity and civilization community. As sectarians they declare war on the majority of the mankind. Nevertheless, I share the concept that civilization subject matches appropriate civil status or well or less profiled civil society group, no religious community.

Thus, ethnologically the word "civilization" leads to two-fold meanings:

1. A psychologically shaped group, which easily (but not permanently) may be identified by its religion. The Statehood and the foreign policy are the most relevant evidences for its institutional existence.

2. A social process which coincides with the human efforts for eternal improvement and wishes for social welfare.

During the war in Kosovo Bulgarian ex-President Peter Stoyanov focused on the identical expression: "civilization choice" bearing in mind only the political component of the process in question.[3] It was related to the Bulgarian society assessment of NATO air-strikes against Yugoslave army. It is to Bulgarian political elite to provide evidence of civilization values change or the shift of the so-called political culture of the Bulgarian people. It encompasses simultaneously the traditional psychological adjustment of the nation, which is summarized by the emblematic term of "religious belonging" and common sense strongly related to the human efforts for social prosperity. The problem of the coherence of the civilization community is quite important regarding the fact that it may be perceived through the following dichotomy dependence: the influence and the exact dimensions of the foreign pressure and the instinctive reaction-response of the group resulting of the religious identity.

The wars in ex-Yugoslavia and the behaviors of the so-called holders of the "Orthodox civilization" suggested that Orthodox religion might be characterized as "missing" religion or "withdrawing religion".[4] We may sustain this hypothesis bearing in mind the presence and the dynamism of the State as a leading foreign policy agent in the international relations' system. The ethnic group as such took away from the civilization group the competencies of State identity and State representativeness.

During the last two decades Bulgarian Ethnic Model (BEM) got a footing in the society and imposed itself as a special political theory within the Bulgarian political agenda. It was innovated by Bulgarian society and its political practice aiming to find out the appropriate long-term answer concerning the implementation of one of the most important aspects of the internal national consents. BEM may be considered as political alternative or a multitude of political principles and characteristics that predominantly include hypothetical structural components. It aims to overcome the intellectual Communist inheritance, the internal confessional differentiation and the presumptive ethnic confrontation. On the other side, BEM became quite relevant and important intellectual product of Bulgarian post-Communist political thought. Indeed, it may be qualified as an impressive ramification of Bulgarian contemporary elitism.

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[3] Bulgarian President Peter Stoyanov's Official Statement about NATO strikes in Kosovo, 17.04.1999.

[4] Chukov, Vl., Foreign Policy and Ideas, Patadigma, 1999, p. 317.

According to the latest ethnologic research, more then 50 different ethnic groups coexist in the country.[5] Therefore, the ongoing competition for the power between the representatives of this ethnic amalgam has to extract democratic rules admissible for everybody. BEM may be characterized as crisis theory. Its impact is significant during the period of State weakness and social insecurity such as it has to be perceived the period of political and economic posttotalitarian transition.[6] In Bulgaria, the overall internal crisis was pushed forward by the so called "revival process" consequences, which remain the gravest disgrace of the Bulgarian totalitarian State in the field of its multiethnic policy. At the same time, at the end of the first decade of the political changes in the country political leader of the Bulgarian Turks Ahmed Dogan publicly launched its concept of BEM. It triggered symptomatic political trends and demonstrated sincere efforts to reach a proposed ethnic harmony with convenient practical consequences. BEM remains a theoretical attempt to establish a sustainable framework of the Bulgarian internal ethnic concert.

Firstly, at this moment, it plays a very important role for the mobilization of agents enabling to build a specific Balkan matrix of State of social welfare. Despite this, the internal mechanisms of BEM implementation left many of the ethnic problems unsolved.

Secondly, BEM gradually crept into permanently renewed national ideal framework. On the eve of the new century, Bulgarian public opinion identified full membership in the European Union and NATO, popularized by the media like "the immanent Euroatlantic orientation", as part of the post-Communist national interests transformed in respective foreign policy goals.

In 1998 political leader of Bulgarian Turks and the Movement of Rights and Freedoms Ahmed Dogan started to shape the theoretical formula the interBulgarian civilization dialog. He pretended to launch within Bulgarian civil society and political elite political and social matrix that he called Bulgarian ethic model (BEM). In 2001 this theoretical construct had been strongly contested by several Gypsy's NGOs. Dogan claimed that BEM is one of the rational and civilization options to be offered to Bulgarian society unlike the bloody Yugoslave interfaith and interethnic model. I would like to summarize the following specific features as they had been formulated by Bulgarian Turks' leader:

1. The Dialog of civilizations is a real and quite distinctive process within Bulgarian social and political space as its agents had been specified. It is easy to identify them insofar it concerns religious shaped bloc. Those agents are quite relevant and sufficient operational for initiating and maintaining active intercivilization contacts. Meanwhile, it is difficult whenever it concerns in-group or co-subjects' dialog within a specific civilization bloc. Thus, the ethnos as policy building agent remains the real holder and the originator of the in-group civilization bloc. The ethnic group plays the role of the most active social factor distinguished by the following features: an autonomous and self-changing reflex system, an independent evaluation

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[5] The concerned information is collected upon unofficial ethnographic statistical researches of Bulgarian NGO Center for Historical and Political Studies, 1999

[6] The crisis in neighbor Macedonia in March 2001 and the legislative elections in June 2001 seriously challenged the BEM background. The statements of Bulgarian Turk and Gypsy leaders became more radical claiming more effective involvement of the big minorities in the power.

system of given historical case, independent concept of Statehood traditions and a specific notion of national unity.

Bearing in mind the above mentioned circumstances the difference between the two ethnic groups – Bulgarians and Serbs, who are representatives of Balkan Orthodox bloc and respectively their minority communities – Turks and Albanians, are quite relevant. The so-called "ethnic" or "nationalist vote" varies in both countries in very large scale. In Bulgaria sociologists suggest about 20-30% of ethnic Bulgarians express to so-called ethnic vote unlike Serbia where nationalist motivated voters are to be evaluated about 60-70%. Similar image and report are to be outlined among the minority political parties. 50-60% of Bulgarian Turks support vote for its ethnical political party MRF while Albanians in Serbia vote 100% for their nationalist political organizations. These figures prove the existence of two controversial models issued from the same civilization bloc, Bulgarian Ethnic Model and Serbian Ethnic Cleaning.

When we talk about the ethnic group as real subject of the dialog of civilizations in Bulgaria I focus on the special role of the Turks as the main minority community. Other Muslim groups remain dispersed among Bulgarian majority. Meanwhile, Bulgarian Gypsies endeavored for their own political organization. In 1999 they set up "Free Bulgaria" and few years later "Euroroma" for claiming to be independent players in BEM. As a matter in fact, the self-sense of inferiority prevailed within Gypsy's and Pomak's (Bulgarian Pomaks) behaviour and these communities remained satellite social and political agents toward the most influential group – Bulgarians and Turks. Basically, Pomak's and Gypsy's vote had been oriented toward the ruling political party – Union of Democratic Forces, Bulgarian Socialist Party, the royalist movement from side or the MRF from another side.

2. The dialog of civilizations and its Bulgarian version is to be perceived as ideological problem. We have to tackle to problem on both sides: foreign and domestic policy. Ahmed Dogan declared at the 6th National Conference of MRF that BEM and its civilization dimensions represent the triumph of the world liberalism. He is right from formal point of view. The world public opinion does not identify all partisan of the dialog of civilizations as ideological liberals. This is because the Islamic world or community has no clear, well-shaped political and ideological spectrum as it is in European society. Thus, the dialog of civilizations is rather permanent process of methodological comparison than a clash between the main political and ideological families – Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism.

The political parties speed up the process of the dialog of civilizations as far as it is a political case. The evidences in Bulgarian case are quite obvious. The local political agents are not only constructors, but also the theorists of BEM's principles. They focused on the equality and balance between the partners in the dialog. Ahmed Dogan declared that "the real criterion of the dialog of civilizations and the democracy is the moral. It concerns the relationship between the majority and the different minorities. The ethnonational State has to respect the principal of the equality of all citizens including the collective rights and freedoms of the minorities".[7]

During the periods 1991-1992 and 1997-2001 the ruling Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) provided the conservative pattern outlines for ethnic minorities' involvement. Smaller political organizations like VMRO, Civil Party of Bulgaria,

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[7] Dogan, A., Political report at the 6th National Conference, 17-18.01.2000, p.6.

etc…with moderate impact on domestic public opinion, enriches the right wing visions. In mid - 2001 Bulgarian Conservative wing remains not quite fermented and structured from ideological point of view despite its international recognition. UDF and the Popular Union are electoral type political organizations. This circumstance bases the confined and selective flux of experts dealing with minorities' problems. As a whole, the Conservative political subjects may be characterized by lack of strongly theoretical purposes. The sole sources in this matter are ad hoc organized workshops, interviews and statements of the ruling UDF leaders provoked by incidental cases. The views in question are enriched by the similar mass media interventions of the leaders of other right wing political parties - CPB, VMRO, etc… The Conservative approach for minorities' involvement in the power includes the following items:

A. Implementation of "non-quota" approach, which entails significant political and social offspring during the respective political model dominance. On February 2000, during the UDF workshop in Pamporovo Ivan Kostov, the UDF leader stated that the ethnic identity is not favor. The representatives of the local minorities are going to be involved in the State administration (including the high level) according to their capacity of Bulgarian citizens with requested professional skills, but not as Turks, Gypsies, Pomaks, etc…[8]

B. Direct contact with the relevant minority representatives by means of getting round of the spontaneous shaped in-group elite of each community. Logically, the Bulgarian Conservatives founded artificial elites, which gradually transformed themselves in semi-dependant political subjects. Par example the National Movement for Rights and Freedoms (NMRF) was founded by MRF rebel Guner Tahir and was assisted by UDF. This minuscule political party survives only for decreasing the MRF electoral influence. G. Tahir, himself remains critical towards UDF Conservative approach towards Turkish community's involvement in the power.[9]

C. It seems that this way of interacting with the minorities is not the best within Bulgarian political and social traditions. The Conservative method provokes constant misunderstandings with the appropriate political party or the minority cultural elite. The MRF isolation from the power suggests risk of social tension. The increased verbal tension between UDF and MRF culminated in the instinctive statement of Ivan Kostov that "MRF is malediction for Bulgaria".

It seems Bulgarian Socialist party (BSP) remained the most hesitant leading political agent in Bulgaria to clarify its stance toward the local version of the dialog of civilizations. In the outset of the transition period the difference between socialists and social democrats is evident. It seems that BSP as successor of the totalitarian Bulgarian Communist party and main political party in Bulgaria harbored some active nationalist remnants from the Communist period. Little by little BSP official stance

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[8] Trud, 17 February 2000

[9] In an interview in "24 hours" newspaper published on 14 March 2001, Guner Tahir declared that UDF policy towards the minorities is totally wrong. Despite this media intervention G. Tahir once again signed a pre-electoral accord with UDF for mutual participation in the legislative election

shifted due to the ad hoc political considerations and as whole remained theoretically undermined. Bulgarian Communists who inspired and realized the so-called "revival process" during the period 1984-1989 later, in 1991, attempted to ban Movement for rights and freedoms. In 1995 former BSP leader and today's Bulgarian president Georgui Parvanov compared municipal elections in Kardjali with Stalingrad battle. While in 2000 he called for adoption of European vision for State-nation building process removing the ethnic criteria. In 1999 he sent a letter of solidarity to Slobodan Miloshevich, responsible for the ethnic cleaning in Kosovo. In 2011 Parvanov categorically condemned Bulgarian nationalist party Ataka's attack against the prayer at Sofia mosque.

3. The character, the history and the ideological specificity of the local nationalism is the third factor influencing the national version of the dialog of civilizations. Ahmed Dodan declared that the structure of the nationalist ideology is the most important component of the stability of BEM.[10] It must be added also the nature of local populist speech as leading operational mean for the political goals' realization. Bulgarians are among the emotional southern nations that are strongly vulnerable to populist propaganda. It is noteworthy that in Bulgaria stoke three types of populist expression. The first is elitist and typical of the party of former monarch Simeon II. The second can be called "populism for the masses" and it is appropriate for the now ruling party GERB of the Prime Minister Boyko Borisov. The third can be classified as aggressive, racist and remains specific for the far nationalist political part Ataka, leaded by Volen Siderov.

Similar is the situation in Greece, Italy, partly in France. Politicians like Boyko Borisov, Nicolas Sarkozy or Silvio Berlusconi could hardly become leaders in Nord European countries.

According to Ahmed Dogan's theory nationalist feelings in the Balkans are projected in the past of each people. The nationalism is playing the role of a redeeming mechanism for the accumulated historical reflexes.[11] We can also add that nationalism of the small nations depends proportionally on the feelings of inferiority, which is demonstrated by the satellite behaviour towards the big powers.

The nationalist behaviour has a long history and may be interpreted by the specific understanding of each of the following components: Statehood, national interests, national and State sublimity, national consensus, etc…the history of the national State remains the most important factor for nationalism building process and its ideological features as leading political doctrine.

There are three kinds of nationalist theory and appropriate behaviours, whose classification depends on whether they produce stimulating or destructive relations with the dialog of civilizations.

1. Missionary nationalism is typical for the ethnosocieties that rely on imperial consciousness of the nation. As a whole, such kind of nations feels satisfied by the place and the importance of their State in the New World Order. In Europe we may classify the leading nations as France, Great Britain, etc... In the Balkans we may

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[10] Dogan, A., Untitled Paper…..p.8.

[11] Ibid…..p.9.

perceive Greece (Bizantium) and Turkey (Ottoman Empire before Erdogan's coming on power in 2002);

2. Aggressive and destructive nationalism is appropriate for nations, which built Empire relied on political domination of one ethnic or religious group on the others. The ex-Empires had been humiliated by the realities of the New World Order. In the Balkans Serbs are typical holders of such kind of nationalism. They established Yugoslave Empire by copying the structure and the ideology of former USSR.

3. Nationalism of participation or supporting type is appropriate for the majority of world State-nations. We may also call neutral from the point of view of maintaining a logical and balanced system of international relations. Bulgarians set up ethnic nation, not civilian one, reproduce exactly such kind of nationalism. Bulgaria had never been an Empire and Bulgarian legislature never acquired colonial-power characteristics.

So, we may summarize the following BEM characteristics as internal civilization dialog in Bulgaria and as they perceived by Ahmed Dogan:

1. Civil society is unified in its diversity;

2. Society pluralism is an imperative precondition for mutual enrichment of all social components;

3. The imposition of a monolithic ethnic nation will lead to violence and State destruction.

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MULTIKULTI IST GESCHEITERT. ES LEBE DIE INTERKULTUR

MOBILE GESELLSCHAFT UND VERWANDLUNGSANGEBOTE

Penka Angelova

Die Überwindung des Nationalismus liegt nicht im Internationalismus, wie viele bisher geglaubt haben, denn wir sprechen Sprachen. Sie liegt im Plurinationalismus.[12]

Die Verwandtschaft, bzw. die Kenntnis von Sprachen könnte ein kommunikations-stimulierender und nicht hemmender Faktor sein. Sprache stiftet eine starke Identität, bemerkt Pelinka, auch immer in Konkurrenz zu Religion, Klasse, Geschlecht, Region, Generation"[13] u. a. Aber sie schafft auch Sicherheit. In dem Zusammenspiel und in dem Bündel von Identitäten kommt auch die besondere persönliche Prägung individueller Identitäten in einer jeden Gemeinschaft und in sich überschneidende Gemeinschaften zum Tragen.

In ihrer Dissertation zur Sprachenpolitik der EU als Sicherheitsfaktor in der europäischen grenzüberschreitenden Zusammenarbeit (Cross-Border-Cooperation)[14] betrachtet Mimi Kornazheva die Sicherheit als soziales Konstrukt und stellt die These auf, dass der Begriff der „internationalen Sicherheit" ein sozialer Konstrukt aus dem Kalten Krieg ist: *die militärische Sicherheit sei bei einer Atomkerngefahr und bei gegenseitiger Verletzbarket nur durch internationale Zusammenarbeit möglich.* Nach dem Ende des Kalten Krieges konstruieren sich aber die **nicht-militärischen** Gefahren prioritär. Der Begriff der internationalen Sicherheit erweitert seine Wirkungsbreite auch auf die politische, wirtschaftliche, gesellschaftliche und ökologische Sicherheit. So betrachtet Kornazheva die Sprachenpolitik als einen der Faktoren für gesellschaftliche Sicherheit, der eine bestimmte gesellschaftliche Wirklichkeit bestimmt, indem er Gleichstellung oder Nicht-Gleichstellung der gesprochenen Sprachen konstituiert und dadurch in Extremfällen zu Sprachimperialismus, bzw. Linguizismus, linguistischen Genozid und Lingua franca führen kann. Am Beispiel von unterschiedlichen Fallstudien weist sie nach, wie Sprachenpolitik ihrerseits individuelle und gemeinschaftliche Sicherheit, bzw. Unsicherheit konstituieren kann. So erweist sich die Notwendigkeit von gemeinschaftlichen Sprachenpolitiken entscheidend für die Überwindung von gemeinschaftlicher und individueller Unsicherheit. Die Entscheidung zum Erlernen und Benutzen einer Sprache ist die Wahl zur Identifikation

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[12] Elias Canetti: Die Provinz des Menschen, Carl Hanser Verlag 1973, München, S.67

[13] Vgl. Dietmar Larcher: Kunstreiten auf dem Lipizzaner der Identität. Selbstvergewisserung unter den Bedingungen der Risikogesellschaft. In: Kunstreiten auf dem Lipizzaner der Identität. Beiträge zu Kultur und Mentalität. Klagenfurt: Wieser, 1998, S. 16-35, hier: S..22.

[14] Mimi Kornazheva: Die Sprachenpolitik – Sicherheitsfaktor in der europäischen Cross-Border-Cooperation. Ruse, 2010, auf bg. Корнажева, М. *Езиковата политика – фактор за сигурност в европейското трансгранично сътрудничество*.

mit Gemeinschaften, die mit diesen Sprachen assoziiert sind. Dementsprechend ist das Erlernen der Nachbarsprache auch eine Möglichkeit zur Überwindung langjähriger Entfremdung, sowie ein gleitender Übergang von regionalgemeinschaftlichen Identitätsstiftungen.

Parallel zu diesen multiplen grenzüberschreitenden Identitätsbildungen und in engem Zusammenhang mit ihnen ist auch **eine neue Durchschichtung und Gewichtung der europäischen Gesellschaften** zu beobachten, die ich hier thesenhaft vorstellen und an einigen Beispielen veranschaulichen möchte:

In der Gegenwart vollzieht sich eine neue Durchschichtung der Gesellschaft, die in ihrer Vehemenz mit der bürgerlichen Emanzipation der Aufklärung oder mit der proletarischen Emanzipation des 19. Jahrhunderts zu vergleichen ist. Auf der einen Seite spricht man von einer „radikalen Neugestaltung der Gesellschaft" auf der Grundlage der „Arbeitsgesellschaft" (Wolfgang Engler)[15], andererseits vollzieht sich eine Differenzierung in eine **mobile und eine stationäre Gesellschaft**,[16] die mit einer neuen Psychogenese und Soziogenese der modernen Persönlichkeitsstruktur einherschreitet. Die Mobilität, das Pendeln und Schwirren zwischen den Kulturen wird nicht mehr als die Beschäftigung ausgesuchter Reiseberichterstatter oder Beobachter fremder Kulturen angesehen, sondern nimmt zunehmende Ausmaße, verändert das Stadtbild und das Handeln in der Gemeinschaft, die Verhaltensweisen des Zoon politikon. Nicht zufällig beschäftigen in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts die Probleme der multikulturellen Gesellschaft alle Medien, einschließlich die sozialen Wissenschaften und die Literatur. Auch in der Kunst-, Kultur- und Bildungspolitik werden Globalisierungs-, bzw. Europäisierungsprozesse[17] beobachtet. Der Begriff der Politik, man spricht eher von unterschiedlichen Politiken in Plural, wird immer mehr globalisiert und das entspricht den allgemeinen Europäisierungs- und Globalisierungsprozessen. Aus unterschiedlichen Altersgruppen bewegen sich Formationen in verschiedene Richtungen, machen es sich bequem und suchen nach geeigneten Lebens- und Seinsweisen.

Wenn man von Mobilität spricht, sollte man sowohl die innere, als auch die grenzüberschreitende Mobilität berücksichtigen. Nach der Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands sind 2,3 Millionen Menschen zwischen den Jahren 1989 und 2009 „gen Westen" aufgebrochen. Aus Berlin wandern jährlich 120 000 „autochthone" Deutsche aus und ungefähr soviel ein. Ganze Stadtteile bekommen ein neues Antlitz. Eine Freundin, die auch Berlin verlassen hat, teilte mir mit, wie das ehemalige Viertel, in dem sie gewohnt hat, schon „ossifrei" sei. Im Zuge der Urbanisierung ist Istanbul ein Zentrum der Binnenmigration in der

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[15] Vgl. Wolfgang Engler: Bürger ohne Arbeit. Für eine radikale Neugestaltung der Gesellschaft. Aufbau Taschenbuchverlag 2006.

[16] Zu diesem Thema habe ich eine Arbeitsgruppe am INST im Dezember 2007 geleitet: http://www.inst.at/kctos/sektionen_a-f/angelova.htm

[17] Europäisierung wird hier nicht im normativen Sinn des bis zur Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts charakteristischen eurozentrischen Denkens verstanden, sondern als Prozess des Wieder-Zusammenwachsens von Europa und der Herausbildung einer für alle gültigen "rechten Ordnung des Gemeinschaftslebens" in der EU.

Türkei geworden, was auch zu neuen Verwaltungspraktiken führt[18]. Was bedeutet dann „Migrationshintergrund", wenn diese Migration ihre Binnen- und Auslandsdimensionen hat. Ich pendle seit über 30 Jahren zwischen Ruse und Veliko Tarnovo und habe gelegentlich Vorlesungen in Deutschland, Österreich, oder auch in anderen Ländern. Mein ganzes Leben baut auf diesem Mobilitätshintergrund. Und ich kenne dutzende von Professoren oder andere Akademiker, die zwischen München und Berlin, bzw. Düsseldorf, Paderborn, Bielefeld, Wien, Budapest und Debrecen etc. pendeln. Schon gar nicht zu reden von der EU-Administration. Es ist schon gut, wenn für die unterschiedlichen Mobilitäten und Migrationen unterschiedliche Begrifflichkeiten gefunden werden, es darf jedoch nicht ihr gemeinsamer Mobilitätshintergrund übersehen werden, und dass in der Gegenwart die gemeinschaftlichen Identitätsstiftungen auf der Basis unterschiedlicher sozialen Netzwerke entstehen und wenig mit einer angeborenen Heimat zu tun haben. Die meisten Studierenden wollen nie in ihren Heimatsort zurückkehren (es sei denn, sie beziehen ein jeweiliges Stipendium). Damit ist nicht das Land gemeint, sondern die Heimatscholle. Dadurch wird auch ein ursprüngliches Fremdsein der Persönlichkeit in der jeweiligen Gesellschaft, gleichzeitig aber auch die Freiheit zur Veränderung und zur Verwandlung beibehalten.

Was sich in der Gegenwart rapid verändert, ist die urbane Landschaft, die neuen Stadtbilder: „Nicht nur Berlin, Hamburg, Köln, Frankfurt oder Stuttgart, auch wenn dort der Anteil der Einwohner mit Migrationshintergrund wie im Fall von Stuttgart bis zu 40 Prozent gehen kann. Auch kleinere Städte können in puncto Vielfalt wie regelrechte Metropolen erscheinen"[19]. Viele Städte befinden sich in einem „dramatischen Wandlungsprozess was die demographische Zusammensetzung betrifft"[20] - sie bewegen sich im Spannungsverhältnis zwischen Schrumpfung und Parapolis. Und das kann auch an den erfolgreichen und nicht erfolgreichen Stadtplanungen verfolgt werden. Ein enorm interessantes Thema für eine Fallstudie kann das Exempel *Stuttgart21* bieten. Eindeutig geht es dabei um den Zusammenprall zwischen mobiler und stationärer Lebensform und Existenzentwürfen. Abgesehen von den unterschiedlichen Parteibildungen um Stuttgart21 kann man in diesem Projekt den Entwurf für eine Stadtwandlung erkennen, die den Anforderungen des 21 Jahrhunderts für Mobilität entspricht und die Stadt zu einem Zentrum dieser Mobilität zwischen Wien und Paris machen soll. Andere Städte ziehen es vor, zu Museen der Vergangenheit zu werden – etwa das Stadtzentrum von Chemnitz, in dem die sozialistische Architektur museal aufgehoben wird. Ähnliche Beispiele gibt es in allen exkommunistischen Ländern. Oder Städte, die sich meistens aus touristischen Gründen auf bestimmte Vergangenheiten fixieren. Sie bleiben aber lebendige Museen, sie profitieren aus einer bestimmten Vergangenheit.

Es wird zu wenig von der Binnenmobilität referiert. In Bulgarien hat im Februar 2011 die letzte Volkszählung stattgefunden, sie hat den Status quo wiedergegeben, nach ihr

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[18] Vgl. Ali Rıza **Abay** (Universität Sakarya, Türkei): Die Verantwortung der Stadtverwaltung und ihrer Bürger in Bezug auf die Anpassung der Einwanderer/Migranten in die Einwanderungddtadt, oder in das Einwanderungsland. In: http://web187.login-14.hoststar.at/inst/trans/17Nr/8-6/8-6_abay-celik17.htm

[19] Mark Terkessidis: Interkultur. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2010, S.16f

[20] Ebd. S. 17

konnte jedoch nicht die Binnenmigration festgestellt werden. Jedoch haben im letzten halben Jahr zwei Konferenzen zum Thema „Die demographische Katastrophe" stattgefunden, in der die Gefahren für die bulgarisch-ethnische Bevölkerung gewittert und Weltverschwörungstheorien an die Wand gemalt wurden. Andererseits, auf der anderen Seite des Kontinents werden in Deutschland, Frankreich u.a. Ländern des so genannten Alten Europa (politischer Slang) neue Nationalismen „verkauft", repräsentativ kann hier die skandalöse Figur von Thilo Sarazin[21] mit seinem Bestseller „Deutschland schafft sich ab" erwähnt werden. Diese beengende, einschränkende, sich auf eine bestimmte (manchmal auch nur ethnische) Identität festlegende Perspektive bedient zur Zeit eine immer dünner werdende stationäre Schicht der Gesellschaft.

Es geht nicht nur um Vielfalt, sondern auch um neue Formen der Mobilität. Wie Terkessidis bemerkt, sind ganze Städte in Bewegung. Es gibt „mobilisierte Räume" in den Städten. Auch der Tourismus verändert sich durch die neuen ökonomischen und politischen Bedingungen - seit es die Billigflüge gibt, oder seitdem die Grenzen offen sind, und über Wochenenden schwellen ganze Städte an, die als touristische- oder Billigdestinationen anziehend sind, oder beides zugleich.

Diese horizontale Mobilität ist in ihrer *Massenhaftigkeit* etwas Neues in Europa und gerade das beunruhigt die unterschiedlichen Verwaltungen – von der städtischen, regionalen und nationalen bis zur EU. Weder der Nationalstaat, noch die EU, die immer noch von nationalstaatlichen Interessen und Begrifflichkeiten geprägt ist, können dem Problem mit Regelungen gerecht werden. So etwa der Versuch, auf dem Gebiet der Arbeitsmobilität Regelungen durch eine „Blue Card" einzuführen mündet in den „unberührten nationalstaatlichen Zulassungsregeln":

Vielfalt braucht Gestaltung. In vielen Kommunen oder Stadtteilen ist schließlich ein Großteil der Bewohner von den demokratischen Prozessen ausgeschlossen. Und die Unzufriedenheit, gelegentlich der Hass, richtet sich mit unterschiedlicher Intensität von einer angeblichen Majorität gegen die jeweils Anderen – in den südlicheren Ländern sind es die „Zigeuner", in einigen mitteleuropäischen Ländern die Juden, im Osten Europas die Russen, anderswo die mit dem Migrationshintergrund. Die Störenfriede, die sich nicht „integrieren" wollen. Manche von ihnen leben dort seit zwei, andere wohl seit zwanzig Generationen.

Diese Bewegungen verlangen eine neue Politik in der Parapolis. Der Begriff Integration stammt aus früheren Jahrzehnten und hat eine charakteristisch „moderne"

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[21] **Thilo Sarrazin** (* 12. Februar 1945 in Gera) ist ein deutscher Volkswirt und Autor. Er hat das Amt eines Senators von Berlin bekleidet. Von 1975 bis 2010 war er im öffentlichen Dienst tätig. Er war zudem von 2000 bis 2001 in leitender Position bei der Deutschen Bahn AG beschäftigt. Von 2002 bis April 2009 war das SPD-Mitglied Sarrazin Finanzsenator im Berliner Senat und anschließend bis Ende September 2010 Mitglied des Vorstands der Deutschen Bundesbank. Sarrazin stieß durch provokant formulierte und kontroverse Thesen zur Sozial- und Bevölkerungspolitik verschiedene gesellschaftliche Diskussionen an. Mit *Deutschland schafft sich ab* schrieb Sarrazin das meistverkaufte Politik-Sachbuch eines deutschsprachigen Autors des Jahrzehnts, welches jedoch auch vielfach kritisiert wurde

Zielrichtung – eine Mehrheit mit gesetzter Lebensweise ist geneigt eine Minderheit zu integrieren, bzw. zu assimilieren. Die Entstehung der Parapolis ist jedoch eine postmoderne Erscheinung. Sie bedeutet nicht den Niedergang der Stadt, sondern fordert eine neue bürgerfreundliche Planung und Administrierung.

Es ist viel Kritik an dem „Projekt MultiKulti" ausgeübt worden und vielleicht mit Recht, denn dieses Projekt, wie es gehandhabt wurde, hat mehr Grenzen und Ausgrenzungsverfahren errichtet, als es abgebaut hat. Mit gutem Grund war es gegen die Assimilation gerichtet, hat aber auch in der guten Absicht, den Freiraum der Anderen andersartig zu sein zu gewähren, doch diesen „Freiraum" zum großen Teil ausgegrenzt. Es mag sein, dass das Projekt „Multikulti", so wie es in Deutschland der 90-er Jahre gehandhabt wurde, gescheitert ist, das Projekt INTERKULTUR bleibt aber aktiv und erfasst immer breitere Schichten. Der größte Fehler des MultiKulti-Projektes war die Annahme, dass die Anderen anders sind als WIR. Die so genannte praktizierte *political correctness* verlangte Rücksicht auf ein vorausgesetztes stereotypisches Anderssein der Anderen. Dabei steckt meistens der Fehler nicht in der Annahme des Andersseins, sondern in der Annahme des WIR – ein durch noch schlimmere Stereotype konstruiertes *Wir*, das entpersönlichend nationalistisch, rassistisch, sexistisch usw. da steht, als Schutzschild für die eigene Unfähigkeit der Kommunikation. Wo natürlich alle anders sind als ich, wir alle jedoch die gleichen Bürgerrechte und Pflichten haben, die gleichen menschlichen Voraussetzungen und Ansprüche auf Anerkennung und Geselligkeit[22].

Weder wird sich Deutschland „abschaffen", noch wird die „demographische Katastrophe" Bulgarien oder andere Länder heimsuchen. Diese Begrifflichkeit, die aus dem Stammesdenken des 19. Jahrhunderts herkommt, ist längst nicht mehr geeignet, die Dramaturgie der gegenwärtigen postmodernen Europäisierungs- und Globalisierungsprozesse zu entschlüsseln. Sie mutet eher den verzweifelten Versuch an, mit der Technik der Dampfmaschine einen Computer zu reparieren, der nicht einmal kaputt ist, mit dem man jedoch nicht umgehen kann.

Deswegen wollen wir uns einem Verfahren zuwenden, der interkulturell dem Menschen freie Räume für Geselligkeit und Verwandlung zulässt und somit Zwischenräume für kulturelle Kommunikation schafft, in denen Interkulturalität auch interiorisiert wird.

Elias Canettis Verwandlungsbegriff und seine Bedeutung für die Interkulturalität

Canettis Menschenbild baut auf der Vielfalt der Persönlichkeit auf, die jedoch in Verbindung zu der Ganzheit der Welt steht und so ihre eigene Ganzheit aufrechterhält. Die Reduzierung auf nur einen Charakter, die Beschränkung auf nur einen Glauben betrachtet er als Gefahr für die Menschen und für die Welt, wie diese Gefahr im 20. Jahrhundert von den vielen einseitigen Glauben nachdrücklich erlebt und ausgekostet wurde.

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[22] Über „Die westeuropäische geistesgeschichtliche Tradition und die Wiederentdeckung der *Geselligkeit*" vgl: Penka Angelova, Europäische Zivilisation. Dreizehn Vorlesungen. Röhrig Universitätsverlag 2011. S. 208f..vgl auch: Tzwetan Todorow, Abenteuer des Zusammenlebens. Versuch einer allgemeinen Anthropologie. Berlin: Wagenbach, 1996.

Die Vielfalt der Persönlichkeit lässt für Canetti Möglichkeiten für Selbstreflexion, Selbstbeobachtung und Selbstkorrektur offen. Diese Vielfalt ist für Canetti erst durch Verwandlungs- und Entwandlungsfähigkeit und durch Maskensprünge möglich.

Elias Canettis Verwandlungstheorie, man kann wohl auch von einem modernen Verwandlungsmythos sprechen, hat sowohl eine anthropologische, als auch eine erkenntnistheoretische, gnoseologische Ausrichtung und die Verwandlungsfähigkeit stellt für ihn erst die Fähigkeit zur Menschwerdung dar. Nicht die Arbeit, wie Marx behauptet, sondern die Verwandlungsfähigkeit, die Bereitschaft, das Andere in sich aufzunehmen und sich in dieses Andere zu begeben hat den Menschen zum Menschen gemacht. In dieser ersten Verwandlung steht zugleich eine erste Form der Kommunikation, behauptet Canetti.

Die Vorstellung von einer ständig offenen, nie abgeschlossenen Vielfalt und Ganzheit der Persönlichkeit ist auch eine Erweiterung des traditionellen, von der Antike übernommenen europäischen Persönlichkeitsbegriffs, die Canetti in der europäischen Tradition der Gegenwart mit anderen Autoren wie Robert Musil, Hermann Broch, Karl Jaspers und Hermann Hesse verbindet:

Die Auffassung von der **Vielfalt** der Persönlichkeit, von der **Mannigfaltigkeit** des Menschenbildes als einem Personenknäuel vieler möglicher Inkarnationen oder Charakterzüge und der **Säkularisierung der Inkarnationslehre** erfolgt bei Elias Canetti in der Form des *Maskensprungs* bzw. des *Verwandlungsbegriffs*, der die beiden Stufen der *Verwandlung* und der *Entwandlung* in sich enthält.[23]

Der Übergang von einem Charakter im Menschen zum anderen erfolgt durch **"Maskensprung" und durch Verwandlung** - eine Begrifflichkeit, die eine Nähe zur indischen Inkarnationslehre aufweist und zu den antiken Metamorphosen, sich aber auch in der moderneren europäischen Philosophie in unterschiedlicher Ausprägung wieder findet.

Canetti weist dem Maskensprung als Vorstufe und Voraussetzung für die Verwandlung eine erkenntnistheoretische Bedeutung zu. Durch den Maskensprung und die Verwandlung versetzt sich der Mensch in eine andere (kulturelle) Entität, eignet sich ihre Eigenschaften an und verinnerlicht sie. In dem Moment der **Entwandlung** springt er wieder „zur Seite", verlässt die Entität des kulturellen Angebots und kommt bereichert durch dieses Angebot als **Anderer** in seine eigene erweiterte Identität zurück.

Die Einheit der Persönlichkeit ist demgemäß über und hinter den Sprüngen, die als eigene Erfahrung dem Erkennenden und als Aufforderung zur ständigen Innewerdung und Identifizierung mit dem Beobachteten, zur jeweiligen Identifikation zwischen Beobachtetem und Beobachtendem, zwischen Dargestelltem und Darstellendem auf den Flügeln der Reflexion auferlegt wird. Gleichzeitig bekommt die Verwandlung als Erkenntniskategorie nur einen begrenzten Status und erst in der Entwandlung, im Danebenstehen und in der parallaxis als Erzählmodus, im Wechsel und der Hinundherbewegung zwischen den »Sehstrahlen« wäre eine Annäherung an die Wahrheit zu suchen, die im Wechseln, Verwandeln und Vertauschen, im Nebeneinander und Miteinander der Perspektiven ihre Begrenztheit transzendiert und mehr erreicht als die einfache Summe dieser Perspektiven. In diesem Anderssein der Wahrheit von allen ihren perspektivischen Teilwahrheiten, steckt die erkenntnistheoretische Möglichkeit dieses Verwandlungsmythos.

Im **Verwandlungsbegriff** von Canetti wird deutlich, dass er durch die Vielfalt der Verwandlungsangebote auch die Kulturen und deren Diversität und Veränderlichkeit in

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[23] Vgl. Penka Angelova: Elias Canetti. Spuren zum mythischen Denken. Wien: Zsolnay, 2005. S. 168f.

seinen Menschenbegriff einbezieht. Das Sichaussetzen, das Canetti mit seinem Verwandlungsbegriff verlangt, geht kraft seiner absoluten Natur über die Wissensakkumulation hinaus, es erschöpft sich nicht im Spiel des Lernens und Anhäufens, sondern geht darüber hinaus in die Erfahrung des Erkennens durch die Interdiskursivität und die Transzendenz der Reflexion.

Diese Vorstellung entspricht auch dem *Bündel von Identitäten*, das sich in Hinblick auf Identitätsbildungen in einer jeden Persönlichkeit auf verschiedenen Stufen entwickelt und das durch die Ausformungen der Kultur auch in unterschiedliche Richtungen gesteuert wird. Canettis Persönlichkeitsbegriff beschränkt sich jedoch nicht auf die Erfahrung unterschiedlicher Gruppenidentitäten, sondern sucht auch nach den mythologisch-göttlichen und tierischen Existenzweisen des Menschlichen. Die Vielfalt der Identitäten des menschlichen Seins ermöglicht gleichzeitig eine Selbstbeobachtung und Reflexion der einzelnen Teilidentitäten, die die Voraussetzung für die Selbsterkenntnis und für die Menschwerdung ist, die sich in der Kommunikation mit dem Anderen und mit den Anderen in einer ständigen Wechselver- und -entwandlung abspielt.

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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FOURTH KIND. THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BARRIERS ON COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION, THE EMERGENCE OF IDENTITARIAN NETWORKS AND THE NEED FOR "TRANSLATION" IN THE ITALIAN SUBSIDIARY OF A CHINESE MULTINATIONAL COMPANY

Fabrizio Maimone, Sara Mormino, Giulia Guccione

The study of intercultural relationships between Chinese and westerners is one of the emergent topics in cross-cultural studies. This paper is aimed to explore the relationship among cultural differences, managerial practices and intercultural relationship in Chinese MNCs. The paper is divided in three parts.

The focus of the first part of the paper is on the theoretical framework of the study. The review is focused on: a) the critical discussion (McSweeney 2009) of the "taxonomical" approach (Hofstede 2001) to cultural studies; b) the analysis of the dynamic nature of intercultural relations, that can be explained either in terms of cultural divergence (cultural differences) either in terms of cultural interaction (conflict, integration and hybridization); c) the connection between culture and identity; d) the critical role played by culture (and therefore knowledge) translation (Holden 2002, Holden and Glisby 2010).

The second part of the paper reports and discusses some findings of an exploratory field research. The case study investigates the Italian subsidiary of a Chinese high-tech company. The Italian branch is actually a bi-cultural workplace, that employs a Chinese management and a workforce composed of Chinese and Italian workers. The company is a leading Chinese multinational firm that operates in the sector of communication and internet technologies, either in the BtB and BtC sectors. The research adopted a qualitative methodology. Twenty open-ended interviews were conducted. The sample was composed of 10 Chinese workers (5 male and 5 female) and 10 Italian workers (5 male and 5 female). All interviewees are key people. The outcomes of interviews have been analyzed using the content analysis methodology. The outcomes of the research has been interpreted and discussed. The main outcomes of the field research are: a) the impact of linguistic barriers, managerial ethnocentrism and "cultural autism" on the processes of identification with the company and integration/cooperation between Chinese and Italian workers; b) the emergence of identitarian networks; c) the emergence of a "surface" and a deep level of intercultural interaction d) the relation between cultural (and therefore knowledge) translation and the processes of intercultural integration/cooperation. Then, the outcomes of the research showed some interesting differences in the perceptions and attitudes of male and female respondents. The results of the field research are consistent with the dynamic and complex approach to the study of cultural diversity, in contraposition with the classic paradigm of cultural taxonomies, stress the relevance of managerial practices, offer some empirical evidences to the hypothesis of "identitarian networks" (Maimone 2005 and Maimone and Mormino 2010) and suggest the necessity of expanding the boundaries of the concept of cultural translation beyond the dominions of knowledge management.

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION: Cometences and Capabilities

In the third part of this paper the limitations of the research, the theoretical and practical implications are discussed. Finally, we argue that only an integrated glocal approach to people management, at individual, group, local branch and corporate level could facilitate the development of "intelligent" intercultural relations and cooperation.

Key words

Transnational organization, Intercultural relations, cross-cultural management, intercultural communication, organizational identity, organizational networks, intercultural conflict, cultural translation, cultural hybridization,

Theoretical framework

A long time has past since Father Matteo Ricci, an Italian missionary and an anthropologist "ante litteram", settled in Beijing and conquered the trust of the Ming Dynasty, behaving "as a Chinese man among Chinese people". China has come back at the center of world relationships. According to Goldman Sachs' researchers (Wilson et al, 2010) China's GDP will contribute as much the G3 (30% of global GDP for each ones) to the global growth, in the next decade. Like in the 16th century, the management of culture differences is one of the key to unlock the door of the Chinese walls.

The scientific community is very far from having found a unique and common shared definition of culture. The debate on cultural differences offers an extraordinary arena for the confrontation between structural-functionalist and postmodernist scholars.

Hofstede (1980) is universally acknowledged as the most influential scholar of the functionalist approach to the study of cultural differences. According to Peterson (2007, p. 371) "Hofstede's project summarized in Culture's Consequences (Hofstede, 1980, 1980/2001) has dominated international organization studies since its appearance". Hofstede's cultural model is based on national culture score means (Ib.). It assumes that culture is some kind of collective programming of minds (Ib.) and national cultures could be studied and classified according to four cultural dimensions. In the late phase of his research, Hofstede added a fifth dimension (Hofstede 1988). The basic concept of Hofstede's model is the correlation between national cultures score means and organizational behaviors. This approach presumes that managers should take into account cultural differences and manage people according to their shared national values (Peterson 2007). Despite of his success and popularity, the model proposed by Hofstede was argued in terms of lack of statistical reliability (Gerhart 2008), insufficient definition of the construct (McSweeney 2002), ecological fallacy of measure design (Peterson 2007).

More recently the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research team (House et al., 2004) proposed a new model based on national mean scores. Moreover, Schwartz (1992) developed another model based on national values.

In opposition with the structural-functionalist perspective, postmodern theorists argued against the monistic and taxonomic approach to the study of cultural difference. Geertz affirmed that to consider culture as a homogeneous and coherent entity is to 'to pretend a science that does not exist and imagine a reality that cannot be found' (1973, 20). According to Barinaga (2007 p. 324), the discourses on national cultures can be viewed as rhetoric strategies that permit to "define geographically limited identities, assigning particular characters, attitudes, values and interests to

those coming from a specific region. As such, they contribute to a sense of a natural, objective, unavoidable boundary that separates group members. In sum, references to 'national culture' were made to enhance one's worth in the midst of confusion.".
McSweeney (2009) argued against the structural functionalist approach proposed by Hofstede et all (2001). According McSweeney (2005, p. 91) Hofstede treats national culture "as implicit; core; systematically causal; territorially unique; and shared."-. McSweeney (2009) questioned the core assumptions of structural-functionalism: national culture as a homogeneous, stable, pure and uncontaminated reality. McSweeney (Ib.), moreover, affirmed that Hofstede's model underestimates the relevance of the processes of cultural hybridization and the role played by non-cultural factors, criticizing the assumed equivalence among culture, nation and territory.

Barinaga (2007), then sustained the discursive approach to the study of cultural differences, adopting the social constructionist perspective. The author (Ib. p.) argued that "…treating national culture as some sort of natural predetermined template, such research places too little emphasis on the discursive processes that go on in social life and thus fails to consider the freedom actors have in defining national identity (Ailon-Souday & Kunda, 2003).".

Moreover, the interpretative theorists argued against the functionalistic perspective, criticizing the concept of unified culture. According to Alvesson and Deetz (2000, p.34) the interpretive research questions 'the logic of displaying a consensual unified culture', focusing instead on 'fragmentation, tensions, and processes of conflict suppression'.

The debate between functionalists and postmodernists is quite intriguing. But we argue that it is possible to go beyond the dispute between "apocalyptic and integrated" (Eco 1964). Archer (1988) focused the analysis of cultural dynamics on social agency, considering stability and change just as the two coins of the same medal. Culture, therefore, may evolve through intercultural interactions (Brannen & Salk 2000) and multilevel cultural dynamics (Leung et al., 2005). Moreover, Martin (2004) tried to find a synthesis between different theoretical perspectives, proposing a multiple and subjective approach to the study of culture. So, we assume that intercultural encounters can be explained either in terms of cultural divergence (cultural differences) either in terms of cultural interaction (conflict, integration and hybridization) and change.

The functionalistic approach could help researchers to shed light to macro (convergent) cultural processes, postmodern and mainly qualitative research instead could provide a deeper and more ecologic view of meso and micro dynamics. So, the choice of one or another perspective may depend on the goals of the research, the level of analysis, the focus of the research design (deductive approach, case study or grounded theory), etc. According to Morgan and Smircich (1980, p. 498) "Qualitative research stands for an approach rather than a particular set of techniques, and its appropriateness-like that of quantitative research-is contingent on the nature of the phenomena to be studied.".

Identity is strictly related to social interactions (Albert and Whetten, 1985). We argue that the apparent antithesis between the integrative and the dis-integrative theoretical perspectives could be composed adopting the multiple identity perspective (Burke 2003). For example, the authors of this paper are Italians, but at the same time they belong to different regional identities, professional identities, gender identities, generational identities, etc. So then, even though all of us are

Italian, we are supposed to have some common identitarian traits, because we share the same language, leave in the same country, have studied in the same educational system, etc but at the same time we presumably have also different multiple identities. Stelzl e Seligman (2009) illustrated the results of a field research that evidenced that the students of an International business school, belonging to the same nationality, showed multiple identities and different values. These findings are consistent with the result of two field researches that involved two transnational organizations (Maimone 2005 and 2007).

If we consider identity as a process and not as a state (Alvesson & Wilmott, 2002), we can assume that there could be different foci of organizational identifications (Foreman and Whetten 2002) and that people working for an organization could show multiple identities, that could coexist in the same person and or group, sometimes harmonically and sometimes in conflict (Alvesson & Wilmott, 2002).

So, if convergent and divergent cultural processes may co-exist in the same organization, then the success of intercultural encounters may be also a matter of "good translation". Holden (2002) used the word translation to define the intra-inter organizational negotiation process that permits the cross-dissemination of knowledge among different national cultural groups. But Holden considers culture and knowledge as practically equivalent (Ib.), so reversely the concept of translation could be applied also to cultural dynamics. According to Holden and Glisby (2010, page 74): -"Translation is indeed a kind of knowledge conversion that seeks to create common cognitive ground among people, for whom differences in language are hindrance to comprehension."-. Translation is therefore a "form of knowledge modification" (Ib., page 78).

According to Holden and Von Kortzfleisch (2004): "translation in the sense of transposing a text in one language in terms of another is a notable form of converting tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge." Holden and Glisby (2010) pointed out the role of relations in the process of translation. According to these authors (Ib. page 98): "Protagonist in cross-cultural business interaction consciously and unconsciously co-create a relationship-specific kind of tacit knowledge". This kind of relational tacit knowledge (Ib.) is based on mutual trust, conducive working atmosphere, motivation and values.

The process of translation is enhanced by the "participative competence" (Holden, 2002, page 273), e.g. –"the ability to interact on equal terms in multicultural environments in such a way that knowledge is shared and that the learning experience is professionally enhancing"- (Ib.). And it is affected by "ambiguity, cultural interference, and lack of equivalence among languages in interplay" (Holden and Glisby 2010, page 82).

Transnational networks may facilitate knowledge translation (Holden 2002) and therefore contribute to the building up of the so called "third culture" (Casmir 1999) or "bridge culture" (Maimone 2005), that allows communication, collaboration and therefore knowledge sharing among employees working in different countries and/or belonging to different nationalities. At the same time mono-cultural networks may inhibit or disincentives the processes of knowledge translation, contributing to the maintenance and reinforcement of linguistic and cultural barriers (Maimone and Mormino 2010).

The case study

The case study investigates the Italian subsidiary of a Chinese high-tech company. The Italian branch is a bi-cultural workplace, that employs a workforce composed of Chinese and Italian managers and employees. The company is a leading Chinese multinational firm that operates in the sector of communication and internet technologies, either in the BtB and BtC sectors. The research adopted a qualitative methodology. According to Yin (1984, p. 23) "the case study research method is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used".

The field research began with open-ended interviews with Human Resources, Training and Education managers. These were used to get a general understanding of the organizational context and to build a preliminary set of hypotheses. Then various organizational documents were collected and analyzed, in order to draw the organizational structure, the functions, and the basic processes.

Then, twenty open-ended interviews were conducted (English language). The sample was composed of 10 Chinese workers (5 male and 5 female) and 10 Italian workers (5 male and 5 female). All interviewees were key people.
The topic addressed by open-ended questions:

- Satisfaction with the quality of intercultural communication;

- Satisfaction with the quality of intercultural relationships;

- Consequences of cultural differences;

- Critical aspects of intercultural communication;

- Level of intercultural conflict;

- Social relations (personal ties).

The outcomes of interviews have been analyzed using the content analysis methodology. We adopted the conventional approach to content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005), based on inductive categories development, that are build up respecting the natural language of the interviewees. We adopted an incremental process: formulation of the research questions to be answered, selection of the sample to be analyzed, definition of the record units, definition of the coding categories, test of the coding categories, assessment of the accuracy and reliability of the coding categories, refinement of the coding categories, implementation of the coding process, analysis of the results of the coding process, final assessment of the reliability and accuracy of data (Weber 1990, Kaid, 1989). The trustworthiness of the results was further verified using peer debriefing and ex-post interviews with a reduced sample of interviewees that confirmed the validity of the findings.

According to Hsieh and Shannon (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) "The advantage of the conventional approach to content analysis is gaining direct information from study participants without imposing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives."

The outcomes of the research

The 55% of interviewees are not satisfied with the quality of intercultural communication. The factors that cause the un-satisfactory level of intercultural

communication, according to respondents, are: linguistic barriers, cultural differences, lack on intercultural communication, intercultural conflict, division of the Branch in two national sub-groups, low management focus on people, low managerial effectiveness, low cultural sensitiveness of management, differences in treatment between Chinese and Italian employees. As we can see, the asymmetric relation between Chinese (perceived by some respondents as the foreigner "lords" of the company) and Italian employees (that in some cases perceive themselves as "servants" of a foreigner employer) is one of the main sources of dissatisfaction. Clearly, in this case, the dimension of culture and the dimension of power interplay, enabling a kind of relational dynamic that cannot be explained only in terms of culture diversity, nor only in terms of employer-employee relationship.
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Quotes:
"Chinese people tend to stay only with themselves creating de-facto a barrier to the real intercultural relationship to happen".
"Managers are not under a healthy way of developing inter-culture relations, they are only focused on sales results.
"(Managers) clearly indicates every day who are the company owners on which the management bet on who others are just necessary evil needed just to face the customers giving them a localized multi-national impression."
"Our feeling is that the Chinese attitude emphasizes control instead of facilitating integration"
The 45% of respondents, instead, said to be satisfied with the quality of intercultural communication.
Quotes:
Yes, people can freely share their own culture and working method, people can also impact each other, it can help us to look the world from different ways and judge things"
"Our company promotes exchanges, initiatives, trip abroad to facilitate reciprocal knowledge".
Cultural differences, linguistic barriers, Intercultural trust, ability to learn from another culture, ethnocentrism and Company-local employees relations are considered critical points in intercultural communication.
Quotes:
"Chinese and Italians have two completely different mentality. They think of things from very different point…Sometimes they are even on the opposite"
"The way doing things…Chinese would like to do things as soon as possible, and optimization gradually, but Italians would like to do things very late and thinking well output and good results. They are both good to achieve final goals…"
"Problem of the language, it is difficult to express my self well"
"It needs time to understand Italian culture"
The 50% of respondents is not satisfied with the level of intercultural relationships. The percentage of Italian males respondents that affirm to be not satisfied with the level of intercultural relationships (80%) is higher than in other subgroups.
The lack on intercultural communication, mind closeness, low proactivity in establishing personal relationships with people (out of job related relations), ethnocentrism and the presence of cultural barriers are the main motives that explain the low level of satisfaction, according to half of the sample. Instead, interviewees

that are satisfied with the quality of intercultural relationships indicate in the quality of personal relationships, the good level of cooperation, the good quality of knowledge and culture sharing, the role of diversity in facilitating creativity the main motives of their satisfaction.

The consequences of cultural differences, according the respondents, are: misunderstandings, decrease of work quality, decrease of the quality of communication process, untrustworthiness of information received, low attention at Corporate level at the feedback of subsidiaries.

The 80% of respondents attributed a medium/high value to the level of intercultural conflict. The 70% of male respondents rated the level of intercultural conflict as "high", the 77% of female respondents rated the level of intercultural conflict as "medium".

The 50% of Chinese male respondents prefer to ask for important and confidential information of professional nature to colleagues of the same nationality. All Chinese females instead declare to talk about important and confidential information of professional nature with colleagues of every nationality. Italian male respondents prefer to talk about personal matters with colleagues of the same nationality (80% of respondents). The majority of Italian female respondents instead declare to talk about personal matters with colleagues of every nationality. Chinese male respondents and Italian male and female respondents prefer to spend their free time with colleagues of the same nationality. Chinese and Italian female respondents generally seem to be more interested in intercultural relationships and more aware of the importance of intercultural communication.

So, the result show a significant tendency toward the forming of personal ties based on national identities, even though personal characteristic (for example the linguistic competence, the time of employment in the Italian branch, the previous multicultural experiences and the personal portfolio of intercultural competences) and gender seem to influence the process. These results are consistent with the outcomes of a field research that involved a multicultural organization (Maimone 2005).

Some respondents affirmed that the branch can operate successfully, in spite of the unsatisfactory level of intercultural integration, because people working for the Italian subsidiary are target oriented and can succeed to collaborate in a customer driven environment, enacting some kind of "surface behavior". However, intercultural misunderstandings and conflict generate un-satisfaction and frustration at a deeper level.

The answers of many respondents suggest a lack of empathic understanding of cultural other, a difficulty in wearing others' shoes and building up a real intercultural relationship. It is a matter of language barriers but also of a (not sufficient) reciprocal knowledge. In other words, we could say that the outcomes of the research evidence a lack of "translation" (Holden 2002, Holden and Grisbly 2010).

Quotes:

"We have to have more trust for each other and for different culture. The company have to do more job to make Chinese know more culture of Italy and to make Italians know more culture about China"

"It needs some time to understand the Italian cultures for all the Chinese staff"

"We may think different ideas of one same thing. May be it will lead some misunderstanding and impact on the later work"

"Because we are a Chinese company. We need to sell products for local. Sometimes we stand on the opposite position to see one thing."
"Our Company is divided into two groups: the Chinese one and the Italian one. How could you expect they will make some communication truly and sincerely? Everybody sticks to their own culture"
"We need to build one team instead of two"
"If an Italian stays with Chinese for a long time, he/she will understand how superior the Chinese feel inside about the other nations. So they won't make any progress for bettering their intercultural relationships"

According the outcomes of field research, the main findings are:
a) A multifaceted and in some cases polarized map of perceptions. According to the complex perspective adopted in this work, people's experience and representation of intercultural encounters is far from be homogeneous and monolithic. Almost the totality of the sample agree on affirming that cultural differences between Chinese and Italian employees exist. But, the interpretation of the impact of these differences and the perception of the intercultural relations (either in terms of intercultural communication and interpersonal relationship) is not coherent, even though we found a tendency toward the negative evaluation of cultural (diversity) consequences.

b) The impact of linguistic barriers, "cultural autism" and managerial ethnocentrism on the processes of identification with the company and integration/cooperation between Chinese and Italian workers: as we can see, intercultural dynamics are inter-related with power and control and are influenced by personal traits, gender, nationality, linguistic and intercultural competences of interviewees.

c) The emergence of a "surface" and a deep level of intercultural interaction: accordingly to the research outcomes, employees seem to have found some kind of intercultural adaptive behavior, but surface "target and result driven" practices may hide a kind of deeper level of intercultural interaction, that impact on intercultural relationships.

d) The emergence of identitarian networks: also in this case, personal characteristic, gender, nationality, linguistic and intercultural competence may influence the process. But many respondents reveal a favoritism toward national identity bounded personal ties.

e) The relation between cultural (and therefore knowledge) translation and the processes of intercultural integration/cooperation. The reciprocal acceptation, respect and knowledge is the base for a genuine, integer and honest intercultural relationship (Ting-Tomey 1999). At the base of this relation we can find an empathic and therefore intuitive knowledge of other's culture and tacit knowledge (Holden and Glisby 2010). Some people, trough the development of intercultural networks, can enhance the process of culture/knowledge translation (Ib.). For the same reasons national identity based personal ties may instead become an obstacle for the process of translation (Maimone and Mormino 2010).

f) The role of management: many respondents indicate in the business driven managerial approach and in the low level of cultural sensitiveness of managers, that in some cases may shift in ethnocentrism, one of the main reasons of intercultural

negative relations and conflicts. A management too concerned in business goals and not aware of the importance of diversity management and of the valorization of cultural diversity is perceived as a negative factor, that impact negatively on intercultural communication and relationships.

Discussion

The results of the field research are consistent with the dynamic and complex approach to the study of cultural diversity, adopted in this paper. Gender, intercultural competences (language and multicultural background) and personal ties seem to mediate the effects of cultural differences. The outcomes of the field research stress the relevance of managerial (intercultural) practices, offer some empirical evidences to the hypothesis of "identitarian networks" (Maimone 2005 and Maimone and Mormino 2010) and suggest the necessity of expanding the boundaries of the concept of cultural translation beyond the dominium of knowledge management, consistently with the theoretical frame proposed before. Therefore we argue that cultural translation is not only a matter of knowledge sharing but also a key process for the creation of the so called third culture (Casmir 1999,), or "bridge culture" (Maimone 2005), that could facilitate intercultural integration, intercultural conflict management and therefore may enable the creation an effective multicultural space (Maimone Ib.).

The outcomes of the research are not inconsistent with a taxonomic view of cultural diversity: quite all interviewees recognize that Chinese and Italian workers are different. But even though the goal of this work was not of measuring culture differences, we cannot underestimate the fact that the perception of the consequences of cultural diversity is not monolithic nor deterministic. Many respondents affirmed that intercultural relations are negative and that intercultural management is un-effective and even not present, in many cases. But there are at same times many workers, a significant subgroup composed of both Chinese and Italian workers, that affirm to be satisfied with the quality of intercultural communication and relationships. This outcome supports the complex and multilevel approach to cultural differences, adopted in this work. So, we argue that cultural differences and other personal characteristics, such as gender, linguistic and intercultural competences, personality traits etc may interplay, creating a multivariate and multi-factorial phenomenology, that is influenced also by asymmetries of power, influence and control. In other words, a complex dynamic.

Since the conducted study was of exploratory nature, limited to one specific organization, it will be necessary to conduct further field research, in order to find out similarities and differences across different business settings. Then, we suggest the opportunity to extend the study to multicultural organizations (where Chinese and Italian workers are mixed with co-workers of other nationalities). Moreover it would be interesting to explore the intercultural relationships in a workplace where the power asymmetry between Chinese and Italian is reversed (for example, a Chinese branch of an Italian Company).

The goal of this research is not to measure a phenomenon, but to describe the intercultural relationships as they are perceived in a specific organizational context. More over we believe that some findings of this research could contribute to better understanding the dynamic, morphogenetic and complex nature of intercultural encounters. We argue that the outcomes of this research support the dialogical

perspective and presume the co-existence of convergent/divergent processes in intercultural relationships.

Finally, we argue that only an integrated glocal approach to people management, at individual, group, local branch and corporate level could facilitate the development of "intelligent" intercultural relations and cooperation.

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A SEMIOTIC AND CRITICAL APPROACH TO TEACHING INTER-CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Roger Bell

Abstract

Inter-cultural communication requires not just cognitive and conceptual knowledge but also attributional knowledge to grasp how values relate to behaviour in real life situations. Static value models aim to predict behaviour but in reality multiple inputs must be taken into account. Understanding behaviour requires richer knowledge in which specific "emic" knowledge of cultures plays a key role.

Apart from generalized references to power distance, traditional value dimension models systematically overlook power relationships and interests within societal cultures and to a large extent in organizations. To explore this area we use a critical approach with special focus on semiotics, including pragmatics, a systematic study of meaning in context (Levinson, 2000). These approaches aim to tap into the specific "emic" meanings of codes and signs and help us interpret how people frame situations, form schemata and act on scripts. Semiotics can be seen as a means of interpreting power and status relationships in society through the meanings of signs, thus informing the critical approach to cultural studies. It acts as a bridge between ethnographic or emic observation and etic structural interpretations, which in turn inform a critical analysis of status and power relations. We illustrate this through teaching points and selected cases.

Meaning is constructed, dynamic and constantly under review (Magala, 2009) in the light of one's strategic purpose in transactions, cultural baggage on multiple levels and repertoires from which we select our behaviour. Individuals are concerned with behaviours that further their own interests (Watson 2001), creating a mix of strategic, cultural, personal and inter-personal influences. Organizations constantly strive to construct and manage meanings in the light of their interests.

As teachers, our objective is practical, using cases mediated by academic, critical and pragmatic analysis to help students gain a rich understanding of multi-cultural business realities and avoid over-simplification in interpreting cultures. Our role is also and crucially to make clear that neutrality may not be as neutral as it seems; at the end of the day teachers may have to take sides on cultural and ethical issues.

Keywords: attributional knowledge; emic etic dichotomy; critical management; semiotics; negotiating meaning; de-briefing cases.

Introduction

Inter-cultural communication requires not just cognitive and conceptual knowledge but also attributional knowledge to grasp how values relate to behaviour in real life situations. Static value models aim to predict behaviour but in reality multiple inputs must be taken into account. Understanding behaviour requires richer knowledge in which specific "emic" knowledge of cultures plays a key role.

In this paper we aim to share with fellow members, teachers and students our experience of various approaches in the classroom and address some of the

weaknesses of the traditional static approaches to cultural comparisons focusing narrowly on a few dimensions regarded as reliable predictors of behaviour.

To enrich our students' understanding of attributional knowledge in cross-cultural communication and management we must emphasize the complexity of the relationship between values and behaviour: students may face frustration in using simplistic sets of explanations often resulting in paradoxical observations (Bell 2006, Osland & Bird 2000)

By defining culture as the set of forces which influence members of communities through their collective experience we are creating a construct which may lead us into the trap of "culture as essence" (Holden 2002). The use of rankings also leads easily to conceptual confusion between culture as statistical distribution and culture as social force: on the one hand a statistical measurement and on the other its meaning, or at least an interpretation of its meaning.

When striving to understand cultures for whatever purpose we need to make use of more tools than the value models based on imposed dimensions on which cultures are ranked and ordered as if they were unitary blocks permitting predictive interpretations. This approach overlooks emic specific phenomena which appear in writers as diverse as Richard Lewis, an English consultant and popularizer of culture and Philippe d'Iribarne, a French social scientist. Lewis for example talks about "cultural black holes", which are obsessive concerns about specific issues such as the American Dream, Australian tall poppies syndrome or French intellectualism: these clearly are in the "emic realm and fruit of history and the popular imaginative" (Lewis 2000).

The emic/etic dichotomy has been extensively used in the literature (Boisot 1995; d'Iribarne, 2009, Geertz 1975, Hofstede 2001; Triandis 1994 etc) and is the epistemological and methodological distinction between participant meanings and observer categorization and comparison. Emic analysis is key to enriching the sterile rankings resulting from the use of etic value dimensions alone, in which comparisons or even measurements are attempted using a concept selected by the researcher such as individualism / collectivism (e.g. Hofstede 2001) or close / distant proxemics (e.g. Hall 1976). As d'Iribarne points out, this approach to national cultures tends to lead to a static undifferentiated perception in contrast for example with the individual diversity of corporate cultures which are recognized to emerge from multiple inputs over time (d'Iribarne, 2009). D'Iribarne is interested in whether in spite of the tendency to use blanket national generalizations we can usefully speak of national cultures: he concludes that one can, but only by recognizing that we must shift from "generic ways to give meaning" to "a dimension much more local given concretely to singular situations". In other words while there are collective forces on national - and sub-national – levels, individuals, with their specific agendas, power relationships and strategies always mediate between culture and behavioural outcomes; d'Iribarne describes this as a question of agency; cultural influences and a multitude of others act on people who in turn have attitudes, make choices and take actions.

The nexus culture/behaviour is often complex to understand and interpret cross-culturally; we need to take into account a complex of inputs, many reflecting interests arising from the social dynamic of the situation and the power relations involved. This suggests that a critical and pragmatic approach might be helpful in thinking about power relationships and a semiotic approach to interpret signs that actors apprehend.

The term "pragmatic" has a strongly linguistic derivation. David Crystal defines pragmatics as the study of "factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others", (Crystal, 1987) hence as a major element of discourse strategy, with a key role in cross-cultural communication studies. For Saussure and in communication studies "pragmatic" supplements the semantic and syntactic; for Shannon & Weaver, who are concerned with a process approach to communication, it is distinguished from the technical and semantic in the effective achievement of communication: the receiver should understand and react in the way the initiator of the communication intended (Shannon & Weaver, 1949).

Semiotics

It is interesting that semiotics has not really entered the international mainstream of cultural research but remained within a linguistically focused, politicized tradition of class-based power relations, centring on French thinkers, particularly Roland Barthes. However, there seem to be valuable potential applications for us because it concerns itself with the creation of meaning and the nature of communication, both of which are central to the interpretation of cultures.

Semiotics, described by Saussure (1983) as "a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life" and for Roland Barthes, as interpreting "the props, the actors, the music, the colours in Brechtian dramaturgy" (Barthes, 1957), is about signs as carriers of meaning. "Signs" are key in giving clues to cultural meaning; the nexus observer/sign makes the construction of meaning possible, as a co-construction of transmitter and receiver. The relationship between his concept of "parole" and "langue" enables us to examine specific "emic" communication situations ("parole") and draw general comparable etic conclusions ("langue") (Saussure, ibid)

Signs are "artefacts or acts that refer to something other than themselves; that is, they are signifying constructs. Codes are the systems into which signs are organized" (Fiske, 1990). This suggests intention on the part of the sender and "social interaction through messages" (Fiske, 1990), in the tradition of Shannon and Weaver's (1948) communication theory. However, we are also concerned with communication as the "production and exchange of meanings" (Fiske, ibid), which is also subject to management (Magala, 2009). This sense of the word is useful for our interpretative efforts in making sense of cultures, as well as in interpreting conscious messages as in typical cross-cultural study scenarios. Organizational semiotics studies the coding of artifacts as carriers of espoused values (Schein 1999) and deciphers them in terms of underlying values. Thus from a critical point of view we are constantly faced with social and corporate messages which aim either to preserve or change the status quo.

A semiotic approach seeks to understand the key relationship between actor, "signified" and "signifier" to use Saussure's terms (Saussure, 1983). In our own cultures we instinctively understand the complex set of meanings embedded in communication; as the anthropologist Clifford Geertz wrote: "the concept of culture I espouse is essentially a semiotic one; believing, with <u>Max Weber</u>, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be

those webs, and the analysis of it … an interpretative one in search of meaning. (Geertz [1973] 2000).

For Saussure the essential feature is the relationship between signs which creates meanings by distinguishing between words, gestures and so on within a given code. At the same time the context gives meaning to the specific message - (see Figure 1). Signs take their meaning from the context in which they are used; all interpretation requires contextualization.

Figure 1: Saussurian model of Signification
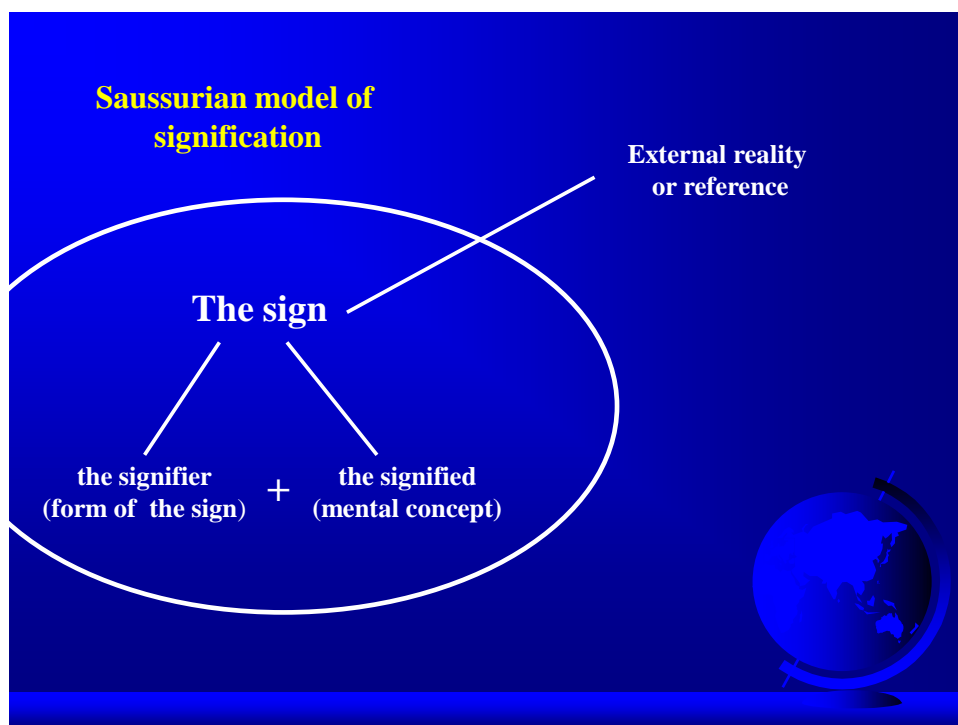
As external observers we may seek significant meanings in the symbols of for example Coronation Street (an English "soap"), breaking down the experience semiotically by analyzing the role of the pub or the living room, the accent and the social roles of the characters. Depending on the observer's frame this could be interpreted semiotically as a Marxist text about keeping the working class subdued and distracted by their local disputes and relationships: such an analysis requires one to step out of identification with the programme as member of working class northern English culture; a greater effort is required in cultural settings of which one is a part; analyzing one's own culture can be difficult.

By bringing cultural knowledge and experience to bear on the codes and signs that make up the "text" of events we negotiate the meaning. A cross-cultural encounter consists of the observed situation (the signs), the observer's experience frame (schemata and scripts) and the reality constructed from these. My presence and participation in cross-cultural events are inseparably part of them; the event involves all of us, the context, the time and place, the feeling and the shared understanding.

Fortunately for us there is considerable redundancy in communication which helps in interpreting communication and events in cross-cultural and multi-cultural situations. When waiting at a bus stop I hear a sentence beginning "how long….?" I predict the enquiry will continue "have you been waiting" (and not: "are your shoe laces?)" and we often do not even listen to the words because they are so predictable. Context, connotations, non-verbal clues, knowledge of the actors and a tendency to use language to repeat information in different forms helps in the task of understanding the points of view, interests and values of our counterparts. Moving outside our familiar cultural environment, however, entropy is likely to be higher and predictability low.

Entropy refers to low predictability of <u>information</u> in a message, that is, the <u>information content</u> one would miss by not understanding a word, gesture or other sign (Shannon & Weaver, 1948). The greater the entropy in messages the more signs have to be attended to carefully to grasp meaning. Thus in cross-cultural situations signs have to be studied for context, connotation, intention and cultural embeddedness: there are more possible surprises. Entropy obviously varies hugely depending on the observer and the situation: it is likely to be high in poetry, listening to non-native speakers, dealing with professionals in a field with which one is not familiar, and of course in cross-cultural encounters.

From a methodological point of view a semiotic approach bridges the dichotomy between the emic and the etic, addressing an issue that has long troubled researchers seeking to show how these apparently mutually exclusively approaches can be reconciled. The main generator of the concept, Kenneth Pike (Pike, 1967), and subsequently John Berry through his notion of derived etics, have suggested that study of the specifics of one culture can be comparable and thus etic if the functional equivalence of the features can be demonstrated (Berry, 1989). In a similar way semiotics studies specifics of transaction, signs and meanings in cultures and interprets in structuralist terms the patterns into which the meanings can be fitted and how they are related to each other and a general communication system (Saussure, 1983). Thus from observation of specific use of words or behaviour one can extrapolate power relationships, sense making myths, conservative attitudes and other comparative generalizations, that is: etic statements, though not in terms of the familiar dimensions or pattern variables used by Hall, Hofstede, Parsons, Schwartz and others

Critical approaches

Individualistic values, conventional gender roles, brevity as an ideal in business communication, low context communication style, rigid time, status by achievement and other cultural norms, whilst seemingly neutral in fact commonly have an asymmetrical impact on different groups within society. Young males in business for example are more likely to benefit than other groups such as single mothers and retired people from the conventions of business discourse.

Socialization into one's cultures involves acquiring preferences that reflect power relationships. Basil Bernstein wrote extensively on how the inculcation of restricted or elaborated codes in children profoundly influenced their likely career

paths and social success, and what they see as "normal" professional prospects. This superimposes a class analysis on what is seemingly a neutral cultural and linguistic contrast. (Bernstein, 1971)

In corporate culture, communication is in varying degrees manipulated by powerful actors in the interests of dominant interest. We acknowledge this as soon as we argue as do Scollon & Scollon (1995) that discourse is the carrier of ideology and serves to preserve power relationships. Members of dominant classes encourage "preferred forms of discourse (which) serve as banners and symbols of memberships and identity" (Scollon & Scollon, ibid, P98).

This is widely documented in the literature on corporate cultures (Alvesson, 2002; Martin 2002; Schein, 1992; Schultz, 1994; etc). Clearly it is crucial to seek the meanings that lie behind the symbols and declarations. Schein using the concept of espoused values suggested that the declarations of organizations can over time become distanced from their real values developing veiled interests as explored in the critical management literature (Alvesson & Willmott, 2003; Magala, 2009).

Alvesson points out that "frequently powerful agents make a difference for how meaning is developed and a group relates to the social world. Power relationships thus matter for the shaping of culture; … a view of reality is then to a significant degree the result of negotiations between actors involved in asymmetrical power relationships" (Alvesson, 2002). Whilst culture is often referred to as shared values in reality there may be internal struggle before dominant ideology becomes embedded in the culture (Martin, 1995).

All organizations are political in the sense that power is disputed by different groups; this is most obviously true in corporations where management, professional groups (sales, marketing, R&D etc) and unionized labour develop their own discourses within the same organization. The culture is held together by some more or less real "social glue" offering shared identity in spite of the perpetuation of conflicting interests. This was investigated in depth by Joanne Martin with her three perspectives on organizational culture, in which she analyzes the same corporate cultures from integration, differentiation and fragmentation points of view (Martin, 1992; 2002).

Alvesson's and Martin's approaches suggest that the most effective power is that which is internalized by the subordinate or other object of persuasion: "when A wouldn't have to get B to do things because B would do this kind of things anyway. Simple empiricism would not be sufficient to reveal this" (Clegg 1989 quoted in Alvesson 2002). The only way to try to access these power dynamics is by critical analysis into the values and meanings acquired by members of a culture: an "emic" ethnographic approach.

Power is not simply a domination issue but embedded in the culture of the organization: "ideologies and mechanisms may exercise power beyond the intentions or control of the elites…" and "forms of knowledge may involve the exercise of power through the capacity to define what is real true and normal and thus regulate and constrain people..." (Foucault 1980, quoted in Alvesson 2002), which is pretty close to our working definition of organizational culture. Alvesson's metaphors for culture in the same book suggest culture should be seen as a control system, echoing Geertz's view (Geertz, 1973) and implying that it is concerned with the preservation of a status quo and existing power and status relationships.

I do not feel inclined in my classes to go too far down the CMS (critical management studies) road; the line of thinking emerging from Marxist related origins through the Frankfurt School is not something to "push down students' throats". This loose school of thought basically questioned "managerialistic assumptions of the legitimacy and efficacy of established patters of thinking and action" (Alvesson & Willmott, 2003, P1). In the extreme form of the argument they believe that people involved in organizations are "developed to fit into the demands of mass production and mass consumption" and consequent standardized forms of individuality" or "reduce human beings to parts of a well-oiled machine (ibid, P2). HR management in particular is seen as having a role of "regulation of the human subject in the workplace" (ibid P3).

A major issue that arises as a result of these reflections is to what extent we as teachers and writers can be neutral with respect to socialization and reinforcement through discourse systems. We are of course more aware of this in international business ethics where a considerable school of thought has been extremely effective in promoting environmental, sustainable, class sensitive, diversity inclusive positions (Aspen, 2009). When we argue that no one system of culture is better than another, which we sometimes do, we are obviously taking a morally relativistic position. As teachers are we only supposed to consider mechanisms and processes or should we evaluate outcomes too? In the current multi-cultural tensions across the world this question becomes daily more important and I do not believe we can as teachers maintain a neutral stance on power, inclusiveness and social implications of cultural norms.

Cultural patterns are concerned with the maintenance of social and organizational power relationships, as noted below in the section on discourse strategies and we should not "skate over" this ideological function of culture (Scollon & Scollon 1995). Analyses of cases should thus embrace a consideration of the partly concealed power dynamics in analyzing organizational events.

With these ideas in mind we can use at least three basic approaches in analyzing any case, as follows

a. The etic dimensions analysis, noting comparisons on dimensions but remaining non-judgmental and neutral.
b. The emic meanings and symbols analysis which becomes more politicized if we apply semiotic analysis. Semiotic ethnography can then be interpreted as etic structuralist comparative generalization.
c. The "pure business" analysis, which involves the analysis of power relations and can be considered from a critical viewpoint. This also bridges the emic-etic divide. It also involves elements that are universal or circumstantial and not cultural in nature.

A non-neutral stance is implied in b and c and we can choose how far we recognize this in our class analyses. As teachers working with cultural issues I have suggested we cannot be neutral; this does not mean that we have to be neo-Marxists in the spirit of the Frankfurt school with its weighty political implications; it does mean we have to raise issues and adopt positions if we feel these are sufficiently

important. I will deal with these arguments in a practical analysis of our teaching under 6 sections followed by the analysis of particular cases which I use in cross-cultural management classes.

Analysis of selected class issues

1. <u>Cross-cultural communication</u>: the culturally relativistic position is sometimes naïve and partially irrelevant to our students' needs; the Gudykunst view of unconditional accommodation is questionable (Gudykunst, 1998)
2. <u>Depths of culture:</u> some issues are neutral; some are not. We distinguish between eating with chopsticks or knives and forks and freedom of choice of marriage partners for example.
3. <u>Stereotypes</u> and how they are formed: what is the social and economic significance of specific stereotypes?
4. <u>Cross-cultural ethical stance</u>: Buller style decision trees in which the first column is "moral importance" and in which a major option is "education" are pragmatic rather than engaged with values.
5. <u>Discourse strategies</u> and their political and ideological implications in preserving the status quo. Is cross-cultural conversational implicature a neutral issue?
6. <u>Corporate culture</u>: embedding by management, espoused values, power implications of management messages and the power relations lying behind these.

1: Cross-cultural communication

In cross-cultural communication seminars we emphasize tolerance and even go so far as to contemplate what Gudykunst describes as "unconditional constructiveness". (Gudykunst, 1998). This means trying to be fair and rational in spite of provocation or attitudes we find distasteful on the part of others: we are advised to avoid emotional traps, seek understanding and communication even if they don't listen, being reliable even if they seek to deceive, using a non-coercive mode even if they try to coerce us, accepting them even if they don't accept us and applying Fisher and Ury's principle of separating the problem from the person (Fisher & Ury, 1981).

This is excellent advice as far as correct behavior goes but there are many situations in which the nature of the conflict in reality is asymmetrical, such as some involving management and labour, landlords and tenants, big v small company negotiation and so on. Very few situations in reality are neutral with respect to power and our "constructiveness" should take this into account. It may be appropriate and legitimate to recommend that issues should be made public, argued in favour of one or other party, appeal suggested to higher authority, direct action recommended, company reputation affected and so on. This is widely recognized as desirable in diversity, environmental and sustainability issues but we can also choose to take a critical approach to power issues such as colonial discrimination policies, unacceptable work conditions, personal abuse of power, respect for local cultures,

exploitation of resources and many others. Some of these issues are seen in the cases below.

2. Depths of culture

We frequently represent depths of culture as visual metaphors such as icebergs, pyramids or onions to show, typically, three levels or depths. These are distinguished in descending order by their accessibility, learnability and how far they are subject to change. The debate about culture often confuses these three levels. (see Fig 2)

Figure 2: depths of culture

Symbols, rituals, artefacts, behaviour, communication style (visible but needing interpretation; can be learned / learned about). So-called "objective culture"

Meanings of artefacts, beliefs, values: (inference and interpretation: time and experience needed). "subjective"

Collective sense of identity (subjective, ineffable, largely inaccessible and unlearnable)

Culture is seen as residing on these intimately inter-connected levels: the visible "objective" outer level of artefacts, names, rituals, customs; a second level in which the meaning of these symbols are located for members of the culture (values such as family, independence, freedom, building the future, protecting the young, strengthening our community), and a third level which is largely ineffable where collective identity and sense of community reside. The first of these is negotiable and may be relatively trivial; the second is negotiable but rarely trivial, the deepest may not be negotiable even over generations.

In semiotic terms the first level is that of signs and the second "the signified", that is, the symbolic meaning carried by the artefacts and behaviours on the first level. Semiotics seeks clues both in societal and organizational cultures to explain what lies behind artefacts by examining rituals, celebrations, stories, texts, buildings, seating arrangements and many others, and to investigate the cultural meaning system which sustains these.

All cross-cultural issues require negotiated solutions that distinguish non-essential symbols that can be traded, social imperatives and family traditions needing long term acculturation, and group identity. When discussing for example UK Moslems we must be careful to distinguish manifestations on the visible level such as eating and drinking customs, use of the hijab, family pressure in choosing marriage partners; values associated with this cultural configuration such as loyalty to family, hierarchal relationships or in-group relationships on the second level; and sense of identity (Moslem, British, Pakistani family roots for example). Successful outcomes to cross-cultural issues require negotiation, meaning dialogue, communication and movement on both sides taking into account the depth of feeling associated with each level. Negotiation is the alternative to violent means of expressing differences.

3. Stereotyping is not neutral

When we show our students the familiar diagram below (see Fig 2) we take no position on the relative merits of positions on the continuum nor do we need to if we are using an etic value dimension approach. Such models (Hofstede, Trompenaars, Schwartz and others) tend to be more or less self-consciously neutral and non-judgmental. Only the GLOBE study makes a claim to evaluate because it is concerned with leadership efficacy: even then there are a range of competing implicit leadership theories (Javidan et al, 2006). GLOBE also explicitly concerns itself with practices "as are" and values "as should be".

Figure 2: stereotyping, the ecological fallacy and prejudiced communication
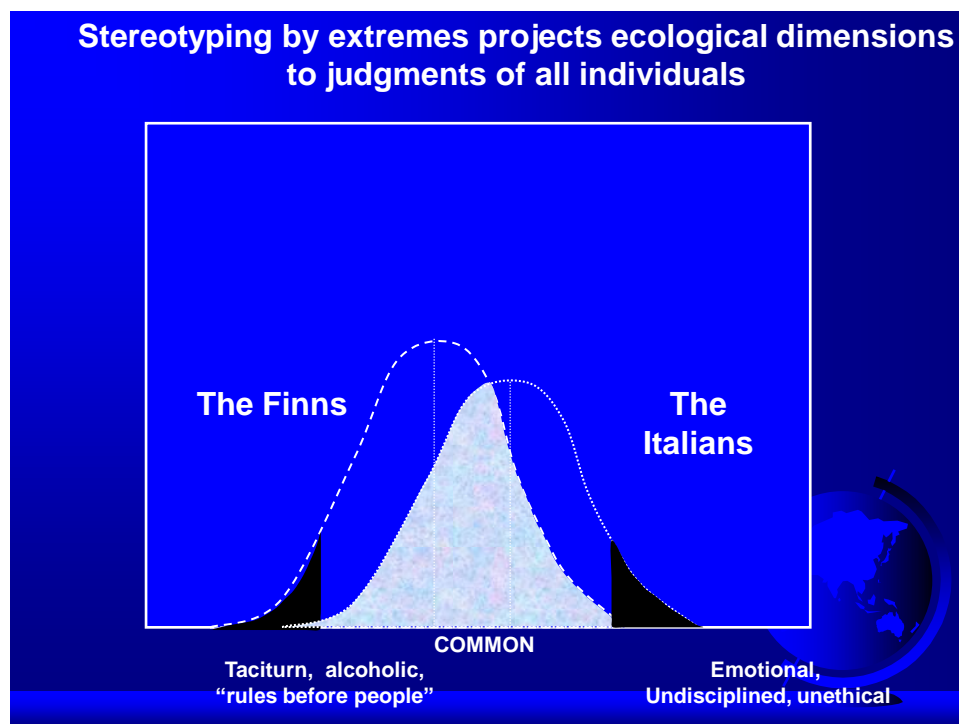
Our students should be aware that the non-judgmental "normal distribution" presentation ignores the historic and social creation of this stereotyping or, if using dimensions rather than crude predispositions, "sophisticated stereotyping" in Osland and Bird's phrase (Osland & Bird, 2000). We need to encourage students to research the historical relationships between cultures to explain the perceptions, attitudes and prejudices that emerge socially over time through association, innuendo and manipulation in turn explicable by power relationships such as colonial, class and gender based power relations.

Commonly members of a stereotyped culture we have met are non-representative (if we have met any at all), for example economic immigrants from the poorest, least educated groups, whose lack of social skills and awareness is generalized to the whole of the culture in question. Thus stereotyped Chinese were once as ignorant hawking peasants whose kids defecate in the streets because the contact we had was with a poor un-educated rural class; a similar argument applied to the perception of Irish labourers in UK or English "lager louts" in continental seaside towns, with associated perceptions as beer (or whiskey) drinking, bar (or

disco) fighting, potato (or fish and chips) eating, foul-mouthed in conversation and so on (Ruscher, 2001). In all these cases we would be guilty of false generalization (see Fig 2).

The critical argument focuses on the dominant culture's interests in maintaining such stereotypes: the target group may be used as cheap employees or gullible customers but contact with them avoided in any other circumstances. What does society make of undesirable immigrants who use their small children to rifle through rubbish bins? It marginalizes them even more according to this argument in order to preserve their subservient role. The diagram suggests societies attribute extremes when in fact the distribution is likely to be normal with median values (however estimated) slightly different; groups are then labeled with these extreme characteristics.

4. Cross-cultural ethical values and decisions

When we present ethics to our students as the tension between universalism and particularism we are using a "sophisticated" euphemism for the balance between seeking individual advantage from professional resource power situations and applying rules impartially as in the case of the official with the power to issue or refuse a licence to open a business. A well-known ethical scenario was made popular in Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's "Riding the Waves of Culture" using the example of the friend asked to cover for a colleague responsible for an accident. The writers are neutral with regard to the decision, using it to demonstrate that on the value dimension of universalism national samples responded with different average scores and also that there are a range of arguments that might justify particularistic behavior (see Fig 3)

Figure 3: cross-cultural ethical decision tree
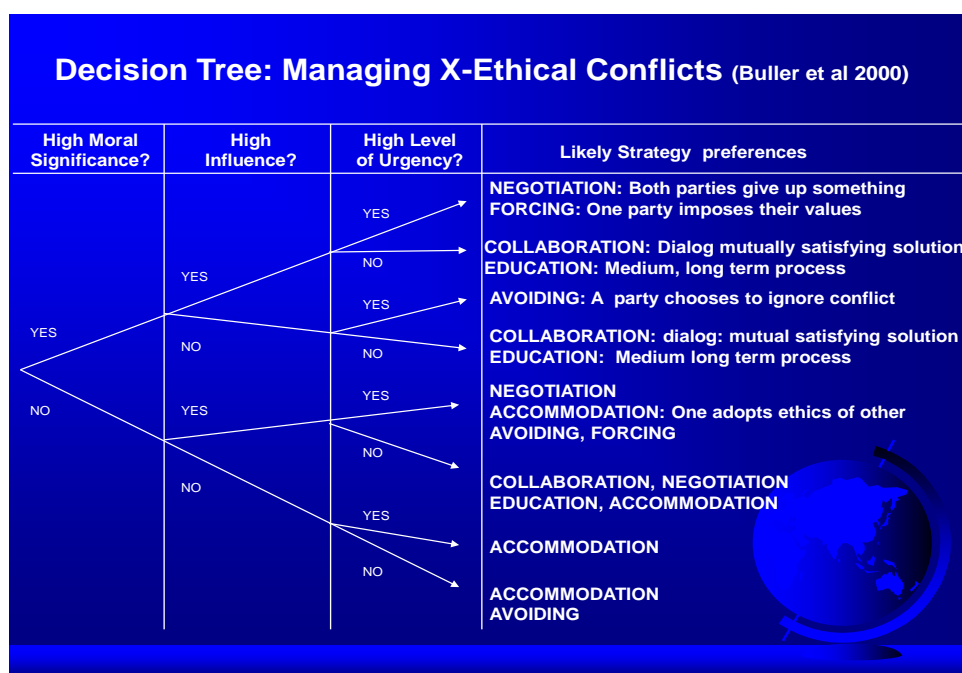
In class, however, we consider the ethical validity of decisions as noted below in the section on cases. We apply models such as the Buller algorithm (Buller et al, 2000), (Fig 3), which has highly pragmatic elements since it takes into account the influence at the decision maker's disposal and the urgency with which the immediate decision has to be taken

The "likely strategy preferences" are pragmatic in the case of accommodation and forcing since they depend on the power balance between the parties. The first column, referring to the perception of high moral significance, also turns out to be pragmatic since it does not address the issue of the difference in moral importance for the different parties; this is therefore a contingent model that depends on outcomes rather than seeking intrinsic value in the decision making process; behaviour is thus still guided to a large extent by interest. The issue for the teacher is how far to seek morally justified solutions rather than simply stating alternatives.

5. Discourse strategies

A major issue in cultural analysis is the use and choice of discourse strategies and to what extent these need to be modified in cross-cultural situations, based for example on the insights of Scollon and Scollon. The function of discourse strategies is to maintain and reinforce the face system, that is, the socially and politically correct status relationships in society (Scollon & Scollon, 1995). Communication implies constant choices of such strategies in order to demonstrate recognition of social status relationships.

Membership of a culture implies intimate and instinctive familiarity with these but in cross-cultural situations we cannot be so sure of the unspoken rules that govern inter-personal encounters; misunderstandings can lead to resentment and emotional reactions can easily appear, as when a person's behavior is perceived as too intimate or too distant. When dealing with discourse strategies we are reinforcing the status quo and power relationships, and hence the dominant ideology that legitimizes these. The status norms we maintain are by implication conservative; no thought is given to dynamic mechanisms for change; expression of social tensions, protest or social resentment are socially deviant. In many cases apparent neutrality is not as neutral as it seems since the dominant ideology and power relationship are embedded in the status quo.

The convention of "clarity, brevity, sincerity" as a communication model (Lanham, 1983) is a minimalist, egalitarian, direct, low context style much admired in the Anglo business world. This convention is seen as most effective and crucially most respectful of the parties involved: in fact, the best way! Nonetheless even Anglo business people may admit that this style could be considered cold and impersonal so there is already some admission of the need for cross-cultural accommodation "because it makes the receiver feel better about doing business with the company" (Scollon & Scollon, ibid, P 94). This statement suggests "we know our way is the best but we have to make concessions to get what we want".

When new members join an organization they learn the conventions of communicative style and who is to be treated how: this discourse system serves to

legitimize a person's place in the community's culture. Discourse is an essential component in the process of being recognized and accepted and is therefore confirmatory of existing power and social relationships. If you want to get on you have to know who to look after and how to look after them. This is a pragmatic and essentially amoral position, seeking acceptance and belonging in society, regardless of the moral status of behavior expected. Thus if all the salesmen cheat on expenses a newcomer will do so too in order to be accepted and enjoy in-group benefits; in this way unethical behaviours are soon rationalized.

The Scollons suggests that our basic ideology is Utilitarian (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, P 104), a society that seeks individual happiness (or the sum of individuals' happiness), progress, is egalitarian, individualistic, sees technology as source of wealth, and values quantitative measurements, making for a competitive, rationalistic innovation seeking culture. This is effectively the modernist view, which is questioned by the critical literature as narrowing choices and forcing members of society into a conventional consumerist mould (Alvesson, 2002). The Utilitarian discourse - anti-rhetorical, empirical, deductive, individualistic, egalitarian - and politically correct - is thus seen as imperialistic (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, P 111); many writers also see gender role implications as a corollary (Magala, 2009)

6. Corporate culture and espoused values.

Schein is probably the best known proponent of the view that founders and leaders seek to embed corporate values through mechanisms such as well-publicized measurement and control (punctuality, output, client attention etc), defining critical incidents (delays, bad climate, losing orders), allocation of scarce resources, role modeling, rewards and status allocation and recruitment and promotion policies (Schein, 1992). These are reinforced by secondary mechanisms such as physical space and buildings, stories and myths, and statements of philosophy and values (Schein, ibid). Nonetheless he is not thought of as taking a critical management view.

In today's business world such acculturation is the realm of marketing consultants and web page designers. The purpose is well-known: to "massage" or manipulate opinion inside and outside the organization in order to maximize loyalty and contribution from employees and maximize sales in the market. These realities are widely recognized in the business world and have led to steadily increasing pressure from organizations and academics - and increasingly practitioners - aware of the dangers of cynical manipulation, concerned to monitor corporate behavior and foster corporate social responsibility and convince business to "do well by doing good".

Studies using interpretative content analysis have examined web pages (Knoppen et al, 2006) and suggested dimensions of value revealed by the discourse they use: moving images, language and imagery to cater for customers' tastes whether teenage, retired people, female or male special interests etc. A semiotic analysis of artifacts and messages is invaluable in bringing out such aspects in product branding highlighting issues such as gender and assertiveness. (Floch (2005); Oswald, 2007)

Outside the world of the corporation the media, arts and bloggers of various hues are all involved in producing and disseminating opinion intended to make us more aware of the dangers of manipulation and discrimination.

Parallel case analysis

This section describes ways we can de-brief selected cases with an emphasis on semiotic, pragmatic and critical approaches, enabling teachers and students to go beyond a purely neutral and relativistic interpretation. The first case has been treated with more detail to demonstrate the analytical technique

Case 1: Socometal: rewarding African workers (Mendenhall et al, 2007, pp 246-248)

This case, taken from an excellent international human resource management case book, is set in Senegal and deals with how a Senegalese engineer (Diop) with French grande école higher education works with the local tribal chief's son (N'Diaye) to motivate the work force to push up productivity by 30% in return for a 2 hour pay increase in the face of the skepticism of the Western managers. He is successful but met with the angry rejection of the French expat boss (Bernard). In this case an etic value analysis shows the contrast mainly on the dimensions of materialism, goal orientation and diffuseness in the form of more work for more money and preference for a good working relationships and respect.

The emic analysis identifies tribal loyalty and trust and Western management skepticism on the other and conservative extrinsic motivation attitudes of the French boss. Semiotically these attitudes are interpreted as being the result of neo-colonial racial stereotyping with a view to maintaining European control and justifying the discriminatory attitude to tribal organization of the workers. Some examples in the text to illustrate this approach:

- Use of word "unusual" suggests it is not normal for highly educated engineers to chat with a factory worker But this worker is "model", which explains his respect for the status quo and the management.
- N'Diaye was not a union member or official rep but was influential in spite of this outside the organigram imposed by the majority French management.
- "While multinational" it's a JV 52% French owned. The "while" in the sentence suggests the multinationality is subordinated to the French majority ownership….
- A model of Africanization of management policies: this is something Western companies are proud of and admired for but top managers are still European suggesting a paternalistic policy.
- N'Diaye "said with a smile" that he could achieve the production increase because it was not Bernard who asked for it. This is apparently a smile of local trust and mistrust of management.
- The French schools referred to are "elite" and "prestigious": in the status structure it is clearly better to have studied in these school than in a Senegalese institution for example.

- Bernard organizes the work with flowcharts and "tells Diop exactly what is required" then disappears to his home in Marseille where he clearly prefers to be. Diop passes on his instructions and keeps Bernard from having to have contact with the local staff.
- No mention of empathy or interest in the staff, only the number on the chart: this is a job to do and then get out as quick as poss. France is more desirable than Senegal to spend the time.
- He is also sceptical about promised results implying that Africans could never achieve so much. The same view was shared by an Italian HR manager: this is the European expectation.
- Diop himself is cautious but open to accepting with suitable evidence that the output increase is feasible. Diop thus sounds both professional and sensitive to local people. He is the good guy in this operation and runs the risk of losing credibility if it fails.

Our de-briefing detects the value structures behind the case. It also suggests that a more successful business case would be to make diversity management and inter-group respect pay off since failure to accord importance to key groups leads to disastrous performance outcomes. Thus the de-briefing of the case situates it in a meaningful and complex cultural context rather than maintaining carefully non-judgmental positions.

Case 2: The Virtual Team.

This was a video commercially produced by Big World Media, Boulder, CO available on internet. See **http://www.tfc.nl/pdf/9052_preview.pdf** for the script of this film.

Diane King is the American manager of an internet retailer who has difficulties leading her virtual team consisting of Chinese, Latin American, Indian and West African members. Process and task elements such as communication, timing, response time, progress reports and deadlines are constantly a source of frustration to Diane, who is the archetypal US time-conscious goal driven manager, with resulting irritation in dealing with the other members of the team.

Firstly the case can be approached as a pure value dimension contrast in which Diane King, the US team leader epitomizes:

- Individualism
- Low power distance
- High task orientation
- Low context communication style
- Preference for codified and factual information
- Sequential rigid time preference
- Specific (separate business / leisure) approach to work
- Need for transparency

This is the pure etic value dimension contrast and so far there is no judgment.

However, she "says what she means and she means what she says", suggesting a certain superiority: this is the "clarity, brevity, sincerity" discourse strategy mentioned earlier and she clearly regards it as the most efficient way and a sign of respect towards the people she is working with. Diane obviously believes that her way is the best. She is not (at least initially) ethno-relativistic; she believes it is a universal business truth that her way is more efficient and her team should be more open, up-front and informative with respect to problems in their territories for example. Semiotically the value contrasts show that she epitomizes the high performance team values made popular notably by Jon Katzenbach in the US in the 1990s: task first and people "as people" second (Katzenbach, 1993). Her writing style is epitomized by a series of initials "RSVP, ASAP, D" The signifier here is a tight brief alphabetical code; the signified is "please concentrate, pull yourself together, have a sense of time"; the external reference signification process is "you need to do something about the bad debts in your territory for example. She expects clear factual immediate answers as an indication of their respect for the American way of doing business.

Her team, on the other hand, are from collectivistic, high power distance, family centred, high context, synchronous time, diffuse opaque cultures. They consider her brusque, cold and informal (in the sense of having little respect for people's family relationships, titles or qualifications), with no appreciation of their pride in their work (for example a Latin American assistant who plays the role she expects of an answering machine). She is unsympathetic to Chinese language problems and infrastructure problems and cost structures which make it difficult to keep up the pace and constant connectivity demanded by this smartly dressed time-kept executive with her laptop in the airport. A reading of the signs in the case suggests that the functioning of a team is a matter of universal "efficiency" as symbolized by Anglo cultures and in particular the US while the developing world is struggling to keep up: the Anglo way trumps the relationship- oriented way.

In fact we should see that conditions are different around the world and not that their way of doing things is less effective. The attempt to impose on others can be regarded as seeking best results at the expense of cultural variability: essentially a colonialist approach. Our in-class analysis is that this has to be dealt with cross-cultural sensitivity in which efficiency and efficacy are not regarded as the same thing: effectiveness depends on the ability of the parties to accommodate to each other and respect the demands of the other and thus maximize the output of the team.

Dr Ahmad and Carlos Noguera in Malaysia (in-house case)

In this case, originally inspired by a scenario in Richard Mead's "International Management" (2004), a Canadian business man is pitching his sale of management training services in Malaysia; Dr Ahmad is his potential client, a highly respected hospital administrator; the long term contract goes to Carlos Noguera, a small and culturally more sensitive Spanish firm with local offices and greater knowledge of the market and culture.

In dimensional terms we identify high/low context (the Canadian is portrayed as factual, up-front, straight talking, standing by the letter of the contract etc), time orientation (scarce to plentiful), formality (the Malaysian is more status conscious than the Canadian) and power distance (the Malaysian is treated with high respect discourse strategies by his people whilst the Canadian is an informal egalitarian with typical Anglo cultural background). No value judgments so far.

A semiotic analysis of signs point to the subjects of the training sessions "Making positive oral presentations", "Presenting management information clearly and effectively" as representing the low context, direct talking ideal for an Anglo organization that talks explicitly about skills and presentation skills and assumes it is a universal best practice. However, this style of package is completely unsuited to the cultural context of a Malaysian hospital as is the idea that the client should be left alone with the brochure or that the doctors should have no informal contact time with trainers. The implication is, however, that this is international best practice should be pushed on the local market, which will in time come to see the wisdom of the Western way.

The critical interpretation goes further and suggests the refusal to admit there is any merit in local ways of doing things, using time and dealing with people and contracts is essentially an imperialistic approach. Our analysis is that it is mistaken and the Canadian should modify his approach or lose his business. This suggests that a purely business view should accept that when selling overseas the onus is on the visitor to be sensitive to local conditions: good business is culturally sensitive business.

Changmai Corporation (Mendenhall et al, 2007 pp 89-96)

In the Changmai Corporation case the Western managers have to decide how to deal with bribery when a local government official tries to get money to pay for a trip to Europe for himself and his wife and a job for his son in the company. This is the classic "Westerner in the developing country" situation. Moral values are confronted cleverly: the locals condemn Western materialism, lack of respect for the family and toleration of towards violence and sex in the media; the Westerners deplore failure to enforce safety regulations, sub-human working conditions, indifference to fatalities and corrupt government officials. A caricature Frenchman plays the role of the corrupt manager proud of his record and pleased to accept rewards, much appreciated by his own company who gain contracts.

The etic analysis points up individualism, collectivism, universalism, particularism, inner and outer locus of control, high and low power distance and so forth, a neutral comparative analysis reinforcing "sophisticated stereotypes".

The semiotic analysis shows indifference to outside worker fatalities, suspicion of Westerners' moral superiority, poor officials with impunity to seek bribes and neglected machinery and infrastructure and suggests that the value contrasts overlook the underlying historical, economic and developmental differences. When the corrupt official says "the safety record does not look very harmonious" after building up a picture of how such a bad record might look to the press the choice of

words and tone (signifier) and the tension created between official and Western manager (signified) refer to an external reality which we consider an ethical dilemma.

The critical analysis shows some complexity. The owner of the plant, which is in Changmai in northern Thailand, is himself Chinese so the stereotypes about Westerners inner agendas do not apply to the ownership structure but rather owner managers internationally. He is in fact quite brazen in his view that lives of workers hired by sub-contractors are cheap and no responsibility of his. The Westerners with their qualms about safety and environmental issues discover that the former is of no interest to local whereas the latter, subject to inspection, certainly is to the point that it can be used to blackmail a Western manager. At the end of the day the Chinese owner wants to exploit the market, the production process, the suppliers and their workers; the Westerners are portrayed as having only good intentions but being ineffectual and trying to do maintain the best "universalistic" standards. However, from a critical point of view the Western company has interests in the corporation's functioning well as a potential future market and fails to confront the moral issues convincingly.

The case demonstrates again that a critical management approach can lend support to well intentioned management whatever its cultural origin but seeks underlying agendas. It is a complex case much as in the real world cases are always more complex, than those we find in teaching books.

Conclusion.

Etic dimension comparisons on their own are morally neutral and thus an insufficient approach to major features of inter-cultural management decision-making. A semiotic approach enables us to analyze emic specificities in situations by investigating the communication acts and other signs in order to draw out underlying patterns. We will take into account multiple explanatory influences on historical, economic, inter-personal, situational and business points of view, that is, the "why?" of many observed behavioural patterns. This is key to an accurate attributional explanation of events and embraces a critical approach to analysis of the power relationships involved.

Ethical issues subject to the supervision of internal and external bodies, NGO's and government level together with shareholder pressure have long been identified as powerful mechanisms on which to build a judgmental involvement in business rather than purely pragmatic and results-driven. The power relations approach can be enlightening for students in many cases which apparently are not ethical in nature.

Students find our approach helpful in understanding how to approach cultural interpretation of behavior in business: it enables them to move beyond stereotyped simplistic approaches. In our classes we strive to reconcile the best in traditional and critical approaches by demonstrating the variety of approaches and by making it clear that cultural issues are rarely simple and rarely neutral, and that one has to decide what is negotiable and what is not. All parties are involved in decisions: the only way forward on cross-cultural issues is to demonstrate the value of negotiation.

Negotiation means the struggle to understand the interests of all concerned, including one's own, and to seek solutions by persuasion and argument not force. Negotiation is the way to resolve conflict that lies between submission to what we do not agree with on the one hand and imposition by force and violence on the other. It requires listening skills, positive attitudes to finding solutions, the will to resolve issues in a morally correct way, the search for agreement without residual resentment and the patience and determination to settle for nothing less.

In teaching culture we are not anthropologists engaging in rich description for academic purposes: we are working in management and business school contexts and cannot absolve ourselves from the responsibility of taking positions. In the same way as corporate social responsibility, diversity inclusion initiatives, environmental sustainability programmes are increasingly disseminated world wide so in the cross-cultural field must we take lessons from the semiotic and critical management school, without necessarily thereby becoming neo-Marxists.

The fact that our approach does not fit students' expectations and previous experience may make our task more difficult. Also many teachers may take the view that our job as cross-cultural communication facilitators and teachers should be neutral and not concerned with anything that looks like political involvement - that we should be studiously neutral - but I do not believe that we can take this view as social science professionals. The teaching approach and literature references are different and must be learned about from the teachers', the institutional and the students' points of view. WE may even feel that the specialized approach of semiotics is not the most digestible for our students: if so then that line of discourse should be abandoned!

By the same token the teacher must be prepared to listen to a critical approach and prepared to spend time and effort inculcating it. Resistance may occur also in corporate settings, in which we do not want to offend our clients. This is one of the oldest dilemmas in the business world: do I tell the client what they want to hear or what I sincerely believe? On a multitude of issues, ranging from the patenting of pharmaceutical products to concealment of the effects of the additives in food to possible dangers to children of small parts in toys, confidentiality about salaries, asset stripping to make workers redundant (as featured in the film Wall St) and a thousand others issues we cannot be neutral; if we do not take a position we acquiesce in behaviour which may be unacceptable. The same applies in our analyses of cross-cultural management cases in our course.

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COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL WORLD AND DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS
/Communication – from John Atanasoff until the present day /

Minka Zlateva

The rapid development of new information technologies has overturned and continues to overturn, at an unprecedented rate, not only many of the traditional notions for interpersonal communication but also public communication practices at all levels – local, regional and global.

It is not only the dimensions, techniques and technologies of communication that are changing, but its very essence is also being deeply affected. This is so because internet communication provides us with numerous combinations of interpersonal and public communication, and, instead of the traditional mass audience, researchers now discuss electronic societies, i.e. groups of consumers unified by common interests which are, in their nature, complex, dynamic and situational. (Burkart, 2000 :382)

The circle of experts from different scientific spheres who demonstrate a lively interest in communication issues and more specifically in intercultural communication in the light of the so-called "global drift" of humanity, as formulated by Zygmunt Bauman, has expanded significantly. And, as current events on both national and global scale indicate, we are already facing the urgent need for an in-depth interdisciplinary analysis of the versatile aspects of the new phenomenon – social media.

The main cornerstones of my report will be:
1. "Linqua universalis" -   the unfulfilled dream of the "father of the computer" John Atanasoff;
2. The new aspects of communication management in social network communication;
3. The global UN initiative "Alliance of Civilizations" -   as a platform for establishment of active dialogue between cultures and civilizations.

Let us first look back at the dawn of the information era so that we can understand the contemporary processes within the global network.

The issues of communication with "the Other", i.e. someone whose identity is different from ours, of cultural flows and their movement, of cultural identity and uniqueness have, for centuries, fascinated scientists who, depending on their respective research field, have adopted different approaches in the study of those issues. But, whereas until recently those issues were the subject of study mainly for philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, philologists, linguists, writers and journalists, nowadays significant interest is displayed by representatives of the exact sciences.

One of them is the prominent American scientist of Bulgarian origin John Vincent Atanasoff, the inventor of the first digital computing device in the world back in 1939-1941. The computer was called ABC /the Atanasoff-Berry computer/ as it was conceived in Iowa State University in Ames together with the graduate student eng. Clifford Berry.

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
Cometences and Capabilities

As John Atanasoff himself writes, half of his blood "comes from south of the Balkan" (Atanasoff, 1992:38), which is where his father, Ivan Atanasoff, came from, before settling in America, having survived the Ottoman massacres in the village of Boyadzhik, Yambol district, during the April uprising of 1876 in Bulgaria. It was from his father that the future inventor inherited his determination, the resilient Bulgarian spirit and the sincere love for his homeland and went on the preserve the surname of Atanasoff for future generations (and for history!). The other half of John Vincent's blood is a mix of Irish and French (Atanasoff, ibid) and this is probably where he takes his inherent charm and the tenacity he displays in overcoming of obstacles. What an illustrative example of the enrichment of personality in the process of intercultural communication!

The Bulgarian origin of "the father of the computer" is well known and has instilled us with pride for several decades.

But the computer invented by the scientist was in fact merely the instrument enabling the revolutionary step forward. According to acad. Blagovest Sendov, who was the first to establish contact with John Atanasoff while holding the post of chairman of the Presidium of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, this step consists of the fact that John Atanasoff "abandoned the stable and reliable, albeit very slow mechanics, and chose flexible and fast electronics" and thus "opened the doors to the contemporary information era for mankind" (Sendov 2003 :17)

Of course, John Atanasoff himself often admitted that at first he had no idea how fast computers were to develop and how rapidly they would penetrate the everyday life of contemporary people. But the issues of communication between people fascinated him for decades.

I was lucky enough to personally discover proof of this interest of his in November 2009, when I was invited to lecture in the Department of Media and Communications and the Department of Computer Sciences in Iowa State University in Ames. I had the unique opportunity to see a model of the famous ABC computer as well as personal belongings of John Atanasoff's, carefully preserved in the Special Collection Department of the Iowa State University. Among them was a handwritten autobiography of the inventor. The final section was unusual, entitled "Other scientific interests". The first place among those interests was held by "Agriculture", and second - "Problems in Communication". (see Enclosure 1)

And here is the explanation given by John Atanasoff himself to the question why communication problems hold such fascination for him:

"My interest in this subject is very intense and ranges from the electrical engineering aspects of communication theory, trough the realm of what Dr. Norbert Wiener has called cybernetics, to coding and other semantic aspects bases of human communication. During the war I maintained as a hobby an interest on the numerical effectiveness of human communication. Much has been justly written about the importance of communication to human race. The fact that it is becoming a great "overhead burden" of human existence is not so well known. The case for better human communication is becoming more urgent".

I would like to emphasize the impressive scale and wide scope of John Atanasoff's interests – from the electrical engineering aspects through communication theory to its role for enhanced human existence. Here is a truly gifted, rich personality, a broad-minded, integral individual who single-mindedly and persistently overcomes all obstacles on the path to the next scientific or applied

scientific problem, yet never compromising the scope of his experiments and creative pursuits.

An indisputable proof in this direction is the history of ABC, forever bound to an unprecedented case in the history of patent law, known as the "thirty-year patent war". John Atanasoff, invited as an expert by Honeywell established and proved, with iron-clad logic, precision and accuracy, during the Honeywell-Sperry Rand suit regarding the computer patent, that the main ideas underlying the creation of ENIAC by Eckert and Mauchly were stolen by Eckert from his ABC computer. The judge, Earl R. Larson, found the courage and fortitude to announce, before the Federal Court in Minneapolis, a just decision against the "precedence" of Eckert and Mauchly and their ENIAC, and, on October 19th, 1973, the truth of the merits of John Atanasoff for creating the first computer finally triumphed.

A certain detail from this patent war deserves special attention, as it is directly related to the topic of our conference. In the heat of the Honeywell vs. Sperry Rand suit, the following episode occurs, as remembered by John Atanasoff: "On Monday I found myself alone so I went to the University of Minnesota and discussed some aspects of the origin of writing in China, Japan and Southeast Asia with a professor from China. He was delighted with our meeting and chance to talk with someone outside the field of linguistics, and I was happy to find out that there are still people in the world who are not involved in patents" (Atanasoff,2003:222). Incredible as it may sound, even at such a fateful time, John Atanasoff remains faithful to his own nature and pursuits a problem related to his greatest dream – the creation of a "new alphabet for the future welfare of mankind"! Even under those dramatic circumstances, his personal fate remains in the background because he is much more interested in universal problems!

He talked of this new alphabet on the day when his paternal homeland, Bulgaria, recognized his special merits and scientific contribution and awarded him with the Order of Cyril and Methodius, 1st class. Cyril and Methodius are the creators of the Slavic alphabet, and today the Cyrillic alphabet is the third official alphabet of the European Union, following the Latin and Greek alphabets, for which we, Bulgarians, are justifiably proud. Bulgaria demonstrated its appreciation for the contribution of John Atanasoff twenty full years before the almighty United States of America and President George Bush personally awarded him with the U.S. National Medal of Technology.

John Atanasoff's dream to create a universal alphabet, or "lingua universalis" to unite all people on the planet remained unfulfilled. In a purely philological aspect, he did indeed fail, but pragmatically speaking, he is the original founder of digital computing using binary code, which, in reality, enables computer connection between people in all corners of the world.

Digitalization based on the binary code causes essential changes both in interpersonal and public communication. Thousands of scientists from around the world take up the study of this exciting new issue. At the same time, the development of internet continues with unfamiliar speed, outpacing all forecasts with amazing alacrity.

The newest aspects of the global network are connected with the emergence and development of the blogosphere and social networks. We should, of course, differentiate between bloggers and members of social networks who use the latter mainly for self-expression and self-advertising, and those who interpret them as a wide platform for sharing of socially significant ideas and taking a stand on crucial

current issues of the social, economic, political and cultural development of their country, region or mankind as a whole.

"The essential aspect of Internet-based computer-mediated communication is that Internet users have access to the largest multitude of possible communication partners and information sources, and the fact that they communicate within a specific cultural context with common traditions and symbols" (Dermendzhieva, 2001 : 29).

Thus researchers in the field of communication management and intercultural communication are faced with mainly three wide study fields. With regard to access to information sources, the issues of freedom of access and equality of use are of special interest.

The diversity of research aspects in the field of information sources is also wide – issues related to their reliability, the actual and fictitious identity of users, the value of information in encyclopaedias of the wikipedia type (http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog), etc.

With view of the topic of our conference, the greatest interest is posed by the study of the communication process within a specific cultural context with common traditions and symbols.

According to Lyubomir Stoykov, blogs and the bloggosphere created by them can be defined as **subcultural phenomena** because "Subculture is a word denoting freedom of appearance, freedom of creativity, freedom and informality of the selected entertainment model. Subculture is a religious rite in which the only arbitrator of values and faith, taste and preferences is the individual" (Stoykov, 2006:44). This is why, according to the author, the main characteristics of the blogger as a subcultural persona is "his/her non-indifference, his/her disobedience, his/her oppositional attitude" (Stoykov, 2006: 54).

Perhaps the most recent example in this direction is the role of social networks for the wave of political changes which has awoken the younger generation and has transformed the political background in several Arab countries. On the one hand, internet networks have become, for that generation, the main source of "forbidden information". On the other hand, the activity of bloggers and the expansion of social networks has clearly revealed that ordinary citizens find, within blogs and social networks, the much desired space for personal participation in the hot political debates of their time by means of expressing a personal opinion before the immense audience of the network, and the opportunity to show that they are ready for specific social action. These events clearly demonstrate the need for exchange of experience and adaptation of social practices in the respective context with view of the political, religious and cultural traditions of each country.

Thirdly, insufficient recognition of the symbols used in the process of communication in different cultures and civilizations on behalf of the remaining part of the world shows the need of "translation" of messages in the global context in order to ensure proper deciphering and support on behalf of the democratic forces on the planet. The path to change requires clear and accurate messages to invoke the desired, and not boomerang effects and to mobilize societies for specific and significant social action.

A similar conclusion can be drawn from one of the most recent events in the Bulgarian political space – the protests against the increase in fuel prices announced by the civil organization "Force" (*Сила*) in the spring of this year. Born from the crest of the wave of general discontent, it nevertheless failed to articulate clear proposals

for satisfaction of the demands of thousands of consumers in the country, because it was unable to make adequate use of the social and political context of the situation and to identify the unifying symbols of those affected.

My proposal is that, in the near future, we embark on intercultural studies of those intriguing current issues, by establishing interdisciplinary European teams of experts – members of the Association for Cross-Cultural Competence and Management.

In the course of such studies we must, of course, pay due attention to the huge potential which the global network is able to mobilize within certain time terms for the solution of important current problems of contemporary mankind.

On May 5th of this year, together with several colleagues of mine – lecturers and students in Sofia University, we had the pleasure of attending the lecture of UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon in the ceremonial hall of our Alma Mater. "How the world looks in 2031 will depend largely on the decisions we make in 2011. That is why the United Nations needs your engagement, now... What we expect to happen in 20 years may happen much sooner, but it depends on us," he stressed. (Ban Ki Moon, 2011). The Secretary General urged students to develop, to dream, not to give up and not to conform … As the main challenges, he identified /the creation of/ a more prosperous world, free of extreme poverty, a cleaner, greener and more sustainable world, and a safer world, free of nuclear threat.

The prerequisites for the realization of those perspectives is educating the young generation in the spirit of tolerance, humanism, good will and intercultural dialogue. Efficient good practices are established through the participation of young people and students in UN initiatives.

One such initiative is the UN "Alliance of Civilizations" (www.unaoc.org). It was announced by the UN in 2006 on the initiative of the Spanish Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and the Turkish Prime Minister Redjep Tayyip Erdogan. One of the main goals of the initiative is to reduce the risk that a "wall of misunderstanding" will emerge between the West and the Muslim world, and to prevent the threat of "conflict between civilizations"; it aims to overcome the separation between the Christian West and the Muslim world following September 11th, 2002 and to activate cultural cooperation on a global scale. Four are the main priority fields of this initiative - youth, education, media and migration.

"Bulgaria is a country with a proven model of ethnic and religious tolerance," said the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgi Parvanov, during the Second Annual Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations in Istanbul in 2009. In his opinion, the Balkans which have so far been known as the powder keg of Europe are currently gaining popularity with a new image – that of interaction in the field of culture, such as the cultural corridors between Balkan countries. President Georgi Parvanov proposed the creation of a fund aimed to help young people to get to know religious and cultural differences and to find the path to cohesion.

On May 16th and 17th of 2009, in Sofia, we held the Twelfth International Scientific Conference of the UNESCO Chair "Communication and Public Relations" in the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski, under the topic "Communication and civilizations", dedicated to the Alliance of Civilizations. The conference was organized jointly with the UN Development Programme in Bulgaria and the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA), with the support of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Bulgaria. The conference

involved theoretical discussions, a round table between journalists and PR experts, a doctoral seminar and students' atelier.

Within the Conference we also held the Third working meeting, bringing to fruition my idea (Zlateva, 2008: 60-61) for creation of a network of chairs and experts in communication from the Balkan states – BALKANCOM – which will cooperate, among other tasks, for the regional realization of the Alliance of Civilizations by means of initiatives and interdisciplinary scientific studies.

The first steps have already been taken. But our common task henceforth is to study communication in the digital world in all its aspects, and to train young generations in the spirit of tolerance, empathy and loyalty to the ideals of humanism and peace.

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Enclosure 1 – Part of the original authobiography of John Atanasoff, presenting his point of view about communication

In addition, the work of the Acoustics Division has been cited in numerous less important ways within the Naval Ordnance Laboratory organization, including in particular its work on project Crossroads at Bikini and for seismic and sonic work on the occasion of the blast which destroyed fortifications of Helgoland.

VIII. OTHER SCIENTIFIC INTERESTS

Agriculture — I own a 125 acre farm in Maryland and keep a herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle. I am deeply interested in agriculture and the possibility of applying more advanced scientific methods in solving its basic problems. The great growth in the application of physics and operational methods to agriculture is yet to come.

Problems in Communications — My interest in this subject is very intense and ranges from the electrical engineering aspects of communication theory, through the realm of what Dr. Norbert Wiener has called Cybernetics, to coding and other semantic bases of human communications. During the war I maintained as a hobby an interest in the numerical effectiveness of human communication. Much has been justly written about the importance of communication to the human race. The fact that it is becoming a great "overhead burden" of human existence, is not so well known. The case for better human communications is becoming more urgent.

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9

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTERCULTURAL TRAINERS[24]

Juliana Roth

Ethics in intercultural trainings is a topic that in the English-language literature is closely connected with the names of Judith Martin and Michael Paige. Until today, their publications are the only sources of explicit ethical rules in the field of intercultural learning and teaching. They advocate general principles based on a culture relativistic approach which closely resemble the anthropological '*Codes of Ethics*' and aim at maintaining the integrity of the trainer. As particularly critical aspects they discuss the aspired transformation of the learner's personality, his or her emotional shock as a result of cultural self-awareness, and the existence of power asymmetries in intercultural interfaces. As concerns ethical issues and responsibilities, Paige and Martin consider the intercultural trainer as the central figure, and they establish rules for him or her which relate directly to the practice of intercultural trainings and can therefore be easily understood by practitioners. They refer explicitly to two categories, the competencies of the trainer and the risk factors in the intercultural learning process, and they present a very detailed catalog of requirements for ethically responsible trainers. The authors do not claim to have exhausted the topic of ethics; rather, they insist that it is a very difficult and tedious field which will become more and more complex with the increasing relevance of intercultural trainings as a field of business.

In the German-speaking world, ethics in the intercultural field is still a very new topic. In the following I will discuss some ethical issues which came up again and again in my own practice of intercultural teaching and training. For the sake of clarity and in analogy to Kant's moral imperative concerning general human interactions I have chosen to present them in the form of ethical imperatives.

1. Intercultural trainers should be mindful of the notions of culture and cultural difference they employ in their trainings

The notions of culture and cultural difference are at the core of intercultural work. Their theoretical framing belongs to the intellectual domains of cultural anthropology and ethnology. For the design of their trainings, all intercultural trainers are thus dependent on knowledge "borrowed" from a field other than Intercultural Communication.

Ever since the first modern definition of culture by the anthropologist Edward B. Tylor at the end of the 19th century, the various anthropological schools have developed their own definitions of "culture". All of them emerged from the attempts of researchers to come to grips with the extant social reality, and by virtue of this they

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[24] This is a shortened version of the article "Ethical Considerations for Intercultural Trainers". In: Juliana Roth (ed.), Sofia Congress SIETAR Europa 2007. Selected Papers. 2010, p. 85-95. http://sietareu.sietarglobal2008.org/images/stories/documents/sofia_papers.pdf

always reflect the Zeitgeist. The beginnings of intercultural trainings in the 1950s coincided with the predominance of the (then new) culture relativistic ideas which were an outcome of the upcoming anti-colonialist and anti-racist movements and the debate on human rights. The culture relativistic concept of culture perceived cultures as the specific, learned social knowledge of coherent and unified social units living in clearly defined territorial units. For that period of time with its relatively low mobility and its limited exchange of information, this definition of culture was probably quite adequate. "Culture" was viewed as objectifiable and was, at least for the industrialized societies, largely equaled to "national culture".

This "classical" concept of culture could easily be made operational for the analysis of the everyday life of diplomats, employees in international organizations, development workers, business expatriates, exchange students or soldiers on peace-keeping missions – that is, those groups who sojourn temporarily as a foreign minority in a cultural majority, in other words: act in international contexts. For such contexts, "culture" was very well represented by the well-known metaphor of the 'cultural iceberg' which is based on the clear distinction between the visible and the invisible parts of culture and presupposes a causal relation between the two.

Until today, this older concept of culture still forms the basis of most intercultural trainings and is well-established through numerous ground-laying publications and handbooks. Its advantage lies in the fact that with its help interactions between members of different national cultures can indeed be predicted with a some probability and that misunderstandings can be analyzed with the help of "culture dimensions" (such as Hall's, Hofstede's or Strodtbeck/Kluckhohn's). Their disadvantage, however, is that they actually lead trainers to rely too much on rather generalized and simplified concepts of "national culture" and that more complex situations – as they are common in multiethnic or multicultural societies – cannot be adequately grasped.

In our present age of growing globalization, individualization, mobility, and world-wide flow of information many basic factors of intercultural encounters have changed dramatically. The fields of intercultural action can less and less be explained by means of clear cultural ascriptions. The idea of cultures as territorially bound and closed units has become highly questionable in many places in the world, most significantly in the highly industrialized regions. As a consequence, the idea of the determination of the individuals by their culture which was suggested by the culture relativistic approach is today criticized as being static and deterministic.

Therefore, in the present understanding of cultural anthropology, culture is conceived of as something fluid and complex, with structures that can be grasped only situationally and for the individual case. In this concept of culture, symbols, images, and subjective interpretations play a very important role. For the analysis of interactions in multicultural contexts this concept of culture offers a decidedly better tool. The asymmetrical relations between the members of the majority group and the different minorities in such societies usually leads to the increased production of subjectively felt or even imagined differences which can then function as self-fulfilling prophesies and develop their own dynamics and produce their own reality.

Does the existence of the two rather different definitions of culture present a problem? Not really. In contrast to Tommy Dahlén, the radical critic of intercultural trainings, who wants to radically replace the classical concept of culture by the modern one, I would insist that in intercultural trainings today both concepts of culture can very well exist side by side and can be made useful. Thus, at the beginning of culture learning, the model of culture as an iceberg can very well serve as a first orientation. To the beginners it offers structures which enable them to organize their pertinent life-world experiences and to make the abstract concept of culture concrete for themselves. Depending on the context, the duration, the learning needs, and the goals of the training, the trainer can then introduce the second model, that of the cultural "backpack". It conceives the cultural knowledge of the individual as an invisible 'rucksack' which one always has on one's back, but is not obliged to keep it open all the time. The use of the 'cultural baggage' is rather flexible because the individual has the freedom to use it individually and situationally.

The two models do not necessarily contradict each other: There are contexts and situations which can be handled better with the help of the 'iceberg' model, and there are others that can be grasped more adequately with the 'backpack' model. The more competent the trainer can handle the two concepts of culture and be aware of their limitations, the more differentiated he will deal with intercultural realities, find the adequate theoretical approach to them and accompany the learners in the process of intercultural learning.

2. Intercultural trainers should refrain from using cultural comparisons based on black-and-white contrasts

In their choice of training methods trainers are highly dependent on handbooks, and it is in this field where the predominance of the American interculturalists is most visible. The sheer number of handbooks and training videos dwarfs everything that has been produced on the European market. In addition, the American books are made up in an attractive manner, their texts are easily comprehensible and their didactic is extraordinary. This is why many European trainers like to use them. The question is, however, whether the methods presented in these books are really applicable to the European situation.

Trainers practicing in the US say that they expect, among other things, to work with trainees who know no foreign languages, have no or only superficial experience with otherness, and want to learn quickly and in a practice-oriented manner.

It is probably due to these features that most methods to be found in US training handbooks tend to illustrate cultural differences by means of black-and-white contrasts. Thus, simulations and case studies, but also exercises on value orientations and intercultural dialogues usually employ extreme cultural oppositions. This is why they are, in the European context, usually perceived as "naive" or "simplistic" and do not achieve their didactic goals.

Similarly, the use of the method of the "culture assimilator" is highly problematic. The classical application of this method – the presentation of a simple story of a conflict between individuals with different cultural backgrounds, the presentation of four

solutions and the pertinent explanations – is today criticized as being too simplifying and as leaving no space for creative thinking. Furthermore, critics today do not accept the idea of handling culture in terms of "right" or "wrong", and even laymen recognize intuitively that cultures cannot be understood as closed systems providing unambiguous orientations.

Even the argument that these explanations contain valuable information about the given culture is not valid in view of the rapid culture change: that too often annihilates the topicality of these stories and turns them into documents of by-gone times. This is particularly true for the assimilators for the rapidly changing transformation countries, for example in East Asia or Eastern Europe. The recent attempts at updating the assimilator method cannot invalidate the fundamental criticism of their formalism and their tendency to convey a false feeling of security. A useful alternative is offered by the method of "otherness narration": this method also uses short and simple episodes which are presented to the trainees with the goal of positioning and grasping cultural differences, of training change of perspective etc., but which are then made the object of analysis and discussion in the classroom.

3. Intercultural trainers should be very critical about passing out "recipe-knowledge" to their clients

Many intercultural trainers are familiar with the problem of being urged to present ready-made 'recipes' for behavior in difficult intercultural situations. How should they react to these demands? Ignore them or point out the risks of such cultural "dos and don'ts" or "culture portraits"? It is well-known to professional trainers that any reliance on such "recipes" is highly misleading and that they are "false friends" who can never do justice to the complexity of culture contacts. The reason for this demand for strict rules is all too well known: it lies in the insecurity arising in each intercultural situation, a fact that gave rise to the most widely known model in Intercultural Communication, Gudykunst's 'Anxiety/Uncertainty Management' model. To the above demands one must add the popular expectation that intercultural trainings merely teach people how to avoid "cultural pitfalls", an expectation that is even amplified by phrases such a "Fit for dealing with foreign cultures" or "Learning to avoid cultural pitfalls" in the advertisements for training seminars.

For the trainer this dilemma leads to a very difficult situation. Even if they, as people working in the service sector, are inclined to fulfill the wishes of their clients, ethically conscious trainers should make it very clear from the beginning that 'recipes' and 'quick fixes' are not at all sufficient for a competent and professional management of cultural differences. But this approach has of course its risks and can hardly be taken without professional integrity and didactic stability. In this situation, the reference to the analogy between culture learning and foreign language learning can often be helpful: in the same way as mere learning of an English dictionary cannot help a Chinese to form proper English sentences, the learning of a vocabulary of Chinese pitfalls cannot enable the European student or businessperson to understand the way of thinking of his Chinese partners.

4. Intercultural trainers should be aware of the manipulative power of intercultural knowledge and competence

There is yet another problem which some trainers may not have been openly confronted with. It is, however, well-known to all those who in the course of their professional careers found themselves in the situation that they were asked by their trainees to tell them "cultural tricks" with which they can "pull their partners across the table", or who were asked outright to take sides with the party that hired them. In all these cases the trainers are placed in the role of the 'man in the middle', a role that is well-known to professional 'go-betweens' such as interpreters or mediators. Already in the early phase of professionalization of intercultural trainers, Condon and Yousef were the first to point out the dangers of this role. They warned against the so-called 'Malinche Syndrome' to which professional cultural mediators can easily fall prey. The name refers to the role which La Malinche, the interpreter and mistress of the Spanish conqueror Cortes, played in the conquest of Mexico in the 16th century. It is known of her that she did not only have a talent for languages and learned Spanish very soon, but that she also adopted Spanish values and was thus able to support the Spanish conquerors in all the negotiations – very much to the disadvantage of her own people. Since that time, La Malinche stands for the unloyal cultural mediator who misuses his knowledge by making it available for only one party.

It is surprising that this problem is not addressed in any of the later publications on intercultural trainings and on the role of the trainer. In view of the world-wide increase in culture contacts, however, this issue has certainly gained new topicality: while in the earlier periods the learners and the objects of their learning were divided by large distances and barriers, today they increasingly find themselves in permanent physical or medial closeness to each other. From this follows the obligation for the intercultural trainer to maintain personal neutrality, an ethical demand that should be added to the catalog of criteria set up by Paige. In any training, the trainer's loyalty should not be with one of the participating parties but with the task he or she has accepted. Observing this ethical demand is not at all easy for any trainer, because in case of conflict one must be ready to accept economic losses in order to maintain high ethical standards. This demand for neutrality is particularly difficult for all trainers who are natives of the culture that is addressed in the training.

5. Intercultural trainers should be aware of the Western nature of intercultural trainings

The question whether intercultural trainings as educational formats can be transferred universally to all learning contexts has rarely been discussed in the literature on trainings. The answer actually depends on the question of the universality or cultural boundedness of the conceptual, methodological and didactic repertoire of intercultural learning in general. Are ideas, formats, and models of training that have grown in the US-American context universally applicable – or are they rather a reflection of their original culture?

In the United States, the problem of the cultural boundedness of intercultural trainings was addressed quite early. In an unpublished paper presented in 1978, Robert Kohls formulated seven practice-oriented theses on the cultural specificity of intercultural trainings and laid open the implicit assumptions in US-American training

formats which he called 'Western' or 'American'. Among these assumptions are, for example, the responsibility of the trainees for their own success in learning, the high value of the learning-by-doing method as well as a preference for experiential learning directed at emotions over cognitive intellectual learning. The first edition of the 'Handbook of Intercultural Training' in 1983 contained an article on the 'Westernness' of the sociological approaches in intercultural research, but there are no consequences drawn for trainings. In the third edition of the same handbook, Fowler and Blohm make an attempt to look at the applicability of various training methods across cultures. "Does It Work Across and About Cultures", they ask, but for most methods they come, strangely enough, to the conclusion that they are very well transferable into other cultural contexts; they make an exception only for self-assessment exercises and simulations.

So far we can rely only on the practical experiences of intercultural trainers who have worked internationally and who have paid attention to the aspect of the 'Westernness' of training methods. Due to their experience they know intuitively about the cultural coloring of the contents, the models, and the methods of trainings. But as long as there are no systematic studies the thesis of the 'Westernness' of intercultural learning methods remains an assumption. In view of the global diffusion of teaching formats and contents, however, the question becomes even more urgent. In case the thesis of the 'Westernness' of extant training methods should be confirmed, intercultural trainers will have to make an effort to adapt their trainings: if they want to work in an ethically responsible way, they must always be aware of the implicit cultural specificity of their teaching in order to adjust the process of culture learning to the needs of their trainees and their cultural environment. This is a demanding procedure for which there are as yet no models.

Until then one can add a few more questions to Kohls' theses and by answering them can try to elucidate the cultural relativity of the basic principles of trainings: Should trainers be moderators or rather transmitters of "correct" knowledge? Does the perception of difference always strengthen the motivation for intercultural learning, as Gudykunst's AUM-theory implies? Can one always lead a rational discourse about cultural differences in the way which Habermas postulates in his discourse ethics? Is intercultural learning possible without self-reflexivity? To each of these questions there will probably be a 'Western' and a 'non-Western' answer. An ethically responsible trainer should know both answers in order to find the best fit between his training design and the cultural orientation of the trainees.

6. Concluding remarks

The discussion about the renewal of intercultural trainings is only in its beginnings. Meanwhile it has become clear that the European perspective on cultural diversity and intercultural interactions makes it expedient to critically assess the extant findings and practices for their applicability to the present social reality in Europe and to integrate the present state of sociological and anthropological research. My presentation has attempted to direct your attention to some very sensitive matters. I have to stress, though, that I have addressed only those topics which are – in my view – of greatest importance. I am well aware of the limitations of my paper, but hope to have given an impulse for systematic studies of the questions raised above.

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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

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Abstract

The goal of teaching a foreign language has always been the issue of hot debates in language teaching methodology. With emergence of Competence-based Approach the idea of teaching communicative competence became quite persuasive in this respect. Though, it can often be heard in teaching circles that language is culture, so should we teach the language as part of culture or we could get off with pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary fit into four speech skills? If the first option is to be tackled (as has been approved of in recent perspective investigations) then what can be called "communicative competence" (CC) and what role is played by culture in it?

Answering these and other questions including the query of what dimensions are applied in understanding the word "culture", what kind of culture is practiced in the English-speaking world, the article aims at taking a closer look into the perception of CC.

It has been clarified what is meant by "an authentic communicative situation" in which a learner has to deal using English, depending on his/her communicative behaviour goals. In this view it is significant to highlight the fact that the term "authentic communicative situation" is now perceived as the one where English is used as the means of international communication, since social and economic globalization has necessitated the use of international English spoken in the "global village".

Therefore, witnessing the shifts in the goal of learning English as to enable learners to communicate their ideas and culture with not only native English speakers but also those of other cultures, the question of intercultural communication is inevitably indispensable in English language learning as far as students' communicative competence development is of primary concern. In this respect the author has made an attempt to suggest some possible suggestions as to find a solution to the mentioned issues.

Key words: intercultural communicative competence, intercultural communication, interaction, competence, learning strategies, culture

Global considerations impact everyday business decisions for companies large and small. Where should we produce, market, and sell our products and services? For most, it is a global market to consider. One only needs to examine the current and projected growth of international trade to clearly see the impact on our future. Corporations are aware that to be successful in tomorrow's marketplace requires employees to be competent in communicating with those from other cultures. In the past, most international managers relied on general cultural guidelines for conducting intercultural negotiations. However, the increase in global trade transactions has resulted in integrated cultural exchanges, new cultural

partnerships, and unique cultural interactions, making old, superficial generalities less accurate.

In today's world of global village, living with differences both at home and abroad is becoming more important. Differences such as values, attitudes, culture, ethnicity, social practices, political beliefs, sexuality and religion clearly direct people all around the world who embarked various meanings to their surroundings according to their individual attitudes that must be fully respected and integrated into life (Tesoriero, 2006). In recent years many scholars has completed various studies to deal with these differences and as a result of these studies one particular and important aspect of working with difference is conceptualized as 'intercultural communication competence' (ICC).

Intercultural communication competence grew out of the interpersonal communication competency research. The contextual distinctiveness of the intercultural interaction is a unique communication competency issue. It is possible that an individual may be highly competent in communicating with others in his or her own culture but not competent when interacting with others who are culturally different.

The goal of teaching a foreign language has always been the issue of hot debates in language teaching methodology. With emergence of Competence-based Approach the idea of teaching communicative competence became quite persuasive in this respect. Though, it can often be heard in teaching circles that language is culture, so should we teach the language as part of culture or we could get off with pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary fit into four speech skills? If the first option is to be tackled (as has been approved of in recent perspective investigations) then what can be called "communicative competence" (CC) and what role is played by culture in it?

The communicative approach considers target language-based communicative competence to be essential in order for foreign language learners to participate fully in the target language culture. As such, the target language culture and its inhabitants, the native speakers, are elements crucial to the success of the teaching model. Learners are not only expected to acquire accurate forms of the target language, but also to learn how to use these forms in given social situations in the target language setting to convey appropriate, coherent, and strategically effective meanings for the native speaker. Thus, learning a foreign language becomes a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of target language culture and its speakers.

However, despite this increased focus on sociocultural elements, writers have been critical of the way that communicative language teaching has tended to ignore the sociocultural dimension of these proposed models of communicative competence, and that it has instead assumed a certain universality in the way in which speech functions are used and interpreted. As early as 1974, Paulston pointed out that the communicative approach was tending to concentrate mainly on referential meaning while ignoring the social meaning of words and phrases . Buttjes (1991) suggests that communicative language teaching excluded the learners' cultural background and failed to see the acquisition of communicative competence as a process of cultural adaptation. Instead, teachers used role-plays and video observations to train their learners in the use of pragmatic strategies and appropriate speech functions in authentic situations. Roberts, Byram, Barro, Jordan and Street (2001) conclude that, while communicative language methodology has done much to

highlight the social contexts of language use, it: "has come to be interpreted somewhat narrowly and prescriptively, as appropriate language use rather than competence in the social and cultural practices of a community of which language is a part." (Roberts *et. al.*, 2001:26)

However, it appears that the absence of overt attention to the learners' cultural background in the communicative methodologies of the 1970's and 1980's was motivated by a more complex set of reasons than simply a narrow interpretation of what communicative competence involved. Firstly, the lack of a cultural component during that time (and, to some extent, still today) reflects a common belief that English should be considered a global language or *Lingua franca.* Of course, this could only be achieved if English was seen as "a neutral vehicle of communication, an empty structural system that does not carry with it cultural, political and ideological baggage" (Anderson, 2003: 81). Therefore, it was necessary to try and disassociate English from its cultural heritage. The argument at the time seemed to imply that as students were going to be using English in contexts other than in English speaking cultures, then it was unnecessary to burden them with information about these cultures. Commentators such as Gray (2002) have pointed out how the English language teaching industry adopted this trend in the 1980's by moving the location of English language textbooks from Britain and the United States to international settings. Similarly, instead of dealing with issues of relevance to the learners' target or home cultures, the content of textbooks focussed more on 'bland' topics such as *travel* and *the future* and thereby avoided any risk of insulting buyers from different cultural backgrounds.

The other reason for the decline of the cultural component in language teaching during this period also had a political background. In the late 1980's, writers such as Brumfit (1985), Phillipson (1992) and Prodromou (1988) were influential in making English language educators question the consequences and impact of their profession. Phillipson's work in particular caused many to consider whether English language teaching represented some kind of new, more subtle form of linguistic and cultural imperialism and whether their methodologies and materials had more to do with assimilation of learners than with their empowerment. As a result of this preoccupation with avoiding the imposition of their cultural values and principles on their students, Pulverness suggests that English teachers chose to avoid cultural content completely: "At a time when Britain no longer occupies a dominant political position in the world, it is perhaps reassuring for teachers to feel that they are permitted to treat English purely in terms of a language system, uncomplicated by any cultural sub-text. Cultural knowledge in EFL classrooms … has remained largely peripheral to language learning, acquired by students incidentally, but rarely focussed on for its own sake." (1995:25)

Answering the above mentioned and other questions including the query of what dimensions are applied in understanding the word "culture", what kind of culture is practiced in the English-speaking world, it is essential to take a closer look into the perception of CC. It has been generally acknowledged that CC can be viewed as communication behaviour in achieving goals by exhibiting this behaviour in an appropriate way in a given situation (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984). To be able to demonstrate such behaviour a communicatively competent individual, according to Canale and Swain's influential model of communicative competence (1983), should possess grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competencies which, in our view, refer to integration of Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence

(grammatical competence) within culture-specific social context (sociolinguistic competence) and the ability to cope in an authentic communicative situation (strategic competence) avoiding interaction misunderstandings by the extended use of the language in culturally and socially varied surrounding (discourse competence).

The given above components of communicative competence should be viewed from the perspective of reality. Considering the first issue of grammatical competence, it is important to analyze what kind of language system should be acquired by an English language learner in order to enable him/her to use it in a certain culture-specific social context. There are at least two options in this respect: 1) the language of BBC (which casts some doubts on the possible chances to use this type of language in other than BBC studio surrounding social contexts); 2) the language commonly heard in ordinary surroundings (in the streets, supermarkets, offices, plants and factories, to name but a few). To exacerbate the issue, it shouldn't be forgotten to be mentioned that there is a huge variety of dialects spoken by people in English speaking countries (not to mention the discrepancies in Englishes of those countries) (Alptekin, 2002: 48). So the question then arises like this: what kind or type of culture-specific social context should be chosen to be included in the curriculum for English language learners?

One of the principal outcomes of the decline in cultural content in communicative language teaching was that it moved the focus of the language classroom from preparing learners to read in the foreign language to being tourists in the foreign country. The content of many communicative syllabuses involved helping learners to buy bus tickets, ask the way and order food in the target language. This was criticized by many as a superficial approach which lead to the trivialisation of language learning and a lack of motivation among students. Pennycock sees it as being responsible for creating what he describes as "the empty babble of the communicative language class" (1994: 311). Bredella and Christ (1995) suggest that the problem with this approach was that learners were encouraged to believe that interlocutors from different cultures would automatically mean and understand the same thing when engaged in conversation together. Therefore, there was no need for learners to ask others what they meant by their utterances and, and as a result, to find out more about the different worldview of their partners. In other words, no 'negotiation of meaning' ever took place.

Furthermore, we are concerned with a quest of what should be meant by "an authentic communicative situation" in which a learner has to deal using English, depending on his/her communicative behaviour goals. In this view it is significant to highlight the fact that the term "authentic communicative situation" is now perceived as the one where English is used as the means of international communication, since social and economic globalization has necessitated the use of international English spoken in the "global village". It can be explained by a mere example of two people doing business in Germany though being an Italian and a Japanese by nationality but still using English at work. Then there emerges another issue which needs clear analysis in terms of whose culture should be primary to make these two people communicatively competent (following the Canale and Swain's model): British or American or Canadian or Australian or German or Japanese or Italian? Or maybe International?

Another question arises concerning the definition of the "native speaker" whose model of communicative competence should be acquired by foreign language learners according to Canale and Swain's model of CC. Kramsch (1998),

concentrates more on the sociological and political consequences of the importance which is attributed to the native speaker and looks at how membership of the group 'native speaker' has been awarded – by birth, by education, or by membership to the social community - and analyses the weaknesses which each of these involve. According to the author, being born in the country does not make one automatically a native speaker, as many people who are born into a society do not automatically come to know and speak the standard dialect of that society, for example Glaswegians in Scotland or children born of Chinese immigrants in the United States. She also rejects the theory that being educated in a language is sufficient to achieve native speaker status, as the membership of this group involves much more than fluency and full communicative competence in the language. Instead, "one must be recognized as a native speaker by the relevant speech community" (1998: 22). Kramsch therefore concludes that the term native speaker is more social and political than linguistic and she suggests that the realities such as increased use of English as a *lingua franca*, the multicultural nature of modern societies and the increasing importance given to nonstandard English dialects has rendered the term an "outdated myth" (1998: 23).

As English is on the way to spread as an international language, the number of its users is set to grow, and soon will far exceed the number of native speakers of English. Thus, we presume that the learners of English will be more likely to use it to interact more with the same type of people rather than the native speakers. Therefore, we are witnessing the shifts in the goal of learning English as to enable learners to communicate their ideas and culture with not only native English speakers but also those of other cultures. Consequently, the question of intercultural communication is inevitably indispensable in English language learning as far as students' communicative competence development is of primary concern.

The processes of national and international integration have predetermined modernization tendencies of Ukrainian foreign language education. Today a foreign language is a means of world comprehension being the tool of recognition of the values of other nations, of cultural uniqueness discovery. Thus, it has become necessary to build a personality that doesn't only speak a foreign language, but is ready to participate in the global society, to understand it, to respect the other foreign cultural identities. This has lead to shifting the emphasis which has been traditionally accepted for the past decades from the importance of formation of foreign communicative competence to the necessity of formation of foreign intercultural communicative competence.

The desire to understand other cultures and their representatives has been urgent for as much time as the cultural and ethnic diversity has been in existence, that's why the notion of intercultural communication is still being discussed greatly in scientific and methodical papers.

The majority of the scientists now consider that the case for intercultural communication (interaction) is valid as long as people represent different cultures and are aware of everything that doesn't belong to their culture recognizing it as something "strange". The relationships then become intercultural meaning that people don't act according to their national traditions, customs, behaviour patterns, but try to get familiar with the "strange" behaviour rules and norms of everyday communication. Moreover, here both common and different peculiarities come up, so that people can distinguish them and accept thoroughly [Кирабаев Н.С. :15].

In summary, in this section it has been shown how social and political factors such as increased migration and the growth of transnational communication (Kramer, 2000) as well as a questioning of what the goals of the language learner should be have led to criticism of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching and its inherent 'native speaker as standard' model. As an alternative, recent approaches have proposed the 'intercultural speaker' as an alternative goal for models of foreign language learning. Byram and Fleming describe such a learner in the following way: "It is the learner who is aware of their own identities and cultures, and of how they are perceived by others, and who also has an understanding of the identities and cultures of those with whom they are interacting. This intercultural speaker is able to establish a relationship between their own and other cultures, to mediate and explain difference – and ultimately to accept that difference and see the common humanity beneath it." (Byram and Fleming, 1998: 8) However, it has been questioned whether such an approach should not lead to an avoidance of materials which focus on the target culture itself. Studying target cultures does not imply that the norms, values and pragma-linguistic rules of this culture have to be imposed on the learner. Nevertheless, learners have a right to be exposed to the foreign culture in order to be made aware of alternative worldviews and to be given the option of 'taking on' aspects of this culture if it is in their personal interests.

To summarize the stated above ideas we have to conclude that the English language became the medium of intercultural communication, and it caused the emergence of new approaches to its learning in educational establishments, particularly in school. Having investigated the possible solution to such an urgent problem the following ideas can be expressed:

1. Having analyzed the notion of intercultural communication and its components it is possible to say that they are nationally-specific components and require understanding in situations of intercultural communication, so it is necessary to familiarize students with them, train them to understand their nature, thus developing their ability to communicate on intercultural level. On this basis we can say that the advantage of learning language and culture in relationship on the level with traditional one is manifesting in the development of skills to communicate with native speakers in real life situations.

2. Interacting with people from other cultures we can face barriers in perception (preconceptions, stereotypes, dimensions of collectivism versus individualism, history and experience, roles by gender or social class, values, customs, uncertainty, ethnocentrism) non-verbal (tone and loudness of voice, facial expression, posture, gestures, eye contact, chronemics, haptics, space in communication, kinesics and proxemics) and verbal processes (competency in writing and speaking a language, idioms, slang, jargon, figurative expressions, exaggeration/understatement). To overcome difficulties in intercultural communication, it is necessary to follow such general guidelines: have a positive attitude about communication. Defensiveness interferes with communication; speak slowly and clearly; avoid assuming you've understood what's been said; practice reflective listening to check your own understanding; and use open-ended questions to check other people's understanding; avoid using slang and idioms, choosing words that will convey only the most specific denotative meaning; listen carefully and, if in doubt, ask for confirmation of understanding (particularly important if local accents and pronunciation are a problem); watch for any changes in body language;

investigate their culture's perception of your culture by reading literature about your culture through their eyes before entering into communication with them; be patient.

3. The principles of intercultural communicative competence are interconnected and constitute the basis for development of methodology of intercultural English-speaking strategies formation. The aim of intercultural strategies is to teach students to communicate with the English-speaking native speakers, taking into account personal needs and requirements of modern society, and the process of their formation consists of four levels. To achieve this goal in formation of intercultural English-speaking communicative competence one has to follow the following strategies: the use of lectures to explore foreign cultures, communication with native speakers, listening to audio recordings interviews, video-record interviews and reading of authentic texts. These intercultural communicative strategies, which enable to depart from the standard pattern of the English language teaching, will make training more effective and help to succeed in intercultural communication.

4. On the basis of domestic and foreign researcher's works critical review, as well as a thorough analysis of the practical material, we can say that the choice of learning content, organization and presentation of training materials should be accomplished taking into account students' interests which appear in the process of study.

5. It has been found that the most appropriate and most effective activities for teaching intercultural communication in higher forms are cultural assimilations, cultural capsules, mini-dramas, role-plays, social and cultural tasks, the use of media, training, comparative and project technology. We have determined that for the formation of students' intercultural communicative competence it is necessary to choose such means of assessment as tests, portfolios, observation, interviews, summary of material analysis in diaries, report of the foreign/own culture monitoring means. They will help quickly and objectively identify the level of knowledge and formation skills of readiness for the intercultural interaction. The carried out investigation suggests that the developed methodology of intercultural English-speaking communicative strategies formation in students is effective. On the basis of our research guidelines for intercultural communication training have been formulated.

6. We consider it appropriate to emphasize the fact that intercultural communication training promotes expansion of worldviews, strengthening the motivation for language learning, developing intercultural communication skills, content of foreign language studies, optimization and updating traditional teaching languages with information and methodology and providing training to use foreign language in any environment.

7. The social dimension of this theoretical explication delineates the interactional aspect of the communication process. Knowledge involves knowing the personal, relational, and cultural standards of competences and the skills are depicted in the behavior of the communicator. Inability to perform the "standards" of what is considered competent results in perception of incompetent communication.

8. To enhance the potential of foreign language lessons in terms of intercultural communicative competence development it is significant to encourage students into participation in the network-based international language learning projects accomplished in collaboration with the students from a variety of cultures using the same foreign language.

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'GLOBAL ENGLISH': PRO ET CONTRA

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Abstract: This paper discusses the term 'Global English' alongside other similar terms such as 'International English', 'General English', 'World English', 'Euro/European English', 'Globish', etc. in relation to, and in contrast with, the current and long-established varieties of Standard English – British English, American English, Australian English, New Zealand English, Canadian English, South African English, etc. The linguistic legitimacy of this term is contested on the grounds of the lack of true cultural background serving as the true soil for the growth of such a variety of the English language.

Key Words: Global English; International English; Standard English; Varieties of English; Linguistic Culturology.

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It is a widely acknowledged fact that today, in the beginning of the third millennium AD, English has secured itself the status of the language of international communication of our planet. The historical, cultural and economic reasons underlying this unprecedented phenomenon have long been analyzed and discussed by quite a number of scholars, British, American, or non-English-speaking alike. One of them, the Italian linguist Umberto Eco (Eco 1995: 331), less than two decades wrote that "the predominant position currently enjoyed by English is a historical contingency arising from the mercantile and colonial expansion of the British Empire, which was followed by American economic and technological hegemony", while another linguist, the American professor of Indian background Braj B. Kachru suggested the term 'world Englishes' for the different varieties of Standard English spoken on our planet today (see Chandrasekhar) and predicted the future possible branching of English into several different languages.

Like any other natural language under the sun, English has its own phonological system, vocabulary, grammar, folklore and literature, as well as its own history and geography, all of which have been studied extensively at least since the publication of the *Dictionary of the English Language* by Dr. Samuel Johnson in the 18th century (1755). Diverse studies into the history of English generally agree on several basic facts related to its major periods and present-day status. They all tell us that having emerged about fifteen centuries ago as a group of Old English dialects spoken by the peoples of Germanic origin inhabiting present-day England in the British Isles and struggling for supremacy throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, in more recent times a more monolithic form of the English language known as Early Modern English emerged and began to be transplanted to other continents and islands across the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Ocean, where in the course of the next several centuries it evolved into its present-day varieties. Today its destiny has changed again: apart from the traditional varieties of the English language, spoken by the populations of the British Isles, North America, Australia, New Zealand, and the use of English as the official language in some countries in Africa, Central America and many islands in almost every ocean in the world, an ever growing number of people in almost all countries all over the world are using it as a second language and a

lingua franca. This unprecedented, spontaneous, uninterrupted growth of the English language, not to mention its many dialects (which is another and very different 'story'), alongside the unparalleled proliferation of an ever-increasing number of locally tinged Englishes that have arisen from its prolonged contact with other natural languages, tend to raise not only deep concerns over its adequacy as a truly effective and reliable tool of communication, but also some fundamental questions concerning the very essence of the phenomenon 'natural language' *per se*.

The aim of this paper is to show that **notwithstanding the widely accepted belief that a new variety of English, known as Global English, is said to be on the rise, the present-day status of this entity is either that of an artificial language, like Esperanto, or of a pidgin, rather than that of a natural language proper, or of a variety of a natural language.** This claim will be supported with some evidence from the basic tenets of linguistic culturology, from Anna Wierzbicka's works on the inseparableness of a language from its culture, as well as from the author's own observations in the course of more than two decades.

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Much has been written about the spread of English across the world in the nineteenth and the twentieth century and its present-day role in politics, international business, science, travel, tourism and the arts. In this, English has been compared to Latin in the days of Rome and in the European Middle Ages and beyond. Prominent English-speaking linguists, such as Albert C. Baugh, Thomas Cable (Baugh, Cable 1993: 8; 330), Tom McArthur (McArthur 1992: 352–353), Sir Randolph Quirk (Quirk at al 1992: 7–10) and David Crystal (Crystal) unanimously agree on its global spread and universal usage by practically billions of people today (see Globalization Report). But although the most common term that is being used by them all is 'English', it need be stressed that each of these authors actually discusses this word as a general term covering the group of the existing varieties of English known as British English, American English, Canadian English, Australian English, New Zealand English, South African English, Indian English, Carribean English, Singapore English, etc. Many of these varieties, whose total number may vary (cf. Varieties of English), have long been described in greater or lesser detail, and even 'bilingual' dictionaries, for example American and British English dictionaries, have been compiled for teaching and practical purposes. A good example illustrating the latter is Jean Weber's list of several hundred English words used in the U.S.A., UK, Canada, Australasia and India (Weber). In this list, the word 'vacation', for instance, is cited as the American English word for the British 'holiday', a word also used in India, while Canadians are said to be using both 'vacation' and 'holiday', and Australians – 'holiday' and 'leave', but not 'vacation'. Still another example is the meaning of 'bush' in British and American English (meaning 'shrub') and in Australian English, where it denotes the forests of very tall eucalyptus trees surrounding the deserts in the heart of the continent.

Today, more and more English-speaking authors of textbooks in Business/International English begin to draw their readers' attention to the differences between the varieties of English In the fourth edition of their university textbook, *Managing Cultural Differences,* for example, the American authors Philip Robert Harris and Robert T. Moran (Harris, Moran 1996: 37) state that "American English is different from, though rooted in, British English, which is further modified as it is used in the British Commonwealth nations". This universally known fact is however often forgotten or neglected, which is probably due to the existence of a

common core underlying all the different varieties of English. They all derive from one and the same language, British English, and this can easily be seen in their common grammar and vocabulary. Another explanation may be the strong tendency in human thinking towards generalization and simplification.

The few instances above are just a tiny part of the impressive mass of evidence that shows that the noun 'English', when used correctly and responsibly by linguists or other scholars, is actually an umbrella term denoting any or all of the existing, traditional, historically evolved standard varieties of the English language spoken in various parts in the world, in which literatures have been written, some of very long standing, others still young, rather than a single, monolithic, global language that is spoken by the whole planet, or some sort of vaguely defined, arbitrary mass of loosely arranged English words, following the non-English native speaker's own language patterns. In this context, the term 'Global English', or its variants, 'Globish', 'International English' or 'General English', as well as their European variety, 'Euro English', should be taken to mean 'English for global/European communication' or 'English used all over the globe/Europe' rather than 'a (kind of) global language based on English'.[25] A very simple touchstone can be asking questions like the following: "What nationality are the people who speak Global English as a native language and what part of the earth do they inhabit"? "What is their culture, geography and history", "Has this language been described and codified systematically in dictionaries and textbooks?", "Is there any folklore created in this language?", "Is there any literature (prose works, poetry, drama) written in it"? "Have the world's major authors been translated into this language?" If one or all the answers are negative, then we are dealing with a purely artificial, virtual, entity and not with a natural language proper. This is because "a language is the 'materialization' of the collective experience and conscience in sound symbols that have been developed in the process of communication. Any given collective conscience finds its expression not just in language, but also in folklore, literature and the arts. Thus, the language, folklore, literature and the arts [of a given community] as different forms of the collective conscience make up a unified 'humanitarian' world of their own" (Slovar).

The difference between the first and the second – incorrect – meaning of the term 'Global English' becomes even more explicit, if we look at some more definitions of the two fundamental concepts, 'natural language' and 'interlanguage'. Still another definition of language describes it is "a system of conventional spoken or written symbols used by people in a shared culture to communicate with each other. […] A language both reflects and affects a culture's way of thinking, and changes in a culture influence the development of its language" (Reference). The term 'interlanguage' arose in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a result of the attempts at overcoming the diverse problems teachers typically confront in foreign language teaching. It was first described in detail by Larry Selinker (Selinker 1972). A Bulgarian linguist, Andrei Danchev (Danchev 1988: 4), further wrote that "foreign language

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[25] International English is the concept of the English language as a global means of communication in numerous dialects, and also the movement towards an international standard for the language. It is also referred to as Global English […], World English, Common English, Continental English or General English. *Sometimes these terms refer simply to the array of varieties of English spoken throughout the world* (International English 2011). – Italics mine, R.P.

learners usually acquire only an approximation, that is an interlanguage variety, of the target language" and coined the term BEIL (Bulgarian English Interlanguage) to describe the specific Bulgarian approximation of English. The most crucial factor determining the character of an interlanguage is therefore the native language and the native culture interference. It is obvious that when using these two terms, special attention must be paid to their cultural aspect. Any well-grounded, scholarly discussion of 'natural language' and 'interlanguage' must begin with the very obvious truth that neither of these entities can be understood in isolation and torn away from the people who speak them, from the specific culture (or cultural hybrid) they store and represent. It is often forgotten that human beings are not isolated atoms. We need to constantly bear in mind that we are always part of very complex, hierarchically arranged communities, each having its own history, usually at least several generations old, and that each of these communities has been inhabiting a specific part of this planet with its own specific physical environment in the course of many generations, the phenomenon of the diaspora being just an exception proving the rule. Individuals are always 'immersed' in their culture, which is itself 'immersed' in its specific natural habitat. Culture both holds a community together and guarantees its survival in the environment it inhabits, and language (the unity of vocabulary, grammar, phraseology and the whole body of precedent texts[26]), while being the storehouse and transmitter of the individual and collective experience of a community, makes possible not only communication, but also the intergroup cohesion of all individuals. All of these aspects are immediately reflected in the vocabulary, while the thought patterns of the members of a community are deeply 'buried', or 'embedded', in the grammar. As has so often been commented since the publication of Wilhelm von Humboldt's groundbreaking work on the language-cum-culture integral in the early nineteenth century, it is precisely this intrinsic relatedness and interdependence between a culture, its habitat, and its language that explains why Eskimo languages have so many words for the different types of snow, why Australian English has a great variety of words for the different kinds of reptiles and marsupials, why *судьба*, *тоска*, *душа* are key words in Russian culture (Wierzbicka 2001) and why Bulgarian has the specific pair of words *човещина* (noblemness, charity, fairness and all other good human qualities) and *човещинка* (human foibles and weaknesses) and a proverb like *От работа се става гърбат, а не богат* (Work makes one a hunchback, it doesn't make one rich).

The Australian professor of Polish background Anna Wierzbicka is a prominent linguists of modern times, who has explored this relatedness in very great detail in the course of several decades of uninterrupted work. In her book, *English: Meaning and Culture* (Wierzbicka 2006) Wierzbicka applies her original semantic method of semantic primes to reveal the inseparableness of the English language from its native, historically rooted, 'Anglo' culture, coming up with the phrase 'cultural baggage of English'. She traces the evolution of some common English words, such as 'right', 'wrong', 'fair', 'correct', 'reasonable' and others, placing them in their proper historical contexts and showing how their meanings changed when these and other English words were transplanted to places outside the 'inner circle', that is the countries where English is spoken as a native language – Britain, Ireland, the USA,

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[26] For the term 'precedent text' in Linguistic Culturology see Petrova's Ph.D. dissertation (Petrova 2006: 19).

Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The author of this paper, too, has explored this problem in a series of papers, such as "Teaching Englishness in English or English through Englishness" (Petrova 2009) and others, as well as in the book *Anglophone Area Studies: an Introduction* (Petrova 2010b) with the aim of articulating and describing the various aspects of 'Englishness' as a linguo-cultural entity.

From the perspective of linguistic culturology, then, 'Global English', when used to denote 'a common variety of the English language, spoken by non-native speakers of English', simply does not exist. David Crystal (Crystal 1994: 113) coined a similar term, 'World Standard English', explaining that this global variety seems to be "acting as a strong unifying force among the vast range of variation which exists", but added that "a totally uniform, regionally neutral and unarguably prestigious variety does not yet exist worldwide". What does exist is a diverse group of non-native English interlanguages, in which neither folklore, nor literature has so far been created and whose populations cannot be located in a single spot on the map of the globe. Functionally, these interlanguages are no different than Esperanto or some other International Auxilliary Language (IAL), to use Umberto Eco's term. They can also be described as pidgins because they serve exclusively practical, and not cultural, purposes. Let us recall that a pidgin is an 'over-simplified', 'childish', 'inferior', simple-minded' 'contact' language, which draws on elements from two or more languages. A notable feature of a pidgin is the lack of grammatical complexity and its very limited vocabulary (McArthur 1992: 778–779). Pidgins can therefore hardly function as transmitters of culture. And it needs to be stressed that a natural language is not only a tool that makes communication possible, but also a transmitter of culture – the way of life of a people, centred on a specific set of values, together with their highest achievements. In contrast, the various English interlanguages are characterized by simplified structures, minimal vocabulary and a strong disregard to standard norm, idiom, appropriateness, and knowledge of cultural background (cf. Global Communication in English), which is certainly not conducive to transmitting culture. In their article "Bringing Europe's lingua franca into the classroom", Jenifer Jenkins and Barbara Seidlhofer (Jenkins, Seidlhofer 2001) for example describe the kind of English spoken by non-English West Europeans, focusing on its simplified phonology, morphology and syntax and come up with two practical proposals: for "the development of a continental European hybrid variety of English that does not look to Britain or America for its standards of correctness", and for a new "focus on contexts of use that are relevant to European speakers of English". The authors claim that "descriptions of spoken English offered to these learners should not be grounded in British or American uses of English but in ELFE [English as a lingua franca in Europe] or other non-native contexts (depending on where the particular learners intend to use their English in future)". The phrase "ELFE or other non-native context" used by Jenkins and Seidlhofer means just any context that is other than English or American, e.g. Italian, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Spanish, etc., but this immediately presupposes this other, specific cultural setting of the language in question, be it German, Italian, French, or Turkish. Using simplified English in such settings may certainly solve some survival or practical problems of non-native speakers of English who happen to be visiting this foreign country. But if one needs to be fully understood by the local people, it will surely serve one better if one either resorts to the native language, or finds a qualified interpreter, neither of which has been suggested by the authors. Jenkins and Seidlhofer's project implies that all the typical, characteristic flavour of the English language, its true 'cultural baggage', will

be stripped off and replaced with this purely functional interlanguage or pidgin. One more problem arises. What would be the common code of signification, i.e. the content plane, for each of the communicants using two different interlanguages or pidgins? Can we indeed speak of proper communication if the common background system of meanings is in question? Wouldn't such communication be ambiguous, confused and inefficient? What if, for example, two interlanguage speakers of English use the word 'bush', cited earlier, with its two different meanings? The logical answer is that proper communication entails a system of signification that is meant to ensure maximum clarity, and this can only be achieved by means of speaking the same language or the same language variety.

Luckily, not all authors celebrate the emergence of a simplified version of Global/Euro English as the lingua franca of the planet. More often than not, we hear individual voices deploring the decline of standards in education in general and in foreign language teaching in particular and the vogue for simplification and reductionism. Language is one of the basic characteristics of the human species and one begins to wonder if this massive modern trend towards simplifying the existing human languages, English included, is something for the human species to be so proud of. There is certainly an ethical problem involved in this debate. Language, like music, painting, architecture, science and technology, is one of the major achievements of the human race and must be guarded, cared for and respected. Natural, living languages are extremely complex and highly specific ways of seeing one and the same reality, different windows open to the world. They have come as a result of long, steady, uninterrupted natural growths, none of which can be imitated successfully in 'laboratory conditions'. They, like every great human achievement (or gift from God), are part of the cultural legacy of humanity and should be treated accordingly, that is, with reverence. Tampering with a language is no different than tampering with the genes of a given species. Seen in this perspective, then, Global English is perhaps no different than a kind of 'genetically modified' English. If the idea is to create a simplified version, specifically tailored to suit the projected needs of large masses of people, we are entering a discussion in which the next question may very well be: Do we have to simplify Mozart's symphonies to make them digestible for all? What about the formulas in physics and chemistry, mathematics or biology? Do we have to simplify these too? Do we have to discard Dante, Shakespeare, Racine, Kant, or Geothe from the school and university curricula and syllabuses only because they are not easily understood by all? Or the Bible? Or the Vedas? Or translate all the major works of humanity into simple and abridged versions and adapt them for this obscure, statistical entity, the 'average' citizen, very much like the mass-produced music in the shopping malls?

A responsible, informed approach is certainly different: we need to make an effort and teach people more reverence instead, awakening in them their true human essence.

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UNDERSTANDING NORMATIVE PERSONALITY AND ITS INTELLIGENCES

Gerhard Fink, Maurice Yolles
Work in progress, discussion paper not to be quoted

Purpose:
A theory of normative personality is developed by using a cybernetic frame of reference, drawing on socio-cognitive and trait theory. The outcome of this approach illustrates the control processes through which an organization operates. Intelligence and inefficacy set limits to the capabilities of achieving high levels of performance. Several forms of intelligence are widely referred to in the literature: intelligence at large (general intelligence), cultural, social and emotional intelligence. In the context of strategic thinking and operational activity, we may further distinguish between figurative and operative intelligence. It is also known that gaps between desired and actual efficacy impact on work satisfaction and emotions, i.e. impact on emotional intelligence.

What is original/ what is the value of the paper?
A new cybernetic approach is developed called Organizational Orientation Theory that for the first time illustrates the interconnection between intelligences in the organization.

Design:
Concepts of cultural, figurative, operative and social intelligence are embedded into a *theory of organizational orientation*. Emotional intelligence and its relation to the other four forms of intelligence are considered. In a final chapter some empirical approaches are listed without further comment.

Findings:
Cultural, figurative, operative and social intelligence are defined. In follow up studies, their relationship can be explored and their impact on performance discussed.

Research Limitations/implications
The arguments provide part of a theory-building endeavour, not yet empirically supported. Cultural dependence of intelligences needs to be specified. It is not yet clear whether and in what way intelligences are culture dependent, i.e. in different cultures may act differently.

Practical implications
With the development of future empirical explorations, the theory should be capable of exploring the intelligences of organizations, offering the potential of delivering predictions of aggregate performance and/or the emergence of pathologies within the organization. Methods of research into intelligences and efficacy need to be explored more deeply.

Keywords:
Cybernetics, organizational intelligences, organizational orientation, efficacy.

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
Cometences and Capabilities

Introduction

There is an increasing awareness of the limitations of organization theory. This was induced by the emergence of numerous scandals that have in general caught organizational theorists by surprise, for instance by the infamous 'Enron's meta-theatre'. In such situations resolutions seem unavailable (Boje, 2002). This has led to a renewed interest in organization theory and in its capability to deal with misconduct that current theory is unable to adequately discover, diagnose or predict (Greve et al., 2010). Organizations develop misconduct through the rise and maintenance of pathologies (Samuel, 2010: 159).

The role of culture in organizational conduct and misconduct normally recognizes that cultural and behavioural norms are of central importance. With normative constructs, the cultural environment defines legitimate conduct and, simultaneously, organizational patterns of non-compliance (Hochstetler & Copes 2001; Shover & Bryant 1993). Corporate misconduct turns to criminal conduct when legitimate corporate norms come into conflict with the ambient norms defined within a corporation's host culture and from which a legal framework arises to which member corporations should conform. Within organizations, criminal conduct is permitted when corporate norms are eroded and expedient illegitimate practices become acceptable (Vaughan, 1983:61). It is through an organization's culture and structure that opportunities are provided for organizational actors to engage in misconduct, though conditions must arise such that awareness of opportunities for misconduct (and crime) enables it to be incorporated it into an organization's patterns of behaviour (Coleman 1987:409). Piquero (2002), referring to work undertaken by Gottfredson & Hirschi (1990) on crime and other risk-taking behaviours, notes its connection with what is called a *trait of low levels of self-control.*

A seemingly promising route to connecting distinct organizational theories comes from the field of organizational culture. This describes the psychology, attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values of an organization, concerns the norms that are shared by people and groups, and the controls that relate to how they interact with each other in and beyond their organization (Hill & Jones, 2001). A demonstration of the utility of this approach comes from Dauber et al. (2010) with the creation of a coherent model that arises from the synergy of a number of organizational modelling approaches. One approach that may be classified as part of this, because of its concern with the psychology of organizations, comes from Weick (1969 & 1995). It adopts a corporate personality metaphor used to model organizations so as to make them seem "compact, intelligible and understood" (Cornelisson et al., 2008). This metaphor is well known (e.g. Olins 1978; Davenport et al. 1997; Gindis 2009; Barley 2007).

Our interest in this paper is to show that ***organizational orientation theory*** is a profitable approach for organizational theorists who wish to better understand and predict corporate conduct and misconduct, and the pathologies that cause misconduct. In doing this we shall extend the notion of corporate personality beyond metaphor, defining a new theory based on the notion of *normative personality*, with particular emphasis on the role of intelligences. In a way the intelligences are the driver for and the constraints of the achievements that an organization may be able

to materialize: without intelligences there are no achievements; with low levels of intelligence poor results develop; and with high levels of intelligence good results can be achieved. ***Intelligence*** is the ability of an agent to appreciate and harness its own knowledge as information about its environment, construct new knowledge converted from information about its experiences, and based on the information to pursue its goals effectively and efficiently. Intelligences enable the consideration of the interests and influences of the external environment (stakeholders, institutions, counterparts in the task environment), an agency's own goals, and the goals of others, and facilitation of the development of ideas about the possible reactions of others in relation to the action taken by the agency. This definition highlights two types of processes by which intelligence operates: forward linkages (formative, action-oriented processes) which guide strategy formation and execution, and feedback linkages (adjustive, correction-oriented imperatives for change), through which information is provided about how the external and internal environments perceive interactions and their consequences.

It is intended to show that while organizations are seen to be complex, modelling them in this way can offer a high potential approach to create comprehensible models that can help us better understand the organization. In the remainder of this paper, when we refer to normative personality, we shall mean the development of the collective mind and its *emergent* normative personality. It is related to the notions of cognitive learning theory (e.g., Miller & Dollard, 1941; Miller et al., 1960; Piaget, 1950; Vygotsky, 1978; Argyris & Schön, 1978; Bandura, 1986 & 1988; Nobre, 2003; Argote & Todorova, 2007), where "learning is seen in terms of the acquisition or reorganization of the cognitive structures through which humans process and store information" (Good and Brophy, 1990, pp. 187). Set within this is *cognitive information process theory*, where the collective mind is seen as an information system that operates through a normative set of logical mental rules and strategies (e.g., Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968; Bowlby, 1980; Novak, 1993; Wang, 2007). These rules and strategies depend on organizational intelligences, and they may fail when pathologies (that affect the intelligences) develop.

Bandura's (1988, 1994, 1999, 2006) socio-cognitive theory of personality was developed through the use of cybernetic information process theory. Referred to as agency theory, an agent is seen as having the cognitive capacities of intention, forethought and the ability to react and to reflect, and it is from these capacities that the *agentic perspective* arises through which adaptation and change in human development occurs. To be an agent is to influence intentionally one's functioning and life circumstances, and personal influence is part of the causal structure. Such agential systems participate in self-organizing, self-regulating, self-reflecting, proactive, and adapting processes, and involving autonomous control. Such cognitive agencies are participative in creating their own behaviour (Higgins, 2000). The same notions can be applied to organisations by considering them in terms of their normative states and processes (Yolles, 2009a), thereby connecting normative personality with operative performance. In creating a theory of normative personality, we draw on both socio-cognitive and trait theory. While there has been some difficulty in modelling the connection between socio-cognitive and trait theories (Bandura, 1999), some progress has been made using cybernetic theory (Cervone et al, 2004; Van Egeren, 2009) that we shall build upon. In trait theory (McCrae &

Costa, 1996; Maruyama, 1988 & 2001), traits are variables that in some way describe personality. In organization theory the traits are variables that take on generic characteristics, and regulate the importance attributed to different classes of information. *Type values* (i.e. specific score levels of a trait) are related to personality styles that establishes an agency's expected behavioral orientation. Traits are relevant for organizational conduct (Denison & Mishra, 1995; van Knippenbern et al., 2010) and misconduct (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

Essentially, normative personality traits are contextually sensitive orientations, which the personality possesses such that they conform to unique sets of characteristics. These traits emerge from the organizational intelligences and regulate of patterns of behaviour, to which observable behaviour more or less conforms under normal conditions. In the theory constructed here, intelligences are seen as a necessary condition for performance, but intelligences also delimit (i.e. constrain) performance, in a way comparable to the engine of a car: without an engine one cannot drive the car, and with modest power velocity is limited. When emphasizing the limitations of performance, it is not only intelligence that is a delimiter of performance, but efficacy too - a notion we shall return to shortly.

Modelling the Collective Agency

Dauber et al. (2010) were interested in the dispersed classes of organizational theory contextualized through organizational culture studies. Drawing on ideas within the field of organizational culture, two modelling categories are identified: a dimensions approach (e.g. Hofstede et al., 1990; Sagiv & Schwartz, 2007), and interrelated structure approach (e.g. Schein, 1985; Hatch, 1993; Homburg & Pflesser, 2000; Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). Linking such approaches with Hatch & Cunliffe (2006) and defining the relationship between strategy, structure and operations through a variety of works (e.g., Chandler, 1973; Schein, 1985; Child, 1972; Argyris, 1977; Galbraith and Nathanson, 1978; Fredrickson, 1986; Dodgson, 1993; Amburgey & Dacin, 1994; Harris & Ruefli, 2000; Whittington, 2001), a new culturally based model for the organization is created, which offers greater coherence (Figure 1).
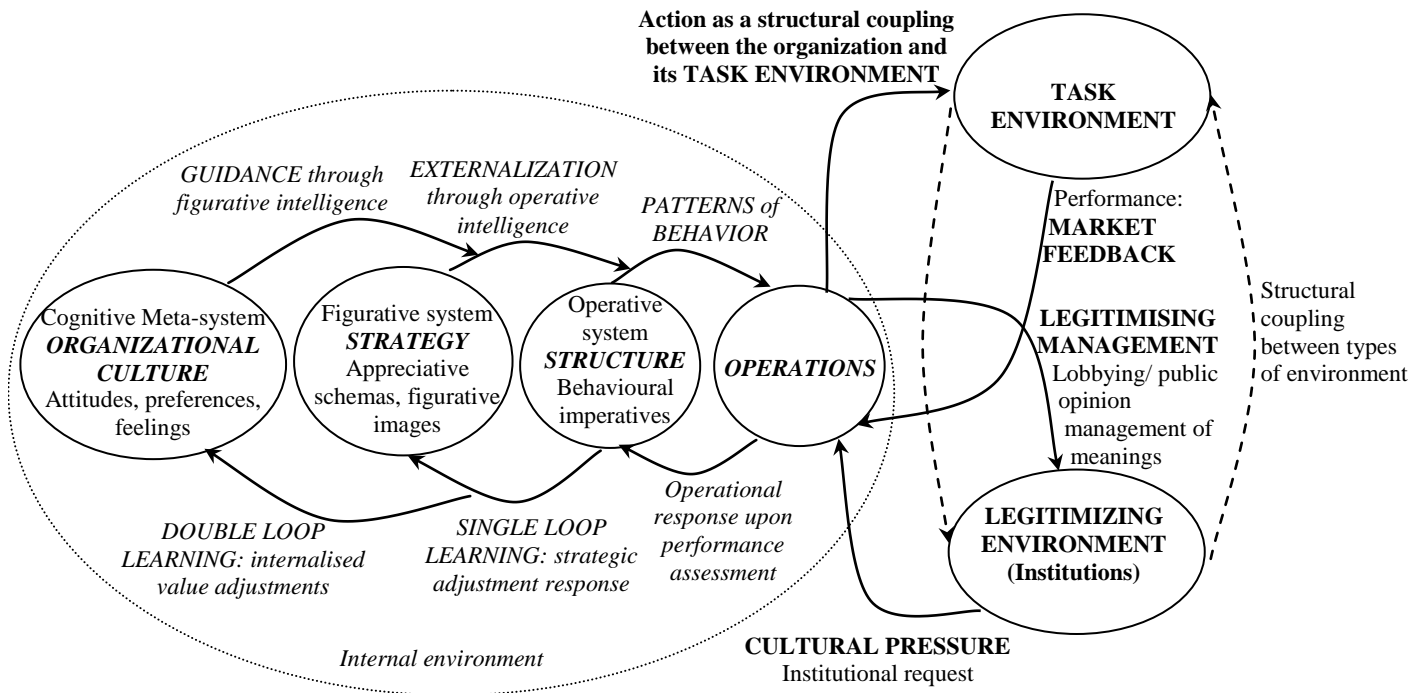
Figure 1: Model of Organizational Culture Connecting the Internal and External Environments (Dauber et al., 2010)

In socio-cognitive theory the mind operates as a complex system (Bandura 1999; Cervone et al. 2004). Socio-cognitive variables develop through socio-cultural experiences. They distinguish between cognitive capacities that contribute to personality functioning, including skills, competencies, knowledge structures that have been derived from experienced real life situations, self-reflective processes that enable people to develop beliefs about themselves within social contexts, and self-regulatory processes where people formulate goals, standards and motivations toward identifiable outcomes (Bandura 1986, 1999; Williams 1992). Performance involves the evaluation of directed behaviour and is related to the interaction between the behaviours, which are embedded in personality structures expressed in terms of systems, and the social environmental factors with which it is coupled. In each of these personality systems, orientations exist that define a set of traits which take on a regulatory function.

Here, a number of notions and terms are used:- The purpose of an agent is to create regular patterns of behaviour for its operations that satisfy its recurrent wants and needs. Patterns are only possible through formal or informal structure, which both facilitate and constrain behaviour through norms that define what is acceptable and what is not. Without structure no patterns of behaviour develop when an agent may be seen to operate/behave in arbitrary ad hoc ways. This can also happen when pathologies develop. The agent model in Figure 1 highlights these patterns of behaviour. It shows feed-forward processes that include guidance through intelligences. Through figurative intelligence, organizational culture guides strategy, structure and operations. Through operative intelligence, externalization processes

influence structure and operations. Operations are instances of behavioural conduct that are hence both facilitated and constrained by structure.

Starting from operations and considering feedback processes, performance assessment creates demands on structure to ameliorate or amplify the morphology of the organization. The notions of single and double loop learning arise from Argyris (1977). S*ingle-loop learning* refers to processes of detecting errors and adjusting existing strategies to meet new requirements as might be dictated by the needs of organizational adaptation and response. *Double-loop learning* refers to a deeper process of learning that relates to value adjustment and the internalization of new knowledge. It is connected to the demands for change in organizational culture.

The two interactive environments shown are referred to as *task* and *legitimizing environment.* The task environment constitutes what the organization offers and delivers as its services. The legitimizing environment gives legitimacy to the conduct, goals and activities of the organization. The organization may also try to influence the legitimizing process (Anderson and Gray, 2006). Both are *structurally coupled* to the system of operations - thus having structure-determined engagement and a common history of interaction (Maturana & Varela, 1987).

This model in Figure 1 is associated with that of Figure 2, which arises from the principles developed in Yolles (2006), links closely with the cybernetic model of personality by Yolles et al. (2011), and acts as the basis for normative personality theory introduced here. Since the theory context is different, different terms have to be used. Figure 2 is a model of the organization formulated through three ontologically distinct domains: the existential, noumenal and phenomenal, each of which has distinct epistemic content and characteristics. In the existential domain there exists a collective *cognitive base* that constitutes the "truths" that form both its *epistemic base* of scientific beliefs, which form patterns of analytic knowledge. It also comprises the *cultural base* of cultural beliefs and values (including valued emotional potentials, Averill, 1980) that arise as normative standards of conduct, where both are connected with assumptions, beliefs and trusted propositions that arise within cultural development. The cognitive base may be seen as the result of cybernetic interaction (Maturana and Varela, 1987: 75) between the patterns of cultural and analytic knowledge, and these affect each other through their history of mutual influence, where cognitive intention plays a metasystemic role and creates a cultural orientation for the agency (Yang et al, 2009). Self-reference is an essential and establishes an agency identity (Hannah et al, 2008 & 2010). The underlying assumptions (Schein, 1985) contribute to organizational knowledge, where false knowledge (when embedded into the culture) results in myth. While Figure 2 is an amplification of the agent represented in Figure 1, it does support a distinction. Here an agent's operations conform to its interests, and the structure that facilitates this is relegated to a horizon of meanings.
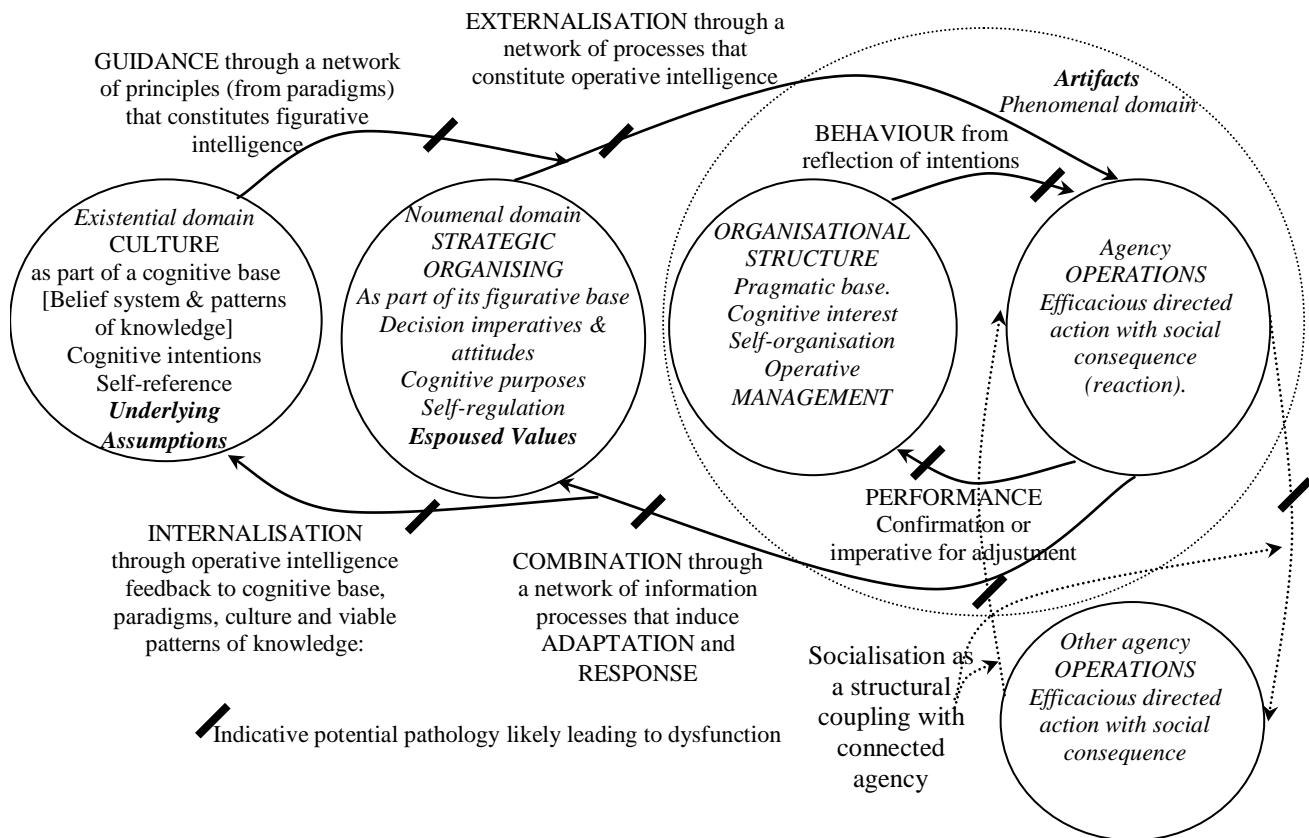
Figure 2: Model of a Social Agency

In the noumenal domain of Figure 2 there is a *figurative base* that is composed of relationships that can be construed with the sedimentation of information rich conceptual models from its cognitive base, with connection to cognitive purpose. It is the home of figurative elements like ideological and ethical structures that contribute to the political and moral functioning of the agency. This figurative part of the agency forms the strategic part from which arise regulation of information flows, decision-making and patterns of behavior, i.e. the 'internal allocation of tasks, decisions, rules, and procedures for appraisal and reward, selected for the best pursuit of […] [a] strategy' (Caves, 1980: 64). Cognitive purposes (Habermas, 1970) are linked to information and determine purposeful behaviour (Espejo et al, 1997). This is also the domain of attitudes, manifested from beliefs to create an "enduring organization of beliefs" around an object or situation predisposing an agency to respond to situations in some preferential manner (Rokeach, 1968). Values are culturally defined (Williams et al, 1992), and when espoused enable the distinction between observable and unobservable elements of culture (Schein, 1985).

The phenomenal domain is populated by artefacts (Schein, 1985) and is the place where organizational structure is maintained. Here there is a *pragmatic base* that is constituted by its normative modes of practice. Standards of validity constitute evidence, which are used for acquiring knowledge in connection with cognitive interest (Habermas, 1970). Self-organization is important to the survival of an agency enabling it to create its own order (Kauffman, 1993).

The network of processes of *internalization*, *externalization* and *combination* is often cited as being due to Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995). Interestingly, three of these Nonaka

and Takuechi concepts arise in Piaget's (1972) learning theory, which explores cognitive development and the construction of knowledge. Piaget's work has been explained for a social context by Leman (1998). The process of *socialization*, through which explicit knowledge can be socially spread, occurs as a lateral (within domain) structural coupling (Maturana and Varela, 1987: 75) where they have a common history of interaction beyond the personality.

In Figure 2 we find normative personality intelligences. Figurative and operative intelligence are closely connected. A normative agent can be said to function primarily through two forms of *intelligence*, *figurative and operative* (Piaget 1950; Yolles 2009). *Figurative intelligence* (a form of autogenesis: Schwarz, 1997) provides its core relational explanations of reality, and *operative intelligence* (a form of autopoiesis: Schwarz, 1997; Maturana and Varela, 1987) provides for its capacity to evidence its figurative base of information. Normative agents with poor figurative intelligence do not maintain good representation in their figurative or cognitive bases. Those with poor operative intelligence cannot adequately manifest elements of their figurative base pragmatically, so that they have limited capacity to turn their models into observable phenomena. To avoid the potential for confusion, it must also be noted here that our use of the term *figurative intelligence* has been extended beyond Piaget's original notion, making it an active rather than passive mechanism.

In normative personality the term *operative intelligence* refers to the capacity for attitudes and conceptual information to be assembled in a coherent way to form personality operations and decision making. Attitudes with their emotional enhancements are constituted as a set of beliefs or values that have been directed towards some object of attention and hence assume an operative function. *Operative intelligence* can condition trait structures and processes, which affect behaviours and hence agency performance.

The phenomenal domain involves an organization's operative system that are connected laterally (within the domain of observable phenomena) as a *structural coupling* with an environment with which it has a history of interaction, and within which it maintains performance. The transitive coupling between the distinct domains of the organization and its environment is cybernetic in nature, with feed-forward and feedback loops.

The noumenal domain of Figure 2 centres on information processes, and thus is constituted as the cognitive part of the organization if the processes do not perform appropriately, i.e. if their efficacy is impeded. As such we identify that this is the seat of any normative personality system that may emerge, and it is our intention to model this. In Figure 2, the bars lying across the connecting *intelligence* loops illustrate the possible pathologies that might arise in the organization (see for example Yolles, 2009a).

In order to understand more about the normative personality, we may find some direction from theories of the individual personality. Support for this comes from a number of sources (e.g. Bandura, 1999; Hofstede et al., 2002; Brown, 1961; Gindis, 2009; Barley, 2007), with agents behaving consistently as "legal corporate persons", and with a unitary rationality that can be explained. In Figure 3 we offer a model of

normative personality. Here personality is taken to be socio-cognitive in nature. Both, emotions and feelings are manifested cognitively and figuratively.

Personality assessment differentiates between personality structures and behavioral orientations. The internal structures are assessed through an examination of a system of interacting psychological mechanisms (rather than a set of independent variables as in trait approaches). In social cognitive theory, assessments capture not only current psychological tendencies, but also personal determinants of action that contribute to development over the course of time. Evaluations are made of individual differences and of the psychological attributes that contribute to personal identity. Ways in which the structures of personality come into play are illustrated as agents interact with the settings and challenges that make up their day-to-day lives. Social cognitive personality assessment seeks to explore agential personality coherence. Assessments explore the cognitive structures that are used to interpret events. They self-reflect and self-regulate, but also induce change through self-organization.
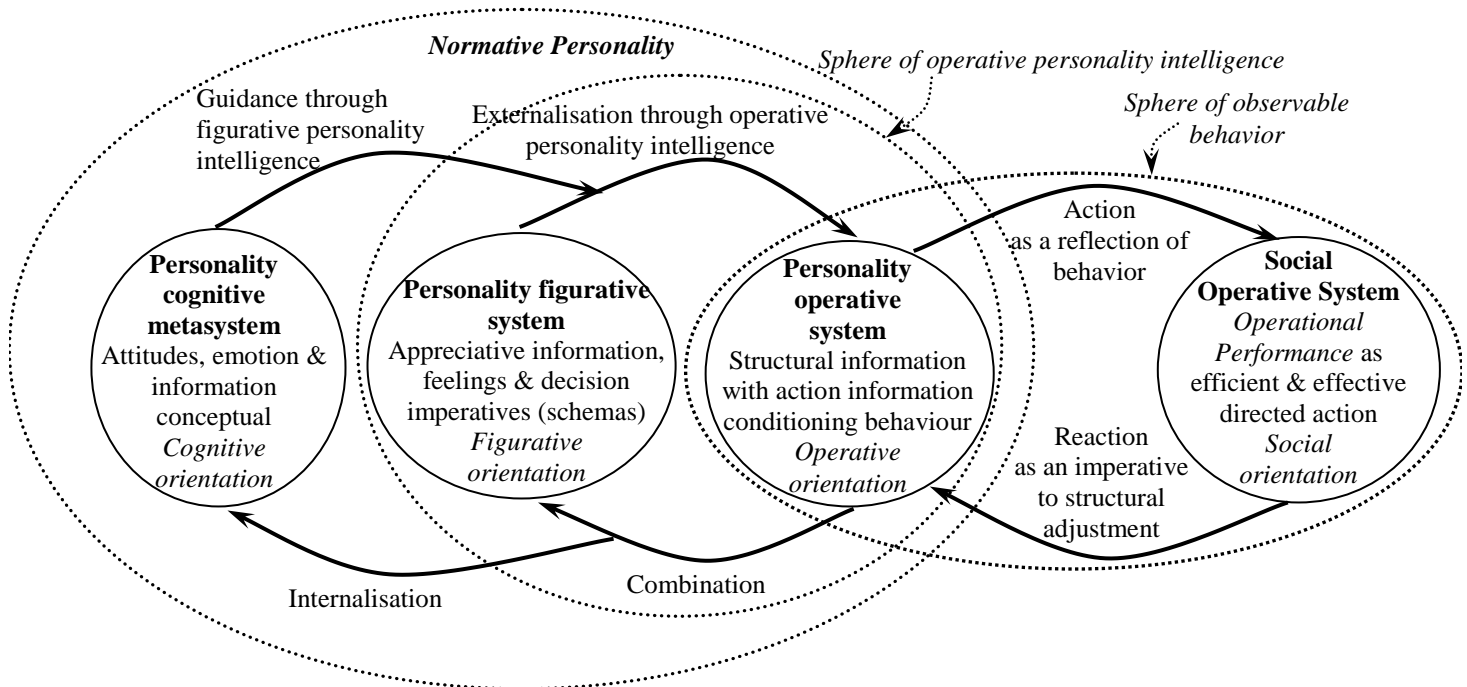
Figure 3: Normative Personality as a Cognitive System with Figurative and Operative Intelligences, seated in the Noumenal Domain of the Organizational Agency

Intelligences and Efficacy

In the model, *intelligences* are constituted as a network of first or higher order processes that each couple two ontologically distinct trait systems. These networks of processes manifests information through semantic channels thereby allowing local meaning to arise from the manifested content in the receiving trait system. *Operative intelligence* is a network of first order processes called autopoiesis (or self-production) that creates an *operative couple* between the figurative and operative

systems. It consists of a network of personality processes, which operatively manifests significant figurative information. It also creates improvement imperatives to adjust the figurative system. Connected with the network of processes that constitute operative intelligence is the capability of operatively manifesting feelings (or reactions to feelings). This capability can be called *"operative emotional intelligence".* Here it is worth mention that in the modelling context emotional intelligence can be considered to be related to both, figurative and operative intelligence.

The network of processes is itself defined by its appreciative schemas, the decision imperatives in the figurative system and the improvement adjustment imperatives that arise from the operative system. *Figurative intelligence* is a network of second order processes called autogenesis or self-generation that *projects conceptual information into the operative couple*. Connected with this network is the capability of manifesting emotions into the operative couple, a capacity that can be called *"figurative emotional intelligence"*. However, this couple also creates improvement imperatives to adjust the cognitive meta-system, from which figurative intelligence emanates in the first place. This meta-system is composed of attitudes, emotions and conceptual information that are harnessed to identify the network of meta-processes that define it, permitting significant conceptual information to be manifested in the operative couple. Intelligences are structured through personality perspectives and preferences. *Personality perspectives* arise in the personality meta-system from attitudes, emotions and conceptual information, and are influenced by the adjustment imperatives carried through figurative intelligence from the operative couple. The perspectives are manifested across the personality through perspectivistic information carried by its intelligences, to be integrated into schemas in the figurative system, and structured into the operative system. *Personality preferences* define a personality's intended trait orientations. In an empirical model, as a variable this is determined by the score that the trait takes. The score of a trait may itself be conditioned in some way by the information carried by the intelligences.

We may speak of *"intelligence limitation"*, if the selection of information to be manifested by the intelligences become uncoupled from the perceived organisational preferences and unrepresentative of the perceived intended perspectives. This lack of representation occurs when not all of the perspectivistic information is represented. Under such a condition the personality may: (1) have its capacity reduced to conceptualise, schematise or apply perspectivistic information; (2) have the orientation of its traits perturbed; and (3) can be drawn towards un-preferred or unintended conduct that may even "corrupt" its proprietary strategic, ideological or ethical orientations. When any of these conditions occur it is because *pathologies* have developed. Pathologic shifts in trait orientations may adjust perspectives that support these pathological developments (Figure 3).

Piaget's operative intelligence, which we have been using as a representation of autopoiesis, is constituted as a network of (first order) processes of the personality that is able to manifest information between its trait systems. Coupling Piaget's and Bandura's terminology, **operative intelligence** has the efficacious capacity of a normative agent to create a cycle of activity that manifests figurative projections as operative objects. In other words, operative intelligence occurs in a personality as the

capacity of a network of processes to efficaciously migrate appropriate information content between two analytically distinct traits, in relation to the beliefs that the agent has in this regard. This now leads us to the realization that it is efficacy that factors pathology, a notion to which we shall return later.

The notion of figurative intelligence (as adapted from Piaget, 1950) is a representation of autogenesis, and is constituted as a network of second order or meta-processes (like cognitive principles) that efficaciously enable and contextualize operative intelligence. It connects *identity* with *self-processes*, a notion indirectly supported by Markus and Nurius (1986) who proposed a theory of "possible selves" which explains how the agent develops a connection between present self, motivation, behaviour and possible or future self. In addition, it connects with Identity Process Theory (Breakwell 1986; Sullivan 2000; Twigger-Ross et al. 2003) where the conceptualization of identity is seen to involve four distinct principles of identity (self-esteem, self-efficacy, distinctiveness and continuity) that together enable the maintenance of a positive self-view.

Now returning to Figure 2, this is a model of the agency in which there exists a strategic organising component that, under the condition that the organisation is seen to have a collective mind, represents its normative personality. The figurative base shown here, which constitutes the personality's resources, enables a capacity to adequately reflect the cognitive base of the agency's paradigm and maintain pragmatic interpretations constitutes its figurative intelligence (Piaget 1950; Piaget and Inhelder 1969; Montangero and Maurice-Naville 1997). ***Figurative intelligence*** can now be defined as providing precise information about states of reality, and involves all means of representation used to keep in mind the states that intervene between transformations, i.e., it involves perception, drawing, mental imagery, language and imitation. Hence, figurative intelligence will be a reflection of patterns of knowledge, and will exist through figurative imagery and patterns of information. In terms of the organization's paradigm the figurative base is composed of models, which entail structured relationships and both epistemic and informational properties.

As we show in Figure 4, the coupling connections between personality and the social system are controlled by ***social intelligence***. It is the network of operative processes that enables a personality to manifest its decisions from its *'technical-interest/power trait'* to be manifested socially as observable phenomena. Indeed, as far as other personalities in the social environment are concerned, the only observable phenomena are created through technical-interest/power. The coupling between the cultural environment and social intelligence (the latter occurring as a migratory dialogue between the personality and the social) is controlled by cultural intelligence.
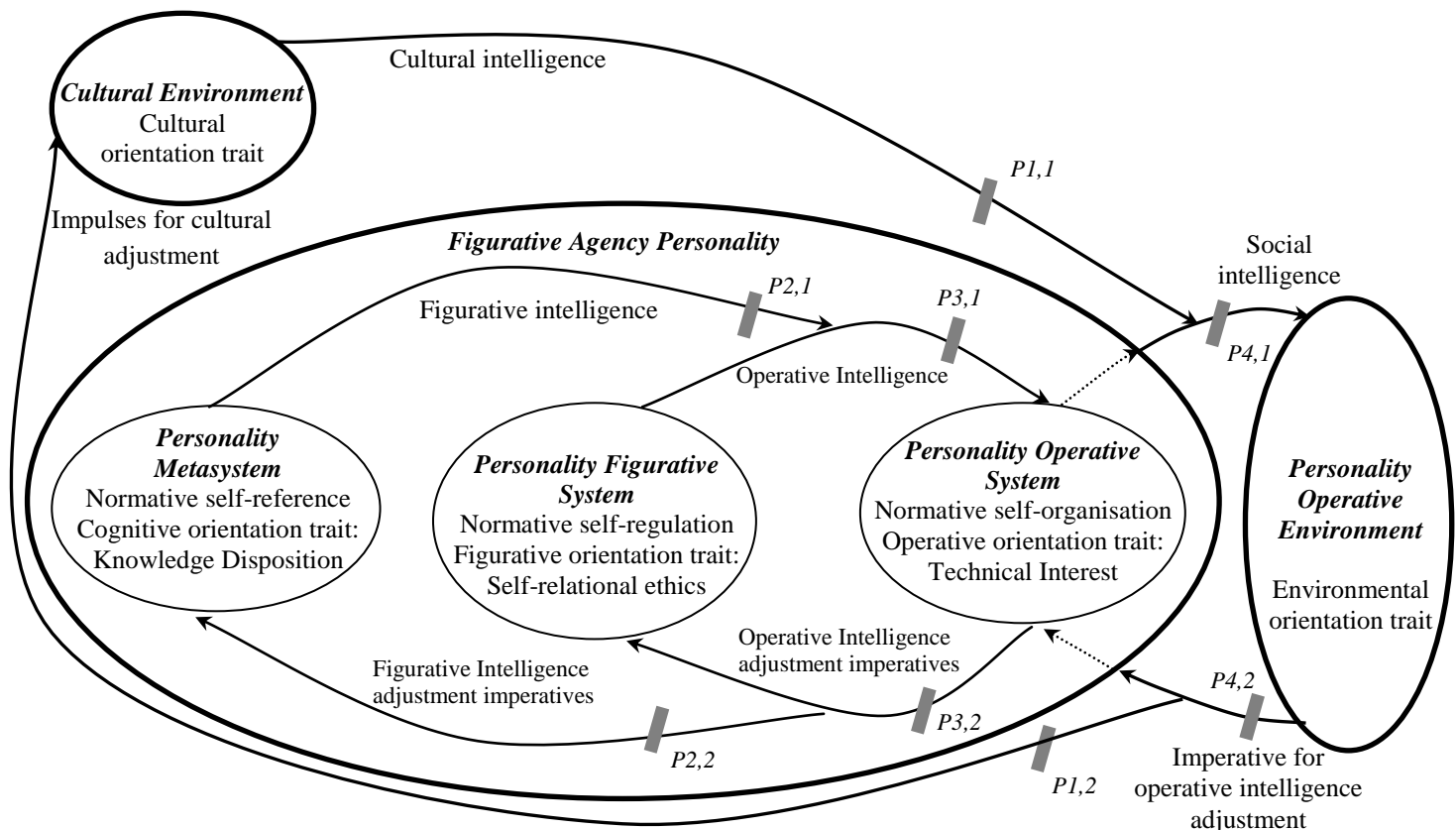
Note: $P_{i,j}$(where pathology type $i=1,4$ and order $j=1,2$) refers to type pathologies that can arise through both *intelligence limitation* and impeded *efficacy*

Figure 4: Socio-cognitive Trait Model of the agency connecting normative personality with social and cultural systems.

Cultural intelligence, according to Earley and Ang (2003: 3) is defined as the ability of an agency to successfully adapt to a change in cultural settings attributable to cultural context. In cybernetic terms, it can be taken as "the manifestation of the cognitive base as patterns of cultural knowledge" (Thamas and Inkson, 2009). This definition requires a plurality of cultural beliefs, attitudes and values, which are in interaction and create a plural figurative base that implicitly has some level of cultural conflict within it. However, where there is no such conflict, then cultural intelligence simply reduces to "the manifestation of the figurative base as patterns of cultural knowledge". Properly speaking this is actually what we might call "figurative cultural intelligence" - the capacity to represent the cultural belief system (of values, attitudes and beliefs) as a coalescence of normative ideological and ethical standards of the culture that ultimately defines what constitutes legitimate modes and means of social behaviour.

It hs been noted that *emotional intelligence* has an operative and figurative dimension. It is part of the network of inter-domain processes that relates selected emotional states from the cognitive domain to feelings in the noumenal domain. It is responsible for what information is selected and considered to be appropriate to a given context and also for what information is selected from feelings that will colour

behaviour. The control of emotions and feelings is determined by the traits, since emotions and feelings are embodied in the states of the cognitive and the noumenal domain. The traits are not only concerned with rational structures and processes, but also through influences from social and cultural intelligence may direct the domains to one or another extreme of emotions and feelings or to a more balanced attitude. Here then, personalities may achieve a balance, e.g. between love and hate. It is the information transmitted between the domains that will define the "local trait contexts" in which love or hate will become dominant. Necessarily these balances will be informed by both cultural intelligence that manifests the potential for emotion, and social intelligence that manifests the social context for which balances or extremes of love or hate are deemed to be appropriate.

The emotions of emotional intelligence are organized responses that cross at least physiological, cognitive, motivational, and experiential personality systems, and are typically associated with internal or external events and may be take on a positively or negatively tainted meaning (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It also includes the ability to regulate and alter the affective reactions of others. For Spering, Wagener & Funke (2005) there are **positive and negative effects of emotional intelligence** that can affect the traits (i.e., the strategic approaches) and solution quality of simple cognitive tasks in an agent's personality. Positive effects can result in flexible and creative thinking and the facilitation of efficient decision-making in more complex environments (Fiedler, 2001; Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987).

A normative agency is normally interested in a desired level of performance that is context specific. Performance is ultimately determined by the *efficacy* of the migrations of information between trait systems for given personality types. So any normative personality interested in changing preferences will also consistently want (at some preconscious level of awareness) to modify the efficacy by which cognitive information is migrated from one cognitive state to another (e.g., self-relational ethics to technical-interest/power or vice versa).

The efficacy of personality processes is important. Bandura (1986) defines the *collective efficacy* of the agency as the shared belief that a collective can, as a whole, attain goals and accomplish its desired tasks. The efficacy of agencies relates to "the soundness of their thoughts and actions, and the meaning of their pursuits, and they make corrective adjustments if necessary" (Bandura 2006: 165). Efficacy involves a belief or perception that efficacious collective actions are possible in relation to a social need. Problems with the cultural cohesion of an agency may affect its performance through lack of confidence in individual agencies and/or perceptual differences in collective efficacy (Bandura, 1995). It can be related to the cohesiveness or coherence of a collective agent, and thus can be indicated by a measure of degree or a measure of entropy of the agent. The efficacy of an agency will influence its ability to communicate, to set goals, and to persevere during adversity. Efficacy is conditioned by emotive imperatives (deriving from emotions in the cognitive domain and feelings in the figurative domain) that can be controlled (Adeyemo, 2007) by emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Efficacy therefore influences an agent's *capabilities* to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect life. Bandura (2006) also refers to empirical research that shows that perceived collective efficacy accounts for

distinctions in the quality of group functioning in diverse social systems. He also refers to **perceived collective efficacy**, by which he means the common beliefs that reside in the minds of group members about their collective capability. The membership believes that they are acting on their common beliefs that contribute to the transactional dynamics, which promote group attainments.

Operative intelligence may be seen as the migration of information between analytically distinct traits of personality. *Migratory effectiveness* relates to how well information is migrated from the figurative to the operative, and this is likely to be connected with knowledge and understanding. As an illustration of this, e.g., how well does a normative personality manifest its self-relational information about ethics (the ethics trait) in the technical-interest/power trait information, and how well is its technical-interest power trait information manifested as a set of social events? In contrast, *efficiency* relates to the *capacity* of the channels through which the migrations occur in relation to the *resources* that are required to manifest the information as social action. These resources may be at some level of awareness inherently or intentionally limited. Hence in any personality the migratory capacities of each process channel may be more or less efficient, and when inefficiencies occur they will result empirically in different scores of the trait variables. From these variable scores we can derive information about preferred or predominant personality type.

Empirically, efficacy can be strong, modest or weak. Scores on a scale indicate the degree of perceived efficacy/inefficacy that an agency might have. Perceived efficacy has an impact on the choices people make. Normally, with high efficacy status impediments to achievement will be seen as surmountable through improvement of self-regulatory skills and perseverant effort. Low efficacy status can negatively influence an agency's ability to communicate, to develop appreciations, and to set goals and cite tasks. It happens because of the way efficacy conditions the manifestation process and hence drives both local development and the adjustment imperatives for improvement. Efficacy can affect an agency's feeling, thinking, motivation, behaviour, and performance - including how it perseveres under adversity. Practically it is the *perceived efficacy* that moderates the agency towards operative performance progression and hence achievement, and the adjustment imperatives that indicate the capability of this progression. The notion of efficacy assumes that every organization maintains some level of emotive impulse control, which might either dampen or enhance on the emotive impulses. Blocked or perturbed information processes ($P_{i,j}$ in figure 4) contribute to the formation of pathologies. They indicate the limited capacity of the agency to generate requisite responses to its perceived needs for achievement under environmental circumstances. The bars ($P_{i,j}$) of the intelligences shown in Figure 4 are indicative of emerging pathologies. Given combinations of these across the personality may well generate distinct personality dysfunctions.

The notion of efficacy applies to the network of processes that constitute the intelligences of the normative personality that determines either preferences or pathologies/dysfunction. In our model, while the traits are concerned with control and the epistemic attributes of a personality (within the meta-system and figurative and operative systems), efficacy is a conditional connector of the ontologically distinct

traits systems. *Espoused values* are manifested as preferences from which requisite efficacy arises in the agency. An agency intuits and appreciates what is requisite from an understanding of its environment in relation to the imperatives from its values and attitudes and other emotive imperatives. Efficacy refers to the means by which figurative and operative intelligences develop, for instance through the coherence of a collective. Greater efficacy will result in more effective intelligence. The evaluation of efficacy could be done qualitatively through ethnographic qualitative or quantitative empirical techniques. Measures for perceived efficacy are provided by Adeyemo (2007), Alden (1986) and Lee (2005).

Since personality orientations are connected to both intelligences and efficacy it is now possible to collect our discussions as a set of proposition appropriate to the normative personality. We have already indicated that personality orientation arises through personality preferences. In the agency cultural/knowledge meta-system, espoused values indicate these preferences. These are manifested: (a) in the cognitive meta-system of the personality as significant attitudes, preferences and connected feelings, (b) in the figurative system as appreciative schemas, and (c) in the operative systems as structural/behavioural imperatives. These manifested preferences determine the set of trait orientations of the normative personality, which in the context of organizations we call organizational orientation. Preferences are thus responsible for the nature of a personality, being influenced by both its intelligences and efficacy, and indeed pathologies and dysfunctions. Pathologies $P_{i,j}$ (Figure 4) that affect both, intelligences and efficacy, can fall into patterns that create agency dysfunctions.

Assessment and Measurement Intelligences and Efficacy in Agency Traits

Our model in Figure 4 contains four forms of intelligence: figurative and operative (and their connected emotional), cultural and social intelligence. In the literature we find a variety of attempts to measure **organizational intelligence,** which largely have no systematic link to most of the different classes of organization theory dealing with strategy, structure, operations, organizational culture or the organizational environment.

Piaget (1950) attempted to measure *general intelligence in children* using cognitive testing approaches to assess their concrete and formal operative strategies. In the context of children, the distinction between figurative and operative intelligence is simply shown in a map of cognitive development by Demetriou, Doise & Van Lieshout (1998, p. 186). The Piaget tests were designed to look for particular types of understanding and/or reasoning (Bybee & Sund, 1982). Outside the child learning context the concepts of figurative and operative intelligence have not been been used. Within the context of organization theory, an equivalent to Piaget's examination of intelligence is the use of ethnographic methods. Interestingly however, operative and figurative intelligence may be connected with an empirical approach (based on a fluid mechanics metaphor from physics) that distinguished between *fluid and crystalline intelligence* (Hooper, Fitzgerald & Papalia, 1971; Schonfeld, 1986). Here, operative intelligence involves the fluid ability of logical thinking and the formulation and elaboration of relations, while figurative intelligence involves the crystallized ability of everyday learning that reflect recordable experience. Measures for both fluid

and crystalline intelligences have been proposed by Cattell & Butcher (1968), Cattell (1971) and Cattell, Barton & Dielman (1972) that may contribute to a more comprehensive approach in measuring organizational intelligence.

Drawing away from this approach, a capacity to measure *general organizational intelligence* has been proposed by Albrecht (2003) and used by others (e.g., Yaghoubi, Moloudi & Haghi, 2010). Albrecht created a model of seven key dimensions of an organization, which were adopted as independent variables on which organizational intelligence depends.
   (1) strategic vision,
   (2) shared fate,
   (3) appetite for change,
   (4) heart (giving more than contracted),
   (5) alignment and congruence (relating to team-working),
   (6) knowledge deployment, and
   (7) performance pressure (which everyone owns with operational imperatives for shared success).

Gonyea & Kuh (2009) use three core dimensions of *organizational intelligence*:
   (1) technical and analytical intelligence;
   (2) intelligence of understanding procedural problems;
   (3) and context intelligence.

These have also been related to the notions of Erçetin et al. (2000) by Potas, Erçetin, & Koçak (2010), from which the following set of independent variables arises:
   (1) promptness in action and reaction;
   (2) adaptation to changing situations;
   (3) flexibility and convenience of operations;
   (4) ability to detect prudence and being prudent;
   (5) ability to use imagination;
   (6) adaptation to changing situations;
   (7) effective communication with stakeholders.

To some extent, these approaches can be connected with *cybernetic intelligence* as described by Schwaninger (2001), for whom (consistent with agency theory) the intelligent organization has:
   (1) adaptability;
   (2) effectiveness in shaping its environment;
   (3) virtuosity (the ability to create a self-reconfiguration in relation to its environment);
   (4) sustainability (the ability to make positive net contributions to viability and development of the larger suprasystem in which the agency is embedded).

Kihlstrom & Cantor (2000) provide a useful review of the notion of **social intelligence** and its relation with other theoretical constructs. Thorndike's (1920) sees social intelligence as the ability of an agent to perceive its own and others' internal states, motives, and behaviours, and to act toward them in an appropriate way.

Cantor and Kihlstrom (1987) define social intelligence in terms of an agent's fund of knowledge about the social world, geared to solving the problems of social life and managing the life tasks, concerns or personal projects which an agent either selects or is assigned. Weinstein (1969) sees it as the ability to manipulate the responses of others.

Kihlstrom & Cantor (2000) further argue that *social intelligence* cannot be evaluated abstractly, but rather with respect to *context* and in relation to the *purposes* it serves from the agent's perspective.

This sets up criteria for the assessment of social intelligence through the use of empirical psychometric tests. For instance, Kosmitzki and John (1993) identified **18 features of social intelligence** including the core attributes of:

(1) understanding people's thoughts, feelings, and intentions well;
(2) being good at dealing with people;
(3) having extensive knowledge of rules and norms in human relations;
(4) being good at taking the perspective of other people;
(5) adapting well in social situations; being warm and caring; and
(6) being open to new experiences, ideas, and values.

Social perceptiveness is the capacity to be aware of the needs, goals, and feelings of others and the greater social environment, and this includes "multiple others" in the organization. High levels of social perceptiveness are useful for:

(1) accurately evaluating a social situation and
(2) determine the needs of the social context,
(3) being aware of their social environment and of the intentions and sensitivities of others.

Gilbert & Kottke (2009) adopt a model of social ability which has to include the core sub-dimensions of the concept of social intelligence

(1) social perceptiveness and
(2) social affordance seeking.

The concept of *cultural intelligence* (Earley, P. C., Ang, S., 2003) posits that understanding the impact of an individual's cultural background on their behaviour is essential for effective business. Earley and Ang suggest that it is possible to measuring an individual's ability to engage successfully in any environment or social setting and identified four basic aspects of cultural intelligence (see http://culturalq.com/fouraspects.html). Measures of cultural intelligence are provided by "The Cultural Intelligence Center" based in East Lansing, Michigan (http://culturalq.com/measure.html). These include the identification of intelligence as Cultural Quotients (CQ), and a number of dimensions of these have been proposed that include drive, knowledge, strategy, and action, which are defined below.

CQ-Drive is the interest of an agent in experiencing other cultures and the extent to which one thinks to be capable of interacting effectively with people who have different cultural backgrounds. It includes:

- Intrinsic Interest - deriving enjoyment from culturally diverse experiences
- Extrinsic Interest - gaining benefits from culturally diverse experiences
- Self-efficacy - having the confidence to be effective in culturally diverse situations.

CQ-Knowledge is an agent's knowledge about how cultures are similar and how cultures are different. It includes:
- Business - knowledge about economic and legal systems
- Interpersonal - knowledge about values, social interaction norms, and religious beliefs
- Socio-linguistics - knowledge about rules of languages and rules for expressing non-verbal behaviours.

CQ-Strategy is how an agent makes sense of culturally diverse experiences. It occurs when people make judgments about their own thought processes and those of others. It includes:
- Awareness - knowing about one's existing cultural knowledge
- Planning - strategizing before a culturally diverse encounter
- Checking - checking assumptions and adjusting mental maps when actual experiences differ from expectations.

CQ-Action is an agent's capability to adapt verbal and nonverbal behaviour to make it appropriate to diverse cultures. It involves having a flexible repertoire of behavioural responses that suit a variety of situations. It includes:
- Non-Verbal - modifying non-verbal behaviours (e.g., gestures, facial expressions)
- Verbal - modifying verbal behaviours (e.g., accent, tone).

Conclusion

The intention in this paper has been to model the role of organizational intelligences within a coherent theory of organizational orientation. Using organizational culture theory, we model the organization as a psychosocial agent with emergent normative personality. As a means of controlling organizational complexity, we have formalized the idea of an emergent normative personality that comes into being when a durable collective develops a dominant culture, and is connected with the strategic modelling processes that an organization is involved in. A new cybernetic socio-cognitive trait model has been developed that draws on the concepts of intelligence and efficacy, and enables agent pathologies and dysfunctions to be explained in a new way.

Understanding organizational intelligence and efficacy, normative trait systems and their pathologies can lead to an improved understanding of the information processes that an organization has and how this affects its social behaviours. The theory that we have developed goes beyond the recognition by Van Egeren that traits may be viewed in terms of self-regulatory propensities or styles affecting how agents characteristically pursue their goals. Here, traits are seen as ontologically distinct, having different derivative natures. They have conceptual, figurative, operative, and event orientations. A network of processes is involved in migrating information from one trait to another. While the traits arise from a base of action related knowledge from which cognitive processes are derived, environmental orientation also has an embedded trait that is more connected with environmental knowledge relating to the structures, norms, and indicative behaviour observed there.

One of the conclusions drawn from the theory is that the value preferences of a normative personality not only determine its trait values (and thus the personality types), but ultimately impacts on its capacity to efficaciously and intelligently service the information needs of the trait systems. A need in agent analysis is to determine whether the value preferences are *requisite* in relation to the agent's environments and contexts. If requisite efficacy cannot be assured, pathologies emerge. Espoused value preferences are central in that they determine whether particular organizational traits arise from preferences or rather from the pathologies that determine dysfunction. Another useful attribute is the analysis of an agent's cultural and social intelligences, enabling determination of whether within a specific context the organization has an appropriate value preference or not. All forms of intelligences taken together therefore provide a picture of the preconscious processes by which an agent operates.

In the end, we have developed agency theory for normative personality to enable us to better understand the regulatory processes that occur within the organization, and this includes both traditional regulatory features that arise from socio-cognitive theory like self-organization, self-reflection, self-reference and identity. Another form of regulation that exists occurs through personality traits that are responsible for stable patterns of conduct and behaviour. Given known contexts, particular instances of behavioural conduct are usually predictable. Stable patterns of behaviour are determined by the set of formative traits. In the modelling process here, we have recognized that organizations operate through formative orientation traits (cognitive, strategic, operative, etc.), and these have core characteristics. These orientation traits can be connected with other relatable theories, enabling us to provide an appreciation of recognizing patterns of behaviour and predicting instances of operative conduct and behaviour, and indeed misconduct.

Agency pathologies have at least one source, i.e. the inefficacies that impede transfer of information between organizational trait systems. Traits are indicative of pathologies which emerge when the actual efficacy of information transfer between ontologically distinct parts of the organization is not the required efficacy through which this should occur. It is this difference that indicates an efficacy deficiency.

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MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE HOFSTEDE QUESTIONNAIRE IN AN AUSTRIAN SETTING

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Abstract

Purpose:
While it has become common practice to measure organizational culture quantitatively, its applicability is seldom questioned nor investigated. This empirical study shows, how one of the most frequently used questionnaires (Hofstede et al. 1990), can only be partly replicated in an Austrian setting using a translated version of the Hofstede et al. (1990) questionnaire. Thus, scholars need to be aware of the fact that findings resulting from such questionnaires are difficult to interpret in a German-speaking research context.

Design:
Quantitative data was collected and analyzed accordingly, using common statistical procedures, such as factor analysis and Cronbach alpha measures. The sample consists of 275 Austrian employees.

Findings:
This study shows that Hofstede et al.'s (1990) questionnaire can only partly be replicated in an Austrian setting. We outline that mainly two reasons account for these findings: (1) practices and values belong to two different, but related constructs. It could be possible that similar practices might be found in different organizations that have complementary organizational values, and (2) national cultural differences.

Research limitations/implications:
Data was only collected and interpreted in an Austrian context. However, it can be assumed that such results can also derive from other German speaking regions. We propose that future research should focus on matching dimensions approaches to organizational culture with other existing models, e.g. Schein (1985), Hatch & Cunliffe (2006), Dauber et al. (2010).

What is original/what is the value of the paper:
To the knowledge of the authors, this study is the first to empirically evaluate the questionnaire in an Austrian setting using two different versions. With respect to the six cultural dimensions of Hofstede et al. (1990), only three of them could be replicated by our data set.

Keywords: organizational culture, performance, Hofstede questionnaire

**CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
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Introduction

Tsui et al. (2007) showed with their comprehensive review of 43 cross-cultural studies that Hofstede's (1980, 1991, 2001) cultural dimensions have become one of the most frequently applied questionnaires in the field. In the sample of Tsui et al. (2007) about 28% of all studies (i.e. 12 papers) used at least one of Hofstede's (1980, 1991, 2001) national culture dimensions as a dependent, independent or moderating variable. Only Schwartz's (1992, 1994) questionnaire can keep pace with the popularity of Hofstede's (1980, 1991, 2001) approach, accounting for about 23% of all studies (i.e. 10 papers) reviewed by Tsui et al. (2007). While 43 studies might seem to be inappropriate for a representative comparison of research approaches, the selected papers have considerably shaped our understanding of cultural effects in the last decades.

Although not analyzed by Tsui et al. (2007) in-depth, organizational culture has become an increasing field of research. Hofstede et al.'s (1990) seminal work, which got already cited more than 1,500 times (retrieved from Google.scholar, May, 31, 2011) has become an important empirical tool to measure culture in organizations. Their questionnaire was developed and tested with data collected in Denmark and the Netherlands.

This paper aims at validating the questionnaire in an Austrian context, in order to test its applicability in other national contexts. Based on 275 received questionnaires, it was found that only two of six dimensions can be replicated. We provide explanations for these findings and give recommendations for scholars wishing to measure organizational culture, using the Hofstede et al. (1990) scales.

The organizational culture questionnaire by Hofstede et al. (1990)

Hofstede et al. (1990, p. 286) defined organizational/corporate culture as '(1) holistic, (2) historically determined, (3) related to anthropological concepts, (4) socially constructed, (5) soft, and (6) difficult to change.' Further, Hofstede (1991, pp. 179-180) argues that organizational culture is 'the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organization from another' and distinguishes between the 'software' for national cultures, mainly expressed in values, and the 'software' for organizational cultures, which is revealed through practices. In his research on cross-national culture differences Geert Hofstede (1980; 2001) had identified national cultures to distinguish people, institutions and organizations in different countries. Ten years later, Hofstede et al. (1990) looked at corporate cultures from the perspective of practices, i.e. patterns of behavior.

While the first study had surveyed employees of one company across many countries, the 1985-1987 project was designed to explore similarities between various organizations in two cultural regions, in that case in Denmark and in the Netherlands. This study, known as the IRIC project (Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation in Maastricht, Netherlands), took place between 1985 and 1987 and covered 20 units of 10 companies with the goal of ensuring an in-depth analysis. The task was to identify differences between organizational and national cultures. They found that organizational culture refers to shared practices much more than to shared values. The identified differences in values mainly resulted from nationality, whereas differentiations in practices mainly resumed from organizational membership. These practices consist of symbols, heroes, and rituals.

Since Hofstede and his co-researchers could show that organizational cultures differ mainly at level of 'practices' and not at the level of values, it became clear that the value-based „five dimensions of national cultures' (power distance, individualism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation) are not

suitable for comparing organizations within the same country. Hofstede and his team (Hofstede, 2008; Hofstede et al., 1990) identified „six dimensions of practices' for organizational cultures ('P' stands for 'practices'), which will be described shortly in the following sections:

- P1: Process-oriented versus results-oriented
- P2: Employee-oriented versus job-oriented
- P3: Parochial versus professional
- P4: Open system versus closed system
- P5: Loose versus tight control
- P6: Normative versus pragmatic

P1: Process-oriented versus results-oriented (Hofstede et al. 1990)
This dimension opposes a concern with means (process-oriented) to a concern with goals (results-oriented). In process-oriented organizational cultures people perceive themselves as avoiding risks and making only a limited effort in their jobs, while each day is pretty much the same. In the results-oriented cultures people perceive themselves as comfortable in unfamiliar situations, and put in a maximal effort, while each day is felt to bring new challenges. This dimension of 'process vs. results' relates to organization sociology, with Burns and Stalker's distinction between mechanistic and organic management systems. According to Burns & Stalker (1961, p. 120), mechanistic systems are characterized by 'the abstract nature of each individual task, which is pursued with techniques and purposes more or less distinct from those of the concern as a whole; i.e., the functionaries tend to pursue the technical improvement of means, rather than the accomplishment of the ends of the concern'. Organic systems are characterized by 'the realistic nature of the individual task, which is seen as set by the total situation of the concern' (Burns & Stalker, 1961, p. 121). Results orientation also corresponds with Peter and Waterman's (1982) maxim number one 'a bias for action'. In order to generate bi-polar dimensions (e.g., 'process-oriented vs. results-oriented'), Hofstede et al. (1990) also took care of bi-polarity for the items (e.g., 'our style of dealing with each other is quite formal' vs. 'we are easy with each other').

P2: Employee-oriented versus job-oriented (Hofstede et al. 1990)
This dimension contrasts a concern for people (employee-oriented) with a concern for 'getting the job done' (job-oriented). In employee-oriented cultures people feel their personal problems are taken into account, that the organization takes a responsibility for employee welfare, and that important decisions tend to be made by groups or committees. In the job-oriented units people experience a strong pressure to complete the job. They perceive the organization as only interested in the work employees do, not in their personal and family welfare, and important decisions tend to be made by individuals. This dimension corresponds to the two axes of Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1964). The view that these two researchers claimed employee and job orientation to be two independent dimensions contrasts with the view of two opposites of a single dimension.

P3: Parochial vs. professional (Hofstede et al. 1990)
This dimension opposes units whose members derive their identity largely from the group itself (parochial) to organizations in which people primarily identify with their job (professional). Members of parochial cultures feel the organization's norms cover their behavior at home as well as on the job. They feel that in hiring employees, the company takes their social and family background into account as much as their job competence. In assuming that the company will take care of them, they also do not look far into the future. On the other side, members of professional cultures consider their private lives their own business, they feel the organization hires on the basis of job competence only, and they do

think far ahead. This distinction is also known in sociology as 'local' versus 'cosmopolitan', reflecting an organization's internal to an external frame of reference (Merton, 1968).

P4: Open system vs. closed system (Hofstede et al. 1990)

This dimension describes the communication climate of an organization (e.g., Poole, 1985). In the open system unit members consider both the organization and its people open to newcomers and outsiders. This means that almost anyone would fit into the organization, and new employees only need a few days to feel integrated. In the closed system units, the organization and its people fit into the organization, and new employees need a long time to feel at home.

P5: Loose vs. tight control (Hofstede et al. 1990)

This dimension refers to the degree of internal structures within an organization, which affect aspects like company behavior and business apparel. People in loose control units feel that no one thinks of costs, meeting times are only kept approximately, and jokes about the company and the job are frequent. People in tight control units describe their work environment as cost-conscious, meeting times are kept punctually, and jokes about the company and the job are rare. Hofstede did already refer to this distinction between loose control and tight control in his research on management control (Hofstede, 1967, p. 144).

P6: Normative vs. pragmatic (Hofstede et al. 1990)

Is dealing with the aspect of 'customer orientation'. This dimension opposes units, whose members accomplish their tasks in strictly following their inviolable rules (normative) to market-driven organizations (pragmatic). In normative units the major emphasis is on correctly following organizational procedures, which are more important than results. In matters of business ethics and honesty, the unit's standards are felt to be high. In the pragmatic units, there is a major emphasis on meeting the customer's needs. Results are more important than correct procedures, and in matters of business ethics, a pragmatic rather than a dogmatic attitude prevails. The 'pragmatism' pole thereby corresponds with Peter and Waterman's maxim number two 'staying close to the customer' (1982).

Methods

The sample is based on the study by Boes (2009) and another independent study conducted in 2010, using the same questionnaire. Together the sample consists of 275 returned questionnaires collected from members of Austrian companies. A German translation of the Hofstede et al. (1990) questionnaire was used to collect the data online.

Results

The following section will present (1) the descriptive statistics of the sample and (2) the results of our test of the Hofstede et al. (1990) questionnaire.

Descriptive statistics

This section is split in two parts showing characteristics of the sample: (1) Individual characteristics of respondents and (2) organizational characteristics.

The individual level: Sex, age, nationality, educational background, type of job, job area

As can be seen from Table 1, most of the respondents, were male Austrians, working as a clerk and finished a higher school, university or college. Apart form that, more than 60% of all respondents were between 26 and 45 years old. Finally, the majority of individuals who filled out the questionnaire currently worked in 'sales and marketing'. These findings clearly outline to which population findings of this study can be generalized.

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Table 1: Individual characteristics of respondents: Sex, age, nationality, educational background (n = 275)

		# of respondents	in % of total
Sex	*Male*	177	64,36%
	Female	98	35,64%
Age	*20-25*	22	8,00%
	26-35	98	35,64%
	36-45	84	30,55%
	46-55	45	16,36%
	Over 55	26	9,45%
Nationality	*Austrian*	261	94,91%
	EU 27 nationality (except Austria)	14	5,09%
Highest completed formal education	*Compulsory school*	5	1,82%
	Company apprenticeship	19	6,91%
	School without higher school certificate	16	5,82%
	Higher school	66	24,00%
	University or college	160	58,18%
	Other formation after higher school certificate without university	7	2,55%
	Missing values	2	0,73%
Type of job	*Clerk*	242	88,00%
	Laborer	6	2,18%
	Civil servant	4	1,45%
	Contract worker	1	0,36%
	Freelancer	3	1,09%
	Entrepreneur	18	6,55%
	Other	1	0,36%
Job area	*Management*	40	14,55%
	Finance and controlling	38	13,82%
	Human resources	11	4,00%
	Research and development	18	6,55%
	Purchasing	7	2,55%
	Production	16	5,82%
	Sales and marketing	88	32,00%
	Logistics	7	2,55%
	Quality and customer services	9	3,27%
	Other internal services	41	14,91%

The company level: Company area, company sector, company size
With respect to company specific characteristics, it can be noted that mainly privately held companies are included in the sample. While more than 30% of individuals indicated that

they are employed by a company that has less than 250 employees, almost 40% of the respondents work for a larger organization (i.e. more than 250 employees) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Characteristics of the companies forming part of the analyzed sample (n = 275)

		# of respondents	in % of total
Company area	Private area	241	87,64%
	Public area	21	7,64%
	Other area	13	4,73%
Company sector	Mining and quarrying (stones, oil, gas) and services	1	0,36%
	Production of food and beverages	21	7,64%
	Production of paper, publishing, print and copy shops	3	1,09%
	Mineral oil processing, cokery	8	2,91%
	Production of chemicals and chemical products	5	1,82%
	Production of rubber and plastic products	2	0,73%
	Production of glass, stone and earth products	1	0,36%
	Production of metals and metal products	22	8,00%
	Mechanical engineering	8	2,91%
	Production of office machines, electrical & precision engines	4	1,45%
	Production of vehicles and vehicle components	16	5,82%
	Energy and water supply	4	1,45%
	Construction	4	1,45%
	Retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and/or gas station	2	0,73%
	Wholesale and trade negotiation	25	9,09%
	Retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and/or gas station	2	0,73%
	Hotels and restaurants	2	0,73%
	Transport (air flights, railroad,..), travel agencies	5	1,82%
	Communication (telephony services,..)	4	1,45%
	Credit and insurance business (banks,..)	20	7,27%
	Real estate	3	1,09%
	Rentals	5	1,82%
	Data processing and data bases	7	2,55%
	Research and development	1	0,36%
	Company-related services	34	12,36%

	(Consulting,..) Others	66	24,00%
Company size	Up to 10 employees	29	10,55%
	Up to 50 employees	48	17,45%
	Up to 250 employees	49	17,82%
	Up to 1000 employees	42	15,27%
	Over 1000 employees	103	37,45%
	Missing values	4	1,45%

Finally, the sample consists mostly of people working in the sector of 'production of food and beverages', 'production of metals and metal products', 'wholesale and trade negotiation', 'credit and insurance business (banks,…)', and 'company related services'.

The findings in the following section have to be interpreted in light of the sample characteristics, thus constitute a limitation for generalization. Nevertheless, the validity of the tested questionnaire should not change due to sample characteristics, in particular if the scales are expected to be useful across industries and sectors. This is the case for the Hofstede et al. (1990) questionnaire.

Validation of the original Hofstede et al. (1990) scales

The next sections will (1) present the results of the internal validity analysis of item batteries based on the constructs of Hofstede et al. (1990), and (2) suggest an alternative dimensionality for the items based on a factor analysis. This seems necessary to allow a meaningful interpretation of cultural dimensions in a Viennese cultural context.

Table 3 provides the Cronbach's Alpha scores for each organizational culture dimension according to Hofstede et al. (1990). While 'results-oriented vs. process-oriented' and 'employee-oriented vs. job-oriented' can be replicated, all other dimensions score considerably below the commonly considered minimum level of '0.7' of Cronbach's Alpha (see also Kline, 1999).

Table 3: Cronbach Alpha scores for the organizational culture dimensions by Hofstede et al. (1990) (n = 275)

organizational culture dimensions Hofstede et al. (1990)	Cronbach Alpha
results-oriented vs. process-oriented	0.858
employee-oriented vs. job-oriented	0.766
professional vs. parochial	**0.339**
open vs. closed system	**0.606**
tight vs. loose control	**0.404**
normative vs. pragmatic	**0.382**

Table 4 includes the Cronbach's alpha scores, for improved scales, achieved through the elimination of certain items. Nevertheless, all four low-scoring constructs remain unreliable (in bold).

Table 4: Cronbach-Alpha scores if certain items were excluded to improve the internal validity of constructs as defined by Hofstede et al. (1990) (n = 275)

Construct	Items	Conbach Alpha (without respective item)
results-oriented vs. process-oriented	positive feedback	0.860
	fast	0.839
	easy with risks	0.847
	everyday new challenges	0.852
	proactive	0.830
	easy with others	0.856
	warm	0.842
	modern technology	0.854
	direct	0.833
	always to the maximum	0.848
	mistakes not punished	0.857
	optimistic	0.837
employee-oriented vs. job-oriented	group decisions	0.738
	not only work	0.713
	expert decisions	0.734
	support careers	0.732
	change decree together	0.743
	support newcomers	0.752
	tops support union	0.771
	integrated in society	0.765
	personal than job	0.752
professional vs. parochial	our private life is considered our own affair	**0.280**
	job competence is the only hiring criterion	**0.156**
	plan the future at least the next three years	**0.391**
	we are strongly aware of competition	**0.375**
	cooperation and trust between departments	**0.222**
open vs. closed system	not only special people	**0.570**
	our team the best	**0.618**
	tops generous	**0.564**
	attention is paid to work conditions	**0.585**
	we are open to newcomers	**0.514**
	newcomers fast feel well	**0.504**

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tight vs. loose control	cost conscious	**0.065**
	respect meeting times	**0.344**
	Well-grounded	**0.330**
	always speak seriously	**0.515**
normative vs. pragmatic	high standards	**0.357**
	organization contributes to society	**0.156**
	following correct procedures is important	**0.408**
	strict rules	**0.359**
	history counts	**0.336**

Due to the fact that 4 dimensions could not be replicated an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to identify how these items might be related and formulate into a different set of items representing similar or even other dimensions identified throughout the analytical process. Table 5 and 6 show the results for the factor analysis including items used in Table 4, which are those who contributed most to the dimensions suggested by Hofstede et al. (1990). Only items, which showed factor loadings of 0.4 or higher, are shown, indicating a clear assignment to one of the factors. The factor '(1) performance orientation vs. weak performance orientation' almost coincides with the dimension 'results- vs. process-oriented' by Hofstede et al. (1990) and shows a remarkable internal consistency of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.862$. All other explored factors show rather low α-scores and consist of items that belong to various dimensions of Hofstede et al. (1990). Still this factor analysis yields acceptable item-combinations, which reflect meaningful dimensions compared to the original dimensionality by Hofstede et al. (1990).

Table 5: Results of the factor analysis – Factors 1-3

factor	factor loading	items	dimension by Hofstede et a (1990)
(1) strong vs. weak performance orientation	.857	Fast	Results-oriented
	.855	Proactive	Results-oriented
	.772	Direct	Results-oriented
	.753	Optimistic	Results-oriented
	.750	Well groomed	Tight control
	.591	Employees feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations and in taking risks	Results-oriented
	.567	Employees always push themselves to their maximum	Results-oriented
	.534	Every day brings new challenges	Results-oriented
(2) participative	.701	Decisions are taken by experts, regardless of their position	Employee-oriented

leadership vs. top-down leadership	.661	Cooperation and trust between our departments are normal	Professional
	.593	Changes are implemented in coordination with the people concerned	Employee-oriented
	.576	Our managers try to support good people to advance within the organization	Employee-oriented
	.576	We are ahead of others with our technology and working methods	Results-oriented
	.492	All important decisions are taken by the groups or committees	Employee-oriented
	.459	We also get feedback from our superiors for good performance	Results-oriented
	.415	In some cases mistakes are accepted as consequence of initiative	Results-oriented
(3) job orientation vs. employee orientation	.744	Organization only interested in work people do	Job-oriented
	.692	Little concern for personal problems of employees	Job-oriented
	.646	Our top managers do not support our membership in unions	Job-oriented
	.631	Little attention is paid to our working environment	Closed system
	.619	Management stingy with small things	Closed system

Table 6: Results of the factor analysis – Factors 4-6

factor	factor loading	items	dimension by Hofstede et a (1990)
(4) open system vs. closed system	.838	Warm	Results-oriented
	.821	We are open to newcomers and outsiders	Open system
	.787	Newcomers are supported to adapt quickly to the job and to the team	Employee-oriented
	.702	New employees usually need only a few days to feel at home	Open system
(5) loose control vs. tight control	.806	We do not think more than a day ahead	Parochial
	.803	We never respect the meeting times	Loose control
	.521	We are all not conscious of the costs (time, material,..)	Loose control
(6) strong vs. weak rule obedience	.865	Organization contributes little to society	Pragmatic
	.765	No special ties with local community	Job-oriented
	.441	In matters of business ethics, we are pragmatic, not dogmatic	Pragmatic

Two possible reasons why Hofstede et al. (1990) does not replicate in an Austrian setting

Hofstede et al. (1990) argue that organizational culture should be measured through 'practices'. This argument stands slightly in contrast to earlier and more recent studies. For example, in light of Schein's (1985) model on organizational culture, 'values' (defined as underlying assumptions and espoused values) and 'practices' (defined as 'artifacts') are different elements of the same model. Although related to each other, practices only represent the manifestation of values. More recently, the generic model of organizational

culture (Dauber et al., 2010) extended the model of Schein (1985) by including research conducted on strategy and structure (e.g. Andrews, 1971; Ansoff, 1965; Donaldson, 1987, 1996; Hamilton and Shergill, 1992, 1993; Williamson, 1975), as well as the impact of the external environment on organizations (e.g. Daft, 2009; Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976; Gartner, 1985; Donnelly-Cox & O'Regan, 1999; DiMaggio & Powell, 1994; Scott, 2008). They conclude that values become manifest through strategy, structure and, finally, observable patterns of behavior, i.e. organizational practices. Thus, the question arises whether similar practices can be found in different organizations, although their underlying values of behavior might be different. Neither this paper nor the analysis of Hofstede et al. (1990) can provide an answer to that question. Thus, more research would be necessary to demonstrate whether the described practices of Hofstede et al. (1990) truly reflect organizational culture values. A possible alternative approach is provided by Sagiv & Schwartz (2007) who used pure 'values' as items (e.g. equality, social justice, creativity, etc.). Consequently a combination of both questionnaires would make it possible to correlate values and practices. This might shed light on whether practices remain consistent across different organizations with different cultural values.

Furthermore, the data suggests that nationality or national/societal culture has an impact on the validity of the questionnaire. While Hofstede et al. (1990) report high scores for the construct validity of their items, only two of six were replicable in an Austrian setting. Therefore, this study might also show effects of societal culture differences between Austria, Netherlands and Denmark (see also Table 7). Thus, a future study might introduce societal cultural values as a moderating variable between the relationship of values and practices.

Table 7: National culture dimensions scores for Austria, Denmark and the Netherlands based on Hofstede (1980, 1991, 2001) (Source: http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php)

	Austria	Denmark	Netherlands
Power distance	11	18	38
Individualism	55	74	80
Masculinity	79	16	14
Uncertainty avoidance	70	23	53

SUMMARY

This paper has shown that some scales of Hofstede et al. (1990) are worth reconsideration in order to achieve an interpretable and reliable result in an Austrian context. Based on the collected data, a somewhat different dimensionality for the analysis of organizational cultures in Austria seems to better serve scholars who wish to understand Austrian corporate values. Theses dimensions includes: (1) strong vs. weak performance orientation, (2) participative leadership vs. top-down leadership, (3) job orientation vs. employee orientation, (4) open system vs. closed system, (5) loose control vs. tight control and (6) strong vs. weak rule obedience.

Reasons for not having been able to replicate the questionnaire could be that (1) similar practices might be found in several organizations with different underlying values, and (2) that national cultural differences have an impact on the validity of the scales.

More research is necessary to fully explore whether the questionnaire can be replicated in other contexts. Until then, hastily applying the organizational culture dimensions of Hofstede et al. (1990) might yield distorted or simply wrong empirical results.

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COPING WITH INEFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Daniel Dauber, Andre Tavernier

Purpose:
The behavior of executives can have negative consequences on the motivation or the trust of employees as well on the long-term business development of the company. This paper investigates into how organizational members perceive ineffective leadership and which coping strategies individuals develop to encounter such behavior of superiors.

Design:
A qualitative research approach was applied to investigate in coping strategies of individuals. Narrative interviews with German employees, middle and top managers were conducted. This paper presents first empirical results of 20 interviews, which were chosen based on theoretical sampling and were analyzed via open, axial and selective coding as commonly applied in Grounded Theory.

Findings:
Seven major coping strategies were identified in the collected data: (1) coping through learning, (2) coping through resistance, (3) coping through communication (4) coping through comparison, (5) coping through adaptation, (6) coping through isolation, (7) coping through distraction. While some coping strategies reflect more passive behavior, other forms relate to open revolt and proactive interaction between subordinate and superior. It is further shown that coping strategies are related to each other, indicating that individuals pursue several coping strategies simultaneously.

Research limitations/implications:
This paper focuses on the individual level and organizational aspects are not considered. The sample is further limited to German employees and managers, thus might not be representative for other cultural contexts. Nevertheless, findings can serve as a solid base to continue research in this direction and provides some new paths towards researching coping strategies related to ineffective leadership.

Practical implications:
Understanding what ineffective leadership is and how it affects individuals is crucial for managing human resources in an organization. Knowledge about how people react to inappropriate behavior of superiors can help to better understand why employees change their patterns of behavior towards a less effective and productive manner. This paper provides seven strategies to cope with ineffective leadership in a practial context and might serve as a reference for superiors and subordinates to better manage the mechanisms behind this phenomenon.

Keywords: ineffective leadership, coping strategies, supervision, communication, resistance, stress

Introduction

A lot of research concentrated on what makes a good leader a good leader. Far fewer research has been conducted to reveal the dark sides of being an ineffective leader. In particular, research on how individuals cope with ineffective leaders and how they are related to consequences of inappropriate leadership behavior remains a black spot in this field. However, bad leaders can considerably reduce motivation, productivity and might even lead to a higher fluctuation of competent employees. Therefore this paper addresses this issue through a qualitative approach. Based on 20 interviews, the authors present 7 different coping strategies and their relationships to identified symptoms of ineffective leadership in German companies.

In a first step, we present a review of literature dedicated to ineffective leadership, consequences of ineffective leadership and coping strategies. In a second step, we explain the methodological approach taken to investigate into this phenomenon. After this, the major empirical findings are presented, especially explaining the seven coping strategies identified in the data. The paper closes with limitations and conclusions.

Ineffective leadership: A review

The following section provides a short overview of existing research on ineffective leadership. First, this section describes different constructs of ineffective leadership. Second, the different effects of ineffective leadership on superiors, subordinates and the organization will be discussed. Table 8 lists common definitions of ineffective leadership. As can be seen there exists no common terminology for ineffective leadership. Nevertheless, all of them stress the negative effects such patterns of behavior can cause.

Table 8: Common definitions of 'ineffective leadership' according to Bardes & Piccolo (2010)

Name	Description
Abusive Supervision (Tepper, 2000, p. 178)	Subordinates perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, excluding physical contact.
Destructive leadership (Einarsen et al.. 2007)	'Behavior by a leader […] that violate[s] the […] interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organizations goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being, or job satisfaction of subordinates'
Bad Leadership (Kellermann, 2004)	Effective (e.g. the inability to produce the desired change) and unethical (e.g. acting in self interest, failing to distinguish between right and wrong) actions by a manager or individual in a position of formal or informal power
Negative Leadership (Schilling, 2008)	Behaviors by supervisors and managers ranging from ineffective to destructive aspects.
Leadership Bullying (Ferris et al. 2007, p. 197.)	'Represents strategically selected tactics of influence by leaders designed to convey a particular image and place targets in a submissive, powerless position whereby they are more easily influenced and controlled, in order to achieve personal and/or organizational objectives.'
Toxic Leaders	'Leaders who engage in numerous destructive behaviors and

(Lipman-Bluman, 2005, p.18)	who exhibit certain dysfunctional personal characteristics.' The actions of these individuals may or may not be intentional, but result in serious and enduring harm on subordinates and organizations.

Studies on ineffective leadership have taken different routes and perspectives. Streams of research include the perspective of executives on ineffective leadership and/or the effects on employees and organizational goals as well as basic concepts of integration. Of particular importance in this paper is research on negative attributes and personality features of executives. As an example, Lombardo et al. (1988) present negative characteristics and behavior by executives. Among these are strong emotionality of the executive, incompetence in assembling teams, a poor relationship with employees, and the lack of support of employees. Ashfort (1997) concentrated on behavior of executives and identified abuse of power as the origin of poor leadership. Other influencing factors, such as the relationship between executives and employees or the organizational framework conditions, also need to be taken into account. Tepper (2000) extends this focus to the characteristics and behavior of executives and includes the perception of employees into their definition of 'abusive leadership'. Bardes and Picollo (2010) support this perspective and emphasize that most concepts concentrate on negative behavior of leadership and their relationship with employees. Einarsen et al. (2007) call the systematic and repeated violation of organizational goals or the demotivation of subordinates "destructive leadership". They developed a model based on this definition that presents both the perspective of the employees and of the organization. It is illustrated that negative behavior by executives has negative effects on employees and organizational goals. It becomes clear that leadership, employees and organizational goals are linked to each other. Padilla et al. (2007) provide a comprehensive perspective by their model called 'toxic triangle'. This model embraces both destructive executives and destructive employees and also poor organizational framework conditions. Destructive executives distinguish themselves by charisma or negative experiences in their own lives. Employees either have low self-confidence and follow the executive, or they share the same negative value system as the executive and therefore reinforce the effects of negative leadership. Poor organizational framework conditions are found, for example, in bad economic framework conditions that lead to increased insecurity.

Higgs (2003) points out that the presented models also share certain commonalities. These commonalities are (1) the abuse of power to achieve personal goals or the hiding of personal shortcomings, (2) the concentration on the negative consequences for the subordinates, such as mobbing or coercion, (3) the exertion of strong control by the superior towards his subordinates, and by that a limited scope for creative activity for the subordinates, and (4) the application of corrupt or unethical rules for the achievement of personal advantages.

In light of the above it is demonstrated that the research area of negative leadership is characterized by numerous differing concepts, the focus being the characteristics of executives, as well as the effects on their employees.

Consequences of ineffective leadership

Derived from the three dimensions of the Toxic Triangle by Padilla et al. (2007), Table 9 now presents possible effects of destructive leadership and 'over-sensitive' employees, as well as poor organizational framework conditions.

Table 9: Effects of ineffective leadership on the superior, subordinate and the organization

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Effects on superior	Improved reputation and power (Schillig, 2007, Ferris et al., 2007) Trait anger (Hershcovis et al., 2007) Threatened egoism (Baumeister, Smart and Boden, 1996)
Effects on subordinate	Job and life dissatisfaction (Tepper, 2000), Psychological distress (Tepper et al., 2007), Deviant behavior (Mitchell and Ambrose 2007), Lower subordinate performance (Hariss et al., 2007) Lower expectation concerning career development and life development (Tepper, 2000)
Effects on organization	Fraudulent accounting (Carpenter and Reimers, 2005) Lower firm performance (Hnieleski and Ensley, 2007) Increase in absenteeism and health care costs (Tepper et al., 2007)

On the one hand, ineffective leadership can have destructive effects on the superior him- or herself. On the other hand, it can have impact on employees and organizational framework conditions. Destructive executives may improve their own reputation or their own position of power (Ferris, Zinko, Brouer, Buckley, & Harvey, 2007). Ferris et al. (2007) point out that destructive leadership does not acknowledge the power held by employees based on their task-specific knowledge and that they strengthen their own position of power beyond their actual position. An explanatory approach for this lack of appreciation of different perspectives can be found in syndromes, such as the borderline syndrome, or in a pronounced narcissistic personality (Higgs, 2009;Goldmann, 2006). The effects of destructive leadership on other persons can lie in a change regarding the qualitative and quantitative performance or the modified employee behavior regarding motivation, confidence, or identification with leadership (Ferris et al., 2007;Schillig, 2007). Higgs (2009) points out that there is a link between narcissistic executives, strategic company development and the number and size of company acquisitions. Furthermore, there is a link between narcissistic executives and the performance of the organization as well as employee turnover (Higgs, 2009). Long-term negative consequences can be found in the corporate culture, employee satisfaction, or the long-term development of the company (Aasland et al., 2008). The market research institute Gallup elaborated an index of commitment regarding the emotional attachment of German employees to their employer. According to their research in 2008, only 13% of all surveyed employees reported a strong emotional attachment to their company. According to Gallup, the cost, just from work absences accruing to the German economy amounts to 16.2 billion Euro each year Gallup (2008).

The effects of ineffective leadership from the employee perspective on the individual person could be lower motivation, lower self-confidence, satisfaction with leadership, or their own, increasing insecurity or lower self-confidence (Schillig, 2007). Effects regarding performance and rising stress are seen in the working relationship between leadership and employee (Ferris et al., 2007). Offermann (2004) explains that even those who are managed can become dangerous for leadership. If they point out risks and dangers for corporate development, employees can prevent wrong decisions. Executives featuring narcissistic behavior have a hard time accepting employee opinions and promote delegation (Offermann, 2004). Employees withdraw and do not express their points of view. Employees that observe simpler tasks in the firms, tend to perceive personality features such as hostility and negative emotions of executives more strongly (Schaubroeck, Walumba, Ganster, & Kepes, 2007). The effects of this enhanced

perception are, for example, depression, personal dissatisfaction or physical complaints. Thus, every fourth EU citizen gets depressed in their life, at least temporarily. One third of those affected undertakes a suicide attempt eventually. The effects at the organizational level include the development of key company economic figures, such as sales trends or sick rates, or a worsening of the framework conditions, such as work climate or free workspaces (Schillig, 2007). Employees whose superiors tend to be abusive in their personal relations, achieve higher sales volume, and have lower expectations regarding career development, life development, and corporate development as well as larger conflict between work and family life (Tepper, 2000). Executives whose personal views regarding anger are negatively skewed achieve lower team and work results, compared to those executives that hold more positive views (van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & Damen, 2009).

In view of the above, understanding the nature of ineffective leadership is crucial for the analysis of coping strategies on the individual level. Besides, contextual factors might play an important role how and when ineffective leadership takes place and how and when coping strategies unfold. Finally, focusing on executives only as the primary source of data collection seems insufficient. The perception of bad leadership and its effects by subordinates might provide interesting insights into this issue. Therefore we decided to collect data from individuals working at different hierarchical levels to provide a more comprehensive picture of ineffective leadership and coping strategies.

Coping strategies: An introduction
There exist various models which aim at classifying coping strategies used to overcome consequences of ineffective leadership. Table 10 presents an overview of some of the most prominent approaches and shows that there exist two-, three- and four-dimensional models, which will now be discussed shortly.

The two-dimensional model is the most common approach in research to classify coping strategies (Duhachek & Oakley, 2007). The model by Lazarus and Folkmann (1984) plays a central role. In their model they distinguish between problem-focused coping strategies that solve the problem at its origin, while emotional coping strategies are supposed to cushion the emotional effects. Three to four stage models show that problem-focused coping strategies can be found in all the other models. At the same time, emotional coping strategies are increasingly presented in a nuanced way, and context factors are included. A meta-analysis by Skinner et al. (2003) examined over 400 coping inventories and they conclude that coping strategies still do not have a unified conception. They criticize that the definition of the concept of coping is still vague, and that the various coping inventories cannot be compared, since they were developed in differing context situations. Skinner et al. (2003) state that the core problem with identifying the coping categories lies in the fact that specific behavior cannot be unambiguously linked to its origin. They propose the creation of a hierarchical structure of coping patterns. In this they distinguish between 'lower order categories', which concentrate on specific activities, while coping families are presented at a higher level. Overall it is obvious that the classification of coping strategies cannot take place in isolation from the subject area and the respective context. Developing a classification of individual coping strategies should be a particular research focus (Duhachek & Oakley, 2007). Coping with stress and burnout features have quite frequently been researched (e.g. Yip, Rowlinson, & Ling Siu, 2008; Lewin & Sager, 2008). In the field of leadership research, coping strategies are often investigated in connection with organizational changes, varying role expectations or job loss. Armstrong-Strassen (2006) researched how middle managers were dealing with organizational changes, and found various coping strategies, before and after the organizational changes. Mendenhall et al.

(2008) describe how managers deal with job loss. They ascertain that job loss was attributed to framework conditions such as globalization or the coping strategies used. Marginson/Bui (2009) conducted research on role conflict in middle management and found that high-performing managers use more comprehensive coping strategies, compared to managers with a lower performance.

However, less research has been conducted to investigate into coping strategies related to bad leadership. Instead, single aspects of the subject area are presented, executives being the main research focus.

Table 10: Models related to coping strategies according to Skinner et al. (2003, p. 221)

	developed by	description of dimensions
two dimensional model	*Lazarus and Folman (1984)*	Problem-Focused: Coping aimed at managing the problem causing the stress Emotion-focused: Coping aimed at regulating emotional responses to the stress
	Krohne (1993)	Approach: Cognitive and emotional activity oriented toward the source of stress Avoidance: Cognitive and emotional activity oriented away from the source of stress
	Bradstadter & Renner (1990)	Assimilation: Transforming circumstances in accordance with preferences Helplessness: Adjusting personal preferences to situational constraints
three dimensional model	*Heckhausen & Schulz (1995)*	Primary control: Effort to influence objective events Secondary control: Efforts to maximize ones fit with the current situation Relinquishment of control: Forfeiture of control
	Skinner, Edge, Altmann & Sherwood (2003)	Autonomy: Coping efforts directed at coordinating actions directly within the environment Competence: Coping efforts directed at coordinating ones own preferences, flexibility adjusting preferences to match available options and situational constraints Others: Coping efforts that coordinate individuals reliance on others with the social resources available in the environments
four dimensional model	*Carver, Scheier & Weintraub (1989)*	Problem- focused: Coping aimed at directly changing the stressful condition Distraction: Coping aimed at avoiding the stressor by engaging in alternate activities Avoidant: Coping aimed at avoiding the stressor by physically or mentally distancing oneself Support: Seeking instrumental aid or emotional comfort from others

Methodology

In order to investigate into coping strategies a qualitative research design was selected. Regarding data collection and data analysis we followed major principles of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The following sections will outline the data collection and analysis in greater detail.

Data collection: Narrative interviews and theoretical sampling

The presented findings in this paper refer to 20 narrative interviews conducted with employees (n = 12), middle managers (n = 5) and top-managers (n = 3) in companies located in Germany. The process was primarily driven by theoretical sampling as commonly proposed for exploratory qualitative studies (Boeije, 2002, p. 393; Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 537; Flick, 2002, pp. 64-66; Lueger, 2000, pp. 80-81; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, pp. 201-215). In addition, interviewees were asked to provide names of potential future interview partners at the end of each interview to facilitate access to the field.

Narrative interviews are particularly useful if the object under investigation is less researched or if the context and the phenomenon of interest are strongly interrelated. This is the case for coping strategies, which might depend on certain characteristics of superiors, different leadership styles and the various situations in which ineffective leadership might unfold. With the help of narrative interviews it is possible to capture these influential factors without influencing the interviewee, i.e. avoid interviewer bias.

Data analysis: Open, axial and selective coding

Data was analyzed following the coding techniques suggested by Strauss & Corbin (1998): (1) open coding (p. 101), (2) axial coding (p. 123), and (3) selective coding (p. 143). The process of coding transcripts was supported by the computer software Atlas.ti V.6. in order to facilitate the management of transcripts (20), developed codes (396) and coded quotes (3148). Besides, Atlas.ti V.6. allows for several advanced analytical procedures, such as the co-occurrence analysis. The co-occurrence analysis explores qualitative data through quantitative methods by analyzing, which codes were assigned to the same quote and might, therefore, be related to each other. It has to be mentioned, that the co-occurrence analysis cannot substitute the qualitative content analysis as it depends on a proper coding procedure. However, it helps to systematically screen large amounts of coded qualitative data.

Ineffective leadership and its consequences: Empirical results

Before we can discuss how individuals cope with ineffective leadership it is necessary to explain how interviewees described 'bad' leadership. Table 11 illustrates those codes that where most frequently assigned to quotes related to ineffective behavior of superiors and describes common patterns of behavior perceived as ineffective leadership.

Table 11: Codes assigned to ineffective leadership (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
ineffective leadership	missing leadership competence	107
	characteristics of superior	79
	weak communication capabilities of superior	29
	lack of appraisal by superior	28
	missing professional competence	34
	spineless behavior of superior	26
	lack of planning	18
	lack of reflective power of superior	13
	lack of trust of superior	13
	lack of mutual trust between superior and	8

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	subordinate	
	technical incorrect decision	6
	arrogance of superior	3
	lack of direct communication	1
	superior feels deflated in his/her role as a leader	1
	TOTAL	*366*

Most frequently 'missing leadership competence' and 'characteristics of superior' were mentioned by the interview partners. Quite often 'ineffective leadership' was not necessarily seen only as lack of professional competencies (34 quotes), but of soft skills, such as 'weak communication capabilities of superiors', 'lack of appraisal by superior', etc. Moreover, lack of trust into one's subordinates is also a typical symptom of ineffective leadership. The following quotes provide examples of interview situations which stress this issue:

P4: '[…] and the negligence of the human part [in leading individuals] lead to an extremely bad work climate or motivation of employees.'

P6: 'That you are able to express what you want. This is very important, to be able to do that as a superior.'

P7 [about a superior]: '[he was] also very much monitoring us and trusted no one.'

P8: 'The upshot was that the colleague was offered a prolongation of his contract, although he actually didn't wanted to do the job as it was. They did not ask me. And this was the decisive event when I said: 'This is a typical wrong decision.' Superiors did not listen or care about their subordinates at all.'

Besides certain patterns of perceived negative behavior, due to a lack of competences and capabilities, several characteristics of superiors were mentioned, which commonly describe 'ineffective leaders':

P4: 'In addition, he [i.e. the superior] was a very self-confident person, and therefore appeared arrogant or pride and, of course, also as a human being, was a difficult person. The combination of technical incompetence or deficit and pride, arrogance, showing-off […] is difficult to cope with.'

P6: 'He also was characterized by something which, to me, is the worst, that he was choleric. That you shout at people only because you got up on the wrong side. That is a no-go.'

P7: '[the superior] shaped the following saying: 'Only under pressure you can create diamonds from coals.' He said that in front of the whole team. He also introduced many young people, including me and once said […]: 'These old ones [i.e. employees] who are left, they simply did not find anything better [i.e. another job].' He was acting like an ass-hole.'

These quotes suggest certain traits that predict ineffective leadership, thus stands in line with trait-based leadership research (for an overview see Bass et al. 1990), which argues

that personality traits correlate with leadership styles and therefore with certain patterns of behavior.

Table 12 provides the ten most frequently mentioned consequences of ineffective leadership. In particular 'frustration' and a 'worse collaboration' due to misbehavior of superiors led to the emerging coping strategies described in the following section of this paper.

Table 12: Most frequently assigned codes related to consequences of ineffective leadership (n = 3148 quotes)

codes	# of quotes
worse collaboration	141
frustration	120
lack of acceptance of superior	91
lower motivation	76
high psychological stress	72
emotionally shocked	66
mistrust	63
feeling of desperation	62
ineffective working	48
lower self-esteem	26
employees leave the company	26

The following quotes provide some examples of how interviewees described the consequences of ineffective leadership:

> P4: 'Frustration, due to the fact that not the best argument counted, but authority. […] And the level of frustration increased steadily in the course of time, because small things started to become bigger. That is logical. It [i.e. this frustration] increased step by step. The more situations there were [i.e. of ineffective leadership].'

> P7: 'Frustration, completely. I started to look for another job. I said: 'I do no longer want that. I will not collaborate.'

> P8: 'Stress. For me it was pure stress. I noticed that in the afternoons and at night.'

> P11: 'I also wasn't a happy person in my private life any longer. Also together with my fellow men I wasn't that happy anymore.'

The following section will, irrespective of the causes of ineffective leadership, provide an overview of seven identified coping strategies, which were mentioned by most interviewees.

Coping strategies: results form 20 interviews

In this section of the paper we will present the seven major coping strategies identified in the data: (1) coping through learning, (2) coping through resistance, (3) coping through communication (4) coping through comparison, (5) coping through adaptation, (6) coping through isolation, (7) coping through distraction. Furthermore, we will discuss how these strategies are related to consequences of ineffective leadership and to each other.

Coping through learning

The most frequently mentioned coping strategy refers to learning processes. Individuals try to understand why superiors behave in a certain way and aim at resolving the problem, which causes psychological stress and develop 'alternative behavioral strategies' to reduce tension between them and their superior in the future. Thus, subordinates learn how to adjust their behavior to their superior. This coping strategy is similar to 'coping through adaptation', however, the latter does not necessarily include a sensemaking/learning process. Table 13 shows those codes, which were assigned to 'coping through learning (CF)'.

Table 13: Codes assigned to 'coping through learning (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping though learning (CF)	reflection	121
	problem solving	50
	developing alternative behavioral strategies	35
	learning	27
	TOTAL	*233*

The following quotes provide examples and perceptions of 'coping through learning (CF)':

P2: 'I was intensively thinking about ways to change the situation. I even made myself a plan, a tactic. I thought about how to cope with it [i.e. ineffective leadership].'

P6: 'I realized that if I react immediately to it [i.e. ineffective leadership], than I behave rather emotionally to it, which made it even worse. This I did two or three times at the beginning of my professional career. And then I realized that this doesn't work.'

P7: 'And then there was another situation and I have to say I learned a lot out of it. Nevertheless it really sucked.'

P9: 'I am thinking about it quite a long time. I am thinking about what I could do better next time. Sometimes I am also writing it down.'

In light of these quotes, 'coping through learning (CF)' results in strategically adjusted behavior of subordinates to meet requirements of the organization dand the superior alike. In contrast to 'coping through adaptation (CF)' (see below), individuals who pursue a learning strategy more systematically analyze the situation and prepare for future encounters with their superior.

As Figure 1 shows, this coping strategy particularly has been mentioned by interviewees in connection with emotional shocks, frustration and high psychological stress. In light of these findings there seems to be a trend toward coping through learning if emotions take over. The values in brackets refer to the proportion of co-occurring quotes to total quotes of a code related to ineffective leadership, e.g. 15% of all quotes that have been assigned to 'emotionally shocked' are co-occurring with 'coping through learning (CF)'.

Figure 1: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through learning (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)

Coping through resistance
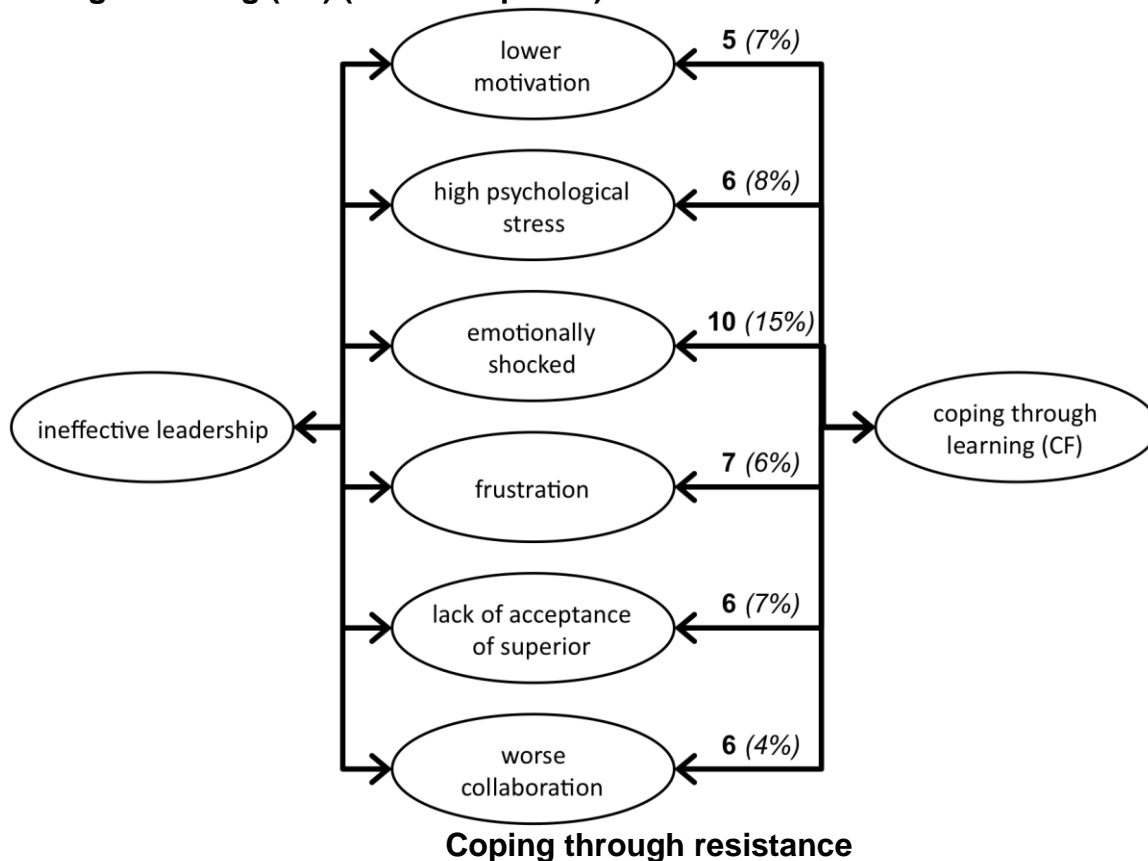
All 20 interview partners referred at least once to 'coping through resistance (CF)'. This kind of strategy evolves if subordinates feel very unfairly treated and if their respect for their superior is rather small. Coping through resistance often implies that individuals behave in ways opposed to what they are told. A similar strategy is often found in times of change, were individuals actively, but often subversively react to undesired changes imposed on them, e.g. people's twist in the context of M&As (Dauber, 2011). Table 14 shows which codes were assigned to this coping strategy.

Table 14: Codes assigned to 'coping through resistance (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping through resistance (CF)	rejection	116
	contradiction	50
	confrontation	32
	circumvention of supervisor	17
	manipulation of supervisor	4

TOTAL	219

Interviewees reported about this strategy in the following way:

P1: 'If I do not respect a person, I have a coping strategy by saying: 'Ok, anyway he doesn't know anything.' So it is rejection as a coping strategy.

P2: 'I did not change my opinion. Although he [i.e. superior] said I should ask the other colleagues, I simply did not do so, because it seem silly to me. And I simply did what I thought is correct, and sold it as the general opinion [to others]. It did not matter, [the superior] did not have an opinion anyway.'

P4: 'But he [i.e. the superior] was very open and it was easy to get him in the direction you wanted.'

P7: 'My boss was of the opposite opinion than me: 'It is necessary to involve them and them and them [i.e. people from different projects].' From this perspective he is a good politician, because he always involves everyone. He is asking this person and this person and this person. And I am rather like: 'We simply do it right now.' And I was against it [i.e. the opinion of the superior] and said: 'No. I am not doing that. That's it. Basta. You can jump on your head, but I won't do it.' [superior answers:] 'But this and this and this.' [P7 repeats:] 'No. I am not doing it.' And then we discussed it during lunch. And then I continued in this manner in front of our team, this happened by accident, until he said: 'Yes, but you have one problem.' 'Which one?' 'I am your boss.' This was his final argument. And then I said: 'Yes, this is a bad thing for me.' And he said: 'Yes, but a really bad one.' Finally, he gave in that I was right, but his only argument left was: 'I am your boss. Therefore do what I want.''

This strategy often worsens the relationship between superior and subordinate and might even result in dismissals. Also Figure 2 illustrates that this rather aggressive strategy often has been mentioned together with no acceptance of their superior, frustration and even mistrust. Due to the fact that this strategy worsens the collaboration between subordinate and superior even more over time, a higher fluctuation of employees was reported by interviewees.

Figure 2: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through resistance (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)

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Cometences and Capabilities

Coping through communication
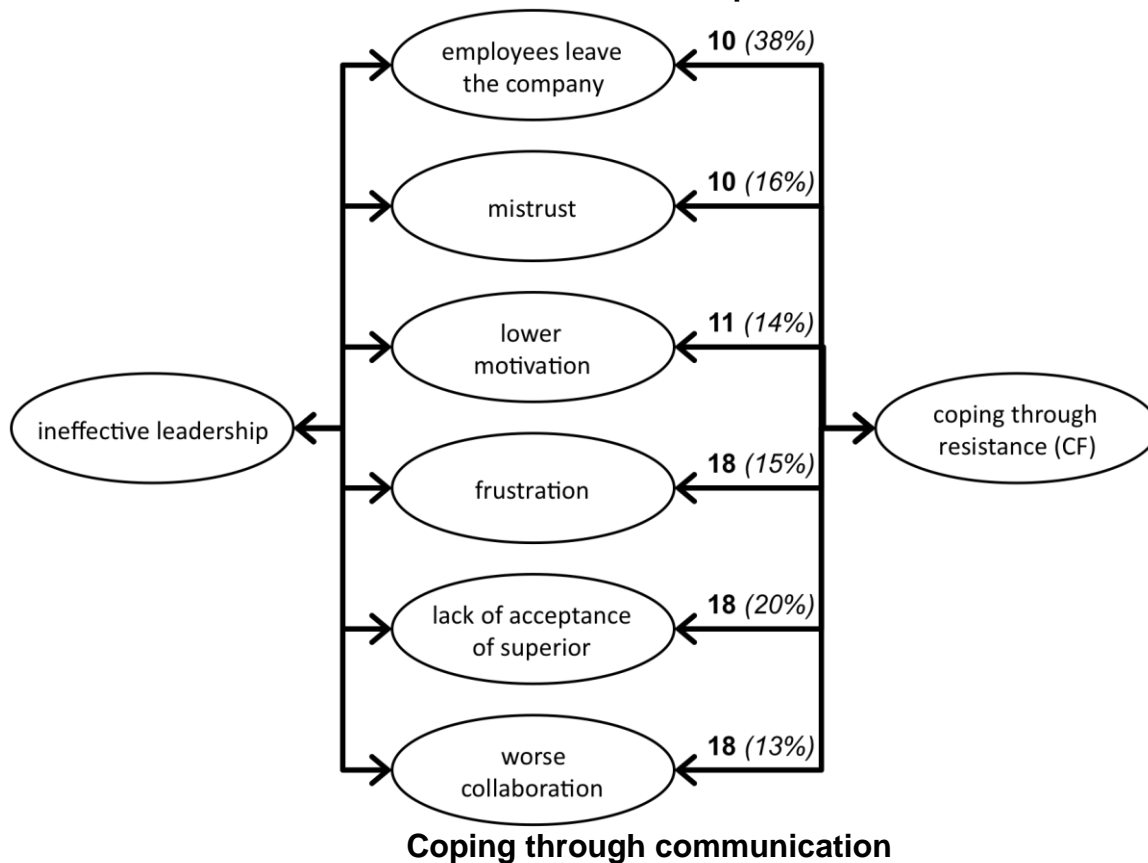
Another coping strategy refers to communication, i.e. individuals see the necessity to talk about their bad experiences with ineffective leadership in order to relieve psychological stress. Table 15 illustrates the different facets of communication related to the coping strategy 'coping through communication (CF)'.

Table 15: Codes assigned to 'coping through communication (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping through communication (CF)	intense communication	75
	communication with colleagues	36
	rational argumentation based on technical knowledge	20
	emotional communication	18
	communication with partner	17
	communication with good friends	13
	communication with parents	7
	negative communication among colleagues	1
	TOTAL	*187*

While some individuals prefer to talk to partners, good friends or parents who are not working in the same company, most of the interviewees (65%) stress that 'communication with colleagues' is crucial for them to calm down and emotionally detach themselves from stressful situations. The following exemplary quotes support this:

P6: 'And directly after this situation I had to let of steam somewhere. […] And very often at a person of trust in my working environment.

P12 [a superior]: 'Well, I think they [i.e. subordinates] are talking among them about their problems.'

P15: 'I actually tried to cope with that [i.e. ineffective leadership] at home. So, I talked a lot with my friend, who has now become my husband, about it. I also talked a lot about it with my father.'

Figure 3 graphically visualizes the relationships between 'coping through communication (CF)' and different consequences of ineffective leadership. Particularly if ineffective leadership leads to frustration and mistrust, coping through communication seems of considerable importance. In contrast to coping through resistance, this strategy does not imply that individuals leave the organization due to ineffective leadership.

Figure 3: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through communication (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)
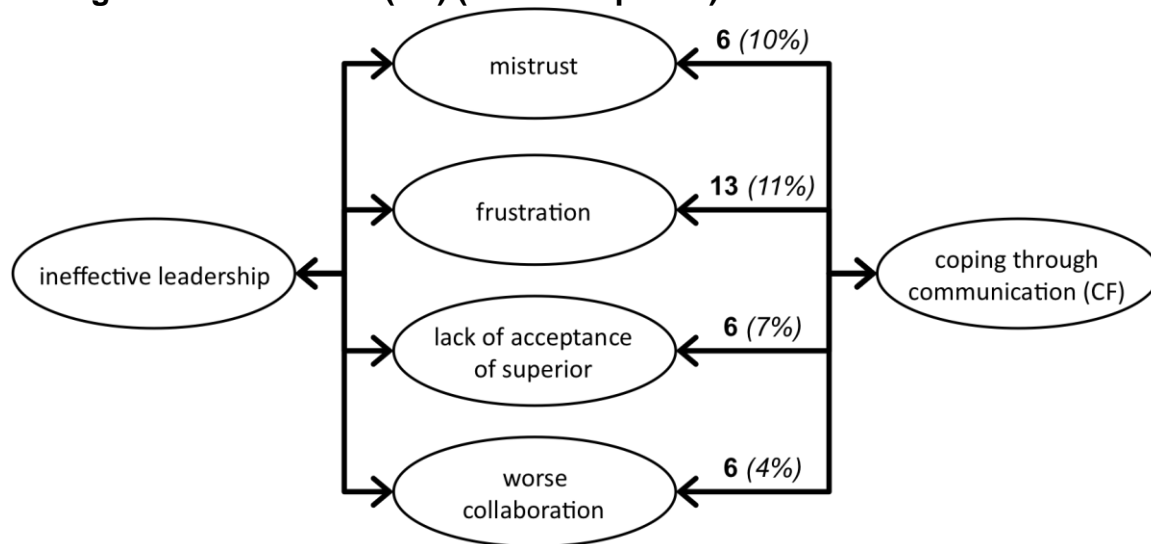
Coping through comparison

Several interviewees (95%) mentioned that comparison with other colleagues, supervisors or the past can help to better cope with the present (see also Table 16). In particular, if the present situation for subordinates has improved, it is much easier to cope with 'less impactful' ineffective leadership.

Table 16: Codes assigned to 'coping through comparison (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping through comparison	coping through comparison with the past	51
	coping through comparison with other colleagues	47
	coping through comparison with other supervisors	44
	TOTAL	*142*

The following quotes illustrate this phenomenon:

P1: 'Because, when comparing with others – there were six other trainees – I saw that it was the same for them [with respect to ineffective leadership].'

P7: 'But to a large extent it is resignation. I see that also among my colleagues.'

P8: 'There are also some people where I would say: 'For me these are not real superiors'. […] I cannot only talk about my boss, I also know in our company about other experiences of other colleagues and how other superiors behave.'

P7: 'Something I liked about my boss [in the former company is] that you are challenged and excessive demand. This you cannot find here.'

However, if the leadership style of the current supervisor is considerably worse than of others, or employees in other organizations experience a better relationship with their boss, individuals suffering from ineffective leadership might leave the organization after evaluating their options through comparison. In 27% of times were interviewees referred to the fact that employees left the organization, they also mentioned 'coping through comparison (CF)'.

Figure 4: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through comparison (CF) (n = 3148
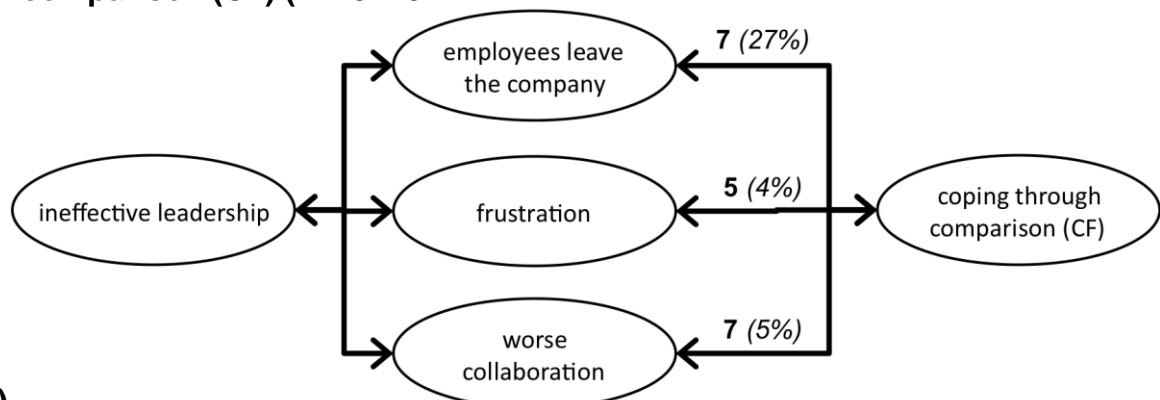
quotes)

Coping through adaptation

Simply accepting the things as they are and adapting to them seems to be another strategy to deal with ineffective leadership. Codes assigned to quotes of interviewees related to 'coping through adaptation (CF)' are is shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Codes assigned to 'coping through adaptation (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping through adaptation	coping through acceptance	119
	coping through adaptation	33
	TOTAL	*152*

The following quotes illustrate this coping strategy:
P12: 'I do not care about the way [my superior leads us]. As said before, you need to take it as it comes. The senior manager is rather the silent one, is

looking at everything in patience and then decides. And the junior manager is a little bit more agile, also quickly drives into something, just to stop him later on again. But the way they lead, I do not have many problems with. As I said, you simply need to adjust a little bit.'

P1: 'At a certain point it was a silent agreement of a peaceful togetherness through not wanting anything from each other, but simply wait until the time is over [and you can retire].'

P3: 'Well, I did not resist during the daily business. But I simply said: 'Ok.''

P4: 'Of course, I had the consequences in mind, the situation, the reaction, the fact that arguments are not of much importance. That not the best argument is important, but what complied to the wishes of Dr. XY [a superior].'

As these quotes already imply, individuals who accept or adapt to the ineffective leadership also resign and abstain from trying to change the situation. This is one of the fundamental differences to 'coping through learning':

P8: ' So, this means that I stopped thinking about it [i.e. ineffective leadership]. Over time working days and daily business help to suppress such thoughts and you simply do not think about it anymore.'

P4: 'And simply being reserved and never provide arguments in an extravert manner, but thought: 'Ok, how would you do it?' But I did not say a word aloud. On the outside I smiled, but inside me I felt sorry for this person […]. I did not take the person serious anymore.'

According to Figure 5, employees frequently referred to this strategy when talking about frustration and stopped trusting into their superior. The co-occurrence analysis reveals a similar result as for 'coping through communication (CF)'. Due to the fact that individuals start to adapt to the new situation, they are less likely leaving the organization. Nevertheless, the collaboration between subordinate and superior is worse than in case of 'effective'/'positive' leadership behavior.

Figure 5: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through adaptation (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)

Coping through isolation
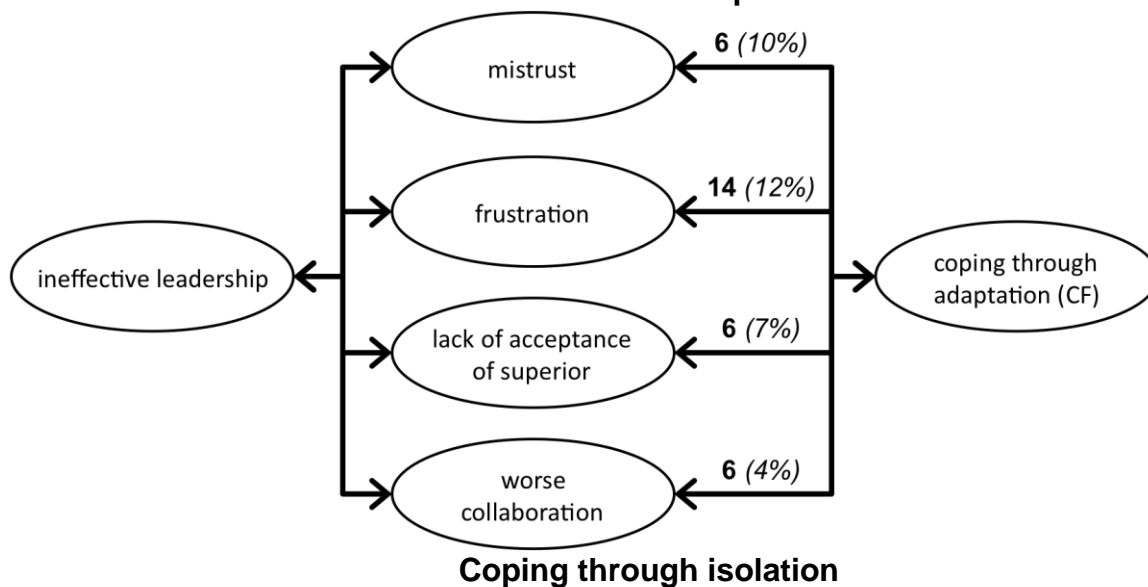
Almost all interviewees (95%) mentioned 'coping through isolation' as a frequently applied strategy. 'Isolation' in this context refers to separating oneself either emotionally or physically from the superior. The different facets of this strategy are listed in Table 18.

Table 18: Codes assigned to 'coping through isolation (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping through isolation	emotional distance	50
	change of occupation	37
	reducing contact with supervisor	20
	isolation of supervisor	15
	change in job	5
	geographic distance	2
	contact avoidance with supervisor	1
	TOTAL	*130*

Sample quotes related to coping through isolation include:
 P2: 'So, I did not talk about it with him anymore.'

 P12: 'At the moment, I am still quite relaxed. Also due to the [emotional] distance. Because you simply need to wait and see what will change.'

With respect to physical distance, most often people indicated that they left the organization, which seems to be the ultimate step taken by subordinates:

 P6: 'I left the company. Interestingly he [i.e. the superior] still did not want me to go. Four hours long he tried to persuade me. [It was] Psycho terror. It was interesting. [later in the interview] and this was actually the reason for me: 'Well, then I cannot stay any longer'. Because I am not only someone who simply does what he is told. Although my position , which I actually filled, would have required that I make decisions. But I was not allowed to do so. I was also not allowed to ask him [i.e. the superior]. Ok, and therefore 90% was wrong anyway. This was a situation where I said: 'No, this cannot be.''

> *P7: And it really exploded in our department. Eight people left the organization on the same day. And in the meantime the whole department had been replaced.'*

Considering the facets of 'coping through isolation (CF)', it becomes clear that most co-occurrences can be found with 'employees leave the company'. Figure 6 further reveals that this coping strategy mainly unfolds if subordinates do not accept their superior. This coping strategy is similarly related to consequences of ineffective leadership as 'coping through resistance (CF)'.

Figure 6: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through isolation (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)
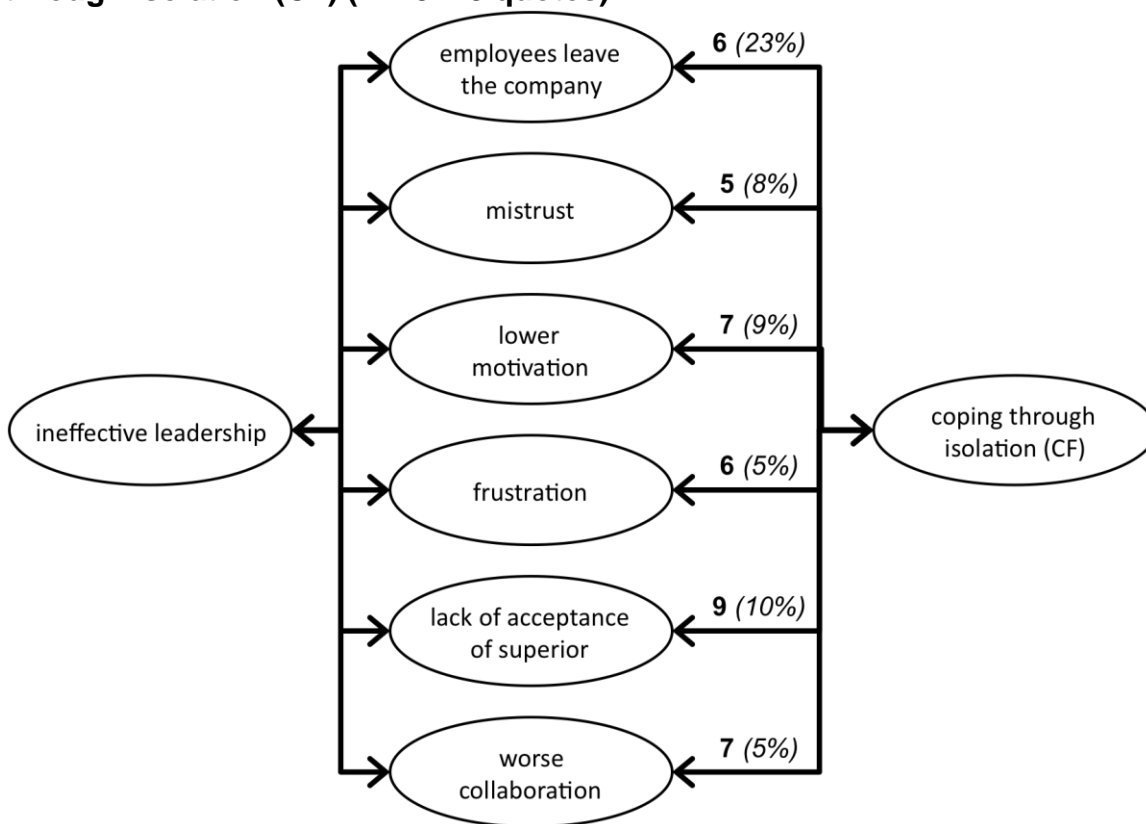
Coping through distraction

Quite a lot of interviewees (85%) referred to 'coping through distraction (CF)', i.e. individuals engage in activities that are neither related to their job nor to their supervisor and helps them to take their minds off and, at least for a short period of time, forget about their negative experiences. Table 19 shows different approaches to distraction. However, some of these might cause acute or chronic illnesses, e.g. 'alcohol' or 'additional eating' and therefore seem less effective for the individual pursuing such a strategy.

Table 19: Codes assigned to 'coping through distraction (CF)' (n = 3148 quotes)

	assigned codes	#of quotes
coping through distraction	sport	25
	compensation	19

	hobbies	15
	self-deception	14
	escape into private life	11
	hope	5
	suppression	5
	alcohol	3
	additional eating	1
	TOTAL	*98*

The following quotes provide further details:

P1: 'Life always consists of different facets. And if it is not working well in one of them I tried, with the several people I have contact with, to see the positive aspects of it. […] I would say, I try a lot to find compensation through my private life.'

P3: 'And then I really escaped. I also was four or five times a week on the sports campus after work. […] Yes, if it got to the extremes I always tried to compensate through sports or walking the dog in the forest.'

P4: 'I drank two to three beers to come to terms with it [i.e. ineffective leadership].'

P6: 'And as there were many of these [situations of ineffective leadership], in particular the last six years, I needed relatively much compensation. The best way is: I like to do sports. This really helps.'

P8: 'Trying to find distraction by […] doing sports, in order to sleep well.'

P11: 'Coffee. Coffee and sweets.'

Due to the fact that this strategy was only few times mentioned by interviewees less co-occurrences were identified. The most important relationship of 'coping through distraction (CF)' was found with 'worse collaboration'. Based on the collected data, this strategy seems to be of least importance, however has several different manifestations as shown in Table 19.

Figure 7: Relationship of consequences of ineffective leadership and coping through distraction (CF) (n = 3148 quotes)
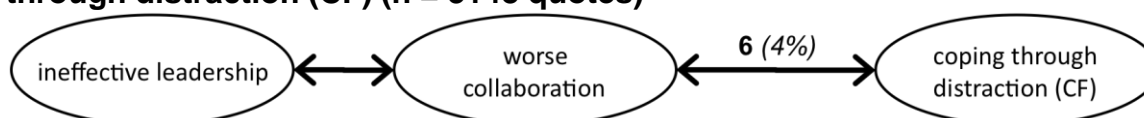
Relationships among coping strategies

As was shown in the former sections of this paper, seven different coping strategies were identified which are considerably related to certain consequences of ineffective leadership. However, no empirical evidence was found that individuals pursue only one of these strategies at a time. In contrast, a co-occurrence analysis reveals that coping strategies (based on different codes!) are remarkably related to each other (see Table 20). The values in brackets refer to the proportion of co-occurring quotes to the total number of quotes of both codes considered in the co-occurrence analysis. This controls for the different number of quotes assigned to each code. Except of 'coping through comparison'

and 'coping through distraction', all coping strategies are, in total, strongly co-occurring with other strategies (about 40%). Thus, our interview partners often referred to several coping strategies when talking about incidents of ineffective leadership.

Table 20: Relationship between coping strategies (n = 3148)

	coping through adaptation	coping through communication	coping through comparison	coping through distraction	coping through isolation	coping through learning	coping through resistance
coping through adaptation		13 (4%)	6 (2%)	15 (7%)	27 (11%)	30 (9%)	24 (7%)
coping through communication	13 (4%)		10 (3%)	10 (3%)	19 (6%)	60 (15%)	50 (13%)
coping through comparison	6 (2%)	10 (3%)		2 (1%)	2 (1%)	15 (4%)	3 (1%)
coping through distraction	15 (7%)	10 (3%)	2 (1%)		11 (5%)	7 (2%)	3 (1%)
coping through isolation	27 (11%)	19 (6%)	2 (1%)	11 (5%)		17 (5%)	31 (10%)
coping through learning	30 (9%)	60 (15%)	15 (4%)	7 (2%)	17 (5%)		29 (7%)
coping through resistance	24 (7%)	50 (13%)	3 (1%)	3 (1%)	31 (10%)	29 (7%)	
TOTAL	**115 (40%)**	**162 (44%)**	**38 (12%)**	**48 (20%)**	**107 (37%)**	**158 (42%)**	**140 (39%)**
% in brackets = # of co-occurring quotes between code 1 and 2 / (# of quotes of code 1 + # of quotes of code 2 - # of co-occurring quotes between code 1 and 2)							

Limitations and conclusions

This paper provided first empirical results related to coping strategies pursued by individuals who suffer from ineffective leadership in Germany. Based on the screened data, it was possible to identify seven different coping strategies: (1) coping through learning, (2) coping through resistance, (3) coping through communication (4) coping through comparison, (5) coping through adaptation, (6) coping through isolation, and (7) coping through distraction.

So far the following conclusions can been drawn from this analysis: (1) Individuals develop patterns of behavior to deal with inappropriate treatment by their superiors. However, not all coping strategies seem to be of equal helpfulness. Strategies, such as 'coping through resistance, 'coping through isolation' and 'coping through distraction' might be useful for a shorter period of time, but less meaningful in the long-run. Such strategies might not reduce the tension between subordinate and superior, or even resolve the underlying problems. The analyzed data does not provide any insights on how efficient certain coping strategies are for individuals suffering from ineffective leadership. To the interviewees all of them seemed reasonable. (2) Several coping strategies might be pursued at a time, thus making it more complex to analyze the consequences of them on subordinates, superiors and the organization as a whole. Future research might address this issue and develop certain common sets of combined coping strategies and analyze which of them turned out to be most successful.

Similar to the results presented in the literature review, consequences of ineffective leadership were most frequently described as 'frustration', 'worse collaboration', 'no acceptance of superior', 'high psychological stress', etc. These 20 interviews also show that ineffective leadership is still of relevance in practice and might account for many dissatisfied and unmotivated employees. More research will be necessary to fully understand the mechanism between ineffective leadership, consequences of ineffective leadership and the impact of coping strategies, e.g. those presented in this paper. The presented co-occurrence analyses show that not all coping strategies are related to all consequences of ineffective leadership.

While many studies in the past covered ineffective leadership, only few of them systemically explored coping strategies of individuals related to this issue. Although only German-citizens were interviewed, the findings of this study might also prove true in other contexts. Cultural differences might influence how 'ineffective leadership' is defined and perceived by employees or managers. The consequences of 'bad' leadership, however, may remain the same and lead to similar coping strategies.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that coping strategies help individuals only to alleviate negative consequences of ineffective leadership. The presented coping strategies do not lead to similar individual performance-outcomes as in contexts where 'effective' leadership styles prevail. Thus, ineffective leadership will always worsen the collaboration and motivation of subordinates until they leave the organization or the superior gets replaced.

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THE EFFECTS OF AGE, ETHNIC AND GENDER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CUSTOMERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS ON SERVICE QUALITY

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ABSTRACT

Given the fast pace of globalisation and the ever increasing rate of immigration, it became crucial for service providers to consider the impact of customers' cultural characteristics on service interactions. In addition, given the high mobility of populations in urban areas, service providers find themselves serving customers who different from them on key demographic aspects. Basing our thinking on Social Identity Theory and the Similarity Attraction concepts, we suggest that demographic diversity along the lines of the core characteristics of gender, age and ethnicity may lead to lower service quality and lower customer satisfaction. We tested these propositions in four Dublin stores of a large multinational supermarket chain. Using a combination of service interaction observations and customer surveys we found that diversity played a significant role in affecting both observed service quality as well as reported customer satisfaction. Age diversity (or differences) had the strongest and most consistent relationship to service quality. Across all three service measures, observed quality, rated efficiency and rated courtesy, age dissimilarity between cashier and customer resulted in lower service satisfaction and quality. Gender diversity was related to lower observed quality as well as lower reported courtesy while ethnic diversity was related only to lower observed service quality. We discuss the importance of these findings for retail stores as well as possible means to reduce these undesirable effects.
Keywords: Diversity, gender, age, ethnicity, customer satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Economists have observed that, in developed economies, there is a steady increase of the share that the Service Sector (also known as the tertiary sector of the economy) holds in nations GDP, at the expense of the shrinking share of the Primary Sector (agriculture, fishing, mining) and the Secondary Sector (manufacturing). For example, Services were responsible for 73.2% of the nominal GDP in the EU, 76.7% in the US and 75.9% in Japan though only for 43.6% in China and 55.3% in India (IMF, 2011). With this steady increase in the economic importance of services and the fierce competition in this industry, customer satisfaction has become a crucial factor in companies' economic success and competitiveness. The importance of customers' satisfaction with the service they receive is indeed very important in retailing and, specifically, supermarkets, which is the part of the services industry our study is focused on.

With the realisation that sales and, less directly, profits, are related to customer satisfaction, retail chains have increasingly invested more resources in ensuring customer service quality (e.g., Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Sivadas & Baker-Prewitt, 2000). Indeed, the ultimate goal of a service provider is to retain customers, which is less expensive than attracting new customer (Warden, Liu, Huang & Lee, 2003). Specifically, our core interest lies in studying the impact of buyer-seller interactions on customer satisfaction.

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Customer dissatisfaction arises when expectations of service are not met; and when expectations are surpassed, the result is satisfaction (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) refer to this difference between adequate service and perceived service as measure of service adequacy. More serious service failures will have increasingly negative service adequacy scores and make it difficult for a customer to trust the service provider (Warden, Liu, Huang & Lee, 2003). Trust is valuable to service providers because it reduces transaction costs and plays a crucial role in a business even being considered as an option when a consumer searches for alternatives (Doney & Cannon, 1997).

Building long-term relationships with customers is considered an essential precondition for the economic survival and success of most service firms today (Berry, 1995). This crucial role of customer retention stems from the increasing costs of acquiring new customers in highly competitive markets and the cost-reducing potential associated with long-term relationships (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). So it is assumed in this paper that service quality bears the potential significantly to influence a service firm's retention rate and therefore the firm's economic success.

The impact of service quality on customer retention is mediated through customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is defined as an "overall evaluation of a firm's products or services (Anderson, Fornell & Rust, 1997). In the marketing literature, satisfaction has been established as a major antecedent of customer retention (Szymanski & Henard, 2001). In the context of relationship marketing, satisfaction is conceptualised as an element of the relationship quality concept (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997).

Inter-personal interactions are a common and frequent element in the service provision process. These exchanges are commonly referred to as a 'service encounter' and can be described as "a period of time during which a consumer directly interacts with a service" (Shostak, 1985, p. 243). These encounters are opposed to service relationships since they are of limited temporally and do not necessarily involve past or future exchanges between the two specific persons. Service encounters can occur face to face or be mediated by an electronic communication medium (e.g., telephone, internet). Our interest here lies in face to face encounters.

The "*form of human interaction*" (Czepiel, Soloman & Surprenant, 1985) is a key part of the overall service product and essential to customers' perception of service quality. Service quality can be described in terms of seven perceived criteria (Grönroos, 2000):

- professionalism and skills;
- attitudes and behaviour;
- accessibility and flexibility;
- reliability and trustworthiness;
- service recovery;
- serviscape; and
- reputation credibility

Past research indicated that service encounter experiences with the sales person influences customers' satisfaction with the purchase. In the context of service quality research, it has been demonstrated that the behaviour of service employees affects the customers' expectation of the service (Britner, Booms & Tetreault, 1990). Generally, customer-oriented selling approach was found to relate to customer satisfaction (Goff et al., 1997; Kelley, 1992). Specifically, researchers have identified employee-related aspects of the service as dimensions of the customer's service quality assessment. For example, three out of five service quality dimensions of Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry's (1988) SERVQUAL measure directly or indirectly address the behaviour of employees, i.e. responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Similarly, Dabholkar, Sheperd & Thorpe (2000)

identify personal attention and comfort as provided by a provider's employees as components of service quality.

However, one area where research is lacking is the effect of diversity on customer satisfaction. More specifically, we believe that differences in core demographic characteristics such as age gender and ethnicity (also known as 'surface diversity') between shop customers and selling personnel would affect customer's satisfaction. While a substantial body of knowledge has accumulated during the past two decades on the effects of demographic diversity for both group-level as well as organizational-level phenomena such as in group processes and team performance, very little research examined the effects of buyer-seller dyadic diversity on customer satisfaction. Our study aims to address this gap by examining the effects of core demographic similarities on the quality of service given by a large retail store to their customers in Dublin, Ireland. In the reminder of the introduction part we will review existent literature, provide theoretical background and, subsequently, propose our hypotheses.

As indicated above, surprisingly little research exists on the effects of diversity in customers-service providers' populations and observed or perceived quality of customer service. In fact, we could identify only three published papers that empirically examined this issue. All three studies used interviews with a general pool of customers to obtain data. Thus, in these three studies, interview questions referred to a general time-frame and experience, that is, interviews did not address customers' immediate experiences with specific service providers.

In the first and most relevant of these studies, Barker and Hartel (2004) focused specifically on the dyadic intercultural service encounter, using semi-structured interviews conducted in Queensland, Australia with customers who did not look Anglo-Saxon / Celtic. They found that ethnic minorities reported that they were talked to more slowly and loudly and that they experienced this behaviour as offensive. Interviewees also reported that they experienced lack of trust displayed toward them by service providers. Other reported experiences included avoidance and overall lack of effort by service providers. Several interviewees reported feelings of shame and embarrassment were reported as a consequence. While these interviewed minority customers experienced lower customer satisfaction, their reactions ranged from passive coping to avoidance of frequenting this business again to active voice reactions such as lodging a complaint.

The second study, by Stauss and Mang (1999), is considerably less informative due to limitations in design and analytic framework used. The authors set to investigate whether cultural differences between customers and airline staff would lead to higher level of negative experiences when the cultural distance is larger. To test their hypotheses, they carried out a critical incidence based study among Japanese, US and German passengers of a German airline. Contrary to their expectations, they found that passengers reported higher percentage of negative service encounters in intra-cultural than in inter-cultural situations. Unfortunately, the analyses did not allow for any firm conclusions to be drawn.

Lastly, building on Stauss and Mang (1999) study, Sharma, Tam and Kim (2009) also conducted an interview-based study to test a model of intercultural service encounters. Their study took place in Hong Kong and participants were 25 customers and 25 service employees from various nationalities. The authors concluded that the interview data supports their propositions that larger Perceived Cultural Distance relates negatively to interaction comfort and, subsequently, leads to lower customer satisfaction. Again, the nature of the method used does not allow drawing solid conclusions, let alone to support a model wit moderators and mediators.

Interestingly, a study of Sacco & Schmitt (2005) that focused on impact of US quick-service restaurants' employees racial diversity also hypothesised that racial similarity

between restaurant employees' composition and that of the community in which they are located would relate to higher profits of that unit. However, they failed to support this hypothesis as they found no relationship between these variables.

Besides the studies reviewed above there are a few studies looking at the experiences of foreign or international students in their host universities (e.g., Paswan & Ganesh, 2005). This type of studies, however, are of little relevance to us since our purpose is to examine the role of demographic differences in the context of routine commercial customer-provider interactions. The context of international students and encounters with university staff is quite different: the 'customers' represent a rather sophisticated, self-selected population who choose specifically to attend the said institution. At the same time, the service providers in many academic environments often specialise in working international populations. As regarding gender and age as demographic fit we were even more surprised that there were no published studies whatever that looked at the effect of similarity between service providers' and customers' age and gender on customer satisfaction. Thus, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to look at the effects of differences on all three characteristics on service quality within a single study.

The lack of studies that examine the role of demographic dissimilarities in dyadic service encounters is indeed surprising given the rather mature state of theorising and empirical research in the area of diversity impacts. We hold the view that what would be most advantageous to the field in the present state is not a further development of ad-hoc models but rather promoting studies with that, building on existing solid conceptual frameworks, employ an empirical design that allows drawing clearer conclusions. We propose that demographic dissimilarity (also referred in literature as 'surface diversity') in service encounters, would, all else being equal, contribute to lower customer satisfaction. Like many other studies that posit potential adverse effects of diversity, we base part of our theoretical framework on concepts derived from the Social Identity Theory (SIT).

According to SIT, the self-concept is comprised of a ***personal identity*** component that includes idiosyncratic characteristics (e.g., personality traits) and a ***social identity*** component that includes salient group classifications (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Individuals classify themselves and others into various social categories (or groups) such as gender, age, ethnicity and organizational membership.

Social identification is the perception of belonging to some human aggregate (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). People perceive themselves as members of certain social groups and perceive the fate of these groups as their own. Overall, social identification is based on our need to reduce ambiguity about self and others and assists in answering the old question *Who Am I*? (Stryker & Serpe, 1982).

A central element of social identification is the sense of in-group membership. Turner (1984, p. 530) proposed the existence of a "psychological group," defined as "a collection of people who share the same social identification or define themselves in terms of the same social category membership." Across many psychological groups and situations, people show in-group favouritism towards individuals perceived to be in their group, compared to members of other psychological groups (Tajfel, 1982; Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

A similar conclusion can be drawn from another social-psychological research tradition, that of the Similarity Attraction Paradigm. According to this framework, observed commonalities lead to interpersonal attraction and liking (Byrne, 1971; Riordan & McFarland Shore, 1997). Based on these two conceptual frameworks we suggest that service providers are more attracted and feel more comfortable with customers whose demographics, age, gender and ethnicity (race), are more similar to their own (e.g., Härtel

& Fujimoto, 2000) and have preference to interact with those perceived as in-group, on the basis of shared surface identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

A substantial body of research has accumulated that indicates that demographic diversity typically leads to difficulties in interpersonal encounters such as those experienced in diverse teams. Members of heterogonous teams tend, at least in the short term, to experience a host of adverse consequences that include more process conflict, fragmented communication, lower trust, disagreement on norms and procedures, limited information sharing and overall lower performance (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; Horwiz & Horwiz, 2007; Jackson, Joshi & Erhardt, 2003; Joshi & Ro, 2009).

The last conceptual domain that we draw on to help formulate our hypotheses is communications. The typical service encounter in a retail context (e.g., shops, supermarkets) involves at least a certain amount of verbal communication. However, in our view, at least as important are the non-verbal aspects of the communication between service provider and customer. This is because in most organisations the scripts for verbal, more explicit communication tend to be, at least partially, specified. They may include greeting the customer, asking if they want assistance and thanking them at the end of the encounter. Compared to non-verbal communication cues, these interaction aspects are both more organisationally sanctioned and regulated as well as amenable to control by the individual service provider. Therefore, we believe that are likely to be more uniformly expressed compared to non-verbal communication aspects. The latter tend to be less regulated and more outside the conscious control of individuals (Dimbelby & Burton, 1998; Hargie, 1997; Hart & Morry, 1996). Non verbal communication conveys emotions that may not be apparent in verbal communication and, therefore, it is especially important to capture this aspect in study like ours (Gallois & Callan, 1997). Furthermore, although culture shapes norms, symbols and meanings (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Gudykunst et al, 1988) research suggests that there is a universal recognition of expressed emotion, particularly in relation to facial expressions (Ekman, 1971, 1992; Ekman et al, 1987).

Based on the literature reviewed above, we argue that demographic (observable) dissimilarity between service provider and customer during a service encounter leads to lower customer satisfaction. We offer the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1A: Age dissimilarity between cashier and customer will result in lower customer satisfaction with efficiency and courtesy of service provided;

Hypothesis 1B: Age dissimilarity between cashier and customer will result in lower observed quality of service;

Hypothesis 2A: Gender dissimilarity between cashier and customer will result in lower customer satisfaction with efficiency and courtesy of service provided;

Hypothesis 2B: Gender dissimilarity between cashier and customer will result in lower observed quality of service;

Hypothesis 3A: Ethnic dissimilarity between cashier and customer will result in lower customer satisfaction with efficiency and courtesy of service provided;

Hypothesis 3B: Ethnic dissimilarity between cashier and customer will result in lower observed quality of service.

<u>Research Context and Setting</u>

To test these hypotheses, we chose to examine the quality of customer service provided by cashiers of a major supermarket chain in Dublin, Ireland. From the perspective of ethnic or cultural diversity, Ireland is an interesting case, both within Europe as well as internationally. Until fairly recently (more or less the mid 1990s), Ireland has been a country that has had a high degree of cultural homogeneity, expressed in its religious, linguistic and ethnic composition. However, due to economic success and rapid increase

in employment opportunities[27], Ireland's economic flourish, that earned it the title Celtic Tiger, attracted high numbers of foreign nationals who came to work and study here for both short and longer periods. At the same time, the structure of the economy has continued to change and, by 1999, it was anticipated that there would be a gradual shift from high-tech manufacturing to market services, especially internationally traded services, over the following decade (Duffy et al., 1999). According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO), there were approximately 76,313 enterprises operating in the Irish Service Sector in 2002.

According to the CSO, there were 224,261 non-Irish nationals resident in Ireland in 2002 (about 6% of the total population). In 2006, this number increased to 420,000 foreign nationals residing in Ireland from 188 nationalities, accounting for over 10% of the total population. This figure does not include the increasing number of tourists who travel to Ireland every year. The vast majority of the non-Irish residents came from the following countries: China, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Nigeria, Poland, U.K. and U.S.A. one should bear in mind though, that UK nationals still represent the largest non-Irish group.

Large urban areas tended to be much more populated by diverse populations and no place in Ireland experienced increased cultural diversity like its capital, Dublin, which makes the city an especially interesting setting for this study given the relatively high frequency of service encounters involving dyads who differ not only in age and gender but also in their national or ethnic background. Following the interest of this study, we focused on observable (surface) aspects of diversity, which included age, gender and ethnic appearance.

METHOD

Design

We aimed at assessing service both from the personal perspective of the customer as well as from the perspective of an outside observer. To that end, we have employed a mix method field design comprised of observations of service encounters and customer answered surveys. The setting for the study was four stores of supermarkets in Dublin, belonging to *Maxi* (not the real name), a multinational supermarket store headquartered in the UK, with a strong international presence. In Ireland Maxi is one of the two major supermarket chains, with 131 stores employing a total of over 14,000 staff. The majority of these stores are medium to large size supermarkets.

Observations

Several of the authors (who belong to several ethnic groups) conducted structured observations in four Maxi stores, which were located in representative locations in Dublin (e.g., two stores were located at the North of the city and two stores in the South areas; some were newer and some were older stores). We unobtrusively observed naturally occurring service interactions of store cashiers with customers at the check-out stage. Neither cashiers nor customers were aware that they were being watched. Overall, 30 employees were observed, with five to eleven observed employees per store. The number of observed cashiers (and, hence, service interactions) varied according to store size. Each cashier was observed conducting 10 different customer interactions.

The observations were based on a structured protocol that included nine items, rated on a five-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Eight of the items represented personnel behaviours that, based on previous studied, are

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[27] Of course, we are acutely aware that this economic thrive came to an abrupt end around 2008. It should be noted that our study was conducted at 2005.

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believed to be indicative of service quality (Berry et al. 1985; Bitner et al., 1990; Martin, 1990; Zeithaml et al., 1990):

- whether or not service workers served customers immediately
- whether they conversed with the customer throughout the encounter
- whether they smiled throughout the encounter
- whether they maintained eye contact throughout the encounter
- whether they maintained appropriated(aligned) posture throughout the encounter
- whether they demonstrated one or more proactive behaviors during the encounter
- whether they handed the customer's change or receipt to the customer, rather than simply placing it on the counter or elsewhere
- Whether they thanked the customer, or otherwise expressed appreciation for patronage.

We then added a ninth item: "whether service provider was polite throughout the service encounter".

Following each set of observations, we approached the observed cashiers and asked them to respond to a short survey, where we asked about employees' . 22 out 30 distributed surveys were returned, resulting in a 73.3% response rate.

Surveys

We approached customers once the shopping interaction ended and the customer was exiting the store. Randomly, every second customer was approached and asked to answer a brief verbal survey. Number of surveyed customers ranged from 25 to 55 per store, yielding a total of 149 usable surveys. Customers were asked to rate, on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1.very poor to 5.excellent their perception of employee's efficiency and courtesy. Customers were also asked about their shopping frequencies, age, gender and ethnic origin.

Independent Variables

Demographic diversity: age, gender and ethnicity were self reported by employees and customers. For age, six categories were used: 15-24; 25-34; 35-45; 46-55; 56-65 and Over 65 years. Male/female indicated gender and ethnicity was indicated as one of the following categories: White, Black, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern and 'Other'. Based on our observations, we have estimated the age range, gender and ethnic appearance for the eight employees' whose surveys were not returned.

For each customer-employee service interaction, we derived age, gender and ethnicity similarity scores. For ethnicity and gender these were categorised as 1. Similar or 2. Different. For age, we used five categories ranging from 1 = No difference (same age group); 2. Small difference (1-10 years gap); 3. Medium difference (11-20 years); 4. Large difference (21-30 years); and 5. Very large difference (over 30 years).

Dependent Variables

Observed customer service quality was the sum of the nine observation items per each service encounter. Customer satisfaction with efficiency and courtesy of service provider was derived though self-report items, one for efficiency and one for courtesy, rated by the customers on a scale from 1. Very Poor to 5. Excellent, where 3. Indicated Average service.

RESULTS

The observed customer service scale, which consisted of nine items, reached a good reliability indices with Cronbach's Alpha = .85. Therefore, all nine items were averaged to arrive at a single observed service quality score.

Descriptive Statistics

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Of the 30 employees, 18 were females; 22 were white (73.3%), one was Black, four Asian, two Latin American and one Middle Eastern. Age wise, 46.7% were in the youngest age group of 15-24, 30% were 25-34; 13.3% were 35-45; 3.3% were 46-55; and 6.7% were 56-65.

Out of 149 customers just over half, 76, were women; 122 were white (81.9%), four was Black, 17 Asian, five Latin American and one Middle Eastern. Age wise, 22.8% were in the youngest age group of 15-24, 22.1% were 25-34; 22.1% were 35-45; 16.8% were 46-55; 8.1% were 56-65; and 8.1% over 65 years old.

In terms of dyadic service encounter, 20.1% occurred in the same age group; 30.9% of encounters belonged to low age difference, 9.4% to medium age difference; 16.8% to large differences and 22.8% to very large differences. 35.6% of service encounters occurred between different ethnic groups and 55.7% of the encounters were among individuals of same gender.

As for dependent variables, the average observed service quality was M = 3.12, reported courtesy was M = 3.54, and reported efficiency was M = 3.50; all on 5-point scales.

Correlation analyses indicated that our measures of age, gender and ethnicity diversity were not correlated. No significant correlations were found between the three dependent service quality variables and neither customers' demographic characteristics nor employees' demographic characteristics. There were some significant correlations among the three dependent variables: reported efficiency and reported courtesy were positively and significantly correlated with r = .54, p < .001, suggesting that although there was a clear relationship between the two variables, they still captured sufficiently different aspects of service since each variable explained less than 30% variance in the other. Observed service quality was positively but not significantly correlated with reported courtesy, r = .09 and positively and marginally significantly with reported service efficiency, r = .16, p = .058.

Lastly, we correlated the three diversity variables with the three service quality variables. We found that age diversity had negative significant correlation with all three service indicators: r = -.23, p < .005 for reported efficiency; r = -.41, p < .001 for reported courtesy; and r = -.32, p < .001 for observed service quality. Ethnic similarity did not correlated significantly with any of the three dependent variables. Lastly, gender diversity was negatively correlated with rated employee courtesy, r = -.20, p = .02. All above correlations were two-tailed.

We used multiple regression analyses to test all six hypotheses. For all three dependent variables, we controlled for store location, which was entered at the first step, we then entered employees' age, gender and ethnicity, followed by customers' age, gender and ethnicity. We entered the three dyadic diversity measures of age, gender and ethnicity dissimilarity in the last step.

<u>Observed Customer Service Quality</u>: the overall model accounted for a significant variance of 29.2%. The three diversity variables accounted for a unique variance of 14.1%. Age diversity was a significant predictor (b = -.19, p < .001) and so was ethnic diversity (b = -.35, p = .03), but not gender diversity (b = -.06, p = n.s.). All effects were in the hypothesized direction, indicating that larger differences of age and ethnicity between customers and cashiers resulted in lower observed service quality.

<u>Reported Service Efficiency</u>: the overall model accounted for 8.9% but did not reach significance (p = .21). The three diversity variables, however, did account for additional significant unique variance of 6.6%. While age diversity reached significance (b = -.15, p = .004), ethnic diversity (b = -.18, p = n.s.) and gender diversity (b = -.10, p = n.s.) did not.

As above, all effects were in the hypothesized direction, indicating that larger differences of age between customers and cashiers resulted in lower self-rated service efficiency.

Reported Service Courtesy: the overall model was significant and accounted for 223.5% of the variance in reported courtesy ($p < .001$). The three diversity variables accounted for additional significant unique variance of 19.8%. Age diversity was a significant predictor ($b = -.26$, $p < .001$) and so was gender diversity ($b = -.37$, $p = 0.07$) but ethnic diversity was not ($b = .03$, $p = $ n.s.). Both significant effects were in the hypothesized direction, indicating that age and gender differences between customers and cashiers resulted in lower self-rated service courtesy.

DISCUSSION

This study is the first of its kind to investigate the effects of the three major demographic diversity characteristics, age, gender and ethnicity within a single study. Furthermore, it is the first to employ a dual-method design, which included both observation and survey methods. Such dual-method allows for examining the phenomenon from two different perspectives, helping to identify similarities and differences in effects. Another strength of the current study is the way that the customer survey took place. While previous studies employed an interview method that necessitates asking fairly direct questions about customers past experiences in the context of ethnic diversity and, thus, runs the risk of affecting interviewees' answers, in our study, surveyed customers were blind to the hypothesis and responded their satisfaction without knowing what we were examining. An additional strength is that customers reported on immediate and concrete service encounters, making their replies and, hence our dependent variables, more reliable compared to asking customers to recall encounters that happened some time ago.

Our results indicate that our hypotheses were partially supported. Overall, at least each one of the three service quality DVs was affected by at least one diversity variable and every one of our diversity variable related significantly to at least one service quality measure. Specifically, we found that age diversity (or differences) had the strongest and most consistent relationship to service quality. Across all three measures, observed quality, rated efficiency and rated courtesy, age dissimilarity between cashier and customer resulted in lower service satisfaction and quality. Gender diversity was related to lower observed quality as well as lower reported courtesy while ethnic diversity was related only to lower observed service quality.

Differences in the effects of the ethnicity differences on the DVs may be related, at least partially, to differing expectations across ethnic groups. Thus, it is possible that customers belonging to different ethnic groups have differing expectations and norms as to what is an efficient and courteous service. On the other hand, the three individuals who observed and rated an average of 50 service encounters each had the opportunity to compare service features across customers and thus may had a more neutrally anchored standard to their ratings.

It is worthy to recap the amount of variance accounted for by the dyadic diversity measures, which is far from trivial. Thus, the three diversity variables contributed 6.6% to 20% above and beyond other variables, which included demographic characteristics of both customers and employees. That these two latter groups of variables were, by and large, non-significant factors for service quality and satisfaction highlight the importance of attending to the demographic diversity factors as having strong influence on customer satisfaction.

Form a theoretical perspective, the present study makes several important contributions, both in terms of concepts studied as well as in the methodological approach

it brings. The study contributes to the important yet rather small stream of looking at diversity factors in consumer research. Furthermore, with its emphasis on dyadic (or relational) diversity, it highlights the importance of looking at matched demographic characteristics at the dyadic level of service provider-customer. There are good reasons to believe that relational identification and diversity at the dyad-level may differ in their quality from identity and diversity dynamics in larger groups (e.g., Brickson, 2000).

Methodologically, it demonstrates a dual method approach to conducting such a study. Specifically, too few studies employ observational methods. While this method, that has its roots in anthropologic research, can be labour intensive it has unique advantages in providing a rich set of data that is not limited to self report but comes close to direct assessment of behaviour.

This may be a good place to mention some of the methodological limitations of the present study. One of these is that the three observers were not blind to the hypotheses as they were part of the research team. Therefore, knowing the general direction of the study may have unwittingly affected their observations. Partially counteracting this threat is the highly systematic method in which observations were performed, that included separate ratings of concrete behaviours on nine different items. While this method does not solve the problem it reduces the subjectivity bias involved.

A related issue is that, ideally, one would have employed at least two observes to rate each service interaction. This would have allowed for inter-rater reliability measures and greater confidence in the ratings. However, realistically, this would have limited further our observed sample. This brings us to the last limitation, which is the exploratory nature of the study in terms of participants and geographic scope. It would be desirable to extend and replicate the present study with larger numbers of both customers and employees and to conduct the survey in various locations, both intra- as well as inter-nationally.

Applied contribution is anchored in the realisation of service company executives and human resources departments that their front-line employees' service may be affected by demographic diversity factors. If we look at the area of customer service as a whole, it is safe to indicate that there is indeed a chain that connects perceived service quality to company profitability. This chain is often mediated by customer loyalty, amount of purchase and communicated service reputation that can be expressed through recommendations or warnings to customers' friends and family.

It is well established among marketing theorists that firms which focus their activities on the needs of their customers, i.e. behave in a customer-oriented way, perform better than those companies that do not (Donavan, Brown & Mowen 2004). The studies by Narver and Slater (1990) and Jaworski and Kohli (1993) empirically substantiate the economic potential of a firm's customer orientation. Because of the intangible nature of services and their high level of customer interaction and integration, customer orientation can be expected to play a crucial role in terms of economic success for service companies.

Retail stores rely heavily on their frontline employees' interactions with customers, so managers need to be aware of variable relating to employee behaviors and attitudes in interaction with customer. Thus, given the meaningful effect size discussed above, it would be worthwhile for large retail chains to invest in educational and training programs of their staff in order to make them more aware and conscious of their behaviour with diverse populations. If we are indeed to trust the observations as representing some objective data regarding the quality of provided service, then we can conclude that the detrimental effects of dyadic diversity are, at least partially, related to cashier behaviour and not only to a subjective sense of lower service reported by customers. This leads to the conclusion that improving employees' awareness in service situations typified by diversity may lead to

improved service and, therefore, to higher customer satisfaction with all its direct and indirect commercial benefits.

At the same time, a more sophisticated analysis can help retail companies ensure that there is a rough correspondence between the demographic composition of the potential typical shopping community and the demographic features of the cashiers working in the store located in that community or neighbourhood. For example, while in three out of the four stores observed there were rather small gender differences among the cashiers (i.e., 20% or less) in the fourth store, the overwhelming majority of cashiers were women. It would be worthwhile to examine whether this limits the satisfaction of male customers. Interestingly and, perhaps, contrary to common sense expectations, in our study males reported receiving both more efficient as well as more courteous treatment form male cashiers than female cashiers, while female customers reported this difference only in regards to courtesy.

Another interesting finding was obtained when employees were asked if they ever received training in customer satisfaction: except for one store where 100% answered this in the affirmative, 40%-80% of employees in the three other stores answered no to this question.

If future studies are successful in meaningfully increasing the sample size this would also allow researchers to start examining demographic diversity characteristics in conjunction; that is, to answer the question of whether interactions among demographic characteristics (e.g., gender and ethnicity) have additional unique influence on service encounters.

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AGE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: IS IT A CULTURAL ISSUE?

Roger Bell

Abstract

The issue of age diversity management (ADM) has gained importance principally as a response to demographic trends and pensions crises at government level. Other imperatives associated with the issue are optimal resource use, inclusion and employability of individuals, concern for age discrimination as a legal and moral issue, fit with organizational needs and customer base and management of stocks of tacit knowledge. These correspond to a three strand approach to diversity.

ADM means that organizations pursue strategically oriented policies, implement procedures and systems, foster attitudes and invest time and money in age related initiatives. Short term concern for cost-cutting and the plight of young people has diluted the urgency of the long term problem in 2011. Attitudes, regulations, institutional arrangements and the relative cost of retirement for workers vary in different locations. This is to be seen against the background of a deep recession in many Western countries, which may make retention of older workers less attractive for many employers.

We hypothesize that cultural variables are significant in explaining these variations. Using the GLOBE model of cultural variables we contribute to explaining the situation in Spain. Many other etic dimensions may be relevant including long term orientation, goal orientation, status by attribution and femininity. Corporate culture is a powerful influence and we consider Cameron and Quinn's competing values framework to examine the influence on policy, attitudes and practices in dealing with older members of organizations. Given that culture is an important influence we propose to approach the issue as one of cultural diagnosis and change.

Keywords: age diversity management, active population, participation rate, corporate culture, GLOBE cultural model, cultural change

Introduction

Age diversity management is a sub-set of diversity management, an area in which gender, race, disability and sexual orientation are other important categories. In US in 2008 for example the incidence of discrimination claims were 35,6% based on race, 29,7% on gender and 25,8% on age (http://agingandwork.be.edu) The issue of age management has arisen principally as a response to demographic trends along with changing attitudes to immigration (Dixon, 2008).

The term strictly speaking refers to the management of diversity involving all age groups but here we focus on older groups. In this context it should be noted that the widespread and stubborn recession from which many Western countries including Spain is suffering has meant a perception of competition between younger and older workers for a limited pool of jobs. Young people demonstrating in Madrid and Barcelona against the election system in May 2011 complained among other things about "grandchildren unemployed and grandparents working". This is a symptom of the "lump of labour fallacy" long identified by economists as the illusion that the number of jobs is fixed and that hiring is a zero sum

game since it leaves someone else unemployed. It is argued that this is a fallacy over the longer term since employment generates spending and expands the economy so that over time it is argued there is an increase in employment. Unfortunately in the short run this is not very obvious (Walker, 2007).

In times of technological change the problem of optimizing use of older workers is compounded by the need for re-training and in many cases slower learning curves. This investment however may well be more than justified by streamlining effects on work processes – once the mechanisms are mastered. These issues concern simultaneously the interests of the older worker and of the organization: it is the meeting of these that guarantees successful implementation of ADM initiatives.

Our interest in this paper is management of older workers (OW), in the upper range of what is at present considered normal working age in Western countries (15-64), specifically the 55 to 64 group, and those of 65 to 71, who are immediately above retiring age in Spain and many other European countries at present, who, though they are considered to be outside working age are a potential reservoir of manpower for organizations and society. At present high wastage of talent occurs since there is a low rate of participation in the productive economy but many workers in this group still have considerable potential for contribution to the efficacy, wisdom and climate of organizations. We argue that it is largely attitudes and custom that keep them from working, in other words cultural values.

The loss of workplaces over recent years as companies turn first to older workers to reduce staff partly because they represent higher costs, obviously creates problems for the worker affected since it is difficult to re-enter the labour market later in life; but also for the organization, which loses skills and knowledge accumulated over the years and finally society in general which has to support the unemployed workers. There is a widespread perception that older workers are more dispensable - apart from being significantly more expensive for employers. (Johnson, 2007)

From the point of view of the older person, it is crucial to maintain personal capacities and keeping them usable by organizations, that is maintaining employability. Skills are only useful if kept up to date but long term experience in which updated skills are embedded is a key strength of older workers. Age discriminatory attitudes of employers run deep: we value older people but imply: "don't send me candidates over 60 to interview". For candidates in such circumstances demonstrating natural energy, enthusiasm and responsible attitude may not help in the face of subtle prejudiced attitudes. The candidate with too much experience can be a problem: employers fear they will not stay or that they should be paying more. (Johnson, 2007).

It is commonly argued that older workers cannot easily learn new tasks especially when these involve ICT (information and communications technology), an aspect of the famous digital divide, that it is not worth investing in OW since they will not stay long in the organization, and that they are less adaptable among other arguments.

These arguments may be countered by underlining the experience, positive attitudes, alternative training methods and task modification. Organizations are often not aware of the merits and resource value of older workers and managers in a time when immediacy and rapid solutions to new problems is considered so highly. Using the distinction between

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fluid and crystallized intelligence (Cattell 1963) it is demonstrated that over a life time whilst there is a rise and fall of fluid intelligence, crystallized intelligence continues improving with age. The change is based on neurological factors in the case of fluid intelligence but cultural and experiential factors in the case of crystallized intelligence, which means that older workers and managers have increasing potential value for organizations (Horn & Cattell, 1966)

In analyzing data we should beware of some terminological problems, distinguishing between various terms:

a) Working age population: the totality of people of ages at which it is legal to work and above which people are pensionable by virtue of their age; generally 15 to 64 at present in Europe.
b) Active population: those in this age bracket who are fit and available for work, thus excluding disabled, those suffering from long term illness and those not seeking work (such as housewives) but including the unemployed, part time, full time and self employed.
c) The participation rate is the ratio of active population to working age population, expressed as a percentage.

A major contrast detected almost universally is that between women and men, with the former normally working and seeking work substantially less. This is reflected in participation rates and has institutional ramifications affecting pension rights and rates.

Demographic shifts arise from birth rate falling below sustainable rate (i.e. maintaining population levels), increasing longevity, smaller families, later age of having children and the effects of immigration. The net result is a fall in the proportion of the population in the active population, which will shift dynamically during the next generations usually assessed over a time frame from the early years of the century to 2050 (Commission of European Communities, 2009).

The demographic changes occurring in the world are dramatic. Globally the population over 65 is about to overtake the number of children under 5 according to the latest US Census Bureau report (USCB 2008). The number of over 65's is forecast to double from 7% to 14% of world population in coming decades. This increase is explained by high post war fertility and health improvements that increase longevity. If this is combined with a trend to lower birth rates the result is indeed dramatic and the region most affected is the EU: by 2040 one in four Europeans will be over 65. This shift does not only affect Western countries: the developing world will also be affected: by 2040 76% of world population aged 65 and over will be in emerging market economies (EME). By 2020 this figure is estimated at 57,1% (Euromonitor, 2010). In 2010 China has already 43,4% of the world population over 65, but this is less than 10% of her population (ibid).

The ODR (older dependency ratio) gives the number of over 65's for every 100 persons between 20 and 64: 33 in Japan, 26 in UK, 21 in US. On the other hand for the moment the figure is 6 in Kenya and 7 in Bangladesh given low life expectancy (Guardian, 2008).

Dealing with these changes over the medium to long term will require compensating changes in labour supply: children coming into the labour market younger (impossible in the foreseeable social climate), shift from labour intensive to more capital intensive

activities, increasing productivity, changes affecting family size and propensity to have children, female employment, use of immigrants to supplement the native born work force inclination to work to ages well beyond the currently normal retirement age and an increase in older workers' capacity and inclination to worker to greater ages. This suggests legal and institutional changes for example accumulating pension rights while working over the age of 65 but also cultural changes in the minds of employers, employees, government and the general public.

Figure 1: labour force projections with constant and rising OW participation

Figure 1.3. Increased participation of older people would boost labour force growth[a]
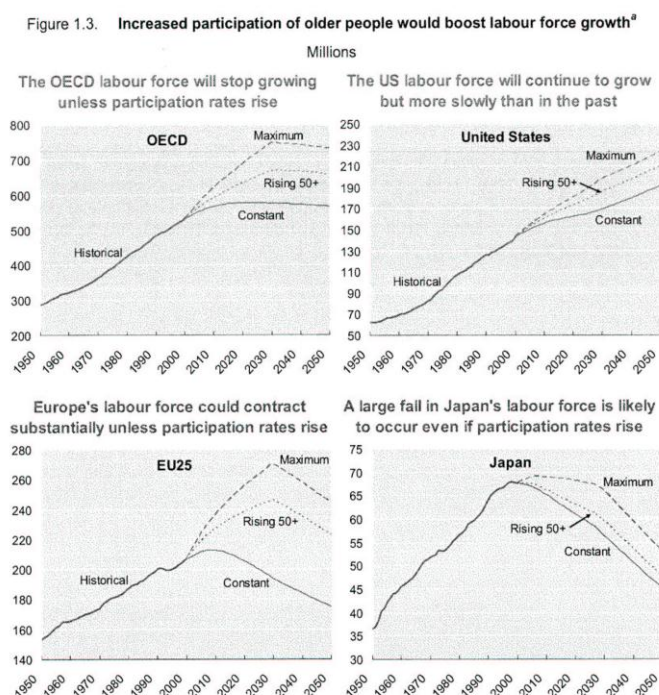
Ironically, the immediate situation is one of high unemployment of the young, estimated at 45% in Spain in 2011 (Naumann, 2011) so that the focus of current debate is difficult to focus on older groups or longer term demographic changes. If we consider the compounded effect of the contribution of greater longevity to increasing dependency ratio we can see how the problem is exacerbated and observe that immigration is unlikely to cover the shortfall. A key variable is participation in the active workforce. In Japan labour force decline has already started; in EU it will start in 2010 if participation rate remains constant; in OECD labour force will remain constant if participation rate is constant. At present in the Europe of 27, 50% are in employment at the age of 60 (COM 2009)

Attitudes to older workers

Type of work has a considerable impact both on desire to work and employability. Jobs involve repetitive work, lifting heavy weights and poor conditions and in general lower educational levels the desire to stop working is stronger and the incentives to continue lower. For older middle class professionals the denial of work opportunities can be a humiliating affront to people who see themselves as active, keen and able to contribute to active life. This could be argued of the unemployed at any age of course but having devoted one's professional / working life over many years to an organization and then find oneself without this central activity may be bitterly hard to accept. It is important to note

that many of the physical effects of ageing may not be relevant for knowledge workers making it easier to continue employment later, typically to the age of 70 or beyond.

OW are supposed to resist change, learn more slowly and are perceived as less flexible. When HR professionals were asked in a 2003 survey what they view as disadvantages of hiring older workers, the most frequently indicated was that they do not keep up with technology (53%), followed by older workers causing expenses such as health care cost to rise (36%) and being less flexible than younger workers (28%). (Collison 2003)

Evidence of age discrimination is frequent. In a 2002 survey 9 percent say they believe they have been passed up for a promotion because of age, 6 percent say they were fired because of age, 5% passed up for a raise because of age and 5% attribute their not being hired for a job to their age. (Roper 2002). In addition the image of youth and youth- centric advertising is enormously powerful in TV advertising. It is widely assumed that they older groups are less creative and innovative in comparison with the younger worker. OW are seen as re-living the past rather than inventing new ideas for the future and may lack confidence in competing with the young. As productivity declines costs go on increasing so the "net productivity" curve shows a falling trend. Naturally companies tend to favour the lower salaries and rising productivity of the younger worker.

When faced with the choice between laying off workers and offering early retirement companies, unions and workers committees (comités de empresa in Spain) prefer the latter option as more socially acceptable and less traumatic. The inclusion of early retirements often makes an "expediente de regulación de empleo" ("ERE": large scale redundancy deal) acceptable in labour negotiations (ibid). Workers as young as 48 may be made redundant and will have great difficulty finding another place in the labour market, though intermediate solutions with conditional returns to work may ease the situation somewhat.

Predictions and prospects

There is predicted to be a period of 10 years in which active populations will increase in Europe (COM 2009) after which the inset of decline will exacerbate the problem. According to the EU the current economic recession threatens future growth and so does the effect of ageing. In any case clearly the pay as you go system is threatened as payments depend on current income to the system. Long term solutions relate to bringing workers back into the system or preventing them from leaving. The European economic Recovery Plan (EERP) aims to foster appropriate investment and skills development to maintain growth potential. Clearly training and management development become key variables in spite of the short term discouragement to invest in these.

Public spending would be increased by increasing average age by a projected figure approaching 5% by 2060 in EU: Spain is one of the countries affected. Action to tighten pension requirements can help marginally including relating benefits to work over a longer period of time. Central and Eastern European countries are increasingly using privately funded alternatives to public pensions while private occupational pension are being boosted in a number of northern European countries (COM, 2009).

Key policies identified by the Stockholm European Council (2001) were better conditions for families and demographic renewal; more jobs and longer working lives; tax and benefit

reforms; raising employment rates of older workers and a healthier older population. A key variable is productivity which implies investment in education and training; (COM, 2009) but there is also a demand side encouragement to expand production of services and products for the older markets. EU organisms can support many initiatives Europe wide with specific encouragement at national level.

It is increasingly recognized that immigration is a vital contributor to economic growth with the average age lower, higher fertility, in general higher flexibility in work place attitudes and work and low costs of hiring. Costs are lower in comparison with maintaining or hiring older workers in terms of salaries, health and protection and related expenses. At the same time there may be negative productivity effect if long term skills are lost and replaced by temporary labour whether immigrant or not.

Whilst we have noted that the long term demographic issue may be seen as competing with short term preoccupations in times of recession in particular the difficulties faced by younger people trying to join the labour market, in recent EU documents recession and ageing population are seen as compounding the loss of potential economic output: "the EU faces the risk of a decrease in its potential growth, already put at risk by population ageing" (COM, 2009: P 6). In addition the financial burden for governments is compounded: "the crisis adds to the economic impact of demographic ageing on pension provision" (COM, 2009: P6). This paper takes the view that structural reform agenda to address demographic shift needs to be strengthened: raising employment rates substantially in particular encouraging baby-boomers to stay in the labour market and not waste their potential (COM, 2009). The five-fold goals stated in October 2006 included promoting employment, better quality working lives, increased productivity, integration of migrants and secure public sector financing (COM, 2006).

In 2007 65,4% of working age population in Europe were in employment, in contrast to the Lisbon strategy goal of 70% by 2010 (Frey, 2009) The OECD estimates only 39% of Europeans between the ages of 55 to 65 work (OECD, 2011) . If Frey's prediction for Europe's rising median age is correct, Europe's economic output could radically decrease over the next four decades.[3] The recession, with young people unable to enter and older workers being obliged to leave the work force has slowed improvement in this area. Ironically, in recessionary conditions OW may seek to get back into the labour market even if this means sacrificing aspirations and skills levels by accepting lower category jobs (FT 09/05/09: "older workers rush back into job market"). This phenomenon depends on the extent of government support for unemployed or early retired workers, and the trend is to reduce such support to discourage workers leaving the market place given that a smaller working population supporting a greater dependent population is increasingly unviable (COM, 2009). Mechanisms to achieve these goals include reforming disability and early retirement schemes, increasing effective retirement ages, removal of employment obstacles, eliminating mandatory retirement age, introducing flexible retirement mechanisms, enabling earning additional pension entitlements and increasing part time work opportunities (COM, 2009).

Health is key and higher productivity and participation is conditional on healthy life expectancy. Even so there are costs in terms of health and social services and training measures (COM, 2009, P8).

Spanish situation and demographic background

The participation rate of 55-64 age group in 2003 in Spain was 43,6%: 62,8% men and 25,5% women. This has been in decline as a result of government policy encouraging early retirement. According to Eugenio Recio (2007) the Spanish pension system means there is not a substantial loss in earnings for workers who retire early, that is, a high replacement income, unlike for example UK, where there are less attractive post retirement payments. Companies themselves make sure the early retirement option is attractive (Recio, 2007). Recio proposes turning to an extended group of workers up to the age of 71 to supply the needs of business in coming years. This involves persuading workers that their contribution is valuable – and not only the professional classes who in many cases are already keen to continue working; this will imply financial incentives to continuing working. However, none of this is likely to happen as long as youth unemployment is a priority.

Spain and Europe whether EU15 prior to or EU27 after 2007 project drops in the 0 to 15 age group of 18 or 19% to 2050 though the drop is 30% in the new member states that joined in 2004 but most spectacularly the over-65 segment in Spain will increase by 111% over the same period in contrast to the European average of 77%. The most spectacular increases of all in Europe and in Spain are in the 80 and over segment where increases approach 200%. In consequence the working age population will decline by 21% in Spain, 16% in EU 25 and 27% in the NMS.

Figure 2: Spanish population projections in %ages

	2005	2030	2050
0-14	14,6	11,9	11,6
15-64	68,6	63,8	53,4
Over 65	16,8	24,4	35,0
Of which, over 80	4,3	7,1	12,3
ODR (65+ / 15-64)	26,1	37,1	47,0

A dependency ration of 47% means almost 1 for 1 balance between those who are working and those who have retired. Increased participation rates are essential to improve this. During the same period the proportion of over 65s in the population will increase from under 20% to nearly 40%. The logic of drawing older people into participation is intuitively strong

Participation rates not surprisingly show considerable gender skew especially in the 55-64 age bracket. Spain had the lowest female participation rate in Europe in 2005 but the highest male rate; this imbalance suggests an area for seeking improvement in participation in the labour market in coming years by attracting more women.

Figure 3 Spanish participation rates, 2005

	2005	Male	Fem
15-24	44,7	49,8	39,3
25-54	79,6	92,5	66,5
55-64	43,6	62,8	25,6
15-64	67,5	79,9	55,1

These numbers had changes somewhat by 2008 rising to 62% for 15 to 65 somewhat below the EU27 average of 66%. In the 50-65 group Spain stood at 53% whilst the EU27 was 57%.

Spanish employment is forecast to increase to nearly 71% by 2050 through increases in both female (38,86%) and older worker participation (53,9%). However, the female component is predicted to rise more rapidly than the take-up of older workers. It is further predicted that employment in the 65-71 age bracket will increase from 3,9% in 2003 to 12,5% by 2025, but that this figure will not then increase further till 2050. Major changes are predicted by 2025 with very limited change thereafter in all age groups and indeed the bulk of changes will have been realized by 2015 (Obeso, 2009)

Part 2: To what extent is this a cultural issue?

As we have seen, major shifts are occurring over time in demographic patterns which will require changed attitudes towards age and the older worker. These changes, however, will be affected by sets of social attitudes and values with major cultural content which are and will continue to cause resistance to change.

Age is a constant that all societies deal with, like birth and death, gender, parenting, social organization, relationship with nature and dealing with time and consequently become the subject of social constructed values and behavioural norms (Eriksen, 1995). Depending on the cultural context age may be highly valued for its experience and wisdom or dismissed as offering only obsolete knowledge and declining achievement.

One has only to consider Shakespeare's seven ages of man in "As you like it" for a graphic representation of ageing as a process of deterioration: "the lean and slipper'd pantaloon" declines finally to "second childishness and mere oblivion". Not much sign of reverence for age there. This might also suggest deeper uneasiness about old people continuing to play an active role in society as if they were younger. All societies see life in stages with rites of passages in changing from one stage to another (van Gennep, 1960). These mark liminal moments, when a person is neither what he or she was or will become. Such rites involve temporary isolation from the rest of society (Eriksen, 1995; Barley, 2000). Older people who continue working can be seen as stuck in this liminal stage and uncomfortably excluded from social acceptance by virtue of behaving as if they had not passed the luminal stage since they should no longer be performing "young people's work".

Etic value dimensions approach

From a work values point of view many studies have attempted to make culture level statements using etic dimension rankings which effectively are used as proxies for culture. These are then predicted to have behavioural implications in fields of interest to researchers, in this case the management of age. The dangers of this method are considerable since this kind of over-simplification eliminates layers of cultural influence at non-national levels and ignores other types of influences on situations and behaviour. Not only this, but the results are often based on samples which may not be the most appropriate for our purposes. These criticisms are summed up by McSweeney's well known criticism of Hofstede's dimension ranking approach. (McSweeney, 2002).

The use of such models can be helpful but should be considered at least partly speculative and at best indicative rather than determinant. What we can legitimately do is reflect on the likely consequences of the values measured on dimensions without making linear predictions from national proxy profiles. At the same time to approach a multi-faceted picture of any culture it is essential to incorporate "emic" factors, that is, the specifics of the history, symbols, artefacts, rituals and heroes on the higher of the depths of culture and their meanings on a deeper level.

The most promising value dimension of culture as a cultural influence on attitude to age is attribution of status as a pattern variable (Parsons & Shils, 1951). Cultures vary in terms of how status is attributed: to what extent by social positioning in terms of family, contacts and networks (status by attribution) and at the other extreme of the continuum by personal achievement and merits (status by achievement). (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). This dimension may also reflect individualism, specificness and goal orientation, with status by achievement corresponding to higher values on each of these. Other things being equal, attitudes higher values should favour older members of society though such must be treated with some caution.

The best known value dimensions model is of course Hofstede's, whose rankings assert that Spain is middle ranked on individualism (score 51), rather low on masculinity (42) higher on power distance (57) and very high on uncertainty avoidance (86). As noted, it is extremely dangerous to use these raw scores (or any other mono-dimensional score) on a national level to draw conclusions or make predictions: these rankings should not be used as a "single-number" proxy for culture.

Nonetheless, we might expect that a feminine culture will be more supportive of older workers as vulnerable individuals; high collectivism suggests an inclusive attitude towards older members of groups. On the other hand, collectivism can also be expected lead to self-sacrificing behaviour by older people to support the group. High uncertainty avoidance would lead us to expect people to think within accepted frameworks, which would suggest they behave according to pre-conceived ideas of what is appropriate for their age, that is retire at 65 or before if, as in the case of Spain, this is the normal pattern. High power distance, as associated with Spain for example, suggests that the choice of carrying on working depends on the status enjoyed by the person involved. Long term orientation would lead us to expect more positive attitudes in organizations toward younger workers at the expense of older members since the former affect longer term performance.

Analysis using the GLOBE model

We considered the GLOBE leadership study covering 62 countries and producing 9 dimensions based on responses from middle managers. The use of these rankings is subject to the same cautions as those of Hofstede though this painstaking and statistically rigorous study produced values and practices responses, that is the culture "as is", intended to assess present realities and the "as should be" which reflects declared ideals. The latter can be considered a reflection of values and the relationship between the two an idealized expression of wishes or even a self-deprecating image of national deficiencies. The figures in the case of Spain are as follows; the band ratings show how items group from A (high) to C or D (low).

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
Cometences and Capabilities

Dimension	"as is"	Band	rank	"sh/be"	Band	Rank	Difference as is / should be
Performance Orient'n (PO)	4,01	B	37	5,80	C	41	1,79
Future Orientation (FO)	3,51	C	45	5.63	B	27	2,12
Assertiveness (AS)	4,42	A	17	4,00	B	18	-0,42
Inst'l Collectivism (IC)	3,85	C	51	5,20	A	12	1,35
Gender Egalitarianism (GE)	3,01	B	51	4,82	A	20	1,81
Humane Orientation (H0)	3,32	D	60	5,69	B	5	2,37
Power distance (PD)	5,52	A	14	2,26	D	59	-3,26
Family Collectivism (FC)	5,45	A	30	5.79	B	21	0,34
Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)	3,97	C	37	4,76	B	17	0,79

Let us summarize the likely impact of these dimensions

Where performance orientation is high we expect age discrimination and resistance to inclusive attitudes since status is gained by achievement rather than seniority (Parsons & Shils, 1951): since status tends to be accorded relatively more commonly by attribution in Spanish culture (Trompenaars, 1998) and PO is medium in Spain this would appear to be neutral with respect to older workers.

Where future orientation is high we would expect the young to be preferred as an investment rather than the old as a source of knowledge grounded in the past, though FO is not necessarily incompatible with respect for tradition, as in the Chinese view. We would expect this to favour the OW in the Spanish case since FO is very low.

High assertiveness is likely to favour the young at the expense of the old if we assume that this value declines with age. Reported as high in Spain, which would not favour OW in their life choices.

Institutional Collectivism: identifies collective organizational interests so might favour the older worker by favouring length of tenure but also could encourage the older worker to withdraw from the workforce if this appears to be in the interests of the organization. Since this is low in Spain this would appear to work against the OW.

Gender egalitarianism: High in the Spanish case, which favours male over female workers in making life choices. Since the figures for male and female retention in the work force strongly favour the former and there is a tendency to retire early this could be reinforced as male OW make their own choices supported by employers.

Humane orientation is recorded as exceptionally low in the Spanish figures. Since this variable favours inclusive attitudes supporting the older worker this would suggest little support from employers in choices of OW. This is reinforced by a negative attitude which often tries to solve down-sizing problems by getting rid of the OW in the organization aided

by a voluntary tendency to encourage early retirement and generous replacement rates of income (see above). This finding is ambiguous and also counter-intuitive, appearing to run contra to Hofstede's finding that Spain is relatively feminine.

Power distance, high in Spain, might be thought to favour gerontocratic organizations but in fact depends on which are dominant sectors, which increasingly means younger generations with the ineluctable advance of digitalization. There is no reason to expect high PD to favour older workers of low status. Status by attribution which is fairly high in Spain as noted would favour OW but high PD means low valuation of low status OW.

Family Collectivism suggests that older members of a community are protected thus favouring older groups by offering a cushion when they are forced out or retire from the working community; they are more likely to be protected by family networks on leaving employment.

Uncertainty Avoidance suggests reluctance to change frames for understanding the world which implies resistance to change in the convention that older people should retire at a given age. It is the place of the young to enter and the old to leave the workforce. Since UA is fairly high in Spain (Hofstede claimed it was very high) this would appear to work against the OW.

These weak predictions from the GLOBE model give insights into cultural values and suggest culture change processes to bring about desired results. The older worker in Spain appears not to be heavily discriminated against but on the other hand not much inclined to struggle for the right to worker more years. As noted, national culture generalizations ignore other variables which might be significant including sector, status (domestic, foreign or multi-national), size of organization, ownership (private or public) and must be used with caution.

Etic models also overlook the emic specificities of cultures. In Spain one heritage of the vertical corporativist unions of the Franco period is strong support for workers including a generous pension system with high replacement rate of income (income from benefits / income when employed (Whiteford, 1995: Recio, 2007). This also means older workers are more expensive and harder to get rid of, encouraging early retirement deals.

In comparative terms there is a clear pattern in Europe with Scandinavian and Germanic countries consistently showing higher participation rates than Central, Southern and Eastern Europe. This would probably be consistent with estimates in the GLOBE findings on a European level were a complete comparison to be made: this should be a step in future research.

Corporate culture focus

Corporate culture is a powerful influence at a sub-societal of analysis on attitudes to older people. The degree of aggressive competitiveness of a company for example will be reflected in less supportive attitudes to what is perceived as the declining power of the OW, in particular with respect to the so-called digital divide, which relegates them to obsolescence and assumed inability to learn. One well-known quadrant analysis is Cameron and Quinn's competing values framework based on axes of inward/outward orientation and flexibility/stability, producing a typology of corporate cultures as in Fig 4.

Figure 4: Cameron & Quinn competing values framework

THE CLAN CULTURE

An organization that focuses on internal maintenance with flexibility, concern for people, and sensitivity to customers. Personal like family

THE ADHOCRACY CULTURE

An organization that focuses on external positioning with a high degree of flexibility and individuality. Dynamic and risk taking

Cameron & Quinn model

Flexibility and Discretion

Clan   Adhocracy

50
40
30
20
10

Internal Focus and Integration

External Focus and Differentiation

10
20
30
40
50

Hierarchy   Market

Stability and Control

THE HIERARCHY CULTURE

An organization that focuses on internal maintenance with a need for stability and control. Efficiency and rules

THE MARKET CULTURE

An organization that focuses on external positioning with a need for stability and control. Results oriented

The four quadrants identified are the clan (human concern focus) bureaucracy (rules focus) market (results focus) and adhocracy (responsiveness to change focus). Any organization has all these competing values present but in varying ratios: the authors' methodology involves attributing 100 points across the four types in order to assess this balance between cultural types. In this model we predict the attitude to OW will vary depending on the weighting of the culture types.

Highest levels of understanding and support for OW can be expected in clan and adhocracy culture types than in bureaucratic or market types. They are located in the upper area of the space in the diagram, which tends to seek greater flexibility rather than stability. The greater the degree of internal focus (clan type, on the left of the diagram) we would expect a more supportive attitude for the OW as organizational member, and the greater the orientation to the external environment (adhocracy type on the right of the diagram) we would expect a greater degree of open-ness to using younger or older workers and finding a use for their skills and potential regardless of age. In contrast we would expect the bureaucracy quadrant to favour rule bound attitudes and thus inflexibility in dealing with people of retirement age and market culture types to be merciless in evaluating the attractiveness of OW in contributing to the bottom line.

This fit between corporate culture and attitude to OW is hypothesized but has not yet been tested empirically; a questionnaire for managers has been prepared for this purpose. Its use has been delayed given the high concern for youth unemployment, estimated at 45% in 2011 as noted above.

Diversity discourse approach

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Age diversity management is concerned with the dynamics of different age groups insofar as these groups are increasingly likely to be working together and integrated in organizations. This will increasingly be the case insofar as acceptance of the older worker increases over the years. Diversity management is concerned with managing diverse human resources (that is to say: people), the relationship between diverse groups and the integration of diverse collectives in the organization. According to the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) business risk caused by demographic change (ageing) was cited as the greatest diversity challenge by 48 percent of survey respondents, almost twice the figure for gender three times that for nationality (BCG, 2009).

Following Ely and Thomas (2001), we argue that diversity perspectives are classifiable into three types: integration and learning, access and legitimacy, and discrimination and fairness. The first of these, integration and learning, focuses on diversity as taking advantage of the rich potential of varied inputs and resources offered by diverse groups within organizations and links diversity to work processes as a means of learning and adaptive change. Thus the qualities of loyalty, patience, good customer relations are often adduced.

The second, access and legitimacy sees diversity in organizational work force as serving to fit stakeholder profiles principally the make-up of the market; the argument is that older people within the organization can respond better to the needs of older customers. The third, discrimination and fairness, is the argument for inclusion and support for diverse individuals as having equal rights to fair treatment and has increased in appeal over the last decade.

The diversity argument is influenced in organizations from the critical point of view of inter-group relations which argues that the social perception and value attributed to groups is a function of their power position in society (Alderfer, 1987). Thus as older groups increase in purchasing power and numbers attitudes can be expected to swing to a more age responsiveness.

Cultural changes processes.

If we argue that the role of OW in society, whether Spain or any other, is culturally marked then seeking to change attitudes requires a cultural change process. Cameron & Quinn, whose major book is called "Diagnosing and Changing Organizational cultures", argue for a process of assessing present and desired characteristics of culture using their Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument under six domains, all of which are revealing of attitudes towards groups of people, including OW: apart from the dominant features of each of the cultural types domains to assess are leadership, people management, "organizational glue", that is, the spirit that unites the organization (with strongest cultural associations perhaps), strategic focus and success criteria.

Depending on views of these criteria attitudes towards OW are more or less supportive or potentially discriminatory: for example if a success criterion is the degree of digitalization in the organization (likely to be associated with market type) clearly groups such as OW are at a disadvantage; if the focus is on human development they are more likely to be favoured (clan cultural type). The steps proposed to bring about change are reminiscent of Kotter's 8 change steps involving developing key people and urgency to develop vision

and make it stick (Kotter, 1996): identify key individuals, use exhortatory stories, map out action steps, implement symbolic changes and create an implementation plan.

For the OW group this means mobilizing organizations to champion this group (such as TAEN in UK), publicize the positive achievements of older people – initiatives could come from HR departments – develop vision by articulating positive diversity approach as top management level, symbolic appointments could include older managers and implementation by maintaining an awareness for example using in-house publications, rewards, prizes and other recognition mechanisms. Deutschebank in Germany is a classic example of introducing this process in their organization successfully. http://www.humanresourcesmagazine.com.au/articles/82/0c01fa82.asp

Others companies who have an explicit policy towards age diversity management are l'Incontro an Italian social cooperative employing older maintenance workers as instructors, Fahrion Engineering in Germany who advertized for older engineers, Home Care in UK and T-interim in Belgium (EFILWC, 2006).

Culture tends to resist change for numerous reasons not least institutional inertia. Where labour relations are consensual such as in Germany worker interests are strongly represented and typically resist extending working life (Muller et al, 2010). The arrangements for financing early retirement may also be influential; in a freer labour market such as UK where retirement benefits are also lower the participation fate of OW is high for example: 56% compared with EU average 41% (European Commission, 2005). Disentangling cultural and institutional variables is complex but we can suppose that institutional arrangements tend to be the consequence rather than cause of cultural variation.

Conclusions

Given that there will be a need over coming years to extend working life and to increase the participation rate of workers in the older age groups, especially 55-64 years, organizations, legislators, employers, and associations concerned with the place of work and ageing as social issues can play a major role. The influence of culture in the take up is likely to be important and to clarify this, a study in which cultural influences in different locations are identified could be carried out..

Policies, practices, attitudes and investment in age diversity management in Spanish companies will need to reflect the changing demographic and more slowly cultural context. If it is the case that the average age of workers will increase over the next 20 (to 2030) to 40 years (to 2050) organizations will have to take this into account in expectations, organization and procedures. It is worth bearing in mind that poor or stressful working conditions can in themselves lead to premature ageing (CNCT 2009). This may imply job re-design to maintain older workers in the work force and look after their health at the same time. Physical effort, eye-sight, balance, circulation, breathing and mental processes such as reaction time may be affected (Texas DOI, 2005). This is essentially a human resource management question of matching posts and job demands to available people and offering suitable training where necessary. It also implies the management of tacit knowledge held in employees' heads as individuals, in teams and work functions (CNCT 2009).

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The phenomenon of ageing is a demographic shift of huge importance for the medium term future economically and socially. Governments are already facing major difficulties in financing pensions and health care burdens of the dependent older population. Changes in attitudes involving more socially useful involvement of older people are inevitable and reduction of the cultural resistance is a major area through which to address this issue. There is little doubt that the effort to address the need to increase the participation of older people in economic activity will become easier as the European economies emerge from the worst recession since the 1930s and the demographics become more urgent. As always the cultural aspects of change are likely to appear more slowly than the economic ones.

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THE ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND INTERCULTURAL COOPERATION AND THEIR LINK WITH CROSS-BORDER RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS
(The case with Bulgarian-Romanian Cross-border Cooperation)

Juliana Popova

Abstract

Purpose:

This paper aims to explore existing attitudes towards intercultural dialogue and cooperation among representatives of Bulgarian and Romanian linguistic and cultural communities in order to prove the hypothesis that the effective cross-border links and relationships in the Bulgarian-Romanian border region depend on the favourableness of these attitudes.

Design:

The review of the principles and components of intercultural cooperation, defined as a tolerant intercultural dialogue laid aside stereotypes and prejudices toward otherness, serves as a theoretical base of the research.

The first part of the research presents the attitudes towards intercultural dialogue of the Bulgarian and Romanian citizens as they are reported in the representative study "Intercultural dialogue in Europe". (Flash Eurobarometer 217-The Gallup Organization, 2007).

In the second part a comparison is made between the Bulgarian and Romanian data obtained through inquiry among Bulgarian and Romanian students on the attitudes towards intercultural cooperation and its linguistic, ethno-cultural, psychological and social aspects.

In the final part conclusions are drawn about the interdependence between the existing attitudes towards intercultural dialogue and intercultural cooperation and the effectiveness of cross-border cooperation in the Bulgarian-Romanian border region.

Findings:

The results from Eurobarometer study regarding Bulgarian and Romanian attitudes towards intercultural dialogue indicate the following trends: low intensity of intercultural contacts among the representatives of the two groups of respondents, low level of agreement with the thesis that cultural diversity enriches the life of society, low level of conviction in the benefits of intercultural dialogue.

The attitudes of the Bulgarian and Romanian students towards intercultural cooperation do not indicate any significant differences. Among the linguistic aspects of intercultural cooperation the young people identify the language as barrier for intercultural understanding but at the same time they declare their readiness to use language-mediator in intercultural interactions. Among the more important ethno-cultural aspects of intercultural cooperation the respondents indicate different beliefs and values and different behaviour which inspire a sense of otherness to the greatest extent. Young people think that the uncertainty and anxiety, experienced in intercultural contacts, are among the psychological obstacles for intercultural cooperation. Getting used to the local rules and procedures is considered by the respondents as the greatest social problem in the process of adaptation to a foreign culture.

As a result of data analysis a conclusion is drawn that the attitudes of young people *at a students' age (their early twenties)* towards intercultural cooperation are more

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favourable in comparison with the Bulgarian and Romanian attitudes reported in Eurobarometer study which represents average data rates. As the main participants in cross-border cooperation are typically people from the second group of respondents, their attitudes towards intercultural dialogue, mentioned above, have negative impact on the effectiveness of cross-border links and interactions.

Research limitations/implications:

The two studies, compared in the research, do not apply one and the same instrument of investigation but the closeness in the topic of exploration allows intercultural comparisons.

Practical implications:

The analytical data can be applied in the design of teaching programs for intercultural cooperation in border areas as well as for the purposes of argumentation of project ideas in cross-border program schemes with European funding.

What is original/ what is the value of the paper?

This comparative research is the first of its kind. It can be replicated in other border regions in order to verify its findings.

Keywords: intercultural cooperation, intercultural dialogue, cross-border cooperation, attitudes, Bulgarian-Romanian border region

Introduction

The most salient characteristics of the cultural environment in the era of globalization are the respect and sensitivity towards cultural diversity as inherent peculiarities of multiculturalism. Due to the increasing cross-border migration, the interdependence between the regions in the world and the aspiration of ethnic minorities towards protection of their own cultural identity more and more individuals live in a situation of "multicultural normality" and have to cope with their pluralistic identities. At the same time cultural diversity is connected with the development of some negative processes like xenophobia, discrimination, intolerance which threaten the peaceful existence of human societies. This context increasingly highlights the role of intercultural dialogue and intercultural cooperation for the transformation of cultural diversity in real advantage of the contemporary development of humankind.

The most topical question nowadays is not how to live together but how to live together without losing our identities and our inherent differences. As Yuriy Krasin says: "in the era of globalization the links between countries and civilization areas are so tight that people have to interact with quite different neighbours, not always pleasant and often incompatible. As a result some kind "tolerance of necessity" arises allowing us to familiarize and to understand each other." (Krasin: http://www.ponedelnik.bg/P10_5-6_WEB.pdf)

Since multiculturalism in the era of globalization has no alternative, we have to find the ways and means of achieving a tolerant dialogue between cultures in which distrust is replaced by interest and curiosity and bridging differences through cooperation has become an innate characteristic of intercultural communication.

The current paper is focusing on the general principles of intercultural dialogue and intercultural cooperation and is seeking their practical realization in the communication between neighbours within the frames of a concrete region, namely Bulgarian-Romanian border region along the Danube river.

The paper tries to give answers to the following questions:
- What is the added value of cross-border cooperation except indisputable economic effects for the regions located in the periphery of the nation states?
- How the familiarizing with the cross-border neighbour as well as the shortage of cultural distance encourage the economic and social development in the border regions?

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- How the development of sensitivity toward otherness and the overcoming of ethnocentrism, stereotyping and prejudging lead to intensification of intercultural contacts, establishment of positive attitudes towards intercultural cooperation and hence to acceptance of multiculturalism as an inherent feature of contemporary societies.

The main task of the paper is to check the hypothesis about the link between the favourable attitudes towards intercultural dialogue and the effectiveness of cross-border cooperation.

Theoretical basis of the research

Human societies are in the period of global transformation of the economy, the political and social systems and the set of traditional values. This complex picture of societal development provokes a debate about the social and cultural identification of the individuals as well as about the dialogue between cultures as universal characteristic of multiculturalism. The promotion of the necessity of such dialogue plays an important role among the initiatives of world's intellectual elite and integrates the efforts of international organizations. Here we have in mind the UN initiative "Alliance of Civilizations" in 2005 and the announcement of 2008 as European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The first initiative is in congruence with the approved by the General Assembly of UN "Global Programme for Dialogue between Civilizations" (21st November 2001), aimed at supporting cooperation between religions and engaged with concrete actions for encouraging the culture of peace and dialogue between civilizations on local, national, regional and international level. (http://www.undp.bg/uploads/ File/news/2008/AoC_FastFacts_BG.pdf)

In the spirit of the efforts to formulate coherent and long-term policy for promotion of intercultural dialogue in Europe as well as between Europe and neighbouring regions a White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue prepared by the Council of Europe is created. In this document the concept "intercultural dialogue" is defined as open and respectful exchange of points of view between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures which leads to deeper understanding of the global perception of the Other. (White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, Council of Europe, 2008)

Other topical definition of intercultural dialogue is: A set of specific encounters in real space and time between individuals and/or groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic affiliations aiming at exploring, testing and increasing understanding, awareness, empathy and respect. The final purpose of intercultural dialogue is to establish a cooperative and benevolent environment for overcoming the political and social tensions. (http://rainbowpaper.labforculture.org)

Specific articles of *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights* (2000) reflect some peculiarities of the intercultural dialogue as: equality, lack of discrimination, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, freedom of speech and movement. This interpretation demonstrates that in the context of intercultural dialogue the abidance of human rights (the rights of the individual) and cultural rights (recognition of specific and/or pluralistic identities) are of equal importance.

The main concept which is used in the description and analysis of the dialogue between cultures is tolerance interpreted as understanding and respect towards a different way of life, different behaviour, customs, beliefs, opinions and ideas. (Bardier, 2007) Tolerance and intercultural dialogue are the main components in the content range of the notion "intercultural cooperation". However when relate intercultural cooperation to its practical realization within the frames of a border region, it is necessary to interpret its content in close connection with the term "border".

The borders typically separate places in terms of politics, economics, culture, history. The role that physical boundaries play in defining territorial identity is a key topic in

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border studies. Borders function as the most apparent means for making sense of the 'outside' world as they feed into the social identity of people by establishing shared values, such as collective images, ideas, and feelings of belonging. (Houtum, 2000).

Oscar Martinez (Martinez, 1994: 1–15) proposed a typology of four types of borderlands based on the border's permeability and on the intensity of cross-border interactions:

- alienated borderlands – in them borders are closed and cross-border contacts are negligible;
- co-existent and interdependent borderlands – they are characterised by higher degree of cross-border contacts.
- integrated borderlands - peaceful relations, economic interdependence and ample cross-border interaction prevail in them.

In the era of globalisation there is talk of the disappearance of borders or their declining significance (Anderson, 1996, Ohmae, 1994 and Shapiro and Alker, 1996). On the other hand, a growing number of scientists analyse borders as socially constructed distinctions between 'us and them' (Berg, 2000: 154–165; Leimgruber, 1991: 43–62).

The cultural aspect of the border is always relative to what is on the other side of it, which implies that it may be represented as cultural or mental distance. (Barth, 1995) For instance, in a study on the determinants of economic cross-border relationships of small and medium sized companies in border regions comprising parts of Belgium and the Netherlands, (Houtum, 2000: 57–83) it was found that people's mental distance towards the other side, as well as their perception of the border's symbolic value, affected the number of such relationships significantly and in a negative fashion. In this sense, interpreting borders merely as physical dividers of space seems inadequate concerning matters of cross-border cooperation and integration.

Through its institutions, the European Union brings to the foreground the importance of cross-border cooperation by turning to its specific instruments. The main objective is preventing the isolation of border areas by promoting cross-border cooperation relations, considering that these neighbouring areas face a similar situation, which strengthens the development of cross-border relations in different fields of interest on both sides of the border. (Toca, 2010: 204-206,211-212)

Cross-border cooperation (CBC) is a key priority of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). It aims at reinforcing cooperation between member states and partner countries along the external border of the European Union.
The European CBC strategy has four key objectives:
- to promote economic and social development in border areas
- to address common challenges
- to ensure efficient and secure borders
- to promote people-to-people cooperation
(http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-cross-border/index_en.htm)

Many West European border regions have been characterised as bridging zones that encourage citizen interaction and exchange. Cross-border contacts between border populations are presented as an avenue towards improved perceptions and good neighbourly relations (Henrikson, 2000: 121–147; Newman, 2003: 13–25).

However in the border regions in South-Eastern Europe the picture is not so optimistic. For example, due to the European funding for programmes for cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and Romania, the contacts between people of the neigbouring countries in the spheres of business and infrastructure have been intensified. But the intercultural dialogue still suffers from stereotyping, lack of trust, lack of common

identification with border region and as a result the effectiveness in the implementation of the cross-border projects is not sufficient.

We can argue that for these regions is valid one of the paradoxes of globalization – the more compressed network of international and cross-border links and interactions, the more vividly manifested regional and local cultural differences. (http://www.rodon.org/relig-090521123351)

In connection with the interpretation of intercultural cooperation in border regions we can mention two theories: Contact theory of Allport (Allport, 1979) and Cultural familiarity theory (Li and Guisinger, 1991: 209–224; Shenkar, 2001: 519–535; Lee, Shenkar & Li, 2008: 1117-1125).

At the heart of contact theory lies the notion that encounters between members of different social groups improve the relations between these groups.

Cultural familiarity theory holds the statement that people/firms are less likely to invest in culturally distant countries, and that they show poorer performance when they do this. (Li and Guisinger, 1991: 209–224; Shenkar, 2001: 519–535).

If we apply these theories to Bulgarian-Romanian border region along the Danube river we can say that with the accession of the two countries to the European Union and elimination of the internal borders the movement of Bulgarian and Romanian citizens in the two directions has been intensified. The increased number of cross-border contacts leads to positive effects in business development, supported as well by the increasing number of successful cross-border projects with European funding. On the other hand, in spite of the geographical proximity, we can argue that the cultural distance between the two countries retains its high level. The mental barriers still exist and hinder the cooperation and the establishment of perspective and sustainable links and relationships in the border region.

In order to find out the reasons for the mentioned above negative trends as well as to identify some opportunities for the improvement of the situation in the Bulgarian-Romanian border region, the work firstly analyzes the empirical results from Flash Eurobarometer survey about intercultural dialogue in Europe, in which representative data for Bulgaria and Romania are collected (Flash EB No 217. Intercultural dialogue in Europe, The Gallup Organization, 2007), and secondly the data from an inquiry about the attitudes of the Bulgarian and Romanian students towards intercultural dialogue are presented.

Experimental basis of the research

Flash Eurobarometer survey on Intercultural Dialogue in Europe (No 217), asked citizens to report their patterns of interaction with people of different cultural backgrounds, and tried to find out their general attitude towards cultural diversity.

The survey's fieldwork was carried out between 13 and 17 of November, 2007. The survey included over 27,000 randomly selected citizens aged 15 years and above from the twenty-seven Member States of the European Union. Interviews, approximately 1,000 in each country, were predominantly carried out via fixed telephone,.

The first section of the inquiry was devoted to people's interaction with representatives of different cultures. The citizens who reported the highest ratios of intercultural contacts were from: Luxembourg (82%); Ireland (77%); the UK (76%): and Austria (75%). The countries reporting the lowest level of interaction were Estonia (43%) and Romania (44%). For Bulgaria 48 % of the respondents reported such interactions. About the specificity of intercultural contacts most respondents indicate people of different ethnic origin as those they interact with. Men; younger age groups; those with higher levels of education; city-dwellers; and those who study or work are most likely to report some contact with someone of a different ethnicity, religion or nationality. (Flash EB No 217, 2007)

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In connection of the presented data we could comment the relatively low rates of intercultural contacts, registered for Bulgaria and Romania. It is not so difficult to indicate the reasons for this. The first reason is the short period of membership of the two countries in the EU and the long historical experience of isolation and restrictions in the free movement of people across borders. The regular communication with representatives of other cultures is rather an exception for the Bulgarians and Romanians than a normal everyday practice. Secondly, we have to point out the typical of the Balkan people focus on their in-group (family, relatives, close friends) and some kind of anxiety in the encounters with otherness in all its types: cultural, ethnic, religious, etc. Thirdly, the direction of migration in Bulgaria and Romania – from inside to outside – does not contribute to increasing the cultural diversity in the two countries. In the near future we couldn't expect any changes in the direction of migration. Therefore the indicated above results are due to objective reasons but not to the subjective reluctance of the Bulgarians and Romanians for intercultural contacts.

Another group of questions in the Eurobarometer survey is dedicated to the attitudes towards cultural diversity. The countries with highest ratios on the statement that the presence of people from various backgrounds enriches the cultural life of their nation are: Ireland (84 %), Luxemburg (84 %), France (82 %), Germany (77 %) and Finland (77 %). The highest levels of disagreement with this assumption are found in Malta, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania but even there more than half of the citizens think that people with different cultural backgrounds enrich cultural life of the country (the ratios range from 52% to 57%).

In spite of the positive trends in relation to the attitudes towards cultural diversity, registered for Bulgaria and Romania, the number of the respondents who think that the cultural diversity does not enrich the cultural life of the country is not so small – for Bulgaria rather not enriched 27 %, not enriched – 11 %, for Romania - rather not enriched – 19 %, not enriched – 11 %. The possible reasons for this are the existing prejudices towards the representatives of some ethnic groups in these countries, e.g. the gypsies. These negative perceptions have their impact on the attitudes towards the representatives of other cultures as a whole.

Another interesting question in the Eurobarometer survey is for the benefits of intercultural dialogue. It was seen as particularly beneficial (at least for future generations) in Sweden and Denmark (both 91% overall agreement); Ireland (90%); Hungary, Luxembourg and Portugal (all 89%). The option "*very much agree*" with the benefits of intercultural dialogue was chosen by 45 % from the Irish and Austrian respondents, 43 % from the German respondents and 40 % from the Czech respondents. Even in the countries where the general agreement levels were the lowest, most people agreed that such exchanges could be beneficial for young people (Romania 63%; Malta and Bulgaria: both 70%).) At the same time Bulgarian respondents were the most likely to agree, by far, that young people should continue to respect family traditions (74% were in *total agreement* and another 21% agreed *more modestly*, 95% overall). This is a very indicative phenomenon for the Bulgarian respondents. Their value hierarchy is dominated by traditional values like family. They rely on younger generations for the acquisition and distribution of contemporary values like respect towards cultural diversity. Here we can find the main difference between the old and the new member states of the EU. The first can estimate the benefit of intercultural dialogue on the basis of existing intercultural experience, while the second give their assessments on the basis of future expectations.

Similar conclusions can be drawn regarding the data about the attitudes towards intercultural dialogue among the respondents in the inquiry. The *cosmopolitan* mindset is more typical of the EU-15 (and especially in: Denmark 56%; Sweden 48%; and the

Netherlands 47%). On the other hand, citizens of the new Member States tend to be less cosmopolitan and more pro diversity in their attitudes, this being most characteristic of the Polish (76%), and Cypriot (74%) respondents. Only 3 % from the Bulgarian respondents declare a cosmopolitan attitude towards intercultural dialogue, while for the Romanians this percent is 30. At the same time 66 % from the Bulgarians argue that their choice is *pro diversity and keep roots*, while for the Romanians this percent is 32. This difference between Bulgarians and Romanians in relation to cosmopoliteness can be explained with the cited above adherence of the Bulgarians to family traditions and their affiliation to the local community.

The Eurobarometer survey also gives an answer to the question: "What is the meaning of intercultural dialogue for the people (EU27)". Most common answers are, as follows:

Communication among different communities – 23 %
Cooperation, exchange, transnational mobility – 13 %
Living together, knowing and understanding different cultures – 11 %
Cultural events and access to culture – 10 %
Coexistence and cultural diversity – 9%
Shared European culture – 8%
Dealing with linguistic diversity - 5
Tolerance, equal rights - 4
Education, exchange of information and ideas - 3
Dialogue in the sphere of politics and economics -3
Immigration/minorities - 3
Preserving traditions - 1
Other – 8 % (Flash EB No 217, 2007)

The notions of the European citizens about intercultural dialogue cover the whole content range of the concept. It is connected mostly with the communication, cooperation and understanding between the representatives of different cultures. This way the communicative dimension of the intercultural dialogue can be identified. Apart from this we can point out its value dimension, connected with respect towards cultural and linguistic diversity, tolerance and equal rights and shared values of the European culture.

As a whole the Eurobarometer survey supports the theses of the current research in the following directions:

- It identifies the attitudes of the representative part of Bulgarian and Romanian citizens towards intercultural dialogue. These attitudes indicate insufficient openness of the societies, affiliation to local and traditional values, lack of sufficient intercultural experience;
- The societal expectations for changes in the attitudes towards cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are concentrated in the younger generations of Bulgaria and Romania. As we will see bellow, this conclusion is supported by the results from an inquiry, conducted among 60 Bulgarian and 60 Romanian students. The study is not a representative one, but it gives information about the main trends in the attitudes of the young people from the two countries towards intercultural cooperation.

A specifically designed questionnaire is used in the inquiry. It consists of 40 questions. 36 of which are close- ended, 1 is open ended and 3 are passport questions. The questions in the questionnaire are divided in four groups related to the linguistic, ethno-cultural, psychological and social aspects of intercultural cooperation. After simple

statistical processing of the data using the formula for percentage part**/**whole = %**/**100, the following observations on the results can be presented:

Linguistic aspects of intercultural cooperation

- The Bulgarian and Romanian respondents are almost equally divided in their answers to the question if speaking different languages in different cultures is a barrier for intercultural cooperation. At the same time the majority of participants in the inquiry think that the usage of language-mediator, e.g. English, facilitates the intercultural cooperation.

- The Bulgarian respondents pay almost equal attention to verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication (42,9 % against 36,5 %), while the prevailing part of the Romanian respondents (61,9%) focus their attention on verbal communication. We can find the possible explanation to this difference in the concept "context of culture" according to Hall. (Hall and Hall, 1990) Although the Bulgarian and Romanian cultures are characterized with high context, its levels are more visible in the Bulgarian culture which means that for the Bulgarians not only words are important in the exchange of messages, but also non-verbal signal and the contextual information.

- Both groups of respondents need more time to think out the message before its transfer to a partner from different culture but the percent of the Bulgarians who do this is greater (76,2% BG against 53,9% RO).

- The prevailing part of the Bulgarian and Romanian respondents seek the confirmation of the partner from the other culture that the message is understood. For feedback most Bulgarians rely on non-verbal signals, while most Romanians require non-verbal and verbal confirmation that the message is understood.

- Both groups of respondents use simpler sentences when communicating with partners from other cultures.

- In relation to the used words and phrases which eventually would complicate communication with a partner from another culture (proverbs, sexist and improper words, etc.), 52,4 % from the Bulgarians declare that they don't use similar linguistic forms. The same percent of Romanians argue that they use jokes in the process of communication and another 36,5 % don't use similar words and phrases.

- The importance of non-verbal communication in the national culture is evaluated differently by the two groups of respondents. According to 78,9 % from the Bulgarians it has great importance for the representatives of the Bulgarian linguistic and cultural community. The significance of non-verbal communication is underlined by 58,8 % from the Romanian respondents, while another 30,2 % consider its neutral importance in their culture. These results support the statement above about the different role which the context of communication plays in the two cultures. (Hall and Hall, 1990)

Ethno-cultural aspects of intercultural cooperation

- The representatives of both groups would communicate in different ways with a partner from Western Europe and a partner from Africa but this is a more valid approach for Romanian students (38,1 % BG – 50,8 % RO). As the main reason for their behaviour the respondents indicate the difference in values.

- In communication with a partner from another culture a great number of the respondents from the two groups (69,8 % BG – 63,5 % RO) compare his/her behaviour with the behaviour of the representatives of their own culture. This fact is relatively unfavourable because it is connected with the ethnocentrism of the

respondents which causes a number of negative phenomena like prejudices, discrimination, xenophobia, etc.

- The prevailing part of the representatives of the two cultures need little time to establish friendly relationships with a foreigner. Young people think that the sharing of personal information is a factor for familiarizing with the representative of another culture. In this case more Bulgarian respondents are convinced in this statement (49,2 % BG – 31,7 % RO). A great number of the representatives of the two cultures consider the existing of preliminary information for the partner's culture a necessary condition for successful communication with him/her.

- Bulgarians qualify a person as different, firstly on the basis of the difference in values and beliefs, and secondly – on the basis of different behaviour. For Romanian the first distinctive feature is the difference in traditions, and the second – values and beliefs. A very positive fact for the two groups of respondents is that an insignificant percentage of them identify the difference on the basis of external physical features. Another favourable prerequisite for intercultural cooperation is that the prevailing part of the respondents approaches the Others with interest and curiosity and not with avoidance or keeping distance.

Psychological aspects of intercultural cooperation

- Almost equal percent of the respondents from Bulgaria and Romania initiate contacts and long-term relationships with representatives from other cultures (50,8 % BG – 47,6 % RO).

- More Romanians than Bulgarians react verbally or non-verbally in the appearance of intercultural differences but the reaction of both groups of respondents is rather of curiosity than of hostility or surprise.

- In the appearance of a psychological barrier in the communication process the Bulgarian and the Romanian respondents use different tools for breaking the ice. Firstly, they use jokes (57,1 % RO – 38,1 %BG) and secondly – self-disclosure, the sharing of personal information with the partner with the expectation that he/she will do the same (38,1 % BG – 25,4 % RO).

- In an unpleasant conversation with a partner from a different culture a great percentage of the Bulgarian and Romanian respondents (44,4) will continue the talk because of politeness. But also a large percentage of them (47,6 % RO – 39,7 %BG) will apologize and will promise to continue the conversation later. This reaction indicates a level of intolerance demonstrated by the respondents.

- The prevailing part of the respondents report about excitement in the communication with a partner from different culture (65,1 % BG – 49,2 % RO) but another 33,3 % from the Bulgarians and Romanians experience uncertainty.

- The respondents from the two cultures agree on the statement that in a conversation with a partner from a different culture they would avoid politics as a topic (47,4 % BG – 50,8 % RO). This result is in congruence with the dominating trend among young people in the whole of Europe to keep aside from political life. Secondly, the respondents would avoid the family as a topic of conversation and here more Romanians would do this (25,4 % RO – 15,8 % BG). If we remind the question above about the sharing of personal information, we can draw a conclusion that the Romanians more strongly protect their personal territory which means that their individualistic values are more strongly expressed. (Hofstede, 1991)

<u>Social aspects of intercultural cooperation</u>

- According to the respondents from both cultures the social characteristics of the foreign partner (age, education, social status) are not so important in the communication with him/her while finding the language of communication is the most significant factor.
- The young people from both cultures would provide access for the representative of a foreign culture to their closest circle (90,5 % BG – 73 % RO).
- Another positive characteristic of the reported results is that in their adaptation to a foreign culture the young people from Bulgaria and Romania look for contacts and friendships with the representatives of this culture (71,4 % BG – 73 % RO).
- According to the prevailing part of the respondents the most serious challenge in their adaptation to a foreign culture is to get accustomed to local rules of behaviour and everyday routine activities.

Conclusions

On the basis of the empirical results above the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The attitudes of the young people from Bulgaria and Romania towards intercultural cooperation are favourable and would contribute to its intensification.
- The respondents from the two countries have intercultural experience which allows them to overcome communication barriers. The young people realize that it is necessary to adapt their communication messages to the partner from other culture, e.g. to think out better their messages, to seek feedback of the understanding, etc.
- The young people identify intercultural differences mainly in the sphere of values, beliefs and traditions. The external physical features are an insignificant factor for intercultural cooperation for them which means that discrimination and racism are not typical of this age group.
- The respondents from the two countries demonstrate an attitude towards Otherness which is mature and free of prejudices. They react with interest and curiosity to the appearance of intercultural differences. Most common associations of the concept "Other" among them are *different, unknown, interesting* and *new*, which means that they perceive the encounters with Otherness as a challenge and tool for familiarizing with and bridging differences.
- On the other hand together with the underlined positive attitudes towards intercultural cooperation the results indicate some relatively unfavourable trends as well. Firstly, the identified ethnocentrism among the prevailing part of the respondents has to be discussed. Although the focus on one's own cultural group is a universal characteristic of human societies, young people have to be aware of its negative consequences and to exclude stereotyping and prejudices from their behaviour. This can be achieved mainly through education and training in intercultural communication. Furthermore, the communication with a foreign partner of a small part from the respondents hides a danger of conflict (e.g. they use sexist and improper words in their conversation). This can be avoided also in the study of intercultural communication which must be included in all forms and levels of education in the two countries. And last but not least we have to mention the identified tendency towards intolerant behaviour among some of the respondents. Probably their communication with partners from their own culture is also intolerant which imposes the requirements concerning the establishment of communication skills as a whole.

- On the basis of the reported results some **insignificant differences** between Bulgarian and Romanian respondents can be pointed out. They are due to the specificity in value orientation and mental programming of the two societies. These differences are reflected in the table bellow:

Table 1

Intercultural differences between Bulgarian and Romanian participants in the students' study

Bulgarians	Romanians
More strongly expressed high context of the culture. Examples: - the young people focus on verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication - they need more time to think out the communication message sent to a partner from another culture - for feedback showing that the message was understood young people from Bulgaria rely mainly on non-verbal signals - non-verbal communication has great importance in the Bulgarian culture	**More weakly expressed high context of the culture.** Examples: - the young people focus mainly on verbal aspects of communication - they need shorter time to think out the communication message sent to a partner from another culture - for feedback showing that the message was understood young people from Romania rely both on verbal and non-verbal signals - non-verbal communication has less importance in the Romanian culture
Weaker individualism - A greater percentage of the Bulgarians think that sharing personal information is a factor for familiarizing with the representative of a foreign culture; - A greater percentage of the Bulgarians use self-disclosure (sharing personal information) for breaking the ice in case of a communication problem - A smaller percentage of the Bulgarians would avoid family as a topic for conversation with the representative of a foreign culture - A greater percentage of the Bulgarians would incorporate the representative of a foreign culture into their closest circle - A greater percentage of the Bulgarians would look for their compatriots in order to communicate with them in a long stay in the foreign culture.	**Stronger individualism** - A smaller percentage of the Romanians think that sharing personal information is a factor for familiarizing with the representative of a foreign culture - A smaller percentage of the Romanians use self-disclosure (sharing personal information) for breaking the ice in case of a communication problem - A greater percentage of the Romanians would avoid family as a topic for conversation with the representative of a foreign culture - A smaller percentage of the Romanians would incorporate the representative of a foreign culture into their closest circle - A smaller percentage of the Romanians would look for their compatriots in order to communicate with them in a long stay in the foreign culture
More assertive communicative style and greater tolerance toward the foreign partner - Young people from Bulgaria demonstrate stronger interest in the understanding of their message on behalf of the foreign partner	**More aggressive communicative style and smaller tolerance toward the foreign partner** - Young people from Romania demonstrate weaker interest in the understanding of their message on behalf of the foreign partner – they expect asking questions in case of non-understanding

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- A greater percentage of the Bulgarians don't use in their communication with a foreign partner words and phrases which would complicate the understanding	- A smaller percentage of the Romanians don't use in their communication with a foreign partner words and phrases which would complicate the understanding
- A smaller percentage of the Bulgarians would communicate in a different way with a partner from Western Europe and a partner from Africa	- A greater percentage of the Romanians would communicate in a different way with a partner from Western Europe and a partner from Africa
- A smaller percentage of the Bulgarians would react verbally or non-verbally in the appearance of intercultural differences	- A greater percentage of the Romanians would react verbally or non-verbally in the appearance of intercultural differences

While the first two groups of differences between Bulgarian and Romanian young people are culture-specific, determined by the value orientation of the societies and difficult to be changed, the last group contains characteristics which are an object of study and development. We can argue that the reported results in favour of Bulgarians are due to the fact that the latter have studied the module "Intercultural communication" in their period of higher education and as a result of this they have developed a greater empathy and tolerance in the intercultural dialogue. Therefore we have a confirmation of our conclusion concerning the establishment of competencies for successful intercultural cooperation through purposeful intercultural education and training.

In accordance with the contact theory of Allport, cited in the theoretical part of this paper our expectation is that the attitudes of the young people from Bulgaria and Romania towards intercultural dialogue and intercultural cooperation will become more and more favourable because of the sustainable trends of mobility, an increasing number of contacts with the representatives of other cultures and the enriched intercultural experience. This will have a positive impact on the cross-border cooperation in the region.

In relation to the older generations, as it was indicated in the average data of Eurobarometer survey, their attitudes towards intercultural cooperation are not so positive and in this sense do not encourage sufficiently the intercultural cooperation. The reasons for these attitudes were already discussed and was concluded that they have mainly objective character. If we remind the cultural familiarity theory, we can argue that the necessary condition for the improvement of the business and investment climate in the Bulgarian-Romanian border region is the shortage of the cultural distance between the two countries. In spite of the geographical proximity, the mental barriers still exist because of stereotypes and not knowing the neighbour. One of the possible instruments for positive changes in the cross-border situation are the so called "soft" projects with European funding, that is projects which include "people-to-people" actions in the sphere of education and culture. They can contribute to the creation of common identity in the Bulgarian-Romanian border region and in this way encourage the fruitful intercultural dialogue. Another possible instrument is the state policy of the two countries. For example, the existing bridge tax on the Bulgarian-Romanian border is an obstacle for the free movement of citizens from the two countries. From 1st July 2011 the Bulgarian government decreased the amount of the tax, but the same steps have to be undertaken by the Romanian side as well.

Anyway, we have many optimistic signals about the opportunities for the development of Bulgarian-Romanian intercultural cooperation in the border regions, namely:

- the increasing number of business partnership between Bulgarian and Romanian firms;
- the increasing number of joint European funded projects;
- the increasing tourist flow in both directions;
- the increasing number of people from both sides of the Danube, who want to study the language of the neighbour.

The authorities on national, regional and local level in the two countries have to transform these positive signals in a purposeful policy in order to encourage the economic and social development of the border regions in Bulgaria and Romania.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF STEREOTYPES TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
(The Case of Bulgaria)

Lyudmila Dicheva

The goal of this paper is to examine the impact of negative and positive stereotyping in international relations concerning Bulgaria's intercultural experience from the 19th century to the present using primary and secondary sources such as the British consular reports, British travel writing, internet coverage, scholarly articles. It puts forward the following questions:

- Do prejudices and beliefs about a foreign country reflect on inter-state relations?
- What can the consequences of positive and negative stereotyping in international relations (IR) be concerning a small country like Bulgaria?

Stereotypes still continue to dominate international relations which makes small countries like Bulgaria feel concerned about the image they have to build up in a changing world, in a changing Europe hoping for realistic assessments on behalf of its international/ European/ EU partners.

According to the American publicist, Walter Lippmann (1922), the creator of the concept of stereotype, stereotypes are routine judgments, simple and often insufficiently grounded but defended by many people with great conviction. In fact Lippmann is fairly positive when he tries to explain the role of a stereotype as something useful and inevitable, something that helps us perceive the world around us with greater easiness before the moment of actual seeing. The positive role of stereotypes can then be seen in the fact that they give a standardized conception or image of a product, person or country which may make it easier for communicators to adapt to something unfamiliar to them. For Lippmann stereotypes are based on our prejudices which help us to perceive the world around us led by our real or unreal images of things. Thus stereotypes can be either positive or negative. Most of those about other nations contain both negative and positive attributes. In his book "Images of Nations and International Public Relations" Michael Kunczik (1990) argues that there is no clear difference in defining concepts such as attitude, stereotype, prejudice or image. Authors often mix them or there is almost an entire overlapping between them. The image should be interpreted as something created and cultivated by its possessor be it a person, a product, a nation, a people. Prejudices and stereotypes can be seen as being created by the environment and are usually ascribed. Kenneth Boulding (1965) goes further when he assumes that the conception of images involves their present day meanings, past aspects and future expectations. National image can therefore be understood as what one believes to be the factual truth about a certain country or its people. The stereotype is a simplified and stable image associated with race, religion, ethnic origin, age, sex, past histories or nationality ascribed to all members of a given culture or group. We can notice that the historical component of a national image is of crucial importance. It is often based on travel narratives, past histories, memories of past events recorded in diaries, newspapers or journals and entirely depends on the attitudes, prejudices and deliberate goals of those who produced the written accounts. National images are often coined on the basis of false events ascribed to a country or nation with the only goal to create a negative or positive impression about a country and its people. This suggests why images and stereotypes may be so important in international relations.

Why are stereotypes in an international context so persistent with respect to Bulgaria and how does this reflect on the international image of the country?

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Finding No1: A nation's image usually depends less on the nation judged than on those doing the judgement (Kunczik, 1990)**.**

Let us cast a quick glance at how Bulgarians have been assessed by some of their neighbours, distant or close in the course of a century. The immensely idealised image of the Bulgarians in the works of XIX th century Croatian and Slovenian writers such as Ivan Kukulevich-Saktsinski(1816-1889), Petar Preradovich and Anton Ashkerts is an obvious attempt to depict the Southern Slavs on the Balkans as a race capable of enduring the hardships of centuries old imperial pressure without losing their identity and sense of justice.

Bulgarian readers owe much to another Croatian writer, Stepan Radich, a graduate in Political Science whose book "Bulgaria Revived" published in 1917 reveals the Bulgarian character in historical perspective. He creates an extremely favourable image of Bulgarians as people of gentle, peaceful, industrious, hospitable, frugal , sober-minded, moderate, reserved, open to innovation and progress disposition. He sums up Bulgarian historical experience and philosophy in a way that has never lost its attraction for us- the farther from Asia, the closer to Europe! Radich is not less impressed by the activity of educated women in Bulgaria as part of the Bulgarian intelligentsia and sees in them one of the vehicles for the country's remarkable advance in most of the spheres of human progress. Religious and ethnic tolerance are traits of the Bulgarian character he puts a special focus on. Analysing Bulgarian tolerance he doesn't miss the opportunity to stress that it is a value shared by all Southern Slavs who look at faith from its moral side and believe in one universal God who is neither Turkish, nor Jewish or Christian but a Father of all people. That's how Bulgarians looked like in the eyes of a Croatian intellectual 75 years ago just four or five years before the first national catastrophe (the book was actually written in 1913)

Finding No2: The closer the image of a nation to another, the greater the probability for them to understand each other. (After Hofstaetter (1957)) The positive descriptions of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians by narrators from the Western Balkans are a proof that the expectations of those image builders were very close to what they saw or felt about the country they described. In relation to this we can come to the idea that the fewer the conflicting points between countries and the farther they stand , the more positive their images of the country they judge. Something we have to remember when we mention the travel accounts of the Pole Boleslav Blazhek(1928).

Finding No 3: Descriptions of nations or countries whether favourable or unfavourable are often loaded with the ideological partialities, weaknesses or insights of those who produce them.

Although evidence of this type is highly questionable and often deemed as having no connection with scientific inquiries, we are inevitably drawn to it since such community images determine to a great extent our position in the European/Balkan family of nations. The fairly hostile attitude in Greek historical or travel writing to Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the course of a century (1860-1970) stems from the intensive efforts of the Greek state and society towards political and national unification and the perception of Greek history as a unique blend of Ancient , Byzantine and Modern Greek history. Hence the traditionally 'barbarous' image of the Bulgarians persists and remains unchanged. Bulgarians are deemed as incapable of assimilating the fruits of modern civilisation. They are backward, slow-witted, clumsy and uneducated and do not understand the essentials of high culture. Bulgarian women were not spared, either. True representatives of the Orient Bulgarian women are trying to become emancipated or acquire West European values in the worst

way possible ruining old family traditions. The mask of Europeanness cannot hide the Oriental residue within the Bulgarian character abundantly illustrated with examples of harsh political reality during Stambolov's term of office as Prime Minister. Bulgarian obedience and discipline are opposed to the Greek liberal spirit and love of freedom. Yet within such a highly critical perception of a neighbouring state the researcher can find some, if not many, positively assessed achievements of Bulgaria. .Kazanzakis for example dares to acknowledge the successful building up of a national system of education and the competent governance of the country in the beginning of the century. Of course, this unexpected achievements of the neighbours the author explains with their unprecedented nationalism. As if Greek nationalism had never existed! By no means these descriptions are stereotypes of distinctly unflattering type, embodying the fears of Greek society or rather of Greek cultural and political elites of their Nothern neighbours involved in the fierce competition for supremacy on the Balkans.

The image of Bulgaria under Turkish rule is well reflected in British consular reports. Being in favour of the 'balance of power' principle in the international security system of the time, Britain had its strategic interests in sustaining the status quo called the Turkish Empire. Although most of the information presented to the British political elite concerns the interests of Britain in Turkish imperial lands, the name of Bulgaria appears always when the reports give account of the ethnic and religious characteristics of the population living on this territory. However the area referred to as Bulgaria is ascribed characteristics typical of the empire of which it is a part. For example the British consul in Varna Saint Claire(1865) admits that 'the condition of the town is not worth describing regardless of its strategic position' which directly suggests the overall backwardness of the empire. In 1868 Vice Consul Mayers in Varna highly evaluates the reforms of the Ruse governor Midhat Pasha but notes that the good effect was lost after he was replaced by a new governor who did nothing to preserve the achievements of his predecessor. Corruption on all levels of Ottoman administration was unprecedented. In 1870 cattle stealing in the Shumla (today's Shumen) region turned out linked with the local administration which forced the new governor to stop investigations. Vice Consul Mayers expresses his regret that Ottoman authorities do not in the least care to improve the condition of agriculture and the infrastructure of the region. All consulates express their indignation at the lack of reliable statistical data on the commercial dealings in the empire. The management of the Ottoman empire is deemed as poor and incompetent with strongly corrupted customs offices, courts and administrative institutions.

After the liberation of Bulgaria from Turkish rule the tone of the consular reports is substantially changed. The image of Bulgaria created in them contains again such elements as backwardness or lack of civilisational brilliance but this time one can feel the hope that the Bulgarian people will finally make their civilisational choice. Charles Harding, second secretary to the General Consulate of Britain in Sofia (1887), marks not without a great interest three important events in Bulgarian history: the unification of the Principality with Eastern Rumelia which he calls a revolution, the Serbian War against Bulgaria (1885) and the abdication of Prince Alexander. The last one reduced the credit rating of Bulgaria in Europe. He claims that the population in Bulgaria ' is waking up for the ideas of the West and feels the need of a western type of civilization.

Finding No 4: Negative stereotypes and images of Bulgaria are very easy to sustain but difficult to change.
Great powers humiliated Bulgaria soon after its liberation from the Turks at the Congress of Berlin (1878) because the leading principle in international relations was the 'balance of power' and too big a state in the core of the Balkan Peninsula posed a threat to the first

comers into the family of independent states. First come, first served! The Bulgarian state could not become the home of all Bulgarians living outside its borders. The unfair division of the peninsula caused the First Balkan War (1912). Some 27 years before the unification of the Principality of Bulgaria with Eastern Rumelia (1885) Austria-Hungary urged the Serbian Kingdom to invade Bulgaria. The result was two victories – one military over Serbia and the recognition of the unification of the two Bulgarias by the Great Powers. To show the hypocrisy of war and civilization George Bernard Shaw produced his play pleasant "Arms and the Man" set in Bulgaria during the Serbo-Bulgarian War. In the play he gives a vivid description of the main character Raina, her room, her father Major Petkoff , her mother Catherine and their notorious library. Shaw's scathing irony when he describes 19th century Bulgaria should obviously have done a lot to create a negative stereotype of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians. The description of Raina's room is unique. It is decorated in the worst possible taste, a taste reflected in the mistress's (Catherine Petkoff's) desire to seem as cultured and as Viennese as possible. But the room is furnished with only cheap bits of Viennese things; the other pieces of furniture come from the Turkish Ottoman Empire, reflecting the long occupation by the Turks of the Balkan peninsula. On the balcony, standing and staring at the romantic beauty of the night, "intensely conscious that her own youth and beauty are a part of it," is young Raina Petkoff. Just inside, conspicuously visible, is a box of chocolate creams, which will play an important part later in this act and which will ultimately become a symbol of the type of war which Shaw will satirize. Raina boasts about her family's library, "the only one in Bulgaria" (Shaw 1303, act 1). Shaw writes: "It is not much of a library. Its literary equipment consists of a single fixed shelf stocked with old paper covered novels, broken backed, coffee stained, torn and thumbed; and a couple of little hanging shelves with a few gifts books on them" (Act 3).

Having adopted the chronological approach to tracing sources for stereotypes associated with Bulgaria we will refer to 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica- a truly reputable source of information concerning the period before the First World War. Modern Bulgarians will probably be shocked to find out that their ancestors were considered a race 'possessing few salient physical characteristics', 'men being rather below medium height, compactly built and very muscular, among the peasantry'. Women are described as 'generally deficient in beauty' and quickly growing old'. To set Bulgarian readers at ease we should remind them that recent anthropological research places Bulgarians among the tallest people of the XXth century with the majority of people today a lot above medium height including younger women. How did the British have to perceive the far off Bulgarians soon after the latter proclaimed themselves independent and became a constitutional monarchy in 1908. Let us assume that most of the character traits attributed to the Bulgarians on page 777 of 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica did exist. The authors of the entry relied on a majority of Bulgarian sources and contributors so we have to be very careful not to put blame on them for the final version of our national portrait. The description involves a number of comparisons with neighbouring Servians, Romanians and Greeks in which Bulgarians can hardly be ranked higher than their neighbours. We are *'less quick-witted than the Greeks', ' more prone to idealism than the Servians', 'less apt to the externals of civilisation than the Rumanians'*. From here on we just need a couple of travel stories supporting encyclopedic evidence in order to create the stereotypes of a nation in a rudimentary state, stereotypes which are to persist in the minds of generations of West European readers. How are we actually described in the encyclopedic entry:

"…they possess in a remarkable degree the qualities of patience, perseverance and endurance, with a capacity for laborious effort peculiar to an agricultural race. tenacity and determination with which they pursue their national aims may eventually enable them to

vanquish their more brilliant competitors in the struggle for hegemony in the Peninsula. Unlike most Southern races , the Bulgarians are reserved, taciturn, phlegmatic, unresponsive, and extremely suspicious of foreigners. The peasants are industrious , peaceable and orderly; the vendetta, as it exists in Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia, and the use of the knife in quarrels, so common in Southern Europe, are alike unknown…..All classes practice thrift bordering on parsimony, and any display of wealth is generally resented……….The Bulgarians are religious in a simple way, but not fanatical, and the influence of the priesthood is limited. Many ancient superstitions linger among the peasantry, such as the belief in the vampire and the evil eye; witches and necromancers are numerous and are much consulted".

We can see that the experts who worked on the entry relied on sources written until 1904. In fact only one of the sources was published in 1911. The rest dated back from the XIX th century. So the above image construction is from the perspective of the powerful OTHER , depicting the state Bulgarians were in until 1904 and carries a number of hidden messages. First, Bulgarians were an obviously backward or 'agricultural race'. Second, the dichotomy East-West is suggested by the presence of the adjective 'phlegmatic' which takes Bulgarians closer to the East than to the West. Third, the reader is led to believe that people of such inferior position to their 'brilliant' neighbours threaten the status quo of the Peninsula. This willful misinterpretation of Bulgarian national goals is understandable in view of what happened between 1912-1918. As for the economic conditions of the 'brilliant' neighbours, they do not significantly differ from those in the land of the 'agricultural race'. On the other hand, superstition at the beginning of the XXth century was not a monopoly of Bulgarians only. Neither was suspicion to foreigners. The Utilitarian discourse system to which Britain naturally belongs does not prescribe the application of the internal egalitarian rules of behaviour to outsiders. Although it has little tolerance for social relationship based on hierarchy, to those outside the system, superiority and suspicion are the driving forces. Even if we assume that looking for the Bulgarian traits of character through the eyes of foreigners is not very rewarding , we have to persist thus bridging the powerful with the less powerful, the known with the less known, Western Europe with eastern Europe.

We cannot help mentioning one of the most successful anti-Bulgarian campaigns of Greece during the Second Balkan War (1913).

Finding No 5: Travel narratives, articles (leading or not), first hand impressions or experiences produce positive or negative attitudes in reading audiences thus shaping the images of other nations.

The Greek press managed to finalise one of its greatest negative PR campaign, relieving Greek diplomats from the burden to turn into negative image makers. Europe and America were supplied with letters and photographs of Bulgarian atrocities committed to peaceful civilians which completely alienated the sympathy of civilized nations for Bulgarians. Greek lobbying in the French and American press did wonders. Bulgaria was not only a loser country but a morally degraded nation accused of killing thousands of people of Greek or other origin. Being cut off from the world by five hostile enemies (Servia, Greece, Turkey, Romania and Montenegro) Bulgaria had no idea of the Greek anti-Bulgarian campaign. Thanks to the investigation conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for Peace the world found out that all atrocities in the Balkan wars were carried out rather by the Greek army than its Bulgarian counterpart. Still the suspicion concerning Bulgaria is still alive in the memory of some.

Finding No 6: Positive images/ attitudes are easier to promote if created on the basis of remote resemblance.

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
Cometences and Capabilities

Boleslav Blazhek is a Pole who crossed Bulgaria in 1928 with a team of Polish teachers. His trip to Bulgaria he described in his travel notes "I Travelled round Bulgaria" published in 1931.The tiny book has been recently translated into Bulgarian and is a unique presentation of Bulgaria and the Balkans as places unexplored and unknown in Poland. Blazhek's first encounter with the unknown are the Bulgarian students studying abroad on board the steamer that is taking him and his co-patriots to the first Bulgarian port on the Danube, Vidin. The spontaneous friendships with the young Bulgarian passengers and the warm reception they gave the Polish tourists in the form of a musical greeting made the Polish visitors feel well disposed to the country and its people, "We suddenly felt we would not be strangers here". Right from the start these Polish tourists felt touched by the dedication and responsibility of their hosts who had been waiting for them in the course of three days keeping the hired accommodation in spite of the long delay. Perhaps present day Bulgarians will be highly intrigued to hear from the mouth of a foreigner his impressions of the Bulgarian Customs officers and the 'extremely simplified customs procedures which were not provoked by any forced civility to foreigners'. One voyage to Instanbul allowed Boleslav Blazhek's to compare the extent to which Bulgaria and Turkey of the late 1920s had Europeanised themselves and his evaluation is in favour of the first. Reading through the pages of the travel notes we feel the spirit of the time-a people wanting to get rid of the memory of a wretched past, termed by Blazhek 'Oriental'.What he claims to have seen was a world very close in fortune to Poland, not primitive, uncivilised or cunning **but friendly in an unaffected way, hospitable, cheerful, uncorrupted, filled with pride and optimism , a world a lot closer to Central Europe** than to the Orient the way he imagined it. Take , for instance his description of Bourgas ,"If it were not for the huge quantities of fruits, vegetables and flowers, nothing would remind one of the East. The town was clean, the streets-wide, the buildings-European. Extremely sympathetic with what he found in Bulgaria Boleslav Blazhek is inclined to exonerate Bulgaria from responsibility for the existence of ugly spots here and there, 'There is no other way! Bulgaria is too poor to embark on serious building and reconstruction immediately, besides, she has to bear the fatal consequences of the lost war. Boleslav Blazhek's cataloguing of some of the traits of the Bulgarians sounds unbiased and the reader will find his commentaries hardly tainted with either political or civilizational prejudice.

Coming closer to the Second World War we should expect to come upon travel writing registering the greater developmental progress of Bulgaria. In spite of the relatively high mortality rates the country experienced its highest population growth for the whole XXth century in 1939.1939 Birth Statistics registered 900 000 new born infants. At the bottom of it were mainly economic ventures with Germany which might have speeded up industrialisation if it were not for the Great War.

Lovett Fielding Edwards comes to Bulgaria as part of a voyage up and down the Danube river right before the Second World War. His goal of course was not Bulgaria or the Bulgarians but Serbia who spirited citizens were admired by the West. The Epilogue of his "Danube Stream" sounds as a painful parting of a 'pampered passenger' with the 'friendly fellowship of the river' and already suggests the presence of the mechanical, menacing shadow of the approaching war. A citizen of the world, a traveller in love with the object of his exploration, Lovett Edwards revels in sights and encounters with people of the lands he became attached to. What do we learn about Bulgaria and the Bulgarians seen through the eyes of a Brit who makes a real effort to dissipate the widely spread prejudices of the West concerning the East or the Balkans:

"…….*the Bulgars do not in the least deserve their reputation for crudeness, roughness and bad manners which European prejudice has forced upon them.We found*

them friendly, simple and helpful. Wherever we went, we were well treated, and in fact found in them all those virtues for which we had sought in vain among the Rumanians, who arrogate to themselves a higher standard of culture."

Just like Boleslav Blazhek he does not miss to note his first encounter with the official representatives of the land, the passport officials:

The Bulgarian passport officials are the most sensible and considerate of their kind I have yet met.

The financial control was equally considerate, if somewhat stricter, and insistd on taking a note of all the foreign monies in our posession when we landed.

Obviously the ethos of state officials in those days seems to have been a lot different from the code of values followed by the new generation Bulgarians whose pattern of behaviour today provokes the disapproval of natives and foreigners alike.

Amongst the copious supply of information concerning the historical past of both Rumania and Bulgaria and his observations on how the two peoples dealt with the low level parts of the Danubian banks the author remarks, "But the Bulgarians were more enterprising than their Rumanian neighbours and have set to work reclaiming this very considerable area of fertile land in a manner truly Dutch. The sustaining dyke was completed in 1930.' Further on he insists on finding unexpected similarities between Bulgaria and his native Britain :

The little town of Nikopol lies in a cup-shaped valley in the cliff which extends on its either side as raw and white as the chalk cliffs of Dover.

We might look at this as a fascinating attempt on behalf of the travel writer to bring the unknown closer to the British reader. The citizen of today's Rousse might feel flattered that Rustchuk did not escape the attention of Mr Edwards for whom the great river served not only as a unique travelling route offering 'the most restful of all holidays' but also as a factor both uniting and disuniting people and cultures:

"The two towns(Rustchuk and Giurgiu) are directly opposite one another and a connected by a regular and frequent ferry. Yet they are miles apart in general appearance and in outlook.

Rustchuk is a surprisingly large town, better ordered, cleaner and generally more sympathetic than Giurgiu.If one were to personify them, Giurgiu would appear as a slightly shifty Levantine trader, with a keen sense of money, an obsequious air covering a somewhat bully nature, and an indifferent sense of cleanliness and morality; Rustchuk as a hard-working peasant, patriarchal in his life, solid and trustworthy in his dealings, perhaps a little stupid but a very good companion. Both towns are obviously suffering from the crisis, but whereas the poverty of Giurgiu appears sordid, that of Rustchuk seems cheerfully and uncomplainingly born."

A bit more about Rustchuk whose portrayal reveals the character of its citizens:

"Though a larger town, it has not so great a port as Giurgiu. Nevertheless the quays are extensive and the newly built railway station is one of the most pleasing and well arranged I have seen in any country. The inhabitants are rightly proud of it and it figures prominently among the picture postcards."

'Proud' is an adjective intensively made use of by both the Pole Blazhek and the Brit Edwards when they speak about the the Bulgarian people, quite in contrast to how we feel today!

"In contrast to Giurgiu, we passed the passport authorities easily and comfortably, and walked into town. It is clean and solidly built, with a rather Germanic air about it."

When Lovett Edwards employs the word 'crisis' we feel tempted to stress how often Bulgarians have had to endure crisis of various intensity. The first poured down on our

people right after the First World War. The second-after the Second Great War. The third? We are deep into it! This means every forty or thirty years, the last one being the most destructive and deforming.

In contrast with the spirit of our times the difference 'between the rich and the poor (in Rustchuk) is not easily visible:

"*I am told that there are some exceedingly rich people in Rustchuk, but that their patriarchal mode of life makes them live outwardly much as their poorer neighbours. There is no ostentation.*"

Taking into consideration Edwards' definite interest in the life of the Serbs, his genuine attachment to Serbia which '*seems to look towards the West whereas Bulgaria looks to the East, to Russia*' we cannot suspect him of being partial to what he experienced or saw during his stay in Bulgaria. Still being the offspring of the West-European cultural zone Edwards can't help mentioning that in Bulgaria 'the Turkish influence is much more apparent'.

Finding No 7: Stereotypes are deeply influenced by the behaviour of the political, cultural and business elites.
It's intriguing to learn how a political leader like Aleksandar Stamboliiski was a description after first hand observation recorded by British journalist A. L Kennedy:

"*Stamboliiski was the essence of his race. He had all the qualities of a Bulgarian, and not quite all his faults. Huge in stature, broad in proportion, big-shouldered, uncouth in his movements and vehement in speech, he impressed everyone with his energy, his sincerity, and his fearlessness. His big brown face was topped with a shock of black hair, and his upturned moustaches helped to give his appearance a certain fierceness. There was a combative twinkle in his eyes, a deep furrow in the forehead between them, and a nose not without fineness. His frankness was refreshing in a country where it is the rarest of qualities. Not that he was wholly devoid of a peasant's cunning; or free from the thriftiness of his class and the avidity of his race.*"

Finding No 8: Negative images in international relations can be created on the basis of negative propaganda by other countries'.
This is especially obvious in most war cartoons and news in the Keesings Archive where Bulgaria is not spared a single move in its efforts to play its international game. Take for example one of the war cartoons of David Low "A Bulgarian bust". It reveals a drunken king (Ferdinand in this case) in lying on the ground in a helpless state.
In the communist and post-communist era we have been defined as 'the true or close satellite' of the Soviet Union. Under communism we remained a dark and mysterious place , unfamiliar to the West and the rest. Small wonder, if there were any images linked with the name of Bulgaria they were often associated with either South America or South Africa. For those who knew something about the Soviet bloc Bulgaria was associated with the lack of democracy and awful toilet paper.
The inadequate behaviour of Bulgarian nationals in an international context additionally complicates the other's perception of us and our country. There are remarkable similarities today between the populist Agrarian leader and Boyko Borisov, a contemporary populist darling. The role of the political, cultural and business elites is not less important for nations and their positive international images. It is they who have to build up bridges and work towards good practices of international cooperation without losing touch with national interest or the good of the country.

Conclusion

States/ countries should behave rationally in international relations and promote all opportunities for understanding between nations/ countries as the only possible route to overcoming negative national stereotypes. A rational solution to such a long-existing problem might be the act of intensive cooperation and integration, and cultural exchange in the broadest sense of the word. This paper made an attempt to reveal the most typical traits in the Bulgarian character defined through the critical eyes of foreigners in the course of a century. Bulgarians are illustrated through a number of historical accounts and narratives but it is in their hands to change the existing negative or almost negative stereotypes gradually acquiring a new value orientation as a result of which most new values (endearingly called European values) can or will become 'inner-directed' or internalised. What can the consequences be of positive and negative stereotyping in international relations (IR) concerning a small country like Bulgaria? They can be disastrous if the negative one prevails. How can we cultivate a more different, if possible, positive image today?

The path is very long, will take a lot of years but is worth working on. The PR Campaign of the Bulgarian government concerning Bulgaria as a tourist destination is the first step towards change. For image improvement to succeed we should harness all – international organizations, churches, universities, NGOs, books, symposia, conferences, trade fairs, cultural and educational exchange, commercial partnership. Even a cocktail party can turn into a useful tool of promotion if it is attended by the right people. We should also try to clarify why our image is negative among certain groups/ countries to know the cure for the disease.

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ROMANIA – BULGARIA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2007-2013. A CASE STUDY OF THE RUSE-GIURGIU CROSS-BORDER REGION

Heidi Fugunt, Strahil Karapchanski

Introduction

When Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007 both countries were identified by economic and social problems. The Romania-Bulgaria cross-border cooperation Programme 2007-2013[28] was set up as a mean of regional policy to assist especially cross-border areas to reduce substantial economic, social and territorial disparities deriving from its isolation from economic and decision-making centres. For the first time this cross-border area is addressed as a single entity and it is hoped that the region lacking a common identity will build up such by connecting people, organizations and institutions on both sides of the Danube in order to overcome common problems.

Bulgaria and Romania were already eligible for funding of the Phare Cross-border co-operation (Phare CBC) but the Program is the first 6-year-period program entirely managed by authorities of the two states now that they are full members of the European Union. By taking an actor-centred approach the paper examines inevitable implementation problems of the Program identified by project beneficiaries. In conclusion the paper suggests possible strategies for improving the performance of the Program. The cross-border region Ruse-Giurgiu was chosen as a case study for the whole Program area because of its special characteristic of being the only region directly connected by a bridge.

The paper starts with the description of data collection and data analysis. By conducting in-depth interviews with experts directly involved into the implementation of different projects and by studying the official documents of the program a system of categories was created covering all identified problem. The following chapter focuses on the Program in the case study area by describing the framework of the policy and reporting some findings of the regions performance and the program's achievements in the region so far. The system of categories is the basis for the analysis in which we explicate and reflect on the structural problems and deficits being encountered by the target communities. Deriving from the findings of the analysis we then identify possible strategies for strengthening the effectiveness and improving the performance of the Program. Therefore the paper contributes to the discussions, inter alia in the framework of the Romania – Bulgaria 2007-2013 Cross-Border Cooperation Programme's managing and steering organs, with respect to ensuring the sound functioning of the program in future. Moreover suggestions are made for setting up of future program lines in the scope of cross-border cooperation.

Methodology: in-depth expert interviews

Conducting the interviews

This paper examines the implementation problems of the Romania – Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 in the border region Ruse-Giurgiu. The analysis is twofold. Firstly, there will be a focus put on official documents and interim reports Iof the programme. Secondly, a closer look will be taken on in-depth interviews conducted with experts directly involved with the implementation of different projects co-

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[28] In the following referred to as the "Program".

funded by the programme. Expert interviews are the adequate method for data collection in this setting since it is a way of making latent knowledge more explicit. Most often the necessary knowledge about the implementation process lies in the hands of a few senior project managers within the staff (such as project leaders or spokespersons). Thus, an interview reveals not only the role of the expert within the project but at the same time provides personal judgement including reasons and conclusions.

The interviews were led according to an interview guideline that was approved in a pre-test with an administrative staff member of one of the projects. The guideline comprised questions about the project itself, the role and tasks of the expert within the project and problem areas of the implementation process.

The interview material derives from interviews with five experts within two different settings, one was an individual interview and the other was a group interview with four experts.

The expert individually interviewed was the Bulgarian project coordinator of the joint research project BRAINS (Bulgarian Romanian Area Identities Neighborhood Studies). The "soft" project is carried out in cooperation with the Academy of Economics in Bucharest, Romania whereby the Romanian university takes in the ruling part. Due to earlier acquaintance with the expert, the interview was conducted by the researcher herself. The 1-hour interview was recorded and completely transcribed using standard spelling excluding non-verbal statements.

The group interview took place within a regular meeting attended by nine project members such as managers, lawyers and assistants. Members of two projects were present – the one dealing with transport ("hard" project) and the other with tourism ("soft" project). The researcher presented the interview topic whereupon four experts of different institutions agreed to participate in the interview. They explicitly asked to treat their names and positions confidentially. The researcher took precise notes of the 90-minutes discussion.

Overall the interviewed experts represented the educational, public and non-governmental sector. Four have a Bulgarian passport, one a Romanian; three are women, two are men; two of the projects they deal with are "soft" and one is "hard".

Data analysis

The interview data is summarized by use of a structured qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 1995; Taylor 1998). For the present data a content centred approach was chosen (for example in comparison to syntactic approach). By this method first step is initial coding by compiling numerous categories while reading carefully through the material. The categories define which text belongs to a category. Next step is to find text exemplifying the categories followed by focused coding to combine or eliminate categories. The category system of central problem areas in the implementation process generated from the interview data looks as follows:

- Centralization
  - Capitals' distance from border region
  - no decision making powers on local level
- General management deficits
  - establishment of new managing structures
    - difficulties in establishing framework
    - lack of knowledge of staff
  - Finance
    - approval of budgets
    - financial capacity

- co-financing
- Communication: English as lingua franca

The European Union's Cohesion Policy

The European Union's Cohesion Policy represents the keystone of the principle of solidarity which is one of the fundaments of political and economic integration in Europe. It originates from the Treaty of Rome (1957) and aims at reducing the disparities in the development of different regions by strengthening the redistribution of financial resources from wealthier towards poorer regions with a focus to the harmonization of their economic performances and standards of living.

During the last several decades noticeable reforms and adjustments deriving from the European integration dynamics has been experienced, primarily as a consequence of the different enlargement stages adding up new member states and their regions to the EU construction. Despite this fact, the major objectives and visions of the Cohesion Policy have sustained. Article 174 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union which entered into force on 1 December 2009 states that "In order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Union shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of its economic, social and territorial cohesion. In particular, the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favored regions".

At present, the European Union's Cohesion Policy is based upon three pillars, respectively Convergence, Competitiveness & Employment and Territorial Cooperation, and for the current financial framework (2007 – 2013) it amounts to around 347 billion EUR (35.7% of the total EU budget) (European Commission 2008a).

Territorial Cooperation at EU level

An amount of 8.7 billion EUR (2.52% of the aforesaid allocation) provided by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is dedicated to territorial cooperation, including transnational, interregional and cross-border dimensions. The latter is directed to cross-border areas which are inhabited by 181.7 million people (37.5 % of the total EU population) and therefore 6.44 billion EUR are foreseen (European Commission 2008b). Cross-border cooperation within the EU context is organized upon 52 programs covering diverse policy sectors, such as:

- Encouraging entrepreneurship, especially the development of SMEs, tourism, culture and cross-border trade;
- Improving joint management of natural resources;
- Supporting links between urban and rural areas;
- Improving access to transport and communication networks;
- Developing joint use of infrastructure;
- Administrative, employment and equal opportunities work. (European Commission 2008c)

The Bulgarian-Romanian Cross-Border Area

One of the above mentioned 52 cross-border cooperation programs is the one covering the Bulgarian-Romanian border. The latter has a total length of 610 km, 470 of which coincide with the Danube River, and its population accounts to more than 5.1 million people (according to data from 2004), distributed 2/3 in the Romanian and 1/3 in the Bulgarian part

Due to its past as both countries' periphery the border area between Bulgaria and Romania has been faced up with considerable problems of structural, economical and

social nature. According Eurostat examining European regions' economic performance, two of the Bulgarian northern regions (North-West and North-Central) and three of the Romanian southern regions (South-West Oltenia, South-East and South-Muntenia) belong to the poorest 20 European areas with GDP per capita rates below 40% of the EU average. The GDP (Gross Domestic Product at market prices) is in 2008 6500 Euro in Romania and 4 700 Euro in Bulgaria (compared to 20800 Euro EU average) (Eurostat 2001a).

The districts of Ruse & Giurgiu

Starting from a very low GDP in 2003 (Ruse & Giurgiu: 2400 Euro), still both regions rank below the national average, but were able to improve their economic performance considerably. In 2008 Ruse had a GDP of 3800 Euro and Giurgiu 3500 Euro (Eurostat 2011a). The unemployment rate is directly linked to the economic performance of the regions. In Giurgiu the rates are remarkably low with only 9,1 % in 2009 while the Romanian average counts up to 20,0% unemployment rate. In the district of Ruse the unemployment rate shows a sharp decrease from 38,7% in 2004 to only 12,9% in 2008 (Eurostat 2011c). The economic structure of both regions is dominated by agriculture. Giurgiu and Ruse have small industrial sectors with light industries as tailoring, textiles and food processing. These are deteriorating industries and require restructuring. The share in Giurgiu is approximately 33% industry, 10% agriculture and 67% service, in Ruse it's 43% industry, 5% agriculture and 52% services (European Commission 2007: 31).

These factors are the fundament of the dramatic demographic problems, such as the declining and ageing population, which the Danube territories of both youngest EU members have been experiencing recently. The population density in the Program area is with an average of 71 persons/km^2 (European Commission 2007: 14) comparably low to the EU27 average (112,5 persons/km^2). Ruse and Giurgiu rank among the other districts as urban centres. In Giurgiu the population density is a little higher than the average with 83,4 (Eurostat 2011b). The figures for Ruse show that the area suffers from a negative net migration rate. The population density went constantly down from 100,2 in 1998 to 89,9 in 2008. The worsening living and working conditions have been the reason for young people leaving their homes in the border regions and to seek for better jobs and higher standard of living in the larger cities.

Ruse and Giurgiu are by far the best connected border regions in the programme area. The only road and rail bridge connecting Romania and Bulgaria is the most used crossing point of the border for Bulgarian, Romanian and international traffic. Especially commuters complain that the high toll for crossing the bridge is obviously not only used to maintain the bridge. Means of public transport can serve only to a very limited extent as an alternative since there are only two buses and two trains running daily between Ruse and Bucharest via Giurgiu. The regional airport of Ruse is currently not operating but the government puts efforts in its reactivation. Giurgiu and Ruse both have ports on the Danube. The National Company for Danube River Port Administration in Giurgiu is responsible for all Romanian ports which are mostly in poor shape and should urgently be reconstructed or repaired.

Only very few Romanians live on the Bulgarian side and vice versa. Both districts have a share of approximately 4% Roma (Ruse 3,65, Giurgiu 3,89), in Ruse are also 13,92% of the population of Turkish origin. (European Commission 2007: 157). In the border regions Ruse-Giurgiu exists the only bilingual education centre acting on both sides of the border. The Bulgarian - Romanian Interuniversity Europe Centre (BRIE) offers Master programs in Ruse and Giurgiu in European Studies and Public Administration.

The Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme (2007-2013)

Because of these alarming developments, the need for a new approach for tackling these common issues has emerged. As a result, the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme (2007-2013) has been elaborated focusing on "diversifying the economic activities on the border, on increasing accessibility to labour and linking areas of opportunity, on multicultural activities for ethnic minorities, aiming to provide alternative job opportunities and improving services for special target groups (e.g. elderly people – health and domestic services, youth – bilingual educational and attractive job creation)", thus "enhanc[ing] the Programme area's attractiveness and make it a better place for living" (European Commission 2007: 15).

Illustration 1: Map of the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme (2007-2013) eligible area

Source: http://www.cbcromaniabulgaria.eu/user/file/harta_finala.pdf

Priority Axes
The Program focuses on special areas of activities called priority axes.
Priority Axis 1: Accessibility - Improved mobility and access to transport, information and communication infrastructure in the cross-border area. The main objectives are to "improve cross-border mobility through improving existing conditions and developing new facilities for transport in the eligible area" (European Commission 2007: 79) and to "enable efficient regular exchange of information and data of cross-border relevance" (European Commission 2007: 79).
Priority Axis 2: Environment - Sustainable use and protection of natural resources and environment and promotion of efficient risk management in the cross-border area. The main objectives are:

- ensuring effective protection and use of the area's natural assets by coordinated joint management systems
- increasing the awareness on the environmental protection and management in the cross-border area
- protecting local population, businesses, environment and infrastructure from the potentially disastrous consequences of natural and man-made crises, by joint preventative actions and emergency response services throughout the border area. (European Commission 2007: 83).

Priority axis 3: Economic and Social Development - Economic development and social cohesion by joint identification and enhancement of the area's comparative advantages. The main objectives are:

- developing cross-border business infrastructure and services
- promoting the image of the cross-border area internally and externally
- supporting development of joint integrated tourism products

- stimulating cross-border cooperation between universities, research institutes and businesses
- supporting a common labor market by sharing information on employment opportunities
- developing cross-border training services for employment, in connection with the integrated market needs
- developing cross-border linkages and exchanges between education/training centers
- strengthening social and cultural coherence and co-operation among local people and communities in the program area. (European Commission 2007: 90).

Priority axis 4: Technical assistance. Main objective is to "provide support for the transparent and efficient implementation of the Programme" (European Commission 2007: 100).

Calls for Project and Project Implementation

The Program was approved by the European Commission in December 2007 and was introduced six months after the first Joint Monitoring Committee. The first call for projects was announced in July 2008 only for "soft" projects[29]. The next call for proposals in October 2008 focused on both, soft and hard projects and was followed by a first call for strategic projects in December 2008. The second call for proposals was launched in 2009 with five intermediary deadlines. Since 2010 there were no further calls for projects launched and there are no plans to launch any new ones within the time span of the program.

According to the website of the Programme until now 392 projects were submitted in total, 158 projects are currently under evaluation, 132 projects were approved, 80 projects are contracted, 3 are already finalized and there were 128 reimbursement requests. The district Ruse is the lead partner of 12 approved projects of which 3 are in the pre-contracting phase and 9 are in implementation. Giurgiu is the lead partner of 7 approved projects, 4 are in the pre-contracting stage and 3 are already contracted (Joint Technical Secretariat 2011).

These are the figures published on the official website, but actually there is no sign how current these figures are. It has to be doubted that the figures are up-to-date because the authors got acquainted with at least two members of projects submitted by the district Ruse which are already contracted.

Key findings

Centralization

A major problem with respect to the proper functioning of the Program is the strong political and administrative centralization in both countries which is to a great extent a remnant of their communist past. Even though both capital cities of Sofia and Bucharest are not part of the Program's eligible area and therefore are not acquainted with the local problems and potentials, they have to be consulted upon each project implementation

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[29] The term "soft" means those projects that don't produce a tangible asset in the end (as studies, strategies, seminars, know-how exchanges), therefore they are mostly referred to as people-to-people projects. On the opposite "hard" projects have as a final result a product, such as a building or a "utility" (investment projects or projects having more than 50% of the total eligible expenditure spent on the purchase of goods).

step. Especially in the Bulgarian case the regional level is claimed to be strongly deprived of any autonomy in terms of decision-making, so there are several ministries in Sofia which need to agree upon diverse procedures in the framework of the project implementation. According to one of our respondents "both capital cities are too much self-focused"; therefore it appears quite unrealistic to expect from them being constructive when it comes to agenda-setting at a local level. The paradox here is the central authorities being too far away from the priorities and problems of the regions, and at the same time insisting on having a say on issues concerning the sub-national units. concerning the sub-national units.

In one of our Bulgarian experts' opinion, the central government has monopolized the management of all cross-border measures and programs the country is part of, namely the ones with Greece, Turkey, Serbia and Macedonia. Due to the lack of financial and administrative autonomy at regional level, central authorities claim to decide on practical matters, such as opening-up and managing of beneficiaries' bank accounts for the project's purposes, co-funding, etc. An example therefore has been given by one of the interview partners who pointed out the fact that his institution had to bear considerable losses because of not being allowed to open-up a separate bank account in the home currency. Therefore it has been making all project transfers in EUR and that has imposed bank fees and currency exchange differences, which are actually non-eligible expenditures within the Program, so they must remain at its expenses.

Having a look at these deliberations, one can thoroughly recognize the interviewees' overall apprehension of all these practices being in contradiction to the Program's motto "Common borders – common solutions". In this sense their aspiration towards more initiative and decision-making competences at local level appears to be entirely justified.

General management deficits

The interviews with the experts revealed two major problem areas arising from deficits in the general management of the Program. Firstly, lacking routines of the completely new established Program structures led to slow project implementation. Secondly, the Program's financial framework and regulations is claimed to be a risk factor for some of the projects.

People involved in the projects feel more and more frustrated by the slow implementation process. The projects' starts were often delayed by long application procedures. Sometimes it took almost two years from the submission of the projects to its actual start. This problem mainly arises out of the fact that the Program is the first of its kind in the Romanian Bulgarian border region. "We have to firstly be aware of the fact that the common structures of management of the program are in process of establishment." (Interview1 2011) one of the experts said. Persons and authorities had no experience in managing structural funds but faced the task to establish a reliable regulatory framework meeting the special demands of the region without relying on a former model. Bulgaria and Romania established several bodies responsible for implementing and monitoring the Program such as Managing Authority, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority, National Authority and Info Point in Bulgaria, Joint Technical Secretariat, Joint Steering Committee, Joint Monitoring Committee and First Level Control Unit. But the lack of transparency regarding the decision-making process generated confusion among the project participants. Why the Joint Technical Secretariat is situated in Calarasi, a place by no means in the centre of the Program area, is one example for the questions. The most thrilling issue regarding the framework of the Program is the fact that the regulations finally entering into force were found to facilitate the approval of soft projects. The experts

wondered if the Program could ensure sustainability opposing many hard projects in favour of soft ones.

Not only the regulation framework but also the human resources of the Program causes trouble. After the first call for applications in 2008 the evaluation of projects was delayed because of too less hired staff (Annual 2010: 24). In the following a lot jobs were created for both Bulgarian and Romanian employees. The experts appreciate the Program providing employment for highly qualified people in the border region. But at the same time they claim that the activities of the staff often don't meet the demands of potential applicants. The presentation of the Program at promotion events organized by the Joint Technical Secretariat at local level tends to be always the same: no concrete answers were given, no cooperativeness and understanding for the beneficiaries' needs and problems was demonstrated. One of the experts exemplified the slow processing of correspondence by showing how he was made waiting a couple of weeks for a simple approval of an identity template. Moreover the experts worried if regional interests are well enough represented due to the fact that no representatives of the regions work in the office in Calarasi.

Problems concerning the financial framework raised by the experts are related to the approval of budgets, financing the projects in advance with later reimbursement and co-financing. Approval of projects was often delayed because of necessary budget revisions. The Annual Reports of the Program stated repeatedly that from the questions received at the Joint Technical Secretariat it was concluded, "that the specificities of the programme were not sufficiently understood by potential applicants" (Annual 2010: 24; Annual 2009: 16). The interviewed experts also said that some regulations were mistaken but underline that according to their experience it is difficult and time consuming to get reliable information and advice to overcome the lack of clarity. The first level controllers dealing with the financial aspects of the projects were always different, so they had to spend a lot of time working themselves into the projects and getting to know what their predecessors had done. If the start of the projects was delayed, the initial time frame could not be kept and eventually won't follow the calendar year creating financial insecurities. Another point that was mentioned by the interviewees was their disappointment that they were not allowed to include the catering costs for the visits of the partners into the project budget. They feel unable to cover the costs all by themselves but fear to appear not hospitable enough to the partners.

A major concern in the program's financial procedures, however, concerns the financing in advance with later reimbursement. It poses a serious challenge especially for smaller institutions and NGOs not having the relevant financial capacity to advance the expenditures. Moreover, experience shows that the period of time between the reimbursement claim and the actual reception of the reimbursement amount sometimes counts up to six months causing difficulties especially for those organizations dealing with several projects and already struggling to finance the 3-months periods. This is considered to be rather discriminative for small organizations.

Another requirement hard to meet is providing co-financing by each partner due to poor financial capacity of some institutions, primarily the smaller ones. Even if the share of co-financing is declared to be reasonable it is found that it is hard to ensure this share from other sources. One of the experts raised the issue of the state double financing if providing state funds for the institution and co-financing the project at the same time. There is a need to come up with creative ideas for private co-financing, but in times of financial crisis this seems almost impossible to achieve.

Above all the Bulgarian experts emphasized the huge discrepancy in the amounts being absorbed by Romanian and Bulgarian partners. Due to differences in the organizational

structure as well as in the financial capacity Bulgarians cannot afford to be lead partners. In financial matters the Bulgarian partners are often unable to ensure the co-financing, in organizational matters they often lack experience in managing large scale projects. The smaller partners have face the fact that they rely heavily on the project leader's information spreading competencies. This circumstance discourages Bulgarian project applicants because the lead partner has the advantage to manage the budget, communicate with the partners and managing bodies and supervise the project implementation.

Communication
The fact that English is determined as Program's lingua franca appears to be anything but facilitation for beneficiaries. Even though good neighborhood is positioned in the forefront of the concept of cross-border cooperation, none of both languages Bulgarian and Romanian is used for the official correspondence on projects co-funded by the Program; letters which are sent, be it to the project partner from the other country or even to authorities in the home country, are written in English and this seems extraordinarily demanding for the participating, primarily for the smaller ones which have no English speaking staff and cannot afford to cover the translation costs. Our interviewees agreed upon the fact that communication in English often leads to misunderstandings, not least due to the fact that people tend to use applications such as Google Translate for transmitting messages to their partners. Especially for technical terms, e.g. legal ones, is this practice beyond doubt not efficient at all. What allegedly causes even more trouble and frustration to project partners is the need for them to maintain written correspondence with their fellow countrymen which are appointed in central states authorities, such as the Bulgarian Ministry for Regional Development and Public Works, in English language. This is nothing but an example of poor efficiency and even senselessness, according to one of our respondents.
Considering all these circumstances, we could easily ascertain that these deficits at the level of communication among the project partners represent a substantial risk for them with a view of the proper functioning of their projects.

Implications for the future
Basing on all the aspects referred to in the previous chapter, particularly on the problems which have been identified while assessing the Romania – Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013, a range of implications occur with a view to strengthening the Program's efficiency in future.
Firstly, concerted efforts have to be done towards decentralization of decision-making powers at sub-national level. In order for local problems to be successfully met, the local institutions need to be provided with the relevant competences to autonomously perform their own agenda-setting. The same goes for financial capacity of the local and regional bodies; preparing and managing good development projects means above all being entitled to conduct own budgetary policies and, respectively, to individually decide on the spheres which are worth investing financial resources in, inter alia in the form of project co-funding.
The second point corresponds to the need for more effective and sounder general management of the cross-border cooperation program. In order to safeguard beneficiaries' trust and interest, the Program's managing authorities are expected to streamline its rules of functioning by accelerating the application and project selection procedures, thus achieving greater predictability for participating institutions as well as transparency for the local communities in general. Another issue of major importance is the orientation towards

stronger balance between Bulgarian and Romanian partners' involvement in the projects realized.

Last but not least, effective communication stays in the core of cross-border cooperation. What has to be taken into consideration here is that communication means by far more than just literally translating your thoughts and messages in a language the knowledge of which is shared by you and your counterpart. Observing our interviewees' points of view, the introduction of a Program's lingua franca, such as English, appears to be a rather artificial measure which jeopardizes the proper functioning of bilateral projects. Therefore, alternative solutions have to be sought for, e.g. promoting the neighbour's language learning. The added value of this approach would be tremendous, bearing in mind the idea that cooperation and communication go hand in hand. In fact, in the light of experience, precisely cross-border areas evolve as places where multilingualism triumphs.

To sum up, assuming that the Romania – Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 is aimed at helping both, on the one hand, existing partnerships to sustain, and, on the other hand, new ones to be established, it needs further impetus with a view to keeping partners' motivation to take advantage of the funding opportunities it offers. This could be achieved primarily by developing a new, beneficiaries-centred approach of the Program's management which would encourage local solutions and synergies.

Conclusion

After more than four years of the Program's functioning, it appears to be quite successful in attracting target institutions' interest to be part of it and to submit project proposals with the idea of solving major development problems in the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border area. As it has been found out in the present article, there are diverse points stated by our respondents in their function as project beneficiaries' representatives, which hadn't been taken into account when designing the Program's guidelines. Issues such as strong centralization, communication barriers and shortcomings regarding difficulties in establishing an appropriate framework as well as financial capacity, seem to substantially complicate the projects' implementation. Therefore, as regards the future programs devoted to strengthening the cross-border cooperation, stronger focus on the local specifics is required. Moreover, a more intensive involvement of the local communities into the programming process would guarantee their greater identification with the Program's mission and objectives. With a view to streamlining the Program's functioning, delegating general program management competences by the central administrative bodies towards the sub-national units directly faced up with cross-border matters is crucial. Nevertheless, communication difficulties could be diminished by enforcing both neighbours' languages, Romanian and Bulgarian, as common tool for understanding, instead of using a third language such as English. In other words, what needs to be done is just adhering to the general concept of finding common solutions to common problems, an indispensable prerequisite for which occur to be stable and sustainable bilateral partnerships emerging in the Bulgarian-Romania cross-border area.

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SYNERGY-SEEKING VERSUS DISTINCTION-DRAWING: PROCESSES OF INTEGRATION AND DIFFERENTIATION IN A JAPANESE-DUTCH TAKEOVER PROCESS

Greetje Corporaal

Abstract

Purpose   The study presented in this paper describes how a division of a Dutch organization first becomes independent and is subsequently acquired by a Japanese organization. It portrays the integration process as a political struggle for power, status, identity, and autonomy. In studying the role of cultural and socio-political processes in transnational organizations, during and after the acquisition and integration process, particular attention is paid to the ways in which managers at the technology division of Mirai Corporation make sense of their transnational work experiences, a decade after the acquisition.

Design   The study has been carried out from an interpretive/constructivist research approach and is based on a 12-month ethnographic case study of a Japanese business group in the technology-oriented manufacturing industry, which is called Mirai Corporation (a pseudonym). In closely examining interviews, observational and documentary material, I explore how Japanese and Dutch top managers discursively construct their own and others' cultural identities and how these can be placed against the political processes that are taking place in the technology division.

Findings   The findings illustrate how the culture discourse is used both to create interdependency and to signify difference. Regarding the latter, the study shows how cultural identities and boundaries are discursively constructed and enacted in order to serve social struggles over power, autonomy and resistance. Here, organizational actors actively use the culture discourse to direct the course of the organizational changes. It is therefore suggested that cultural identities do not carry a pre-given meaning that people passively enact, as is sometimes assumed, but rather as social constructs, talked into existence by organizational actors within particular social contexts.

Research limitations/implications   Awareness of the organizational and political context in which transnational collaborations take place is regarded essential for understanding how organizational actors attribute meaning to their transnational work experiences and the role 'culture' plays herein. The research complements and further develops the stream of interpretive research in CCM by showing its relevance for investigating processes of cultural identity formation in a period of organizational integration.

One limitation of the study is its focus on a single case, which is not characteristic of all transnational acquisitions and management teams. This limitation notwithstanding, the study does contribute to furthering theoretical insights.

Originality/value of the paper   The study contributes to the CCM and integration management literature by illustrating the relevance of discursive processes of cultural identity construction in the context of post-acquisition integration, economic insecurity and unstable power relations.

Keywords: Culture, Discourse, Identity, Japan, Netherlands, Power, Transnational collaboration

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
Cometences and Capabilities

It's impressive in a way. I like to work with foreign colleagues and foreign customers. But sometimes it's difficult [person starts laughing]. It's challenging, yes. [The] plan is quite different... Dutch colleagues and Dutch customers are quite different.

This Japanese manager hints at a difficulty many organizational actors experience today: encountering cultural differences in collaborating with foreign colleagues and customers. For many this experience can be 'impressive', 'difficult' and 'challenging'. In fact, Søderberg and Holden (2002: 104-105) contend that cross-cultural encounters are the primary challenge for transnationally operating organizations today: no manager '… can escape from the possibility of misjudgement, misperception and mistakes in handling the complexity of cultural relationships with customers, suppliers and stakeholders'. Björkman et al. (2010) have recently underlined the need for furthering our understanding of the various culture- and identity-related problems and challenges in transnational collaborations. They particularly point out that researchers should focus on close collaboration in transnational work teams. The ethnographic study presented in this thesis investigates a case of transnational collaboration between a Japanese and a Dutch subsidiary management team of a Japanese TNE that are in a process of organizational integration. It aims to shed light on cultural identity processes and their enactments by systematically analyzing how organizational actors interpret and make sense of their transnational work experiences and discursively construct their own and others' cultural identities.

Organizational globalization is promoted by those who claim that transnational collaboration and cultural diversity contributes positively to organizational performance; stimulating innovation, creativity, and improved problem-solving capacities. Clearly, these are all valuable assets in a global knowledge economy. Yet, the question is whether globalization is indeed a smooth and successful widening of contacts, connections, and identifications across the globe. The evidence drawn from organization studies suggests this process is not that simple or unproblematic. In fact, the majority of cross-border collaborative forms, such as global mergers and acquisitions (M&As) run into difficulties or even lead to outright failure (Phatak, Bhagat & Kashlak, 2009: 229; Child et al., 2001). Apparently, working in a global setting brings along unforeseen risks and problems, and hence, many transnational collaborative forms end up being terminated.

Several scholars have argued that the success or failure of these global M&As is strongly related to contextual factors and the applied strategy to integrate and streamline the acquired or merged organization with the cultural norms and values, structures, systems and strategies of the new partner or parent company (e.g. Dauber, 2011; Froese & Goeritz, 2007; Vaara, 2003). Here, cultural identity processes and processes of power and politics would play a major role (Ailon-Souday & Kunda, 2003; Vaara, Tienaari & Säntti, 2003). Transnational collaboration thus seems to rests on the management of mutual interests, political issues and processes of sensemaking (Van Marrewijk, 2004; Ybema & Byun, 2009). This directs attention towards the dynamics of cultural identity formation processes and the role power and organizational politics may play in the discursive enactment of culture and cultural differences, conceptualized as 'mutable, negotiated, and infused with contestation and power relations' (Jack et al., 2008: 875).

The research presented in this paper is based on a 12-month ethnographic case study, conducted in a division of a Japanese business group in the technology-oriented manufacturing industry, which I will call Mirai Corporation (a pseudonym). I will address the following research question: 'How do organizational actors make sense of their transnational work experiences and discursively construct their own and others' cultural

identities, in view of a process of organizational integration? With this research, I aim to extend our understanding of the role of cultural identities and processes of power in the context of organizational integration. In the following section, I will set out the theoretical argument in more detail, after which I will describe the research setting, the applied methodology and method of analysis. Research findings will then be presented. I will conclude with a discussion of the findings and the insights an interpretive approach to culture research in the context of post-acquisition integration can offer.

An interpretive approach to the role of 'culture' in post-acquisition integration

For organizations that plan to operate on a global scale, mergers and acquisitions (M&As) have become a popular growth strategy (Bartlett et al., 2008; Dauber, 2011; Hitt et al., 2001). Attention for organizational change processes following M&As started in the 1980s with the finding that what happens after a merger or acquisition is important for understanding whether or not intended synergistic benefits and added value have been realized (Vaara, 2003). Especially when it concerns the proper management of non-financial factors like human, cultural or socio-political barriers to integration, often-unforeseen problems occur (Birkinshaw et al., 2000; Bjorkman et al., 2007; Dauber & Fink, 2011; Froese & Goeritz, 2007; Greenwood et al., 1994; Seo & Hill., 2005; Stahl & Voigt, 2008; Vaara, 2000; 2003). Although the 'people' or 'soft' side of post-acquisition integration is usually given little attention or left completely unmanaged, several scholars have started to stress its importance. Several scholars have also started looking at integration processes through a cultural lens. Here cultural differences are often viewed as creating strong impediments to organizational integration (Brannen & Peterson, 2009; Brock, 2005; Norburn & Schoenberg, 1994; Palich & Gomez-Mejia, 1999; Reus & Lamont, 2009).

One criticism on this field of research is its dominant realist/positivist ontological and epistemological stance towards culture. In the broader field of international and cross-cultural management, a variety of scholars have recently argued for a critical re-thinking of the theoretical, conceptual, and epistemological foundations that currently predominate research in the field (Søderberg & Holden, 2002; Jack et al., 2008; Ailon, 2008; Primecz et al., 2009). A second criticism concerns that, although several integration scholars do mention the political dimension of cultural integration (e.g. Grunberg, 1981; Haspeslagh & Jemison, 1991; Jons, Froese & Pak, 2007; Olie, 1994; Larsson & Lubatkin, 2001), generally little attention is given to the role of power, political conflicts and resistance in transnational organizations and collaborations (Dorrenbacher & Geppert, 2006; Vaara, 2000; 2003). For instance, Mense-Petermann (2005) has highlighted that integration conflicts may be labelled in either political or intercultural terms, depending on which party is leading the integration process. In addition, Vaara (2000; 2003) found that in the integration process, cultural conceptions are manipulated actively and purposefully for more or less legitimate purposes. Therefore, we should take the politics involved in post-acquisition integration change processes seriously. Since we still do not know much about processes of cultural identity construction and the role of power and politics, a detailed understanding of the cultural and socio-political aspects of post-acquisition integration process is regarded relevant.

A small group of interpretive scholars has taken up this advice and directed attention towards the dynamics of cultural identity talk and its embeddedness in social, economic and political processes, illustrating the socially situated and strategic use of culture in interaction (Ailon-Souday & Kunda, 2003; Barinaga, 2007; Brannen & Salk, 2000; Olie, 1994; Dahler-Larssen, 1997; Koot, 1997; Ybema & Byun, 2009). For instance, Barinaga (2007) shows how organizational actors discursively construct cultural identities in intercultural encounters, which are actively used for specific purposes. Ybema and Byun

(2009) also pay attention to the importance of the actor in establishing cultural boundaries between individuals and groups, showing how individuals discursively construct cultural boundaries between the self and the other, legitimizing or challenging existing relations of power, status and authority. These scholars suggest that cultural identities do not carry a pre-given meaning that people passively enact, as is sometimes assumed (e.g. Hofstede, 1980, 2001) but rather as social constructs, talked into existence by organizational actors within particular social contexts. Cultural identities are thus viewed as discursively constructed in the way actors talk about themselves and others; discursive practices which are embedded in processes of power and politics.

Vaara (2003) has highlighted that in case of global acquisitions, national cultural backgrounds are likely to play parts in uniting and dividing managers as organizational actors may be inclined to interpret integration issues in nationalistic terms (see also Calori et al., 1994; Olie, 1994; Very et al., 1997). As such, the construction of cultural difference is grounded in processes of identity construction and organizational politics: individuals discursively construct sameness and difference by emphasizing the particular cultural characteristics that appear important to base this sameness or difference on. This paper contributes to this stream of research by adopting an interpretive perspective on post-acquisition integration and focussing on the cultural and socio-political processes by which organizational actors make sense of and enact cultural differences, in view of the organizational change project that is taking place.

To conclude, the review of the literature shows the relevance of an interpretive and power-sensitive understanding of cultural identities and differences, in processes of post-acquisition integration. In order to illustrate how this approach can enrich and contribute to improved insights, I will analyze how the managers in technology division of Mirai Corporation talk about their own and others' cultural identities.

Methodology and approach to analysis

The setting: Mirai Corporation
This study concerns a Japanese TNE, named *Mirai Corporation*, which has its headquarter and most of its subsidiaries located in Japan but also several subsidiaries in Asia, the United States and Europe. Due to confidentiality agreements on securing the identity of the organization and its employees all names of respondents and key characteristics of the organization have been anonymized. The name Mirai Corporation therefore is a pseudonym.

The case described in this paper concerns transnatioanl collaboration at top-management level in one division of Mirai Corporation, which is named *Mirai Technologies*. As a research site, this division is particularly interesting because of its history and characteristics; the Dutch subsidiary, *Mirai Netherlands*, takes a unique position within the division and the power dynamics between the the Japanese and Dutch subsidiaries are rather complex. This research site is also interesting for other reasons. Whereas traditional cultural models would predict low success rates of collaborations between the two cultures (in this case Japanese and Dutch), this particular acquisition is generally viewed as successful. Next to this, the integration literature tends to assume the integration process starts right after the deal has been closed. However, the board of Mirai Corporation decided to integrate and align Mirai Netherlands with its Japanese counterpart, *Mirai Solutions Japan* (MiSo), a decade after the acquisition. The period in-between, the Japanese and Dutch subsidiaries operated relatively independent from one another. As such, the integration project marks a critical turn in the organization's history. Since we do not know much about the integration outcomes under these circumstances,

this case might provide us interesting insights. The study of top managers' sensemaking practices of transnational collaborations, is important since their actions directly affect the course of these organizational processes (Vaara, 2003). In the context of organizational integration, these managers face the paradoxical dilemma that they are supposed to manage the cultural integration process while, at the same time, they also try to make sense of culturally related differences themselves. I will now continue with describing the applied research methodology.

Research methodology
The findings presented in this paper are part of a larger research project on transnational collaboration, for which I conducted fieldwork in Mirai Corporation between September 2009 and September 2010. The case on the integration project included 15 participants (all male) of which six persons had a Japanese nationality, eight persons had a Dutch nationality and one person had a Belgian nationality. Of these people, six worked at MiSo and nine worked at Mirai Netherlands. All participants were managers (ranging from junior manager to executive level) and worked together with people with different cultural backgrounds on a daily basis. In the first part of the fieldwork period, the primary focus was on studying transnational collaborations between Japanese and Dutch employees at Mirai Netherlands. In the second part of the research project, I focussed on investigating the Japanese point of view on the collaboration. For this purpose, I collected data in Japan during a four-week stay in April 2010.

At the start of the interviews, I explained the purpose of the research project, why I invited the interviewee for an interview, where the interview would be about, and the conditions of the interviews. The interviews were semi-structured and contained questions about the interviewee's personal and work background, experiences regarding working with people from different cultural backgrounds and (culturally related) differences in ways of working. Instead of answering a set of questions on pre-defined topics, I encouraged the interviewees to come up with issues themselves and to tell their own stories and experiences regarding the acquisition and their transnational work experiences. As such, the interview approach can be regarded as storytelling (Gabriel, 2000). The interview usually ended with some questions regarding the development of a training program on transnational collaboration and whether the interviewee thought such a training program would be beneficial or not. The duration of the interviews ranged from 1 hour to 2.5 hours. The interviews with Dutch individuals (and one Belgian) were held in Dutch, while the interviews with Japanese individuals were held in English. Although all interviews were recorded, I also made manual notes during the interviews. The recorded interviews were either completely or partially transcribed at a later stage.

Next to interviews, I observed managers' daily working activities, as well as audit meetings, video conferences, project team meetings and training sessions. Together with observations in more informal settings like coffee breaks, lunch breaks, and after-work drinks, this gave me a sense of the everyday working lives of research participants. The data obtained through documentary analysis served as input for, to supplement, and to support the data obtained by other research methods (Blau, 1968: 4; Thomas, 1993: 89).

The method of analysis can be described as discourse analysis. By closely examining interviews, observational and documentary material, I explored how Japanese and Dutch managers at Mirai Corporation made sense of and attributed meaning to their transnational work experiences and discursively construct their own and other's cultural identities. Preceding the analysis, all interview transcripts and fieldnotes have been transcribed. By reading and rereading the data several times, the data was coded and categorised into different themes. For this process, I made use of the qualitative data

software Atlas ti. In the analytical process of moving back and forth between the analysis of meaning construction at the individual level and a more abstract level of interpretation of socio-cultural phenomena at the organizational level (Clausen, 2004), I gradually gained a grounded understanding.

The run-up towards the acquisition: a short history

Mirai Corporation was founded in the first half of the twentieth century in Japan and is active in the technology-oriented manufacturing industry. In order to strategically globalize and expand its various businesses, Mirai started to establish a number of strategic partnerships and acquisitions from the late twentieth century onwards. Originally being a smaller player in the market, Mirai wanted to expand globally, which could be realized by investments in new product development or a foreign takeover. Since the latter option seemed to have a better outlook, Mirai decided to pursue this strategy. Hence, at the turn of the twentieth century, Mirai Corporation decided to acquire a Dutch company, Filco *NL*. This acquisition made the technology division, named *Mirai Technologies*, one of the biggest of Mirai Corporation.

Filco NL started its business in the early 1920s under *Nuca*. Due to accumulating production and sales issues, production costs snowballed and therefore Nuca decided to privatize this division, which became named Filco NL. The managers of Filco NL initially expected that the privatization would turn out positively, providing them with new opportunities. Unfortunately, the agency, which had bought a major percent stake in the company, had a strict investment regime and the goals appeared not to run parallel: while business was going well, and the managers at Filco NL developed plans to expand production capacity, the agency did not approve of them. They wanted to make money with selling Filco NL, not with selling the products they made. Hence, it came as no surprise that at the turn of the twentieth century, when Filco NL had become a huge success, the investment agency decided to sell Filco NL to Mirai Corporation.

The acquisition by Mirai Corporation, marking a second critical turn in Filco's history, was received with mixed feelings. On the one hand, Mirai Corporation was willing to make the necessary financial investments. On the other hand, people were also reserved: employees questioned whether Mirai was a suitable partner since Mirai had experienced the same problems as they had. Therefore, people wondered if it would not go just as with Nuca in the past. Nevertheless, since Mirai Corporation had expressed its willingness to let the company grow and to invest in the expansion plans, people at Filco NL (which was now named *Mirai Netherlands*) were content with the takeover. After the many disappointments, the Japanese were more than welcome. Therefore, speaking in 'managerial' terms, the acquisition was viewed as a win-win situation, characterized by mutual interests and interdependency. In documentation about the company's history, the acquisition was described as 'a unique and enduring marriage, built upon mutual understanding and shared optimism'. Figure one provides a schematic overview of how Mirai Corporation, MiSo and Mirai Netherlands are related to one another.

**CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
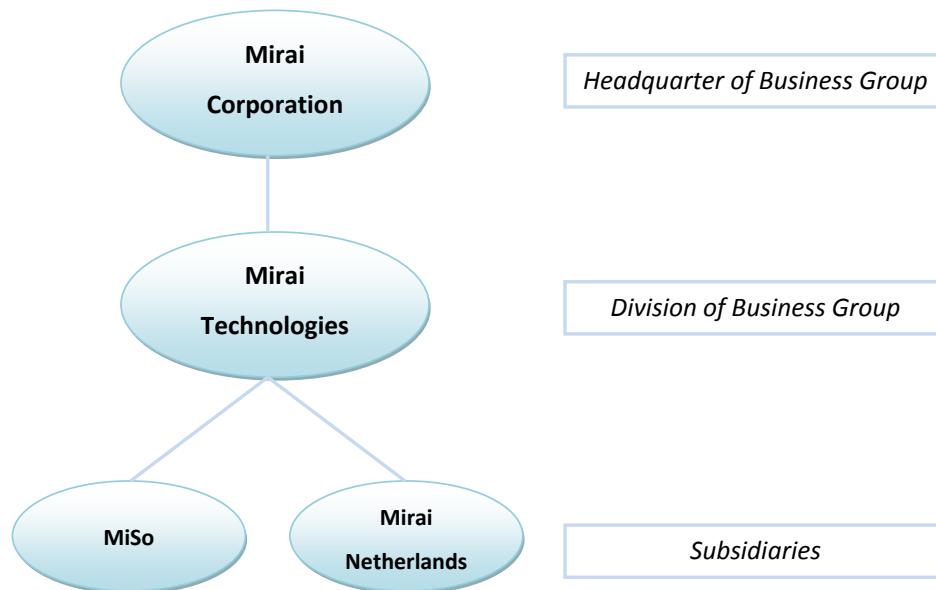Cometences and Capabilities**

Figure 1: Company structure Mirai Corporation, MiSo and Mirai Netherlands

The post-acquisition period: a 'voyage of discovery'
Despite this 'shared optimism', the period following the acquisition was rather turbulent. Mirai made a very an unusual decision: whereas in other foreign acquisitions they had replaced the entire subsidiary management team by a Japanese one, they now decided to keep the Dutch management team in position. This made Mirai Netherlands the only foreign subsidiary of Mirai Corporation with a non-Japanese management team. This period was also characterized by a group of Japanese expats coming to the Netherlands that started to investigate the acquired company, manage the expansion project and assess possibilities for synergies. In the interviews, both the Japanese and Dutch managers gave retrospective accounts about how they experienced this post-acquisition period, of which examples are given in box one.

One Dutch manager mentions that the Japanese were initially seen as 'checkers', working at 'police sites', indicating that the Japanese were not immediately trusted by the Dutch. The Dutch employees did not understand the conversations the Japanese expats had with each other, which made them suspicious. Furthermore, the Japanese tendency to ask many detailed questions in order to understand the acquired company and create trust with the Dutch was something the Dutch managers were not used to. One of the Japanese managers who came to the Netherlands after the acquisition mentions that 'in the beginning it's a kind of fighting always'. Here, this person refers to the struggles he had with understanding and working together with the Dutch. He also mentions the Japanese tendency to ask for much clarification or detailed questions in order to reduce uncertainty and create trust. It is suggested here that the trust-building process works rather differently.

Besides establishing trust, the Japanese expats also started to investigate ways to establish synergies and to improve the production plants of Mirai Netherlands. One of the things that the Japanese took over from the Dutch was project-based work. The managers at MiSo recall the willingness of the Dutch to adapt and adjust to the Japanese/Mirai way. For instance, regarding reporting of business plans, the Japanese were very surprised to find out that the Dutch managers were not used to work with Excel and PowerPoint. One of the Dutch managers at Mirai Netherlands mentions that 'this was also a very special period since Mirai Corporation and Nuca/Filco NL had been competitors for years and now

they were one company, they could see how both parties had approached the development process and hence, they learned a lot from each other. In fields like production and research and development (R&D), the technical knowledge provided a shared language for the two nationalities.

However, the Dutch managers also point out that the Japanese turned out to have little to add to the way Dutch production was organized and were unable to solve the problems encountered at that time. This made them realize that regarding research and technology, they were ahead of the Japanese.

Box 1: Talk about the post-acquisition process		
	Japanese managers	**Dutch managers**
Establishing trust	… as you know, in the beginning it's a kind of fighting always. (…) I tried to come here [Mirai Netherlands] many times with Dutch people, to try to understand completely each other. But impression is, as you can imagine easily, always Japanese people like to clarify this and that, even if there's uncertainty there. (…) In the beginning, we didn't know each other so uncertainty is much, much bigger than today.	Well, to constantly justify yourself and to explain and build up trust… Like 'guys it will be allright'. (…) Well, eventually we got through that [process] well, and a lot of trust came. But that [process] was quite difficult. (…) They ask for so many details… concerning content, before trust can arise. We came through that phase, but that made my job at that time quite hard.
Seeking synergy & exchanging best practices	Probably this is the case that Mirai was behind. The way is project based working, PBW. (…) These days project based working, it is very popular [but] ten years ago it was not so frequent, it was not so popular. So, for me it was very fresh. So, I learned a lot from people and way of working of Nuca, or Filco NL. (…) We started so-called global projects with R&D people. (…) It is a good experience and a good stimulation. (…) So far, historically speaking [there are] so many ways, good ways, that we continue. Now it's different but when I joined Mirai Netherlands, I was surprised that people from Nuca only used Word, no Excel and no PowerPoint [laughing]. Always long sentences written there [Dutch reports & presentations] and no pictures, no drawings. (…) And eh… one Dutch director asked me 'please teach us [Dutch] how do we use excel?' [person starts laughing] Probably it's a good influence from Japan to the Dutch people, Mirai Netherlands people, at that time. (…) Always I remember that they would like to know how to be in line with the Japanese way.	When we had just been taken over, it was a very special situation. For many years, Mirai Corporation and Mirai Netherlands had been each other's competitors. You know each other from the patent literature, but you've never had the chance to really take a look in each other's factories. By doing that, you can really learn a lot from each other. All these technical problems you're trying to solve. Everyone is looking for solutions, so it's very interesting to see… 'Gosh, how have you done that?' Because unlike many other cultural matters, technically seen the law of energy is the same in Japan as it is here. So, you can easily see what the technical approach has been and then you see very interesting similarities and differences. (…) and then Mirai came. When they acquired us, Mirai had the expectation that with some effort from Japanese side, we could make a huge step forward in our [plant] performance. Well, actually we did pretty good already. And it turned out to be much more complex than they [the Japanese] expected and they had little to add.

What comes to the fore in the above presented findings is that in this first 'voyage of discovery' both the Dutch and Japanese showed a willingness to adjust and take over best practices from each other. However, the Japanese expats also encountered many differences between the Japanese and Dutch companies, and this willingness to adapt

appeared not to be true for all aspects of organizing and managing work. Mirai Corporation therefore decided not to integrate Mirai Netherlands immediately into the Japanese organizational and managerial structure but instead to keep it somewhat independent. According to the Dutch managers, this was a well thought through decision of the headquarter: they had seen with different Japanese takeovers that the immediate integration of acquired foreign companies did not pay off as expected. In the years that followed, Mirai Netherlands could therefore continue its business more or less as an independent company.

From a political perspective, the collaboration between the Japanese and Dutch companies seems an interesting case. On the one hand, mutual interests and interdependency characterized the acquisition. Mirai Netherlands was dependent on its Japanese mother for enlarging production capacity, while the latter greatly relied on Mirai Netherlands for reinvigorating its Japanese technology division, for instance by taking over technology and using Mirai Netherlands' sales channels for selling Japanese products to European customers. On the other hand, Mirai Netherlands also seemed to have obtained a special status within Mirai Corporation. Although they were the acquired company, and therefore inferior, they appeared to be superior in terms of technological know-how, providing them with a source of expert/intellectual power. Furthermore, sine Mirai Corporation decided to keep the Dutch management team in place and not to integrate Mirai Netherlands into the Mirai structure, this provided Mirai Netherlands a special status in the Japanese company hierarchy. But how is this ten years later? In order to find this out I will now turn to how the collaboration proceeds almost a decade later.

Ten years later

The start of the 21st century was a new beginning in Mirai's history. Besides the acquisition of Mirai Netherlands and several other mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures, Mirai rebuilt its corporate brand and underwent a number of structural and managerial reforms. One of these reforms was the adoption of a holding company structure in 2005. In this process the Japanese technology part of Mirai, became a separate subsidiary, which was called *Mirai Solutions Japan* (MiSo). Together with Mirai Netherlands, MiSo was now one of the main players in the technology division. Though, being appointed 'core company' of the division, MiSo kept a slightly higher status than Mirai Netherlands.

The collaboration between Mirai Corporation, MiSo and the Dutch subsidiary cannot be judged simply as going good or bad. Rather the case is more complex and characterized by 'mixed feelings'. Box two provides examples of how the managers of Mirai Technologies talk about the collaboration, both in positive and negative ways. Both Dutch and Japanese employees in Mirai mention that in general, the collaboration has proceeded well over the past ten years. The Dutch managers value that they have received the freedom to act almost as an autonomous entity and could continue working more or less in the same way as they did before the acquisition. The Japanese managers bring up that although collaborating with Dutch managers at Mirai Netherlands is regarded 'challenging' and 'difficult', they enjoy working together with Mirai Netherlands and have learned a lot about Dutch people. But the Japanese also recognize the difficulties in working together with Mirai Netherlands and think that their Dutch colleagues might also have a 'complicated feeling'

Box 2: Talk about collaboration ten years after the acquisition		
	Japanese managers	**Dutch managers**
Positive	… what we [Japanese] tried is to experience, experience, experience and make face-to-face discussion. Of course it's a kind of cost but we liked it. And through the experience over a certain period of time we made a good way.	As a company (…) as Europeans, Westerners, we work relatively independent within the Mirai organization. [And] actually, we were always able to do our own thing and could convince people [in Japan] that we were working on the right things.
Negative	There's some communication gap between Dutch people and Mirai management. We often observe such things. (…) Maybe Mirai management needs to know more about Mirai Netherlands. And also I think Dutch people working at Mirai Netherlands need to have deeper understanding of the way of working of Mirai. So vice versa… mutual understanding and intensive communication is definitely necessary. '… in my experience, Dutch people don't have the intention to understand Japanese at this moment. (…) They prefer Dutch way.'	Often it's somewhat inimitable [in Japan] and every now and then you [Dutch manager] feel a bit helpless. (…) You do not exactly know why [Japanese] people do certain things. And it's also difficult to anticipate on it. Up till now, those Japanese have followed their procedures for one hundred percent! And their way of thinking and way of presenting, you name it, minor adjustments. (…) We're Japanese for almost ten years already. We have become a little more experienced, but still you notice that there are clear differences. (…) And that will probably stay the same, even over fifty years. But yes… it clearly has an influence, there is no other way.

about them. They mention to have great difficulty in convincing Mirai Netherlands to align its business policies and processes with the 'Mirai way'. The Dutch managers often refuse to adjust their business and management style to the rules, regulations, and way of working set by Mirai and therefore, they are seen as not taking the rules and regulations set by the headquarter seriously.

Indeed the Dutch managers were not always positive in their accounts of how the collaboration with Japan proceeds but found it 'difficult to exactly pinpoint where differences form a barrier to good collaboration'. It is brought up that whereas they first had a lot of autonomy in deciding how to run their business, this autonomy has been cut back by the organizational and environmental changes that have recently taken place in the organization. One of the changes is the succession of the CEO of Mirai Corporation, who does not originate from Mirai Technologies. Since this new CEO does not know the characteristics of the business and the company's history in this field, this '… asks for a huge amount of explanation.' A second cause mentioned is 'absolutely the crisis'. This is said to result in an increased need for explanation and a drawback in the trusting relationship between Mirai Netherlands and the headquarter. The Dutch managers furthermore mention that before the financial crisis, they were continuously sold out and performed better than expected. As such, there was some space for deciding their managerial course. This was tolerated in times of prosperity but in times of greater economic insecurity and organizational reforms, this was restricted.

It is also brought up by the Dutch managers that Mirai Corporation makes a clear distinction between mainland and overseas subsidiaries, and Japanese and non-Japanese employees. In dealing with the financial crisis and getting the managerial procedures back on track under a new CEO, this distinction has become more salient, especially when it concerns financial savings. The Dutch managers generally feel that they are not approached as members of Mirai Corporation and are not treated equally. In this regard, the collaboration is not always running smoothly: 'communication is difficult and sometimes there are strong disagreements.' One Dutch manager brings up the following:

'Our Japanese colleagues do not always make it easy for us, I think. (…) Of course it's the inequality in the relationship… and maybe also our behaviour.' Other examples of cultural identity talk about the Japanese in times of organizational uncertainty and change are provided in box three.

Box 3: Cultural identity talk in times of organizational & environmental changes

Dutch managers

There are Japanese who really [with fist hitting the table] continue to approach us as the acquired company! And so, they position themselves as uh… we are the instructing, questioning and judging party. (…) What I find the most difficult thing is and which really annoys me is that the Japanese don't approach us as a member of Mirai. That can really make me mad… I am an employee of Mirai, end of discussion! (…) While the Japanese colleagues often admit that we aren't Mirai. It's like they are Mirai and we aren't. That is one of the most difficult things of the way the Japanese collaborate with us.

The only thing that annoys me sometimes is… I don't want to talk about 'übermenschen' and 'untermenschen' but … a Japanese feels … that… well, I will never become Japanese. And actually I don't know if that annoys me or not.

There are many Japanese who have the idea that they are quality people, in relation to the rest of the world. (…) [And] that has a lot to do with the fact that they live on an island.

It's careful manoeuvring for them. On the one hand they want to save costs and then, they don't say it like that but you do feel it, there is Japan and not Japan… So it's easier for them to fire people outside Japan.

Towards a global integrated way of working: exchanging best practices & valuing differences?

In order to transform the company back into an entity that yields profit, Mirai Corporation decided to restructure its business divisions in 2008. Although Mirai Technologies had generally performed well, the CEO also asked for organizational reforms in this division: in the future, MiSo and Mirai Netherlands should work more closely together and to realize this, an appropriate management structure had to be designed. For this purpose, an organizational change project set off. As part of this organizational change process, the CEO of Mirai Netherlands was appointed general manager (GM) of the entire division and since MiSo was the core company in this division, he also became the CEO of MiSo. This is regarded a very unusual decision by the board of Mirai Corporation, forming a landmark in the company's history: never before had a non-Japanese person been appointed such a high position in the organization.

According to the GM himself, what Mirai wanted to signal to the outside world by appointing him as GM of the division is that '... they [the Japanese] want to become more global'. He continued: 'so, they are very proud that a Westerner is their boss.' According to the GM 'the cross-cultural nature of Mirai Technologies may serve as a unique and sustainable distinctive competency in competing effectively in an ever-changing international business context.' And by globalizing the management approach, cultural integration and seeking synergy, all business activities should become more efficient. He furthermore argued that the employees '… have to appreciate the [cultural] diversity (…) and [that] working together will bring the appreciation for our differences and the realization that together we are stronger and create a competitive advantage.' Though, recognizing the importance of gaining support for this new way of working, the GM set-up a Japanese-Dutch project team that should design the integration plans. With this measure, the Dutch GM intended to anticipate on the Japanese way of working and to achieve support for the foreseen organizational changes.

GM: Because we want to integrate... we purposively said that well… you need a mixed team of Japanese and Dutch people, that talk through that [the organizational changes] beforehand. The aim is actually clear, we sent that with them [the team]. But now go and check what people think of it and how we can adjust that. And then, come to a decision because now it is really sliding the Japanese and Dutch culture into each other.

Although there were some critical voices, the managers at Mirai Netherlands were generally positive about the upcoming integration. Often being frustrated about how the collaboration with Japan proceeded, they hoped that with the organizational changes the relation with Japan would improve. Especially in fields like production, R&D, and purchasing and logistics they hoped that there would now be a more serious search for establishing synergies. And although they thought that the organizational changes implied that Mirai Netherlands would become more Japanese, they hoped that, together with their colleagues at MiSo, they could come to a global management approach.

When I talked with the managers at MiSo, they appeared to have a slightly different look at the organizational changes that were taking place. They were rather sceptical about the integration project, and the Dutch and Japanese companies working more closely together. One of the Japanese managers brings up not to understand why the headquarter has made the decision to integrate the two companies. Besides this, they also mention that the Dutch GM did not clearly communicate the purpose of the integration project. This message should have been brought with enthusiasm and passion in order to make the integration successful. The Japanese managers also expressed their concerns about whether it is possible to completely integrate with Mirai Netherlands, and implement the organizational changes deeper into the organization at all. Hence, although the Dutch managers were generally optimistic about the upcoming organizational changes, their Japanese colleagues were rather skeptical. An overview of examples on how the Japanese and Dutch managers talked about the integration project is provided in box four. I will now continue with discussing the encountered differences concerning meeting styles and decision-making processes, as encountered in the integration project, in more detail.

Box 4: Talk about the integration project

Japanese managers	Dutch managers
Why is Mirai bringing us together now? It's happy for Dutch people, but [for us] unfortunately… I don't think so [person starts laughing].	… the first years we talked a lot about each other's processes (…) We really tried to find synergies by so-called Global projects. But at a certain moment (…) it was abolished. (…) Actually, this has resulted that, in all facets but especially concerning the technology side, I think that we are now more distant than 4/5 years ago.
The objective and goal of our way of working should be shown and eh (…) From my point of view, a kind of eh power… farming. In other words, enthusiasm or passion. These kind of things. It's very important from the word of the top management. (…) We want to do this. Like Ghosn-san… Carlos Ghosn. He's very powerful. I don't know if he's successful, but he's very powerful. (…) So, in business way, more business way.	I clearly think that that [the collaboration] should improve. In the organizational change process, we try to integrate the two management teams and I see it as a challenge (…) to make a change in that.
… we expect one organization… even when it is virtual, how to communicate? How to understand each other? Before understanding each other, they [Japanese employees] are expected to experience similarly to us. First is [to] understand the difference. They didn't do that. (…) . But what we experienced is probably what they will experience from now. But barrier is very high. And eh… How to do that? That is my so-called headache.	If we are going to design the new organization, you can… Japan and the Netherlands… integrate things a little more and bring more people together on substantive issues. That will also have an effect. Also with short-term exchanges. Exchange experts on substantive topics (…) So. I hope that this new organization can contribute to that. Searching for synergy possibilities, best practices, just exchange more people.

Encountered differences in the integration team

As the integration team started its activities, the Dutch and Japanese managers mentioned that the collaboration did not proceed as expected. The Dutch managers bring up that the Japanese team members did not actively take part in the project, as they did not express their opinions and visions openly during team meetings. The Japanese managers bring up that despite the fact that the GM tried to anticipate on the Japanese way of decision-making by setting up the project team, they were not very happy with how things proceeded. Their main complaint was that the timeframe was too short and that the Dutch team members were too fast in taking decisions. Especially the differences in meeting styles and decision-making practices were brought up in the conversations I had with the managers. I will now continue with discussing Dutch and Japanese managers' identity talk in this regard.

Meeting and discussion styles

The Japanese managers mention that the style of meetings, the timing of discussions and also the process of consensus seeking is different with the Dutch managers. They have noticed that the Dutch managers talk a lot during meetings; they freely express their opinions, even when the topic is not their specialty. One Japanese manager brings up that if the topic of discussion is not their field of specialty, Japanese people generally refrain from participating in a discussion. The Japanese managers prefer to go through the process of discussion and consensus-seeking before a meeting and therefore, discussing the topic of concern again during the meeting is not considered a contribution to the decision-making process. This pre-discussion process has also been called *nemawashi*. One Japanese manager mentions that the Dutch colleagues sometimes also do a kind of

'nemawashi': '… there [at Mirai Netherlands] is some attitude towards nemawashi. I sometimes see Dutch people do nemawashi. That's comfortable, even to me.'

The Japanese managers realize that they should speak out more during team meetings. According to one Japanese manager: 'I understand Japanese should speak out during the meeting, including me. [But] I don't think it's easy.' The Japanese mention that they do not like to actively participate in meetings because they generally prefer to avoid risks and prevent loss of face. In fact, as a Japanese, you should only speak out during meetings when the topic is your own speciality and even then, only when it is an important remark or question that you think really needs to be made. As one manager explains, only when the topic is a '… big issue, I think he [Japanese person] talks. But small issue which is not valuable for decision, we [Japanese] don't say anything.'

One Dutch manager explains that the Japanese way of having meetings and discussions '… remains difficult for us, Dutch people, to deal with. Because you get the feeling that they [Japanese managers] have no contribution because they say nothing and that's a pity of course.' The managers at Mirai Netherlands have recognized that in Japan, 'a little more is done backstage': in more informal settings, the Japanese often work to achieve consensus and as such, 'the direction is already mostly decided before the meeting'. In this regard, the formal meeting '… is more a formalization of the direction'. The Dutch managers bring up that these pre-discussions are a necessity because the Japanese are not capable to go through this process during a meeting in which English is spoken. They also mention that the Japanese may not be willing to speak out openly, but clearly await their superior's opinion, because of the Japanese tendency to avoid the risk of losing face. In contrast to the Dutch who have no hesitations to speak out freely regardless to whether their superior is present or not, the Japanese are said to clearly await their boss's opinion with which they agree accordingly. In a Japanese context, arguing against a superior's opinion would be disrespectful. In Dutch meetings, on the contrary, everyone present usually speaks out. This is related to Dutch culture, in which hierarchy would be less important and people tend to speak out more openly about all sorts of issues.

Box 5: Cultural identity talk in relation to meeting styles and processes of discussion and consensus-seeking	
Japanese managers about Japanese	**Dutch managers about Dutch**
In Japan, we talk sometimes these issues with people concerned. So, we don't need to explain the background (…) [because] before the meeting we had a small discussion… a small talk sometimes. So, we know the background each other already. (…) So, main direction is already done before meeting by people concerned.	We [Dutch] like to enter a discussion and dialogue. A Japanese would not do that as easily. (…) …also in official meetings… to just have a nice open discussion. (…) We quickly open the discussion during meetings. That's part of an exploration of opinions and so on. Well, from the Japanese side, people don't like to do that in public.
Our country… Japanese don't talk if the topic is not their role. This is his [someone else's] subject, so outside people don't say something about it.	… we continuously look at the bigger picture, instead of the boss. (…)We say, it's all good and dandy, he [the boss] has the last word (…) but I have an autonomous responsibility… and I will confront him with that. (…) That's something that I don't experience with my Japanese colleagues… that they do that in public.
Japanese people tend to hesitate a little in expressing their opinion. They don't like to take a big risk by speaking out. Have you noticed some interesting phenomena about Japanese people? They don't like to take risks. (…) Even if they have hundred percent of confidence, Japanese people hesitate to speak out.	… sometimes they [the Japanese] look at us with astonishment… because we [Dutch] do it in a typical non-Japanese way.
Japanese managers about Dutch	**Dutch managers about Japanese**
I think it's culture because in the meeting, every people… if they [Dutch people] have a question in their mind, they speak out directly to presenter. So, that creates… all questions concerned are cleared. (…) Even a small question… if he [Dutch person] has a small question, he speaks or talks this question. But in Japanese, in my experience, a lot of people don't do that. (…) It's cultural difference I think.	… they have more difficulty in expressing their opinion when their boss is present. They clearly await until he has said something.
In the meeting Dutch people think talking… make questions are thought contribution in the meeting. But in Japan we don't think uh… contribution by making question or giving opinion in the meeting.	… the Japanese obviously wait to see which way the wind blows…. [and] then they withdraw themselves (…) and then, eventually, there's a group position. So, they carefully spend a lot of time on preparing decisions, trying to reach consensus. That's more than we Dutch people do. (…) In Japan that's possible because people spend so much time at the office. But it's again in the genes, because that's how they think it should be done. But that's clearly another cultural difference.
They [Dutch managers] may spend some time to prepare for interview or meeting beforehand… to have smooth communication. And also they, some Dutch people respect the Japanese way. So, they take *nemawashi* procedure. (…) That is indirect way of doing things. But they know that some Japanese people prefer nemawashi to prepare complicated negotiation or persuading.	… brainstorming, entrepreneurial thinking… I rarely see that with the Japanese. That's what I find the biggest difference. Just to dialectically develop a line of thinking with each other. (…)The Japanese are kind of handicapped in that. (…) Just to express what you think and start a dialogue.

According to the Dutch managers, the way meetings proceed in the Netherlands would be unthinkable in a Japanese context. One Dutch manager explains that Dutch people are also familiar with a form of nemawashi: 'We also put things to steep. It's actually quite the same.' However, as another person explains, this is only because of necessity: '[with the Japanese] you will need to put things to steep. And give the Japanese time to put their hands around it. (…) If you want a decision is made on something, you will need to make sure that you've discussed it with everyone beforehand.' Box five provides examples of how the Japanese and Dutch managers talk about themselves and each other in this regard.

Differences in language, communication and ways of thinking

The Dutch managers furthermore mention that the Japanese have difficulty in following and coping with the Dutch listening style and their critical attitude during meetings and discussions. They mention that due to language difficulties, the Japanese managers might not be able to follow and actively take part in discussions that are held in English. Within MiSo, people still prefer to communicate in Japanese since only few Japanese people can speak English and all communication with the headquarter is still in Japanese. More generally, the level of English in Mirai is said to be 'disappointingly low' and, according to one Dutch manager, this would 'form a serious handicap to real globalization'.

One of the reasons given by the Japanese for why they do not speak out during meetings is 'mainly because of English capability' and therefore, during meetings, '… 90 percent of conversation (…) is done by Dutch people, only 5 percent from Japanese.' More, generally, the Japanese admit that their 'poor capability of speaking English language' forms a barrier to collaborating effectively with the Dutch and forms 'one of the hindrances or barriers to overcome cultural gaps'. In relation to this, the Japanese managers also emphasize that the 'thinking way is quite different': whereas Dutch people always try to come to a most logical decision, the Japanese would strive to reach a most harmonious decision. According to one Japanese manager '… Japanese people … many people have different opinion, but always try to find out the consensus. In contrast, 'Dutch logic is uh… not so flexible.' It is furthermore brought up by one Japanese manager that regarding the communication about the motivation and goal of the integration project, they have encountered a paradox that when communication is most important, the Dutch tend to forget it. Hence, this person hints at a situation where the cultural characteristics of Dutch people do not seem to apply. An overview of instances of cultural identity talk concerning language and ways of thinking is provided in box six.

Decision-making processes
The Dutch managers also experience differences concerning the process of decision-making. Often they encounter that whereas the topic of concern has been talked through during a meeting and the Dutch managers are willing to take a decision, the Japanese are not. This is said to be because they take individual responsibility for decisions while the Japanese are only willing to take responsibility as a group. Furthermore, one Dutch manager brings up an occasion, in which Japanese and Dutch employees had to come to a decision concerning the integration project and one Japanese manager reformulated his opinion, after consultation with his superior. Though recognizing the

Box 6: Cultural identity talk concerning language, communication and ways of thinking	
Japanese managers about Japanese	**Dutch managers about Dutch**
In order to make consensus, Japanese logic can sometimes be very flexible, in order to reach optimal consensus, which makes the implementation of the decision smooth and effective'	We are anti-thinkers… Many Dutch people in this company are anti-thinkers. So, [during a meeting] someone gives an opinion and then you say 'yes but…' or you overrule him in the communication. In the dialogue with us, that's just very difficult for the Japanese.
Peace in mind. Avoid strong conflict. We're a small island. Kind of tender to people. Respect elder people or superior people. And don't stand on ceremony. (…) Do you know *wa*? (…) Harmony is the relationship with the rest. That's a very important keyword in the structure of Japanese people.	
Japanese managers about Dutch	**Dutch managers about Japanese**
… there are some similarities between American people and Dutch people and the keyword here is logic. When you are preparing a theme… [this is] with logical sentences, logical analysis and logical observations.	And what plays a huge role is language. Explaining of … and particularly in details and word choices … How you say things. That's … that remains… Mirai owns us now for ten years already and it [language] still plays a role!
The Dutch, especially… it's my understanding. Dutch people sometimes take the individual thinking way. But on the other hand, the Japanese sometimes dislike such a thinking way [person starts laughing]. Respect for the group and other people's thinking way.	… we listen actively, that's difficult for them… in the dialogue. I also experience that. (…) When, in a conversation with a Japanese colleague, I ask 'how is it with this? And how is it with that? Can you explain that once more? I don't understand that completely… Can you come back to that once again?' Then I only want to understand… but they feel that they are steered.
Dutch people like speaking… communication. It's one of the most important things you are thinking of. And now, probably you are forgetting it. I say a little directly but honestly speaking that's most important to both of us. Now at the plant we must be in the same community. That's what the GM should be thinking.	

difference in the importance of hierarchy in Japanese superior-subordinate relations, some Dutch managers do perceive the Japanese way to deal with hierarchy in the decision-making process as 'boss pleasing' and actually hindering optimal decision-making. From a Dutch perspective, 'sometimes you just need to take a stand and get on'. In the Netherlands, this behaviour is not perceived as being disrespectful but instead, as making an active contribution to the decision-making process.

The Japanese managers characterize Japanese decision-making as being more 'group oriented', aimed at reaching 'full consensus'. In contract, the Dutch style is said to be more 'individualistic', aimed at reaching 'democratic consensus'. Regarding the outcome of the integration project, the Japanese managers mention that the Dutch project leader made a mistake in spreading the final integration document before a final decision had been achieved. They mention that it had been better if the document had been formally discussed before spreading it further into the organization. An overview of instances of cultural identity talk in relation to decision-making processes is provided in box seven.

Box 7: Cultural identity talk in relation to decision-making processes	
Japanese managers about Japanese	**Dutch managers about Dutch**
In case of Japan, in order to make consensus, we try to get agreement as much as possible… as much as possible. One hundred percent, quite happy. But so… 90 percent, 85 percent that I do to get agreement. But in case of Dutch, I don't know exactly, but maybe more than half… 51 percent. (…) This is consensus… I don't know exactly.	We [Dutch] take individual responsibility much faster. In Japan, people don't take responsibility as an individual but the group does. That's a clear difference. … when you are with only Dutch… it just goes faster. Everyone has his or her say and then someone says, 'this is how we will do it'. And that's not always better.
Japanese managers about Dutch	**Dutch managers about Japanese**
Sometimes you [Dutch] publish or send an email, announcing something official. Unfortunately, which was not determined officially [person starts laughing]. We are now deeply involved in a consolidation project, which was lead by a Dutch manager. From Japanese side, his way of doing has some problems. So, I and my colleagues should tell him something about the Mirai way of doing something.	'actually, every time it comes down to the same [thing]… that during a meeting no response is given or no decision is been taken. They wait to see which way the cat jumps.' Then I think damn boy… you shouldn't have done that! You're disturbing a process in such a way of which I think… By not committing autonomously but trying to please the boss, you're disturbing the process so badly that actually the Dutch organization suffers from it. (…)Then I think 'Jeez guys… did you let yourself get taken again?' (…) Then you see that the Japanese please their boss more than we do.

Power and politics in Mirai Technologies: The core company issue

Both the Japanese and Dutch managers have expressed their frustrations about how the integration project proceeded. The Japanese disapprove of the way their Dutch colleagues are working; not only in the integration project but also more generally they feel that the Dutch managers are imposing their way of working upon the division. Mirai Netherlands often diverges from the rules and regulations of Mirai Corporation, and legitimizes this by emphasizing their strong strategic position and international orientation. Besides, in contrast to the Japanese managers who have a system of job-rotation, the Dutch managers often work in one area of specialization. As such they are often more knowledgeable than their Japanese colleagues, which provides them with a source of intellectual/expert power.

The Dutch managers acknowledge that they do not easily change their way of working towards a more Japanese one, and that when in the collaboration the Japanese and Dutch 'systems' or 'ways of working' clash, the Dutch managers are inclined to take over control and proceed in their own way. A major issue that came to the fore in the integration team is the discussion about which company should be the core company of the division: MiSo or Mirai Netherlands? Mirai Corporation appointed one company in each division as core company. This company is responsible for the overall management of the division, and all the communication with the headquarter, making this a very strategic position. Traditionally MiSo has been the core company of Mirai Technologies but during the organizational changes, discussions have started to assign Mirai Netherlands as core company. This argument was substantiated by the facts that in terms of size and turnover, Mirai Netherlands is superior to MiSo. It is furthermore mentioned by the Dutch managers that whereas they 'don't know the strategy of Mirai for internationalization', they view themselves as more global than Mirai Corporation. Therefore, it was logical to appoint

Mirai Netherlands as core company, increasing the power and influence of the Dutch managers in determining the managerial course of Mirai Technologies.

The Japanese managers experience the organizational changes as affecting their position within Mirai Corporation. They wonder if the organizational changes are a veiled 'reverse takeover' and they are gradually turning into a Dutch company. The GM also brings this up: 'there is also a lot of insecurity in that [the organizational change process]… like what is going to be my role, my function? They [the Japanese] have the feeling it's some kind of reverse takeover.' According to the GM, the many organizational changes result in feelings of insecurity 'for a number of Japanese, because we [Mirai Netherlands] are so big compared to MiSo… On the one hand, they acknowledge that, but on the other hand you have the Japanese pride. We [Japanese] did acquire you [Dutch].' A bit laconic, the GM puts this aside as being an inherent part of the process of becoming a larger company.

To great disappointment of the Dutch managers, the CEO of Mirai Corporation rejected the proposal for changing the division's core company into Mirai Netherlands. This was perceived as a huge change in Mirai's globalization strategy: whereas the appointment of a Dutch GM was generally viewed as a sign that Mirai wanted to become more global, they now think that their mother company is still a very Japanese company and regret that 'Mirai does not try to really become global'. Legitimating and reaffirming their position, the Japanese managers do not object to the CEO's decision. They now argue Mirai Corporation wants to stay a Japanese company, and therefore Mirai Netherlands should respect the rules, regulations and way of working of Mirai. Since this is clear CEO-policy, there is no room for discussion or debate about this. Furthermore, being part of Mirai Corporation, it was MiSo who acquired Mirai Netherlands and therefore, the Dutch managers should adjust their way of working and not the other way around. This would make it much easier to get things done in Japan. Examples of how the managers talk about the political struggle between the two companies are provided in box eight.

Box 8: Talk about processes of power and organizational politics

Japanese managers about Japanese	Dutch managers about Dutch
Sometimes Japanese people have the feeling that Dutch people push their thinking way to Japanese colleagues. Because… I understand Dutch procedure is same as United States and European countries thinking way. So, maybe Dutch people understand this is the international standard… 'why don't you [Japanese] follow international standard'?	… sometimes we believe that we have all the wisdom of the world…and get on with it. (…) And yes, we should really sincerely, I should almost say, be open towards the fact that people can think differently. That they have a different way of working (…) And you should take that into account.
Mirai Netherlands operates in a big business and we [MiSo] are quite small (…) But in our [MiSo] understanding, we are, we belong to Mirai Corporation. So that is the big [company]… bigger than Mirai Netherlands.	I think that, deep in their hearts, they respect our organization. If you simply take a look at the statistics. We started in the business about the same time. Mirai Netherlands is just ten times as large as MiSo. Those are the plain statistics that a Japanese should see too.
In my understanding Mirai Corporation still wants Japanese centered management. I don't make objections on that policy… we can't change Mirai Corporation to American company or Dutch company. So we have to accept that.	I am very open towards cultural differences, other views… But I must say that, and that is a handicap of myself, I frown upon imposed cultural differences. I'm very stubborn in that.

Japanese managers about Dutch	Dutch managers about Japanese
Probably the case you [Dutch] are now experiencing is very similar to the case we [Japanese] experienced in year 2001. Very similar, but the other way around. I am recognizing myself.	Real differences you see is that we think in functional lines (…) Mirai thinks more in legal entities. We view these legal entities as completely insignificant.
In Mirai Netherlands, you have big power (…). Of course we [Mirai Netherlands] have a long history of successful result. I understand we [Mirai Netherlands] have … big identity, I expect that … I understand it seems difficult for them [Mirai Netherlands] to change [person starts laughing].	The legal entities… we see them as subordinate. While that is currently different… In Japan that is… they view these legal entities as very important. While we think here that these legal entities are more a vehicle you need in order to do business… but that doesn't influence your management structure. And we try to get that integrated structure….
First the planning and control manager should receive this and check everything and see if this is good to transfer to all plant people, yes or no. (…) We must discuss this together like that. In my consideration that's better, instead of directly sending documents to many people. Normally we don't do that. (…) So, our way of working… this is very conceptual management [person is laughing again]. Japanese people like a more practical message. Including myself.	… Mirai does say that they really like to become a Western company… also does a few things. But it's terribly hard for them because (…) it's a very Japanese company though. With Japanese ways and a different way of thinking.
… misunderstanding and kind of shock of the culture. This is Dutch way and are we going to be a Dutch company?	

Discussion & Conclusion

In this paper, I illustrated how Japanese and Dutch managers of the technology division of Mirai Corporation make sense of their transnational collaboration and discursively construct and enact their own and others' cultural identities. The study sheds light on cultural identity processes in a period of economic insecurity, managerial changes and unstable power relations. The findings illustrate that the Japanese and Dutch managers use the culture discourse to create interdependency but also to signify difference from each other. On the one hand, the GM tries to legitimate the integration plans by

emphasizing the distinct characteristic of Mirai Technologies, depicting the cultural diverse nature of their division as a unique and sustainable distinctive competency. As such, the GM tries to create interdependency by emphasizing difference. On the other hand, the culture discourse is used to create a boundary between the self and the other in the context of organizational integration. The relation between MiSo and Mirai Netherlands is characterized by political ambiguity, which has become particularly salient in the integration project. The Japanese feel the upcoming organizational changes threaten their position and actively draw on differences in communication, meeting and management styles, in order to explain their hesitations regarding implementation. Furthermore, drawing on language difficulties and differences in meeting styles and decision-making processes, the Japanese have been reluctant in actively taking part in discussions on the integration plans. Likewise, the Dutch managers fear that the organizational changes will imply they have to conform more to the Japanese way of working. Here, MiSo is argued to use its status as core company and access to the board and supporting staff of Mirai Corporation to defend their position and to convince them to adjust their way of working to a more Japanese one. By not adjusting their meeting and decision-making processes, they prevent the Japanese from actively taking part in the discussions, hence providing themselves room to direct the course of the integration plans.

To summarize the research contribution of this paper, the study illustrates the ways in which cultural identities and boundaries are discursively constructed and enacted in order to serve social struggles over power, autonomy and resistance. In this case, discourses on culture are actively used by organizational members to direct the course of the upcoming organizational changes. Hence, an awareness of the organizational and political context in which collaborations take place, is essential for understanding how organizational actors make sense of their transnational work experiences. The findings presented in this study complement and further developing the insights reached by other interpretivist scholars (e.g. Ailon-Souday & Kunda, 2003; Barinaga, 2007; Brannen & Salk, 2000; Vaara, 2000; 2003; Ybema & Byun, 2009). The study is however limited by the fact that it focused on a single case of transnational collaboration which is not characteristic of all transnational acquisitions or management teams. One should thus not expect to encounter similar findings in other times and places. These limitations notwithstanding, the study does contribute to theory development by highlighting basic social processes and mechanisms in working and interacting across boundaries. Further research is necessary to investigate how culture discourses are used by organizational actors in different settings and whether the salience and importance of cultural identities and boundaries in teams is indeed dependent on the level of political unrest or uncertainty in organizations. For this purpose, more longitudinal studies are regarded necessary. The research agenda can furthermore be strengthened by studies of transnationally operating teams at different organizational layers, such as senior and middle managers, or people working at production or R&D departments.

To conclude, this paper has illustrated the relevance of discursive processes of cultural identity construction in the context of post-acquisition integration. I started with a citation from a Japanese manager, who argued that working in such a setting is 'impressive', 'difficult', and 'challenging'. In a similar vein, researching how organizational actors make sense of their transnational work experiences by uncovering the underlying processes of social identity formation and intergroup relations appears to meet the same criteria. An interpretive approach to cultural identity with a focus on the politicized nature of transnational and intercultural relations can offer new ways of viewing these relations.

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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: BULGARIAN REALITIES AND FOREIGN GOOD PRACTICES (THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS)

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The changes in Bulgaria after 1989 and its accession to European Union in 2007 provided possibility to Bulgarian higher education to take part more actively in the processes of internationalization and globalization of the higher education and contributed to intensification of the students and lecturers mobility within united Europe.

Today in Bulgaria there are 51 accredited institutions for higher education. According to National Statistical Institute (NSI) during the 2009/2010 academic year 9.8 thousand international students were taught in our country, which is with 6.7% more than the previous year. (NSI, 2010, p. 5). In the frames of EU's program "Erasmus" during 2009/2010 627 international students visited Bulgarian higher education institutions (HEIs) and 1687 Bulgarian students, during the same period, were taught in different European countries. (European Commission, 2011)

The desire of the representatives of Bulgarian higher education to expand its share in the international education market is evident from the clearly expressed will in that direction in public space – both on behalf of members of academic community and on behalf of state institutions which is reflected in the legislative changes currently taking place in Bulgaria.

Increasing the competitiveness of Bulgarian higher education institutions, both on a domestic and international level, is the main task for each institution and for the sector as a whole. In this context, achieving a strong connection between the students and the higher education institution of their choice, expressed in attachment and loyalty on their part, is a major task for education institutions, being a source of competitive advantage. Such loyalty, however, is also directly connected to the level of satisfaction felt by students with respect to their universities and schools of higher education. Understanding of the factors resulting in a high level of satisfaction and the methods of management of such factors create the opportunity for development of effective strategies for advancement.

Students' satisfaction can be measured against the following parameters: quality of academics, quality of administration, quality of social life; quality of infrastructure and quality of support services. (Thomas, 2011, p.185). Higher education is one of the fields where intercultural communication is extremely intensive and justifiably may be regarded as a major element for achieving student satisfaction. In today's global and multicultural world, the issues of intercultural communication should be viewed as an integral characteristic of the quality of teachers and teaching, since cultural competency and sensitivity are important factors for the quality of the education process. Intercultural communication is related to the quality of social life because it provides students with opportunities for expansion of their cultural horizons, but may also be a source of problems and discomfort. Development of intercultural awareness is also important for the quality of support services and administration, bearing in mind that support service officials need to do their job with knowledge of the specific problems, needs and attitudes of the students depending on their cultural affiliation.

In May 2011, the author carried out an unrepresentative telephone survey covering representatives of international student departments and public relations departments in

five of the accredited Bulgarian institutions of higher education and an examination of their internet pages.

The results reveal that while most higher education institutions in Bulgaria do have departments or individual experts working in public relations, they are as yet not fully aware of the serious potential of this technology. The study also comes to show that the issues of intercultural communication are currently insufficiently presented in the agenda of Bulgarian universities and there is plenty of room for improvement and development. A review of the literary sources from Bulgarian authors reveals that the problems analysed in the present report are modestly presented. A search of the electronic catalogues of SS. Cyril and Methodius National Library of publications (books, collections, treatises, periodicals) containing the key words "higher education" and "public relations" found only nine relevant titles from 1992 onwards, and under the key words "higher education" and "intercultural communication" – only two.

The main purpose of the report is to emphasize the positive contribution of public relations in the processes of intercultural communication with international students as one of the important target publics in schools of higher education.

Intercultural communication in Bulgarian higher educational institutions for the present has been carried out spontaneously, in the course of the educational process and the interpersonal communication, but it becomes more and more obvious that it is necessary to provide active support of professional communicators therein.

An overview of foreign experience may provide useful guidance for activity enhancement within Bulgarian universities in the field of public relations and intercultural communication.

Today's schools of higher education constitute large heterogeneous communities made up of various internal publics (students, lecturers, administrators, technical and service personnel) where people of all social strata, nationalities and age groups converge. The efficient integration of such publics would be unthinkable without the application of public relations techniques.

Public relations is defined as social technology; therefore, we propose to assume that, according to functionalist sociology perspective, public relations, as any other technology may be characterized by manifested and latent functions.

Within its **manifested function**, public relations, as part of the organizational management (according to Cutlip, Center and Broom), have to „establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends." (as cited in Ledingham&Bruning, 2000, p. xiii). Public relation experts are defined as "boundary-spanners", whose responsibility in organization is to „support other internal subsystems by helping them communicate within the organisation itself and by helping them in communicating with external audiences. They provide a counselling role, advising what and how to communicate and they can also provide an implementation role by undertaking the communication on behalf of the subsystems".(Gregory, 2004, p. 50).

In the global world we live in, the cultural differences of target publics play an important role in communication process. "Corporations will need communicators who can educate them about the cultural background of a certain audience and the best way to address its needs [. . .] We [communicators] will also be required to help [management and] staff find meaning in a rapidly changing world" (Cambié& Ooi, 2009, pp. 13, 14)

Foreign students represent one of the major target publics in the field of higher education for several reasons, both at micro and macro level. In a short-term perspective, it is their financial contribution for the respective educational institution, the local community and the national economy of the host country that comes to the foreground.

The long-term effects, however, should not be ignored. For example, a study organised by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (UK) found that international students generate a reserve of goodwill not only with regards to their Alma mater but with regards to the host country as well. They are highly likely, even after their return to their home places, to continue using intellectual goods and services, such as publications, know-how and courses, from the country in which they were educated (UK), and to recommend their universities to future students (Development Education Association & Association of University Teachers, 1995, p. 11). Ultimately they may be viewed as bridgers of the gap between the culture they belong to and the culture of the countries in which they received their education

Foreign students also require special attention on behalf of higher institutions due to the fact that they can be identified as a "vulnerable" public (Brown, 2008, p. 11) which must be facilitated in the course of introduction and adaptation into an entirely new lifestyle away from their homeland.

It is important to highlight that although the focus of this study is international students, many of the activities aimed at them actually contribute to the development of the intercultural skills of the students as a whole. Today, as professionally instructed specialists, they all must possess cultural sensitivity and ability to conduct a dialogue because they form the future scientific, social and political elite nationally and globally.

From the point of view of communication with international students (both those following the full programme and those participating in international exchange programmes), the efforts of PR experts, within the manifested functions of public relations, should be concentrated in two directions. The first is *informing and advising the management* and the different units in higher education institutions (administrative and academic) of the specific needs and problems facing international students by means of information campaigns, seminars and trainings[30].

The second is *maintaining constant dialogue with the students themselves,* both for the purpose of getting to know their needs, demands and attitudes and for the purpose of acquainting them with the culture of the respective university and the respective country.

Arguably, intercultural dialogue commences as early as the time of selection of the educational institution. At the eve of 21 century Karen Heenan Davies wrote that „Companies [and HEIs as well] will become more global, so practitioners [in public relations] will need to demonstrate global capabilities, with cultural sensitivity and knowledge to adapt programmes to suit local needs" (as cited in Theaker, 2004, p. 333)

From this perspective the main task of public relations practitioners is to adjust their communication plans and programs in regard to the cultural specificity of target publics and to provide international students rich and useful information about their future environment, so that these students can make an informed choice of an educational institution, which corresponds to their educational, personal, and last but not least – cultural preferences.

Comprehensive knowledge of the values, motivations and information needs of the target audience allows public relations experts to carry out effective communication programmes in conformance with its specifics.

Although ccommunication with students can be carried out through a variety of channels – information materials, meetings and presentations, online communication merits special attention. Internet sites are a powerful communication instrument in the

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[30] An example in that respect is given by the Chicago University. Chicago University (2011). *Training at the University of Chicago. Retrieved from* < https://training.uchicago.edu/>

hands of public relations practitioners, which allows provision of constantly updated information facilitating both the choice of educational institution and the successful transition of future students into a new, often significantly different reality. Such sites enable universities to provide information on everything related to admission and entry – from introduction to the different specialties and programmes, application steps, availability of scholarships and visa issues to reception in the country, accommodation, social opportunities within and outside the campus, existing students' organizations, services offered to international students by university bodies, etc.

A good example in this respect is University of Cambridge which, for 2010, is ranked first by QS World University Rankings (QS World, n.d.), being the first non-American university to hold that position. Its site stands out with its incredible wealth of content regarding all aspects of life within the university. Visitors can learn important details about the institution – history, traditions, organisational structure, values and mission. In the "A-Z for International Students" (Cambridge University, 2010) guide foreign students can find an answer to all relevant questions regarding their stay at the university. External resources are also offered. For example, the "Comfort Zone" brochure of the British Council (British Council, n.d.) on the same site provides foreigners with the opportunity to learn about different aspects of daily life in the UK which will be of importance from their very first day in the country. Students are also provided with a publication prepared by the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA, n.d.) explaining the phenomenon of culture shock, the main underlying factors and useful links to different sites on the topic.

It is worth noting that preliminary knowledge of the "culture shock" phenomenon is important as it is a step towards management of a problem which may have serious psychological, social and physiological consequences. Delivered on time this information provides preconditions to at least diminish the gap between expectations and reality.

Studies show that stress is at its highest at the earliest stages of the stay as foreign students are expected to cope with the new language and the challenges of a new socio-cultural and academic environment, combined with feelings of home-sickness and loneliness (Brown, 2008). This may render a negative impact on behaviour, relations and the perception of others.

Such negative consequences can extend beyond the individual level and may, ultimately, reflect on student-institution relations. The inconsistency between expectations and reality caused by inherent difficulties in adapting to a new culture – that of the host country and the organizational culture within the respective university - may grow into a negative attitude towards the receiving organization and even towards the country as a whole.

The efforts of university academic and administrative staff to support students during the period of orientation and acquaintance with the new country are, from a psychological point of view, an important indicator of the value of students for the organization. These are efforts which not only facilitate the above process but also increase the sense of satisfaction in relations with the organization and hence enhance the positive attitude and loyalty to the institution., as far as they are related to such key determinants of service quality amongst which responsiveness („emphasising attentiveness and promptness in dealing with customer requests, questions and complaints") and empathy („defined as caring,individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers")(Al Khattab&Fraij, 2011, p.15)

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Building a good and lasting relationship between students and their universities is possible only with the joint efforts of international student departments, students' organization, the staff team and, of course, public relations departments.

Leading world universities offer their international students different opportunities for a smoother transition into their new life. A positive contribution to the adaptation process are the so-called „orientation days"[31]. Effective means for mitigating culture shock and facilitating adaptation are the so-called 'Host Family Programs"[32] the philosophy of which is to provide a "home away from home". Programmes of this type are free and on a voluntary basis. International students are thus given the chance to create long-term close, empathic relations with locals who can then introduce them to their own culture and lifestyle. Regardless of whether the hosts are members of the local community or part of the academic staff, alumni or administrative staff of the respective university, they can offer students from abroad the chance to feel more comfortable in the new environment. Some universities launch different events at which international students and their host families can participate together thus strengthening the connection between all parties in the programme.

An alternative to this approach is accommodation of the "Bed and Breakfast"[33] type (used mainly for short-term stays and not for the entire study period). This form is paid but is significantly different from the standard stay in rented premises because potential hosts may join such a programme only after undergoing orientation sessions and interviews with university representatives prior to being approved. A significant part of their obligations is to spend some time with their guests on a daily basis so that they can get to know each other.

Regardless of the specific form of the programme, participating students will have the opportunity to immerse themselves into the local culture in an informal way, to hone their language skills, to receive support during organization of their new life.

The benefit is bilateral as internationals students, on their part, enhance the cultural horizons of their hosts and the local community as a whole. Ultimately, these programmes allow for a stronger connection with the university itself.

Examples from the practice of different European North American and Australian universities demonstrate that the role of professional communicators in the process of intercultural communication in schools of higher education is significant. Professionally organized communication programmes play an important role for reducing perturbations

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[31] For example, the Stockholm University website presents a lot of on-line resources along with up-to-date information on events such as "Orientation Day", " Guided tours on campus" and "Guided bus tour in Stockholm". Stockholm University (2011,June 30) *Study with Us: Orientation days for exchange students* < http://www.su.se/english/study/exchange-students/orientation-days-1.513>

[32] An example is given by the Denison University. Denison University (2011) *Office of International Student Services: Host Family Program*. Retrieved from <http://www.denison.edu/ offices/international/host_family_program.html>

[33] Detailed information is available on the Griffith University website. Griffith University(2011) *Homestay*. Retrieved from <http://www.griffith.edu.au/homestay>

during the transition from one lifestyle and cultural environment into another. Ultimately, it could be said that efficient communication is part of the quality of the educational service offered, which is far more than just the sum of educational issues.

An important part of the tasks facing public relations experts is to create conditions in which international students will have the opportunity to express their cultural affinity and will be able to get to know each other on a cultural level.

A good practical example is that of an international university operating on the territory of Bulgaria – the American University in Blagoevgrad (AUBG). Its internet site contains numerous valuable ideas. Its "International week" covers various interesting events such as "Country Presentation" in which participants share little-known facts of their culture and traditions; "Arts, Crafts, Games" – a programme involving activities such as origami, teaching Mongolian writing and Bulgarian embroidery; "Taste Fest" – presentation of traditional dishes prepared by students, teachers and employees; AUBG Millionaire Show – quiz show containing questions on the culture, geography, history and traditions of the different countries represented in the university community; Travel Series programme in which students exchange international knowledge by sharing their impressions from a foreign country they have visited (American University in Bulgaria, 2011) In this way PR specialists at higher schools can help students develop cultural empathy and broad-mindedness.

In the context of this topic, it is interesting to explore the role of public relations within its **latent functions.**

An important task facing the teacher and administrative staff with regards to both international students and students as a whole is the formation of intercultural communication competences, i.e. "the knowledge, skills and attitudes that comprise a person's ability to get along with, work and learn with people from diverse cultures" (Intercultural, n.d., para. 2).

According to some studies, although universities, offer many opportunities for intercultural communications, most "students are more likely to work and learn alongside and not jointly with those they perceive as culturally different" (Mixing, n.d., para. 3). According to the same studies a path towards solution of this problem is to convince them to leave their comfort zone and extend communication beyond national, cultural and language differences.

Special attention in this regard deserve the programs, aimed at local communities (another important external target audience), where students participate as volunteers because there unstrained environment for intercultural communication is provided. Although these programs are created in order to strengthen and maintain the relationship between universities and their local communities, such programmes can successfully serve as a bridge between in-auditorium training (expanding the range of possible didactic and pedagogic approaches) and the PR-practice of the respective educational institution.

What is unique for public relations in schools of higher education is that such programmes directly contribute for increased quality of the end product of higher education – not simply well-trained professionals but young people of democratic thought possessing the skills to work in a global and multicultural world.

Public relations programmes are an important element not only with view of fostering the relations of universities with their target publics but also as a supplementary element within the so-called informal learning process whereby students accumulate valuable worldly experience and develop important qualities and skills necessary for successful professional realization, determined "as "key" because they serve as the

foundation for the development of further competences; "soft", because they supplement specific professional competences; "transferable" – because they are developed throughout the entire life cycle in different situations and can be applied in any professional environment; "hidden" – because are difficult to measure and assess but are clearly identifiable in the work place" (Georgieva, 2011, p.13)

The joint work of teachers and PR-experts may result in the creation of significant "community relations" programmes ranging within a wide frame – work with social institutions (orphan homes, homes for the elderly, etc.), health institutions, schools, civil associations, non-governmental organizations, local and central government, which will meet significant social needs as well as provide students with the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge, to accumulate empirical experience, to cooperate beyond the boundaries of their cultural origin, united by a common, relevant cause.[34] This creates synergy both in terms of the educational and instructive process and in terms of the PR-activities of the individual institution.

Public relations activities within the university environment can and must, in many cases, be viewed as an aid and supplement to the educational and instruction process. Such programmes not only create favourable social consequences for their beneficiaries but at the same time promote social sensitivity, democratic thought and behaviour, cultural and ethnic tolerance, a spirit of cooperation and respect towards others in all students engaged in their performance. Ultimately, social values and attitudes are formulated in the practical application of knowledge and ideas already acquired and in the accumulation of new knowledge and ideas as a result of the interaction and communication with other people.

As a conclusion we may summarize that professionally implemented PR approaches to issues of intercultural communication in higher education have significant consequences both for individual educational institutions and society as a whole. They are among the significant factors determining positive attitude and loyalty to Alma Mater, developing good-will to the host-state, building bridges between various cultures which is extremely important in today's multicultural world striving for peace, understanding and sustainable development.

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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AT RISK
/Analysis of a case of the Border Police – Bourgas/

Gergana Vladkova,

Dimensions of social life are complex interaction of communities in complex hierarchical relations, where human movement is followed by the fact of global transformations and cultural conflicts destabilized by crises and conflicts in the material and spiritual world. Social environment as an open system influenced communicative relation interaction between subjects' level and cultural diversity because of the social barriers between communicators to create mismatches or disagreements, negativism, conformance, uncertainty and suggest a situation of risk.

PR is the early warning system that analyzes the risk, identify risk, create a concept for risk tolerance and assess the effects thereof. It provides the actions of participants depending on the entity that performs risk activity. Explore reasons and examples of risks taken alternative solutions for overcoming the situation of risk. PR classify the field of manifestation of risk acceptable parameters and its different dimensions of social and psychological level, reported cross-cultural differences on the basis of credibility and reality, profile the participants in the communicative act.

The subject of this study is the role of public relations to overcome risky situations and conflicts in intercultural communication process to achieve social trust, continuity, understanding and social cooperation among participants. The object of study is a case of the Border Police, Burgas. **Is built is the main hypothesis** that in the field of intercultural communication in the risk situation in border areas, seizure of illegally crossed the border immigrant or refugee creates prerequisites for conformity with Community behavior, isolation and polarization in the acceptance of otherness.

Intercultural communication is meaningful welfare imposed prejudices and stereotypes towards different to others, the treatment of the adoption of otherness is an indispensable value.

"Intercultural communication is conceived as interaction between people from different cultures or communication, influenced by cultural variation. Common to all definitions is that they define intercultural communication as an interactive process in which participants come from different cultures. "(Juliana Roth / Klaus Roth, 2007: 15).

Intercultural communication is a modern discipline that borrows from cultural studies, anthropology, ethnography, linguistics, psychology, social sciences from all the cultural diversity of contemporary societies. Existing group and interpersonal relationships create conditions, conditions and reasons imposed making solutions. As Juliana Roth , effective interpersonal communication in intercultural situation is possible only when individuals between different cultures pre strangeness is overcome by an act of already made self-understanding. (Juliana Roth / Klaus Roth, 2007: 238).

The essence of risk communication is characterized by an uncertainty of the situation in which intercultural communication there is a threat or a favorable end to realize the consequences of the dialogue. Of course, should not ignore the limitations of the existing shortage of time at risk and the requirement for timely and adequate intervention to achieve a positive effect.

"At the risk situation is objective and subjective sources of risk. **Objective side** / outside sources be determined by the uncertainty in the development of the phenomenon of reality. There are important uncertainties and the existence of threats and dangers. **Subjective side**   / insiders / has three elements:

• orientation to uncertainty;
• identification and authentication to the threats and likely benefits interpretation
• assessment and treatment to outcome and implications.

From the language point of view the definition of risk in the semantic sense prevails aspect of the undesirable phenomenon. (Iliev/ Bakardjieva, 2006: 97-98).

• **In intercultural communication in a situation of risk** is important to provide mental state of participants in the communicative act as complete or incomplete knowledge of the same is likely to induce a state of aversion or disapproval for the current uncertainty. Fear, as we know it generates a different attitude in the communicative act especially at risk when the consequences may be irreversible.

   • **The risk factor stressful situation** is a prominent mechanism and scoring of events. Taking change or independently depending on their abilities, interprets the phenomenon of risk in different directions: the fear of repression, death, racial discrimination, military regime, seeking challenges and emotions, social challenge. Cultural differences determine different categories of interlocutors; these tend to aggression and hostility, social and asocial types.

   For communication at risk it is necessary to have prepared profiles of danger. Prepared profiles of risk must include the following conditions:
- the human need for self-preservation and security;
- the need for social approval;
- The risk of direct or non-physical contact, especially in intercultural communication, where language barriers can be fatal;
- the alleged qualities of the participants in the communicative act, which may lead to negative consequences;
- improper assessment and use of existing information / important is proper adoption and decode the message, attitudes and emotions in their perception and subsequent effects /;
- underestimation of the behavior of the recipient leads to a tendency of minimizing the risk of what happened or ignore.

   The risk assessment process is interrupted, covering development of the entire communication process from its beginning to its end and the consequences. When evaluating risk communication is necessary to maintain continuous contact between the communicator and recipient, to create a condition of mutual trust. According to C. F. Adrienko people tend to relate with greater confidence in information coming from other people who like or love them, because if interacting parties have mutual sympathy in their relations to one another barrier in the relationship does not appear. This respectively can correlated and barrier relations at cultural diversity of subjects in the communicative process (Andrienko, 2000: 242)

   Intercultural differences inevitably involve risks communication in terms of disparity and universal logic occurs in other than differential variations.

   Existing group and interpersonal relationships create and define the conditions necessary reasons and decisions. The interpretation of causality leads immigrant / refugee / in the border area to seek answers to what happened and coming to the formed lasting changes in social respect. Here should keep in mind, the extent of its communicative power of intuitive and rational level. **Flexible adaptation of immigrants in specific risk situation requires continuous adjustment of the lead in the communicative act by interaction with the recipient**.

   Limitations in the assessment, perception, understanding hiding most stereotypes created by societies. This requires the maintenance of high activity in the management of communication. Often immigrants / refugees / attempt to illegally enter the country groups of different numbers people. Important is to identify the group as a nation, ethnicity,

religion, social categories, social status, sex, age, education, status ranks. Within each group there is a leader / group leader / elected by themselves articles. Its solutions are valid and conclusive and authoritative and responsible enough. PR professionals have the intuitiveness and the ability to detect the leader of the group and thus to reduce the possibility of contradictions. PR practitioners have a high communicative culture to achieve mutually shared objectives and avoid the information vacuum.

Cultural diversity overexposed in the field of intercultural communication a **high reactivity in humans**, particularly important in a risky situation to be able to react properly in case of danger. In the border region in the face of cultural differences in intercultural communicative plan is necessary that appropriate methods, techniques and tactics for its successful control. In similar situation to the complexity of the risk is increased dialogue and bring special requirements for communicators requiring flexible mediation solution problems. A detailed analysis of the case to be open, clarify and propose adequate consensual solutions in the rapidly changing situation.

Effective communication placed first is a contribution to the success of change undertaken. PR practitioners raise effective communication as the basis for any one project or program. The globalized modern world is a set of unique cultures, and through public relations becomes a real possibility of all experience and knowledge to be used for noble purposes, not for profit in direction of social approval.

Free movement of persons within the EU **and the forthcoming accession of Bulgaria into the Schengen area address the new challenges in the practice of intercultural communication**. With the adoption of Bulgaria into the Schengen country to increase the requirements for the observance of the border regime, including the approach to risk groups of immigrants from third countries. Amid the deepening conflict situation in Arab countries, based on the daily risk analysis carried out by certain employees RD Border Police - Burgas, predict the likelihood of our country to become a desired destination of the refugee wave. Therefore, measures to strengthen the outer boundary to combat illegal immigration, human trafficking and smuggling, to curb crime, to prevent criminal acts and offenses of national and trans-boundary levels.

The most common causes of impaired communication are a result primarily of the existing language barrier of prejudice and stereotypes built the inhabitants of border areas due to socio-psychological-political or religious grounds. There is exclusion of such groups in closed communities because of fear for the security and desire for continuity.

Build positive attitudes among the public towards others - different from us - orientation and processing of a message sent to the recipient must not only induce changes in cognitive structures, but in mental. Emerging differences between cultures influence social behavior and produce a continuum of mental models associated with fear of security, xenophobia, conformity, aggression and other antisocial forms of behavior. Variables cultural features are justified largely by the diversity and differences in socio-economic and politico-religious, and psychological isolation is an aspect. Observed similar groups in closed communities because of fear for the security and desire for continuity. The danger of stereotypes and prejudices are a very important phenomenon.

Ignoring their social function to reduce tensions and lead to the adaptation and enhancement of group cohesion can lead to permanent differentiation based on the formation of the typical relations - interpersonal and inter- relations. Adoption otherness of the removal of established stereotypes and prejudices that different from individualism to verify consistent way to a more liberated view of individuality. Stigmatization and sentence imposed practical coverage of stereotypes. You should not start with, in terms of damage and that of the benefit aspects must be separated and seen as a guide system to handle communication with otherness.

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The study seeks to assist and direct monitoring of ongoing communication process to a positive change in acceptance of other cultures and pave the way for a consensual solution.

The analysis we present is a case / case study / practice of the Regional Directorate of Border Police of detained illegal immigrants in the area of responsibility of border police station in Burgas in 2009, supports the thesis that in a situation of risk when crossing the border legally or illegally from migratory flows of foreign nationals there are real preconditions for thinking in conformity with Community and isolation, which requires efficient use of a professional firm as a technique of public relations.

Concrete case is analyzed under border police control. For this purpose, scientific formulations are used by different disciplines for precise examination of the risk situation in the process of intercultural communication.

The study should answer some of the following questions:

1. Why in intercultural communication at risk cultural differences predetermine the outcome of the communicative act as an adverse effect?

2. How professional PR firm in place effective communication?

3. What is the way of implementation of effective communication with mutually consensual solutions based on trust for both parties - participants in the communicative process?

4. What are the weaknesses in the communicative process in the particular case?

5. Why in a situation of risk with representatives of foreign cultures is not ethical and moral requirements for tolerance in the face of otherness?

Cameroon nationals enter the country through the border checkpoint - Airport - Sofia for the inclusion in the crew list of a motor boat / M / K / «KEMI TUG» with the flag of Finland, with pre-made transit visas. Following consultation carried out showed that in the Black Sea lacks the above vessel. People are defaulting on transit time, do not have sufficient funds for maintenance and for leaving the country.

On 06.11.2009 at 12.00 am at the Hotel Park, situated in the Bourgas area of responsibility in the border police station - Burgas / GPU / at the Regional Directorate of Border Police / RDGP / - Burgas after the surgical and search activities were discovered and taken to a special room following seven Cameroon nationals: Akumcha Beltha Akuwi-born 14.08.1972g.; Antoine Ngoko Tchanga-born 24.03.1986g; Endalle Christine-born 13.02.1971g; Bissong Rostant Enow - born of 04.09.1977g; Tabot Joel Ayuk - born 07.06.1973g; Nyang Nyang Lazard; Clarence Ngwa Fusilem - born 10.02.1978g. Cameroon nationals were arrested by orders of the Head of the GPU - Burgas in order to prevent new offenses of foreigners. Of individuals are imposing administrative measures / CAM / as follows:

Deportation of Bulgaria "under Art. 41, p. 2;- Prohibition in Bulgaria "under Art. 42, para. 1, para. 2 and para. 3, in conjunction with Art. 10, para. 1, p. 9 and art. 11, p. 5 for a period of 5 years from 06.11.2009 till 06.11.2014 years
By lowering barriers for implementation of CAM in art. 41, paragraph 2 of the Law on Foreigners and organizing the removal of foreigners from the Republic of Bulgaria, under Art. 44, para. 10 of the Law on Foreigners are escorts and placed in special detention facility for foreigners to Migration Directorate-GDBOP.

These are concrete actions taken by police staff in the GPU-RDGP Burgas. But to discover omissions in intercultural communication, we must analyze the case / case study / as follows:

Cameroon nationals enter Bulgarian territory, within the social environment, their different. Their first contact with the border authorities at the border control checkpoint / checkpoint / Sofia Airport. Review carried out a model of communication is unidirectional.

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The simplified model is somewhat facilitate this, Cameroon citizens to avoid limiting their free movement. In his departure from Sofia they hire taxis to the city of Bourgas and pay a good amount in euros of drivers asking them to bring them to a hotel where to stay . In the implemented interpersonal communication between driver and aliens as an act and process of contact between the subjects found the overall effect of the message and the information is perceived as ultimately illegal immigrants / refugees / easily reach the desired destination.

Interpretation of information by the recipient - the taxi driver, was adopted by the individual experience of the Bulgarians, their knowledge and level of social development. The driver accepts the otherness of the background of the already constructed stereotype of the immigrant / refugee. He does not ask questions, does not care attitude with already established that the alien can be easily manipulated into as many currencies and the irresponsible to withdraw. The presence of communication barriers of sub cultural level has occurred due to different customs, norms, values and understanding of language. Language barriers can put us in a position of perpetual misunderstanding and comb. Indifference of drivers who are these citizens, how they came to Bulgaria, what are you doing here, why they want to go to the city of Burgas, for what reasons, who will remain and therefore evidence of impaired productivity in intercultural communication, especially in terms point of the moral aspect.

Corollary Cameroon citizens were taken to Hotel Park - Burgas and accepted by the controller quite formal again the principle of the single mode of communication. Of meetings of Cameroon nationals with taxi drivers and hotel administrator is apparent that they arranged immigrants / refugees / General signs for them. This leads to discrimination of the individuality of each of the refugees at the expense of the total. As a result of timely and adequate actions of border guards persons were found and taken to the offices of the border police station - Burgas. Of Cameroon nationals are provided food, medical examination, they are aware of their rights and obligations are under the law on residence of foreigners in Bulgaria.

The outcome of discussions with them in French and English apparently arises disagreement between communicators in relation to export their arguments and our country. The existence of the barrier due to differences in social and cultural terms leads to exit risky situation fatal - of Cameroon nationals were given refugee status and are imposed compulsory administrative measure / CAM / s prohibition of entry into Bulgaria. Negative obstacles in pursuit of interpersonal communication in the test situation distort and hinder the deployment of the communicative act, which **leads to polarization of parties in situations of risk.**

Differences in allegations between border guards and citizens Cameroon gives guidance to the emerging risk situation to disastrous consequences for foreigners say them to be repatriated from the country without the right of entry for five years and sent to their extradition to the House for temporary accommodation of foreigners - Busmanci. In relation to extradition and expulsion of people **European Convention on Human Rights** of 04.11.1950 on (ECHR) art. 3 contains a special protection against extradition, which states: "Nobody may be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment." Interpretation means no one can not be deported, extradited or not be admitted to the limit in country where it threatens such terms. Will adduce an example: A citizen of Sudan made many thefts. As Islamic law the thief his severed right hand. Under EU law understanding of punishment associated with mutilation, is inhuman. Therefore, pursuant to Art. 3 of the ECHR Sudanese should not be extradited or expelled.

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:
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The analysis of case studies of border police station in Bourgas Regional Border Police Directorate - Burgas identifies the following gaps in the communicative act in the process of intercultural communication:

1. Participants in the communication process are not properly encode and decode the message. Understanding and interpretation should be done synchronously between communicator and recipient.

2. Minimization of misunderstandings during intercultural contact is a consequence of the gap between what they wanted to say border police and how it is understood by Cameroon nationals.

3. In interpersonal communication in intercultural situations where risk is not achieved efficiency due to differences in cultures and Failure to act self-understanding.

4. Lacking harmony and dialogue to achieve mutually beneficial positions for both parties involved in the communicative act.

5. It is used in a licensed interpreter current situation, which greatly hampers decoding of a message sent by Cameroon nationals. Owing to the shortage of time is ignored interpretation of different speech translation.

6. In social terms, have not been evaluated feelings and emotional states of foreigners, maybe not so much a personal level, but as the social meaning of their experiences. We know that survival is an appreciable factor in social adaptation of otherness.

7. Given the fact that it has retained a group of people, not focusing on one of the mechanisms of socialization - conformance phenomenon. Conformism is behavioral change, through which the individual meets the pressure group trying to be consistent with it, taking proposed or imposed norms. This change goes through the negation of some previous positions and leads to self-approval by adopting new. Undoubtedly group has a leader who defend the positions and opinions of the group, but there may be members of the group, which only give appearance that they agree with others, although they have their own opinion and a desire to exit situation. Because of imposed social control by police officers, especially in a democratic country like Bulgaria, where we can see a large enough quantity in conformity with Community people in specific risk situation is observed not otherness in general and specific social cultural group from Cameroon citizens. Someone immigrants / refugees / certainly did not have with whom to return, while others have taken this intrusion in the country for fear of political or religious persecution, threats to security or freedom due to violence, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment, but the risk they are taking for themselves determines the outcome of the situation.

8. The intervention of a professional Public Relations firm in intercultural relations in a situation of imminent risk is to protect the dignity and rights of individuals to protect the individual from any kind of manipulation. Not using the communication specialist as a technique of public relations and disintegration leads to polarization of foreign nationals at cultural diversity, negativity.

The analysis of case / case study / practice of border police management of detention of illegal immigrants in the border area to monitor partially supports the thesis **that in a situation of risk when crossing the border legally or illegally from migratory flows aliens exist real conditions for conformity with Community thinking, fear of security and isolation, which require efficient use of a professional intermediary in public relations. Based on empirical research can be done the following summary: Foreign nationals arriving on our territory, in designated areas or other places, difficulties in the process of intercultural communication for fear of racism,**

xenophobia and polarization in the adoption of otherness especially from obscurity for his security. Many of them voluntarily take the path of risk, but have found themselves in a situation of dependency or deadlock, led by their instincts to purposeful action.

The case supports the argument for the necessity of using a professional firm of public relations to achieve public trust, consensus and understanding between communicators and recipients, refugees, to help them cultivate their contact environment not only in along the border areas, but throughout our country and appeals to the public for more kindness and tolerance of otherness.

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UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF CULTURAL DIALOGUE IN BULGARIA, ROMANIA AND HUNGARY
(THE CASES OF CLUJ-NAPOCA /KOLOZSVÁR/ AND BRIE – RUSE – GIURGIU)

Hristina Sokolova

The purpose of this paper is to analyze how the policy in the sphere of higher education in the new EU member states has markedly improved their interstate relations and made their contribution to the preservation of cultural and language traditions in trans-border regions populated by national minorities. The language and minority policy in Europe is enshrined in the European Framework Convention for Trans-frontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities of 1980 and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992, both under the supervision of the Council of Europe.

There is no clearly outlined definition of the concept of 'national minority' as a European legal norm because it is generally defined by the domestic law of the respective European state. Still we can find some of its characteristics in Reccommendation No1134 on national minorities (1990) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE):

…." *separate or distinct groups, well defined and established on the territory of a state, the members of which are nationals of that state and have certain religious, linguistic, cultural or other characteristics which distinguish them from the majority of the population…"*

Also:

i. national minorities shall have the right to maintain and develop their culture ;

ii. national minorities shall have the right to maintain their own educational, religious and cultural institutions. For this purpose, they shall also have the right to solicit voluntary financial and other contributions including public assistance ;

iii. national minorities shall have the right to participate fully in decision-making about matters which affect the preservation and development of their identity and in the implementation of those decisions ;

iv. every person belonging to a national minority is required to comply with the obligations resulting from his citizenship or residence in a European state.[i]

Another definition of the *national minority* concept is given in Reccommendatiion 1201 of the European Parliament (February1, 1993) which states that a national minority are a group of citizens of a given country who meet the following five requirements:

a. *reside on the territory of that state and are citizens thereof ;*

b. *maintain longstanding, firm and lasting ties with that state ;*

c. *display distinctive ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic characteristics ;*

d. *are sufficiently representative, although smaller in number than the rest of the population of that state or of a region of that state ;*

e. are motivated by a concern to preserve together that which constitutes their common identity, including their culture, their traditions, their religion or their language.[ii]

At the Council of Europe's First Summit in Vienna (October 1993) heads of Council of Europe member-states offer yet another definition of 'national minority' although this time the approach to its interpretation is more tentative and bound to the integrity of the respective country in Europe:

"The national minorities which the upheavals of history have established in Europe should be protected and respected so that they can contribute to stability and peace.

In this Europe which we wish to build, we must respond to this challenge: assuring the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities within the rule of law, respecting the territorial integrity and the national sovereignty of States. On these conditions, these minorities will make a valuable contribution to the life of our societies.

The creation of a climate of tolerance and dialogue is necessary for the participation of all in political life. In this regard an important contribution should be made by regional and local authorities.

In their actions, States should ensure the respect of the principles which are fundamental to our common European tradition: equality before the law, non-discrimination, equal opportunity, freedom of association and assembly as well as to participate actively in public life."[iii]

The question of the language policy to minorities and higher education is to a certain extent in the hands of the member-states themselves since both the European Framework Convention for Transfrontier Cooperation between territorial Communities or Authorities and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages , give a lot of opportunities for creative interpretation and implementation.

The target of my research are two educational institutions "Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, and the joint Bulgarian-Romanian venture BRIE – Ruse/Giurgiu , located in two neighboring towns on the Danube River, the first one Ruse in Bulgaria, the latter- Giurgiu in Romania.

 "Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania is the sole higher educational institution in the region of South-East Europe offering instruction in three European languages (Romanian, Hungarian, German) parallely and independently in almost all of its degree courses. The paper will make an attempt to outline the prerequisites for the development of such an educational institution persistently following the language policy of both the Council of Europe and the EU by looking back at the history of the university itself and giving reasons for its present day model of functioning. Through these concrete case studies of language policy in the sphere of higher education we can have the chance to examine why and how neighbourhood policy between Romania and Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria has recently operated.

The University of Cluj – Napoca is an extremely interesting example for successful and good educational practices in a trans-border region with a substantial language minority well aware of its Hungarian identity.

The history of minority struggle and tension between the Romanian state and the Hungarian minority in Transylvania dates back to the time of the First World War, after the Treaty of Trianon(1920) was signed and Transylvania was ceded to Romania. During the

Second World War the region returned back to Hungary for the time of the warfare but in 1947 it was again ceded to Romania together with its Hungarian population. Evidence shows that Romania and Hungary started competing for Transylvania as early as the 19th century which means that minority problems were always there but statistical data proves that it developed as a territory which was initially linked with Hungarian history.

In his lecture "The Second World War. Consequences and Evaluation delivered at an International Scientific Conference on the last world war in 2005, Sofia, Bulgaria, the Hungarian scholar from Cluj-Napoca, Mihai Zoltan Nagy reminds us that "*during the twentieth century the fate and status of Transylvania gives more than one potential reason for Romanian-Hungarian conflicts or turn Transylvania into a region of local tensions. The decisions determining where this region should belong have always influenced the power ratio in Europe where great powers were the domineering factor in determining the fate of Transylvania"*. Until 1974 Hungarians constitute a majority in the region but today the ratio between Hungarians and Romanians is approximately 18% to 79% in favour of the Romanians. The above facts give an answer why I have chosen this particular university as part of the European educational space for the purpose of my paper.

The University of Cluj-Napoca or "Babeş-Bolyai" University – Cluj-Napoca suffered a lot of changes and metamorphoses till the moment it started functioning along present day lines. The numerous attempts to sustain academic activity in Cluj always faced barriers for political and historical reasons. It all started in the far off 1581 when the Transylvanian Prince Stefan Batory founded the Jesuit College in Cluj. Cluj is also the birthplace of one of the most popular and successful Hungarian Kings, Matias Corwin (1443-1490), who encouraged the development of the arts in the whole territory of Hungary. From that time on the educational institution was transformed into a number of other educational institutions such as Collegium Academicum (1622), the Jesuit Academy(1688), the Royal Academic Lyceum (XVIII century) with the newly founded Law and Medical faculties. After the Agreement of 1867 when Transylvania became again a part of Hungary, it was clear that Hungary needed more universities out of Budapest. Thus Bratislava (Pozsony)and Cluj (Kolozsvar) were planned as new university towns. Kolozsvar, the capital of Transylvania, was selected as a most suitable place for university education for a number of reasons. It was the seat of Transylvanian Museum Society whose library and other collections plus the already existing Law and Medical faculties were a good academic foundation for the development of higher education in the region. Thus the year 1872 marked the official opening of the Kolozsvar University with its 4 faculties: The Arts Faculty, Mathematics and Natural Science Faculty, Law Faculty, Medical Faculty. From 1881 the institution used the name of the Hungarian Royal University" Jozsef Ferenc". At the end of the First World War when Austria-Hungary tunrd into a loser-country and expected its partitioning, Kolozsvar University was transferred to Budapest (1919) and then to Szeged – in 1921 where it put the foundations of today's Szeged University. At the end of the war Cluj witnessed the opening of a new, Romanian university called after the name of King Ferdinand I. It is interesting to note that the new institution allowed a Hungarian branch in its structure headed by the literary man and linguist Georgy Kristof. In those days only theology was studied in Hungarian. During 1940 when the First Vienna Award gave Transylvania back to Hungary, the Cluj educational institution was moved to Sibiu and the Hungarian university is transferred from Szeged to Cluj.

The university in Cluj under communism

From June 1st 1945 following the governmental decision of Prime Minister Groza the university moves back from Sibiu to Cluj, functioning in two directions with a statute of separate institutions – Romanian and Hungarian. Under communism the university

expanded but it also felt the unprecedented ideological pressure of the new Romanian leadership which allowed the appointment of lecturers without any academic experience. In 1947 the ideological attack on academia was crowned with the reorganization of the university along the Soviet educational model. In 1958-1959 the leadership of the Romanian Communist Party decided to unite the Romanian and Hungarian subdivisions of the university into one in accordance with the international antinationalist and antiseparatist feelings in the Eastern Bloc. That's how **"Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca** appeared , named after two renowned scholars – the Romanian doctor, Victor Babes (1854-1926), and the Hungarian mathematician, Janus Boylai(1802-1860) and where Hungarian remains the language of instruction.

The peak of its expansion and development the university reached in 1971, the time of ripe socialism. In those days it had 14 438 students distributed in eight faculties. In it the lecturers of Hungarian origin constitute 24% or 194 people. During the cultural revolution of Chaushescu (1972) a lot of degree courses were removed and the number of students speedily went down. The academic 1989/1990 is the worst for the period with only 3 007 students enrolled. Only 661 of them are Hungarians (22%). For a couple of years the university managed to restore its former shape relying on new plans for degree courses such as European Studies, courses for Library and Social workers. Four theological faculties were founded oriented to the most popular Christian religions – Eastern Orthodoxy, Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Reformist Theology. There began large scale structural projects. Postgraduate education was at its height in 2000. Since 2005/6 the institution has adopted the three stage Bologna system of education.

How Romania and Hungary benefited from their rational language and minority policy?

The European Framework Convention for Trans-frontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities open to signing on May 21 1980 was in power on December 22 1981. So far it has been ratified by 26 countries and signed by 7 other member-states. Bulgaria ratified this convention by a law (See State Gazette No114 of October 2, 1998). It is therefore important whether Hungary and Romania have ratified it. According to this Framework Convention trans-frontier cooperation contains two major components:

1) harmonization (i.e. mutual consultations, exchanhe of information, discussions, joint research and coordination);

2) agreements and organizational documents (i.e. between the states and between the territorial communities or authorities of neighbouring countries).

It is good that language and minority policies in the EU are additionally supported and closely bound to the European Framework of Transfrontier Cooperation (1980) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) . Each member-state is obliged to sign these two key documents in order to harmonize the opportunities for free movement of people, commodities and intellectual labour and to facilitate the development of backward regions in the community inhabited by minorities or located near a border area. That is therefore the way to give opportunity to free initiative of separate educational and economic institutions. In the case of Cluj-Napoca the existence of the university there is built on the basis of these two above mentioned documents. Today the university is actually trilingual and the reasons for that might be the following: the availability of historically conditioned Hungarian minority in Transylvania; Romania's responsibilities before the EU during the pre-accession negotiations about the equal opportunities for the preservation and the distribution of minority languages on the territory of the EU; reinforcement of good neighbourly relations between Romania and Hungary to overcome the Chaushescu legacy of Romanisation and the tension behind the modern

development of Transylvania; the wish of Romania to conduct a speedy integration into the EU. It is important to mention that regardless of the fact whether we speak about a minority group or not, the population of Transylvania is of great importance to the socio-economic development of Romania as both a demographic potential and geographical location closest to Central and West Europe. This has a benevolent influence on the cultural and historical memory of the region and the further integration of minorities into the development of the national economy which is exclusively important for the oeral development of Romania. Whether Hungarian or not, the inhabitants of Transylavania are Romanian citizens and are not less important for developing the potential of the Romanian nation. This explains why the Romanian government tolerates the prosperity of the region in relation to higher education conducted in two or more languages since this can make it possible for the economically active part of the population to take part in the construction of the Transylvania region.

At the same time following the spirit of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages of the Council of Europe Romania contributes to the preservation of both cultural diversity in Europe and the pacification of a minority population which has not stopped voicing its minority demands. According to the Charter the teaching and studying of a regional or minority language in all educational stages should have a leading role in its application.

Being trilingual, the university in Cluj-Napoca fully meets these criteria to serve two minorities(Hungarian and German) and a Romanian majority. Article 14 of the Charter encourages trans-border exchange and cooperation in all their forms: bilateral and multilateral agreements in the sphere of culture, education, information, professional training and postgraduate studies without undermining the integrity of the country of the majority. So far it has become clear that the very existence of Cluj-Napoca University in its present day form is obviously motivated not only by the willingness of the Romanian state to preserve the culture and language of the Hungarian and German minorities in Transylvania ,but also by its genuine wish to meet the requirements for EU membership and fully integrate the university into the system of EU higher education.

Should there be an alternative Cluj-Napoca University supported by the Hungarian minority?

When Chaushescu's government prohibited the usage of Hungarian language the number of Hungarian speaking university students decreased. This is a sound reason for the Hungarian minority after 1989 to set up an Association for the foundation of Bolyai University. The association is a non-governmental organization of Hungarian lecturers, students and intellectuals in Transylvania aiming to return the university in Cluj to the Hungarian minority in the region with Hungarian as the major language of instruction in higher education. There follows a conference – the first Conference on Higher Education for minorities in 2005. Since then the number of association members has risen and is still rising. This non-governmental organization has far reaching goals:

- its mission is to give back the university in Cluj to the Hungarian minority by popularizing the problem on an international level;
- by attracting international and minority support for the cause;
- by restoring Hungarian language as a language of instruction in secondary education and the Hungarian symbols and monuments in Transylvania.

For better or worse, the Associaton has not registered any serious success in its minority goals to obtain the right to its own university. There are no indications on behalf of the Romanian government that it will permit the separation of the Hungarian element from the

university in Cluj-Napoca. It's worth noticing that the 'benevolent' changes in the Cluj – Napoca University started after 1989 when the Hungarian degree courses were restored and their number rises with every academic year. Since 1993 Hungarian speaking students can apply separately from their Romanian speaking colleagues competing for 300 vacancies. Then followed an entrance exam in Hungarian. Another good indicator for minority tolerance is the gradual rise of the number of lecturers with Hungarian language. In 1990 they were only 90 full time lecturers and now they are approximately 400. Still the body of Hungarian speaking lecturers consider this number insufficient and will be happy to increase it.

"Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca is unique with its 61 degree courses taught in the Hungarian language. The Romanian division of the university has 43 000 students (out of which 1 500 of Hungarian origin) and statistics for 2008/2009 shows that its Hungarian division has 7 423 Hungarian speaking students. Today "Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca is a leader university for the Hungarian speaking minority in Transylvania having produced a lot of high quality specialists in the sphere of journalism, economics, theology, etc. The language of academic research is again Hungarian. The university offers over thirty master programmes with opportunities for doctoral research conducted in Hungarian. Since the Hungarian lecturers and students are minority they create their own associations or organizations which actively support education in Hungarian language, work on projects that allow them to obtain financial assistance from the EU and Hungary.

What must we know today about "Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca?

It is both an educational and research institution of the Humboldt type working in accordance with the European Credits Transfer System since 1998 and the Bologna System since 2005. University leavers can get their higher education diplomas in two languages – Romanian and one world language.

To conclude the case of   **"**Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca we can say that it is an interesting example for successful forms of cooperation on an academic and societal level between two nations with rich and complex history. The creation and functioning of the university in its present day form date back to the time when communist states followed the policy of supranationalism in all spheres of life and according to which the internationalism of the communist idea was more important than nationalism. However this was changed during the rule of Chaushescu when Romania adopted the so called aggressive nationalism towards its Hungarian minority. Actual cooperation between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority started after 1989. Thanks to its involvement into the European Credit Transfer System in higher education and being faithful to the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, the university is constantly improving and reforming itself. Both Romania(1998) and Hungary (1993) exert effort to accept laws concerning internal and external minorities. What's more the Hungarian minority has set up an independent organization of the Hungarian minority to struggle for and get back their Cluj Napoca university (so far unsuccessfully) as a guarantee of preserving their national identity. We cannot reject that the Hungarian minority is sufficiently well represented on institutional level in the region. It is supported by the academic community of the Hungarian division of the University in Cluj-Napoca. This is an example of good will cooperation between the two EU member-states Romania and Hungary. The mere existence of the university is an indicator that integration between minority and majority runs more smoothly than before, that there is a well developed element of tolerance that turns the institution into source of relative peace and serenity for

the Hungarian minority which has not forgotten the coercive measures the Romanian government used to call integration. Such coercion , if it were to happen today, Hungarians in Romania would simply call Romanisation.

BRIE
Let us have a look at another educational institution whose task was never to alleviate minority problems but to create an atmosphere of loyalty to and trust in EU values. I would call BRIE a ray of hope and godly light since it is again an educational centre this time located on the border between Bulgaria and Romania.

BRIE – a brief history
The Bulgarian-Romanian Interuniversity Europe Centre is a project in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe . As such it was initiated by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) at the end of 2000.
Since 2002 the Bulgarian-Romanian Interuniversity Europe Center has constituted a cross-border educational network with the goal to actively make a contribution to the actual and future challenges of the region.
Against this background, BRIE is firstly aiming at developing human capital. The region needs professionals, who will be able to prevent from destruction and start building the region anew. They will have to concentrate on projects and overcome the huge social and economic disparities with the other parts of Europe.
On the other hand, the region needs people, who have experienced togetherness and friendships with people from other states in their university lives. Such people are more likely to overcome narrow-minded national thinking and combine the commitment to the region with its integration into the European Union.
The raison d'être of BRIE is the argument, that change in the region could only be driven by a new generation of people. These young professionals should possess professional competences, a culture of cooperation and the awareness, that societal development in Europe is based on values, related to:
- economic growth, jobs and prosperity
- democratic structures and societal participation
- ecological and global responsibility
- the reduction of stereotypes and peaceful coexistence
Having this in mind, BRIE enables to overcome borders and turn education into a driving force.
Unlike the university of Cluj-Napoca BRIE has turned into a purely supranational structure whose major goals are to train high quality human resource , ready to work in a competitive European environment, to inculcate in its students European ideas and values, to gradually melt any barriers to successful communication between the Bulgarian and Romanian divisions of BRIE. The legislative framework "EU- BRIE" is not to reconcile Bulgarians with Romanians because of past or present day existing prejudices but to intensify integration between the two countries which have never had conflicts similar in intensity to those between Hungary and Romania. It is interesting to note how the cultural and historical legacy of the region including the three member-states defines its educational goals. Being an important crossroads Romania benefits a lot from its strategic position. It confirms it s position of a country creating a good balance between ethnic peace, European integration and the defense of its national interests. In all cases Romanian citizens , including those from Transylvania and the lower Danube may have their educational interests oriented to those two educational institutions. Both BRIE and Bulgaria, as a co-initiator, have a realistic vision of the future development of the EU and

the Danube Region by supporting the education and training of local human capital ready to implement its international experience for the benefit of the region.

Present day activities.
Apart from the two master courses BRIE is responsible for a number of additional activities such as projects and events organized for the students. An example of good practice are the summer schools within the institutions of the EU. I myself had the chance to be involved in a such a summer event. Most important for the proper functioning of the institution are the three pillars of BRIE.

The three pillars (Ps) of BRIE
 The geographical position of Giurgiu and Ruse stands for the spirit of the coalescence of today's Europe. Although the Danube River has served as a dividing line between Romania and Bulgaria from a historical point of view, this strategic location has always been shaping the lives of the people on both banks of the Danube and the development of the region.

Today, this common sense of the people is risen again in order to achieve the vision of a common European future. The borderline loses its dividing effect and is now becoming an EUROREGION. As a territory of unified infrastructure and free movement, the region is not only an important connection of waterways and roads but also a symbol of mutual economic, political and social development.

The Bulgarian-Romanian Interuniversity Europe Center (BRIE) is one of the first signs of this EUROREGION, promoting regional cooperation and the process of European integration at the same time. By bringing together representatives of science and industry, BRIE represents a cross-border educational network in South Eastern Europe driven by the Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest, the "Angel Kanchev" University of Ruse as well as various German universities.

The identity of this network is based on three pillars (3Ps), which are incorporated in the BRIE logo:

- BRIE is a follower of the Bologna process and belongs to the European educational area (inter-university Partnership);
- BRIE contributes to the education of a new generation of professionals, committed to the European integration, to the region of South Eastern Europe and to the border area at the Danube bridge (university- professional practice Partnership);
- BRIE interacts with businesses, politicians, public administrators, NGOs and the media to respond to societal needs (university - public - private Partnership).

The organizational structure of BRIE (Board, Commission, Advisory Board) is also international in nature:
The BRIE Board consists of the Rector of Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies (Prof. Dr. Ion Gh. Rosca), the Rector of University of Ruse (Prof. Dr. Hristo Beloev), Director of BRIE centre at Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies (Prof. Dr. Constantin Apostol), Director of BRIE centre at University of Ruse Ruse (H.A. Prof. Mimi Kornazheva). The Board is chaired by one of the Rectors of the Universities and rotates annually. Members of the BRIE Commission are the BRIE-Ruse and BRIE Giurgiu offices as an executive body (Directors H.A. Prof. Mimi Kornazheva / Prof. Dr. Constantin Apostol, Deputy Directors Prof. Dr. Juliana Popova / Dr. Iulian Intorsureanu, office manager).The Commission is chaired by one of the Directors of the BRIE centres and rotates annually.

The decisions are being made within the international environment of all-partner-universities' representation. President of the Advisory Board: Prof. Dr. Rita Süssmuth, former President of the German Federal Parliament and former Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Women, Youth and Health. [iv]

Comparison of the two educational institutions.

Name of Higher Educational Institution	Historical background and rationale	Structure and functioning	Number of degree courses and students
BRIE	Development of Euroregions in the EU	Simple and convenient structure , in accordance with the size of the higher educational institution which supports it, similar to the structure of the University of Cluj-Napoca	Two master programmes plus extracurricular work. No faculties.
University of Cluj-Napoca	Maintaining the ethnic peace and stability in the region of Transylvania	A more complex structure but convenient and in accordance with the size of the university – three divisions according to the language of instruction (Romanian, Hungarian, German). The rectors, deans and heads of departments of the university are linked with the respective language division.	21 faculties in all fields of science with the exception of medicine.

Conclusion

In conclusion I would like to say that the development of Euroregion "Danubius" as well as Transylvania entirely depends on the political will for the implementation of EU legislation. Yet political will is helpless without the support of civil society and the academic community. It is a fact that both educational institutions started changes urged by both academics and their respective university administrations . The example these two institutions set is extremely important because it not only clearly demonstrates the direct implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the European Framework Convention for Trans-frontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, the Strategy for the development of Euroregions but also the maturity of the societies in these three countries when it comes to the solution of complex issues such as the preservation of a minority in a way that all parties involved can benefit from the positive outcomes reached. For an openly international project like BRIE it is important to note the new

understanding of international cooperation in a totally new context, different from that of the past. Finally, I feel tempted to give my personal opinion on the issue. As a person who was brought up in a region linked with BRIE I admire the maturity and practical attitude in the behaviour of the two educational institutions which defend in the best possible way the interests of their citizens and students, care to build up bridges between people and countries, an approach that is much more efficient and successful than any of the local or international political campaigns attempting to do that.

Internet sources:

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http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=5804&tmpl=printpage

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2267/is_n1_v63/ai_18501093/

www.ncrdhp.bg/mrrb/docs/doc_37.doc
http://www.ubbcluj.ro/

Notes:

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[i] http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta90/EREC1134.htm
[ii] **http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta93/EREC1201.htm**
[3] **http://www.ena.lu/**
[4] **http://brie.uni-ruse.bg/en/page**

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