

# CULTURAL LITERACY OF MIGRATION: AFFECTS, MEMORY, CONCEPTS

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## ABSTRACTS

### **TEODOR AJDER, Mămăliga de Varşovia magazine**

#### **The Multidimensionality of (Non-) Presence of Poland's Resident Non-Polish writers**

The paper considers the careers of a few of the currently practicing writers, immigrants in Poland for whom Polish culture and language was new, as well as a number of writers who come from minorities living in Poland. It is an attempt to sketch some of the fears of these individuals or collectives in relation to the Polish establishment, that seem to be to some extent pervasive to all migrants. The importance of the language that these people chose to write in, while in Poland, will be discussed. The role of Polish Academia in promoting and disseminating texts written by non-Poles will be taken into consideration. Literary and book clubs, magazines founded by migrant writers or Polish platforms where these writers can share their texts will be listed. In this context a number of international or local press agencies and radio stations, or specific radio programs should be also taken into account. A number of migrant or minorities' magazines published in Poland sometimes in languages other than Polish will be presented.

An attempt to sketch some of the abuses – financial, embezzlement - of non-Polish writers in Poland will be made.

Some contemporary successful and well-read Polish language writers, who were born into families where at least one of the parents was an immigrant who, importantly, wrote and published voluminous texts about their experiences of being the children of two cultures, will be introduced.

Finally, some light will be shed on the non-presence of the non-Polish writers in the Polish internet.

The ideas presented in this paper should be rather taken as an attempt to depict certain directions for future possible research and not taken as granted.

## **MADELEINE CAMPBELL, Cultural Literacy Europe**

### **Intersemiotic Translation as Process in Cultural Production**

#### **CONTEXT AND AIMS**

Following the 2015 CLE Conference at Birkbeck, the London Statement concluded that Cultural Literacy is “as much about innovation and creative practice – whether scholarly, artistic or social – as it is about analysis, and it very often brings these two methods together”. The aim of this special interest group is to identify, foster and analyse creative practices in translation and their potential impact on society.

In an increasingly transcultural Europe, the process of intersemiotic translation offers innovative ways for migrant or minority communities to engage with each other and their host society in situations where conflicting strategies of remembering and forgetting create boundaries.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Intersemiotic translation provides an interactive, participative platform with the potential to engage individuals and communities in connecting with cultures different from their own. This special interest group proposes to chronicle and reflect on this process of collaborative translation, chart its impact in communities or other public settings, and research the socio-cognitive mechanisms at work. In addition to researching its theoretical and aesthetic rationale, we are interested in how intersemiotic translation might function to promote cultural literacy.

#### **What is Intersemiotic Translation?**

The act of translating from one language to another involves a political, culturally embedded process that can impact both the originating and the receiving culture. In literary translation, a text is translated into another text using purely verbal means. This process is considered “intra-semiotic” as it remains in the verbal domain within the system of signs and meaning we call language. In contrast, an intersemiotic translation carries a source text (or artefact) across sign systems and typically creates connections between different cultures and media. While in literary translation the onus tends to lie principally on the translator to convey the sense of the source artefact, intersemiotic translation involves a creative step in which the translator (artist or performer) offers its embodiment in a different medium. This process is facilitated by perceiving and experiencing non-verbal media through visual, auditory and other sensory channels, for example through dance or sculpture. Instead of focusing on the translation of sense or meaning, the translator effectively plays the role of mediator in an experiential process that allows the recipient (viewer, listener, reader or participant) to re-create the sense (or semios) of the source artefact for him or herself. This holistic approach recognizes that there are multiple possible versions of both source and target texts and this can help mitigate the biases and preconceptions a static, intra-semiotic translation can sometimes introduce.

#### **POLICY**

Creative practice initiatives are difficult to finance. They bring together practitioners from a variety of disciplines and do not scale readily. Thus it is difficult to satisfy funding criteria for

impact and public engagement, which usually require a growing number of members of the public to be reached by funded interventions. Such guidelines set up by definition a “them” and “us” between artists/performers and the spectator public and perpetuate the dividing line such projects aim to break down. Creative practice is a qualitative, subjective reality made up by individuals, with the potential for profound transformational learning in a diverse group of participants, which in turn may affect attitudes in a local community and, incrementally, in society at large. This special interest group aims to provide an effective vehicle for influencing funding bodies to develop flexible funding mechanisms more suited to such initiatives.

## **RESEARCH**

The CLE London Statement identified the development of knowledge and shared practices “as a key strategic goal for a meaningful impact on European society and beyond it, by supporting individuals and groups in the continuous effort to achieve greater social justice and active forms of citizenship.”

This SIG proposes to review contemporary theory and practice in the field of intersemiotic translation and to develop case studies of contemporary examples. Informed by philosophy, linguistics, poetics and cognitive sciences, we are also interested in whether and how the methodologies of practice as research (PaR), primarily developed in the performing arts, can be applied to the process of intersemiotic translation as cultural production.

The experience of translating a source artefact (whether text, image, sound, sculpture, gesture) through an interactive process that results in embodied, subjectively-formed, meaningful narrative for the participant forms the central object of enquiry.

Questions of definition include the perennial debate over whether intersemiotic translation is truly translation, or rather adaptation, interpretation or even transcreation (an adaptation that aims to convey the meaning or a source text but is not bound to reproduce the form). Specific types of translation that can be considered intersemiotic include ekphrasis (from non-verbal to verbal), homophonic, homographonic or material translation (respectively from verbal to phonetic, graphic, and haptic—conveyed through the sense of touch). Ephemeral, performative forms of intersemiotic translation are of particular interest in understanding process as cultural production because they foster a real-time interactive relationship with the audience where participants become alternately actors and witnesses in the translation process.

Specific lines of academic enquiry to be pursued may include questions of whether and how the experiential nature of projects involving intersemiotic translation can serve as an awareness-raising tool, break down intercultural boundaries and help build empathy between conflicted communities.

## **EXAMPLES/PROJECTS**

Further information on this SIG, and examples with brief descriptions can be found at: [http://cleurope.eu/activities/sigs/intersemiotic\\_translation/projects/](http://cleurope.eu/activities/sigs/intersemiotic_translation/projects/)

**CLAUDIA CIOBANU, Mămăliga de Varşovia magazine****The migrant voice: quiet and a little schizophrenic**

*"Claudia, I have been in Poland for almost ten years and I feel that no one listens to me!"*

This is my Moldovan friend Teodor, the otherwise talkative one, explaining to me why he so desperately needed to meet me that day. In the morning, Teodor had called me with a sense of deep urgency in his voice: *"We must speak immediately! Could we meet today? You're at work?! Then during your lunch break! I am coming there."*

For the meeting, Teodor brought along Mihai, a Romanian from Baia Mare. Mihai, who has a PhD in Political Science from Baylor University in Texas, moved to Warsaw because his wife got a job offer which could not be passed. Working in customer services for Google, Mihai finished most of his days without sharing with anyone what he thought about the exaggerated role the Catholic Church played in Polish public life or about the injustices inbuilt in the flat tax system practiced in Poland even though these were the topics that interested him most.

"No one listens to me back in Moldova because I haven't been there in so long even though I follow what's going on and no one listens to me here even though I am fluent in Polish because I am not one of them," confessed Teodor drinking a rare espresso which met his expectations. "We have to find a way to be listened to."

Mihai nodded in agreement. So did I.

Teodor is a writer, artist and psychologist. He reads all the time, follows the artistic scenes in Poland, Romania, Moldova and Russia and his head buzzes with ideas. In Poland, he wrote literary and art criticism for a few well reputed though not commercially successful magazines and even exhibited his own art. But he still felt that what he had been able to express were isolated shouts which got lost in the general lively murmur of the active Warsaw intellectual life.

I understood him. During my first years in Poland, I experienced a terrible dissonance in my daily life. During my working day, I could be writing an article about Poland for some international media. But then, when I switched off my computer and went to some *domowka* where I was invited because of my Polish partner, I would have to tell tales about my home town Brasov, the beautiful Carpathian mountains surrounding it or traditional Romanian dishes.

It was hard to imagine that my views about Polish politics could be interesting to any Pole. I may have been right on the general diagnosis of what was going on but a general diagnosis is always too dry for a party. What was needed were the little anecdotes about Aleksander Kwasniewski's drinking habits or Donald Tusk's daughter's fashion blog, which I was ignorant of and which were the ones to keep the conversation spicy and going.

When Teodor summoned me to meet, I was acutely aware that for the moment at least no one in Poland cared much for what I had to say. I could get there some day – and there

were various strategies for that – but it would take time. At the very least until I became fluent in Polish. In the meanwhile I needed to figure out ways to alleviate the schizophrenic feeling of not mattering much in Poland when I had gotten used to mattering a little elsewhere.

The day Teodor and Mihai came to my office to share an existential dilemma we decided to create a magazine of Romanians in Poland.

I resisted at first.

I do not want to write those typical expat things about which restaurant in central Warsaw is worth going to or about which mall shows what movie with English subtitles!

*“We won’t,” answered Teodor. “We will write about what we want to write. You will write about Romanian elections, Mihai will write about the importance of a decent minimum wage and I will write about art in public spaces.”*

I cannot write any more in Romanian. I’ve written almost only in English for the past ten years.

*“Sure you can. You know Romanian better than any other language. It is still yours. We will re-learn it together.”*

Who will we write for?

*“For everyone. For Romanians, for Poles, for anyone else, no matter where they are from or where they live. We’ll write in Romanian, Polish and English.”*

I agreed. It was half-hearted because despite Teodor's reassurances it still sounded too much like an expat and like a Romanian-only publication. But I agreed. When it came to intellectual life I felt homeless in Poland. A magazine for Romanians in Poland would offer me a warm, albeit small and feeble, shelter.

Teodor's call to create a magazine together came coincidentally at the time when my need to figure out what was my place in the world had reached fever pitch.

For the first two-three years of being here, I had tried to live the life of a Pole. It was possible for me to try because I had a Polish partner whose friends and colleagues were open-minded well-educated Poles who were ready to accept and treat me as an equal. Because my partner would bring me to the movies, discussions and demonstrations Poles were going to. I did not have to navigate first the Poland accessible to English-language speakers because I was brought from the start into the Poland of Poles.

And yet, despite everyone's good will, those were awkward times. It was like when, used to wearing jeans and flats every day to work, one suddenly has to dress in a steam-ironed suit with impeccable white shirt and high heels for an interview. The interviewee feels suffocated by the tight rigid collar. The interviewers note the unpolished nails and the inexpensive haircut. Neither of the sides buys it.

When we started the magazine, I had just accepted that I could not be living like a Pole. I retreated from Polishness into migranhood.

It was migranhood, not Romanianness. I did not just do the magazine, I also joined a new radio station run by migrants in Poland to do a show about international politics and I participated in a writing competition for migrant women in Poland. In the latter cases, I was one of many migrants coming from various countries brought together by the fact of being foreigners in Poland.

With our magazine too, we tried very much to go beyond our Romanianness despite nominally working under its label. Ours is a paradoxical magazine: it's a magazine of Romanians in Poland created by people who would otherwise not resort to their Romanianness as a primary means of defining themselves.

We write in Romanian because we miss our language and want to recuperate it after losing it in exile and because some of us express themselves best in Romanian. We acknowledge that being Romanian is what brings us together. But we don't want it to be an ethnic magazine. We want Poles to write for it in Polish and we want others, from wherever they are around the world, to feel welcomed to write for it in English or even other languages.

To media experts, this openness translates into vague concept and target audience, naivety, certain failure.

*"You have to drop the English-language texts altogether, increase the number of Polish texts and write in Polish about Romanian culture,"* this was the advice we got from an experienced Polish publisher during the launch of the print version of our magazine in Krakow.

At the launch, the Romanians could not wait to get their hands on a publication in their native language. They thanked us for creating the magazine, for coming to Krakow. They promised support. They said they wanted us to write about anything as long as it was in Romanian. About migrant experiences, Polish society, cultural events.

The Polish publishers, on the other hand, asked us to write more in Polish. About Romanian culture, Romanian writers whose works were translated into Polish or Romanian films.

We exhausted ourselves saying each sentence in both Romanian and Polish because most of the Romanians didn't speak Polish and the Poles didn't understand Romanian. We spent sleepless nights after trying to figure out how we could meet expectations of both sides.

The meeting was in the end another omen of how irreconcilable the schizophrenic nature of the migrant voice is. You have to speak different languages and say different things in order to be heard in your home and host countries. Split in half and send the halves walking in different directions, meeting different people. Trying to keep the two halves together may end up confusing people too much. Making you illegible. Unsalable.

In hindsight, the texts I most wanted to have in the magazine were the ones falling through the cracks of these conflicting needs of two separate audiences. They were the texts we had published about *Charlie Hebdo*, about *Syriza* or the refugee crisis. These were the texts in which we were neither speaking about the condition of being a migrant in Poland for a

Romanian audience nor were we presenting Romanian culture for the benefit of Polish readers. They were the texts in which we, as individuals rather than as migrants, were discussing global events and universal themes burning for us.

In the one year during which I immersed myself in migrantness, I noticed something interesting. As a migrant, all I was being asked about was what it was like to be a migrant.

Would you like to take part in a living library project as a Romanian migrant sharing this experience with Poles? Would you like to write for our website about what it was like to make a birth certificate for your mixed nationality child? Why did you move here? How long will you stay? What do you think about Poles? Do you like Warsaw?

I answered those questions. I wanted to speak about those issues for the same reasons I want to write this essay: to clarify things for myself and to share my experience with those like me and with those from whom I am completely different. After a while, when I got bored to repeat the same answers, I still did it because I thought it was wonderful to see a new interest for migrants in Poland.

Nevertheless I couldn't help notice that to those asking me questions my migrant identity had swallowed up my whole being. I was *the migrant*. Full stop.

## ROBERT CRAWSHAW, Lancaster University

### **Text, Inter-semiosis, Affect and Impact: brief reflections on Ariane Mnouchkine's *Le dernier Caravansérail* as a representation of migration.**

As will be known to most if not all of you, Ariane Mnouchkine's *Le dernier Caravansérail* was a mixed-media dramatic performance, staged and directed by Mnouchkine and enacted for the first time in 2003 by her radical experimental troupe *Le Théâtre du Soleil*. Founded in 1964, *Le Théâtre du Soleil* moved in 1970 to *La Cartoucherie*, a former munitions factory in Vincennes on the Eastern periphery of Paris. Against a



background of political upheaval, the locale allowed for large-scale carnivalesque events incorporating circus acrobatics, music and dance to be combined intertextually with dramatic narratives grounded in social critique. These included *1789*, a re-enactment of the French Revolution, through to a reworking of Molière's 17<sup>th</sup> century classic *Tartuffe*. To call *Le dernier Caravansérail* a play would be to misrepresent its generic significance. The term 'dramatic experience' would be nearer the mark. The event lasted six hours with a break in the middle. It was not restricted to single theatrical frame. The staging involved a series of dramatic tableaux or episodes, each having its own set and its own internal narrative. As such, it corresponded to a modern odyssey; indeed the word *Odyssées* in the plural featured in the extended title of the piece.

The production was designed to replicate the experience of migration to Western Europe from an indeterminate place of origin: Afghanistan, The Middle East and Africa. England, represented by a green field above the White Cliffs of Dover, constitutes a mythical, utopic destination, the closing tableau of the sequence, a promised land offering less a climax than a wistful backward gaze over the sea to the travails of the journey and the countries of the past. The impact of the production was such that in 2006, three years after its opening, a film was made of a live, specially produced performance. The film has lent *Le dernier Caravansérail* the status of a universal work of art which now exists in its own ubiquitous space and can be evaluated with reference to a phenomenon which is simultaneously European and global, although by now, of course, it has attained the status of an all too prescient historical artefact.



The questions which I would like to raise with respect to this unique creation concern the way in which *Le dernier Caravansérail* should be 'read' as a cultural phenomenon. As an artistic event, it defies easy generic definition; it is at once a re-enactment of 'real life' experiences, recorded in written testimonies made available to Mnouchkine in preparation for the production and a dynamic theatrical creation. The written sources from which the text is derived are

mostly letters to friends and families 'back home', giving accounts of encounters on the journey which were then 'translated' by Mnouchkine into short episodic scenes. The scenes move backwards and forwards in time, are located in different 'real' places such as Sangatte, the temporary, now notorious encampment outside Calais, a barn in the Balkans, a street in North Africa and so on. Their *montage* gives at one and the same time a sense of displacement, reiterated confusion, powerlessness and narrative disjunction which deliberately subverts a sequential chronotype while reflecting its sub-title: '*Le fleuve cruel*'/'The cruel tide'.

The special feature of *Le dernier caravanasérail*, like other Mnouchkine's pieces, is that she used as actors real-life migrants who had actually experienced similar episodes to those replicated on the makeshift sets. These were persons living illegally in France *sans papiers* and who were strictly speaking ineligible for employment. The relationship between art and reality was deliberately blurred, drawing attention to the relationship between the two. The point being made was at one level self-evidently political. On the other hand, the production was subverting assumptions about the relationship between real life events and their mode of representation. The obvious artificiality of the *mise-en scène* and the blatant amateurism of the acting have a Brechtian *verfremdungseffekt* which serves to distance the viewer, enhancing the symbolic status of each individual episode, their frequent disjunction forcing the viewer to question the causal relationship between them. In so doing it heightens the viewer's sense that they are analysing the defining, dislocated structural components of the migration process yet, as in Brecht, without these being deprived of their affective potential. Affect and analysis thereby work simultaneously in tandem. In the live performances, the fact that the audience itself moves from scene to scene by definition enhances its sense of participation in a physically shared experience.



My argument is that this unusual combination of reality and performance precludes the suspension of disbelief while demonstrating beyond doubt that these are events that are taking place on a daily basis. The resulting dialectic has far greater and more lasting impact than standard reportage whose primary impact is an immediate appeal to the viewers' emotions without the apparatus which would provide a reasoned understanding of the complex factors involved. Significantly, *Le dernier caravansérail* also embodies an aesthetic which exemplifies Fredric Jameson's neo-Marxist analysis that the relationship between art and real life in society is not, as Althusser would have it, one where the canonical artefact constitutes a visionary creation which reveals expressive causalities corresponding to a given historical moment in the development of western society. Rather, Jameson claims, it is the paradoxes and dialogic tensions inherent in literature and other forms of art which point to their dialectical analogues in real life and anticipate social change.



**MARY GALLAGHER, University College Dublin****Teaching Migrant Writing**

This presentation is inspired principally by a worry about certain connections or disconnects in my own academic world: between research and teaching ; between the teaching/study of language(s) and the teaching/study of literature ; between literature and culture (or even (multi-lingual) literacy and culture.

The first of these 'disconnects', the one between research and teaching, particularly undergraduate teaching, is too general to merit discussion in the present context. However, in some situations, such as the situation of academics toiling in 'language departments' in the Anglophone university (monoglot in Globish), it is becoming difficult to ignore the tides sweeping away the values of multi-lingualism, of linguistic diversity, and perhaps in some sense the value of language itself. These tides are particularly strong, and particularly difficult to swim against, at the base of the academic pyramid (undergraduate study) and quite far up the academic pyramid in fact (where the research citations that count most are found in publications in Globish).

To put it at its simplest, it is becoming very difficult in my own academic world to ensure that our anglophone students graduating with degrees in French are literate in French. Most of our students are what teachers at primary or second-level would term 'reluctant readers' ; this means in effect that they would prefer to eat a book rather than read it, not to mention read it from cover to cover, most especially if the book in question is 'literary'. 'I'm doing a degree in French because I love languages : if I'd wanted to study literature, I'd have done English' they wail. Our university administration hears their customers' complaints loud and clear, which is why our academic unit underwent a name change two years ago: from the 'School of Languages and Literatures', we became a 'School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics'. Our President informed us that the advice to the university' s strategists was that 'literature is a hard sell', whereas 'culture' still attracts students.

Of course, we still study language and literature (and language through literature) with our students at University College Dublin. And one of the ways in which we try to address the 'disconnects' outlined above is by exploring the ways in which culture, literature and language connect with each other. Although, speaking for myself, I've been doing this for decades by reading American writing in French with my students (which is of course a species of migrant or transnational writing 'avant la lettre'), I have adopted a slightly different perspective in studying 'migrant writing' over the last few years.

We do still look at texts by obviously, self-identified 'transnational' and 'transcultural' or even translinguistic writers. So this means reading the work of any of those writers who only write in French because of their (post-)colonial backgrounds : this involves mostly Caribbean, Canadian and African authors writing in French, or those European-identified writers who nonetheless acknowledge their colonial origins (eg. Marie Cardinal or H el ene Cixous). Of course, we have also studied and continue to work on even more quintessentially 'migrant' writers, even more culturally 'unclassifiable' authors who have no particular post-colonial connection or

background : these would include authors such as Régine Robin, Nancy Huston and Samuel Beckett. Nowadays, however, we also study the shifting, migrant, mobile sub-texts of works by authors who are often classified as writing 'classic French literature' or 'French literary classics' : these include Marguerite Duras and J.M.G. Le Clézio. It is in these capacious courses on 'migrant writing in French' that I find myself not spontaneously and productively working with my students, not so much against the grain, even sometimes with the help of tailwinds and even overcoming some of the disconnects mentioned at the outset.

**DOROTA JARECKA, Institute of Literary Research, PAS****Representing Migration in Contemporary Art. The Artists' Dilemma**

*The Artist's Dilemma* is a short movie from 1901. It features an artist at an easel who portrays a young woman posing for him. Unfortunately, by some marvellous trick, a phantom of another girl appears, also of great beauty. The painter gets lost among his multiple (multiplied?) subjects that fuse and dissolve, eventually abandons his work and loses his mind. This rather shallow comedy marks a tremendous shift that was about to happen in art, soon after, the Western European idea of representation was revolutionized. However, the artists' dilemma is still in operation.

The question I would like to pose is how artists deal with the issue of representation when meeting so called Other – a refugee. Representing the Other means exerting power over him or her, however the refusal to represent implies turning one's back to the events, and a renunciation of responsibility. The artists' dilemma formulated in this way leads us back to the old aporia of productivism: should an artist support the proletariat by organising production together with workers in, as Boris Arvatov put it, a "proletarian laboratory"? Or should she or he represent the toil of working class in painting? And what "to represent" could mean in this context?

Most acute criticism of Western art for being a product of the distant gaze can be found in Walter Benjamin's famous essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, but also, surprisingly, some interesting formulation of the problem could also be found in Erwin Panofsky' groundbreaking work on Gothic architecture and scholasticism. Panofsky considers perspective as a "symbolic form", a specific tool for representation which is subjective, local, and inherent only to a specific region and a relatively short period of time. There is nothing "universal" and objective to it. Rooted in the scholastic mind it is based on a model where the viewer/ painter/ architect exists outside of the represented reality. One can recall the later feminist revision of art history and the male gaze, or postcolonial studies that denounce scientific "objective representation" as local and inherent to imperialism. The question asked by Gayatri Spivak, "Can subaltern speak?" can be rendered as "Can subaltern take photos?" In other words: Who is in the picture?

The Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei has been a supporter of refugees since the beginning of the European migrant crisis. In December 2015 he traveled to the Greek island of Lesbos to volunteer at the Moria refugee camp, where he took several hundred photos, which he shared on Instagram, documenting the plight of displaced people from the war-torn and poverty-stricken regions of the Middle East and Africa who have survived the dangerous journey to Greece. He makes a gesture of inclusion: while taking pictures of camp inhabitants he always places himself among them. Is he including them into his own image? Or the other way around: Is he attaching himself to their image? He is stretching his right hand to hold a camera to take a "selfie". Thus striking an acrobatic posture: he remains within and outside the picture at the same time. This borderline position is also a condition for the image.

When we compare this image to the famous *Positive series* by Zbigniew Libera and its source image, which is a movie still from the documentary by a Russian director Vorontsov, we understand the advantage of Weiwei's position. As Vorontsov confessed years later, some scenes for his documentary movie, *Liberation of Auschwitz*, were made much later than January 1945, the date of Auschwitz liberation. For example, an excerpt that shows camp survivors behind barbed wire was filmed in March 1945, and shows survivors hospitalized at the former camp in a makeshift hospital. To conclude: It is Vorontsov who is missing from the picture. Former prisoners staging real prisoners being liberated are put in the position of the Other, thus they represent prisoners in front of the camera, but they do not really represent them.

Weiwei confronts the means of representation. In the end of January 2016 Weiwei made headlines with a photo of himself posing as Aylan Kurdi, the Syrian toddler whose body was found last September on a Turkey beach. The photo was taken by a reporter for the magazine "India Today", but it had a precedent: in September 2015, after the boy's death, dozens of people wearing red T-shirts recreated the moment when the body of a three-year-old Syrian refugee was discovered on a beach in Turkey. They laid down for about 20 minutes in the sand in Rabat, Morocco, to pay tribute to the boy. However, Ai Weiwei shifted the subject matter – from the boy death to the media itself: While the group in Morocco recreated an event, Ai Weiwei recreated the image that spread all over the world.

What he is trying to achieve it is to neutralize the old alternative between being a producer, e.g. in this context an activist who is helping the refugees off a rubber dinghy, and being a witness, e.g. a distant painter at his easel outside of the painted scene. Weiwei is an activist who questions representation at the same time as he struggles for it. A very awkward position to take.

As Dmitry Vilensky, a member of the "Chto Delat" group, noticed, the problem of aesthetic representation and of political representation, should be examined together. The crisis of representation affects politics to the same extent as it affects art. Slavoj Žižek in his *Year of Dreaming Dangerously* (2012) suggests that democracy as a system of representation is no longer efficient and it should be reinvented, or transformed into more direct model. Discussing the issue Žižek ironically recalls the dictatorship of the proletariat as a possibility.

Can we imagine equivalent „direct|“ representation in art? It already functions as Vilensky observes:

„Reacting to this state of affairs, a number of progressive cultural institutions developed various methods in order to implement a policy by which they rejected their traditional representative role and strove to become places where different individuals and groups (primarily those excluded from the representative spaces of public politics) could deliver their messages to society in the most unmediated way. Relational aesthetics, community-based art, art therapy, interventionism and many other civically engaged art practices have reduced the role of the artist or curator to that of a professional mediator who opens up these spaces to “facilitate” spontaneous utterances and participation. As in politics, we are dealing here with

the same questions about forms of power and the relationship between the principle of democracy and delegation”<sup>1</sup>.

Interestingly enough artists who engage in the conflict eventually choose rather traditional forms of representation. Weiwei calls for installing “a monument” to refugees. Isaac Julien in his multichanneled installation *Western Union: Small Boats* filmed on Lampedusa island creates rather pompous allegory. Tomas Rafa reduces his means to mere documentary filming causing the feeling of “overrepresentation”, of surplus of reality. All of their efforts can be understood as examining representation. There is possible no other way to see how the phantom of the Other dissolves.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://chtodelat.org/b8-newspapers/12-38/dmitry-vilensky-in-defense-of-representation/>

**JOANNA KOSMALSKA, Uniwersytet Łódzki****Transnational Dimensions of Polish Migrant Literature**

In July 2012, *Madame Mephisto* by A.M. Bakalar, a Polish female writer based in London, was longlisted for the Guardian First Book Award. The novel tells a story of a woman, Magda, who emigrates to the UK and becomes a drug dealer. In one of her articles, Bakalar stresses that it is "a sign of our times that migration between countries offers to many people the best of both worlds." In November 2014, Daniel Żuchowski, a Polish teacher in Dublin, was invited to the Dublin Book Festival to talk about his recently released collection of short stories, *The New Dubliners*. When asked about the setting of the book, he replied that the stories were "universal enough to have happened in any other European, or even non-European, capital." These are only two out of over eighty poetry, prose and drama books that have been published since 2004 by Polish authors who lived, or still live, in the UK and Ireland. All of the writings were conceived from the clash between the writers' national context and other, alien contexts and, therefore, they duly illustrate how the driving forces of transnationalism have shaped contemporary Polish literature. That being said, the presentation focuses on how the "new" aspects of transnationalism (advances in transportation, the breaking down of barriers to the flows of people, development of electronic media, and globalisation of economic and social relationships) have influenced contemporary writings by Polish migrants who have moved to Britain and Ireland.

As the speed of transportation between home and away, fostered by the proliferation of electronic media, created the impression of proximity, the migrants have developed a feeling of being suspended in some virtual space between two countries. In *Fairyland*, Krystian Ławreniuk compares this experience to "sneaking from one fairy tale to the other"<sup>2</sup> while Wioletta Grzegorzewska describes it as the state of being "twin" and turning "between dreams" in *Smena's Memory*.<sup>3</sup> The migrants locate their homeland in a virtual space characterised by fluidity, porosity and dislocation, where they can conceive their "private homeland," shaped by the vicissitudes of their own lives. This invented land is not confined to any geographical, political or social borders. In *Internation*, Piotr Czerwiński describes its elusive nature in the following way: "Our homeland can be anything and anywhere. Our homeland might not exist at all. Maybe, Poland is not a country. Maybe, it is a state of mind."<sup>4</sup> Adam Gruchawka arrives at the same conclusion in *The Emigrant's Shoes* where he writes: "our fatherland is a mental concept."<sup>5</sup> Living abroad has affected migrants' perception of their homeland as a product of their imagination, formed by their personal experiences. Although it is too early to argue that we have entered the era of transnational order, and that we have become – as the title of Grzegorz Kopaczewski's novel suggests – members of the *Global*

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<sup>2</sup> Ławreniuk, Krystian. *Ziemia wrózek* [Fairyland]. Brzeg: Fundacja Rozwój, 2014, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> Grzegorzewska, Wioletta. *Pamięć Smieny/Smena's Memory*. Londyn: Off-Press, 2011, p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> Czerwiński, Piotr. *Międzynaród* [Internation]. Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2011, p. 329.

<sup>5</sup> Gruchawa, Ryszard Adam. *Buty emigranta* [The Emigrant's Shoes]. Warszawa: Exlibris, 2007, p. 77.

*Nation*<sup>6</sup>, there is a clear shift from a more local concept of the country to a more global, hybridised understanding of homeland that has taken place in Polish migrant literature.

The cultural flow between the core (the UK and Ireland) and the semi-periphery (the migrants' homeland) has turned into a powerful two-way process which has had the effect of remapping, pushing forward the mental borders of Poland. It has brought to the attention of Polish migrant authors the cross-border exchanges, connections and practices, which allow people to develop attachment to multiple locations at once. By the same token, it has moved migrant writings away from a narrow focus on the home culture to include the geographies, histories, and traditions of Western Europe to a much greater extent than heretofore. Consequently, the writers present a myriad of foreign locations, ethnically diverse characters and non-native traditions. They also emphasize the importance of creating contemporary culture instead of focusing on historical and political commitments. As the founder of Polish Theatre Ireland, Anna Wolf, points out in an interview: "we don't have to fight any regime at present, so our patriotism manifests itself rather in our affection for culture."<sup>7</sup> By saying this, she does not suggest transporting the folklore, embellished with the crowned eagle, to the host country but creating a mainstream culture that, on the one hand, will make it easier for other ethnic groups to understand Polish people and their traditions and, on the other hand, will broaden the horizons of people who live in Poland. In other words, she advocates creating transnational literature and art that embraces multi-locality, interacts with other cultures, and combines the elements of nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

The platform for producing such transnational writings is often the borderless space of the Internet. The narrator of Anna Łajkowska's *Shadows in Moorland* reveals on the opening page of her novel: "I wanted it to be a blog at first..."<sup>8</sup>. A similar thought must have crossed Wioletta Grzegorzewska's mind because this Polish poet, who currently lives on the Isle of Wight, set up a blog, *Pamięć Smieny/Smena's Memory*, where she notes down her observations that later become an inspiration for her poems and prose. Interviewed about her activity on the Internet, the writer said, "When I emigrated, I published a lot with online writing communities, such as *Nieszuflada*, because this was my only path to Polish readers. [...] I observe that emigrants miss people who have stayed in their home country and they tend to become very active on the Internet when they move abroad."<sup>9</sup> That the online writing has greatly influenced Grzegorzewska's works becomes clear when we look at her 2011 book that bears the same title as her blog, *Pamięć Smieny/Smena's Memory*, or at her 2012 collection of prose poems, *Notes from the Isle of Wight*,<sup>10</sup> where the author kept the blog-like form and layout. Consequently, the text is divided into short sections, each marked with a date. It covers the period of 2006-2012, in chronological order, from the time of the writer's arrival in the UK to the year of the book's release. Selected poems from *Notes from the Isle of Wight* and *Smena's*

<sup>6</sup> Kopaczewski, Grzegorz. *Global Nation*. Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Wolf, Anna. "Polish Theatre Ireland Is a Place Where the Two Cultures Meet." Interview by Joanna Kosmalka. *Studi irlandesi. A Journal of Irish Studies* 5, 2015, p. 130.

<sup>8</sup> Łajkowska, Anna. *Cienie na wrzosowisku* [Shadows in Moorland]. Katowice: Damidos, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Grzegorzewska, Wioletta. "Czuję się pisarką polską z krwi i kości." Interview by Joanna Kosmalka. *Arterie* 2(19), 2014, p. 154.

<sup>10</sup> Grzegorzewska, Wioletta. *Notatnik z wyspy* [Notes from the Isle of Wight]. Częstochowa: e-media, 2012.

*Memory* were included in her 2014 book, *Finite Formulae and Theories of Chance*,<sup>11</sup> which was published under the pseudonym, Wioletta Greg, to make it easier for English-speaking readers to pronounce the author's name. The book received a lot of critical acclaim and was shortlisted for the prestigious Griffin Poetry Prize in Canada in 2015.

Not unlike Grzegorzewska, Daniel Żuchowski also started a website where, for a couple of months, he was publishing excerpts from the collection of short stories he was working on at that time. *Writing.ie*, an Irish literary portal, got interested in his efforts and featured his work-in-progress on their website. Żuchowski and Grzegorzewska are just two out of many authors whose work have become "electronified" in a sense. They use blogs as a writing tool, a space where they gather and organise their thoughts to later publish them in book form.

Obviously, moving from the virtual world of blogs to publishing houses affects the writings in many ways. For instance, the first reviews reach the authors when their work is still in progress since readers tend to send their comments via email or leave them on various websites. Before the book appears in print, it is often already confronted with and, to some extent, shaped by the readership. What also comes with the culture of blogging is the ethos of independence because the websites are usually set up by the writers themselves, which gives them unlimited control of the content and layout. They keep this freedom by self-publishing their books or signing contracts with small, independent publishing houses. Another easily traceable similarity is the journal- and journalism-like nature of the analysed writings. In *Blogging, Citizenship, and the Future of Media*, Mark Tremayne observes that the most common kinds of blogs are *online diaries*, which follow private stories of the bloggers, and *filter blogs*, which comment on events in the world around by "filtering" information from other sources.<sup>12</sup> When we look at the content of the migrant books, it turns out that about ninety percent of them are a combination of those two types of blogs.

In some books, for example Maria Budacz's *WOT*.<sup>13</sup> or Michał Wyszowski's *On the Left Side of the World*,<sup>14</sup> the text is divided into short, topic-oriented sections, which are reminiscent of blog postings. The prevailing mode of blogging dictates that the postings are sequenced according to the date of publication and, as if obeying this rule, a large majority of the analysed writers do not disrupt the chronology of their plot. Most blogging software allows also the bloggers to upload a full range of files, such as written texts, photos, sound files, video clips, and hypertext links. Although the scope of multimedia use in books is obviously very limited, we can track down some features that are more common for literature produced by the migrants in the British Isles than for works published in Poland. That those characteristics have developed due to the extensive use of electronic media is suggested by the fact that they include numerous excerpts of emails, quotations from Skype and phone conversations, photo documentation, etc. There is also a tendency of shooting video clips that promote the writings on YouTube, a trend that has been popular in the UK, but not in Poland.

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<sup>11</sup> Greg, Wioletta. *Finite Formulae & Theories of Chance*. Todmorden: Arc Publications, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Tremayne, Mark. *Introduction: Examining the Blog – Media Relationship*, w: *Blogging, Citizenship, and the Future of Media*. London: Routledge, 2006, s. X.

<sup>13</sup> Budacz, Maria. *WOT. 4*. Warszawa: Papierowy Motyl, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Wyszowski, Michał. *Na lewej stronie świata* [On the Left Side of the World]. Warszawa: MG, 2010.

When we look at a number of migrant writings, their creation process seems to go full circle: the books are first produced in the virtual space, then they arrive in a printing house, only to end up on the Internet again, where they are advertised. No wonder then that there are so many parallels between the online and migrant writing.

The heavy reliance on the Internet of the authors who live abroad has also affected the language of their books. Their writings are mostly devoid of lengthy, convoluted descriptions of places, characters and the like. The language is informal, playful, explicit, abbreviated, and often emphasises meaning over form. It is relatively simple, characterised by short sentences, a moderate amount of adjectives and adverbs, and numerous neologisms. For example, "kejpis" is an acronym of the kitchen porter [/kei/+/pi:/+s] (Gębski)<sup>15</sup> while a "rain off" means a forced day off due to the bad weather conditions (Ławreniuk)<sup>16</sup>. If we look at these linguistic features outside the literary context, they immediately bring to mind instant messaging.

What further distinguishes the language in migrant books is the linguistic hybridity. Living in the multi-cultural, predominantly English-speaking environment of Britain and Ireland has naturally led to creolization of the language that Polish migrants use on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, their writings are sprinkled with Anglicisms, loan-blends, translation equivalents, code-switching, and phonetic transcriptions. Inspired by Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, Piotr Czerwiński wrote his 2009 novel, *Conductum Lifae*, in this nascent, deliberately exaggerated migrant dialect:

Zapłacił dwa **jurki** to the **happy peepal from Africa** i wyszedł na świeże powietrze, na którym akurat dla odmiany nie padało. Był szczęśliwy, myślał że wszystkie jego problemy przejdą do historii, a on sam rozpocznie nowe życie szybciej niż się spodziewał, w nowym **bajobongo mleczno-miodowym świecie** (106). [...] Nie mieli szczęścia z pracą po studiach, ponieważ w **Bulandzie** najlepszy sposób, żeby zostać politykiem, to nie mieć żadnej szkoły w ogóle, a oni mieli doktoraty. **Job** w supermarkecie to raczej **user-friendly** eutanazja niż robotą, z powodu **pampers-pisser** pensji, więc uznali, że będzie mniej samobójczo, jeżeli pojedą do Anglii, upokarzać się za funty. Oboje byli zerami w dziedzinie języków obcych, ale Grzesiek miał **lucka** i znalazł **job** od zaraz.<sup>17</sup>

In his novel, the writer gathered and applied linguistic features introduced, though in a more subtle way, by all contemporary migrant authors. This newspeak, captured in migrant books, explores not only the construction of the dynamically developing dialect but also the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic exchanges that occur under the forces of migration.

In *Global Matters*, Paul Jay points out that it is no longer possible "to make a clear distinction between exchanges that are purely material and take place in an economy of commodities and exchanges that are purely symbolic and take place in a cultural economy."<sup>18</sup> The economic flows propel the cultural transfer and vice versa. What this reciprocal relationship leads to is a greater commodification of migrant narratives than is the case with the literature produced in

<sup>15</sup> Gębski, Ireneusz. *W cieniu Sheratona*. Warszawa: Warszawska Firma Wydawnicza, 2011, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Ławreniuk, Krystian, p. 69.

<sup>17</sup> Czerwiński, Piotr. *Przebiegnum zyciae* [Conductum Lifae]. Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2009, p. 236.

<sup>18</sup> Jay, Paul. *Global Matters: The Transnational Turn in Literary Studies*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2010, s. 56.

Poland. As I have mentioned earlier, a number of these books are either self-published or released by small publishing houses, which means that the migrant writers are frequently forced to assume the role of author, publisher and agent simultaneously. In some cases, the attention has consequently shifted away from the artistic dimension of the writings to their social and anthropological functions. It has resulted in a surge of migrant writings which, although of little aesthetic value, are full of social and cultural information. They document an important period in contemporary history, deconstruct old and create new stereotypes, redefine the meaning of nationality, homeland, and patriotism, capture the transformation of young people into European citizens, and depict how the transnational identity and culture come into being.

*The paper is a part of the article that has been accepted for publication in an issue of "Teksty Drugie" (June, 2016) devoted to contemporary migrant literature. It is based on research carried out within the international project (No. DEC-2011/01/B/HS2/05120, coordinator: Prof. Jerzy Jarniewicz), which was run at the University of Lodz with financial support from the National Science Centre. More information about the undertaking is available on the website: <http://archiwum-emigracja.uni.lodz.pl/>*

**DRAGINJA NADAŽDIN, Amnesty International Poland****Avoiding the responsibility for refugees**

1.2 million refugees should be resettled by the end of 2017, but governments are doing too little to help 19.5 million refugees in the world today. 86% of the world's refugees are received by the world's poorer countries while the wealthy ones avoid their responsibilities. This attempt to avoid responsibility for refugees is based on representation of the refugee as a threat to ourselves and our own world.

My presentation is focused on the attitude towards refugees and its relation to the language used by politicians (decision makers) and media in describing refugee crisis and offering (?) the answers to the crisis. The present political discourse on refugees is dominated by hate and the list of reasons why borders should be closed to refugees is presented as unquestionable and very long. This is a real challenge for describing the factual situation in a country of origin refugees are fleeing from, and on their journey to imagined safety. It also impacts creation of adequate reception policy.

In one word we are witnessing the biggest refugees crisis in last 70 years, but the words used in a public debate are expressing fear and anger towards refugees themselves. The short analyses of representation of refugees in media and public discourse shows the essential traps we fall into when speaking about refugees as the Other. It also shows a need for more sophisticated language that would describe both situation of refugees and the receiving society.

The question I would like to raise are focused on the language used to describe the refugees and the level it really illustrates our attitude towards them:

How media answer on refugee crisis shapes people's willingness to let refugees live in their countries, towns, neighbourhoods and homes?

Does anti-refugee political rhetoric reflect public opinion?

What is the attitude towards refugees in the countries who have already accepted large numbers of refugees?

How many people would welcome refugees with open arms, or even take them into their own homes?

Are those welcoming citizens and taking the refugee crisis personally really silent?

Increasing number of people in Europe decide to do something completely different than their government told them: they went to European borders not only to meet refugees face to face but also to help them. While we know a lot about xenophobia and intolerance towards refugees we still know too little about those who reject those concepts and expressed their solidarity in practise. We know even less about refugee's attitude towards the places they are hoping to reach and stay in. The debate of the representation of refugees should not only aim to expose the obstacles for understanding these perspectives but also to find a channels for these voices to be heard. And to ask ourselves if we are ready to hear refugees speaking for themselves.

**PATRYCJA SASNAL, Polish Institute of International Affairs****Ethical migration policy as a challenge for the EU**

Both, the European Union and the codification of migration policy have roots in the IWW. The paper assumes that the Weberian ethic of ultimate ends (helping people in need and avoiding war) can be achieved through ethics of responsibility (practical ethics of politicians). In debating an ethical migration policy of the EU the paper uses theoretical framework of Max Weber's "Politics as a Vocation" and Amartya Sen's "The Idea of Justice", in which Sen purports that the end evaluation on the basis of ethical ideals depends on the ideological predisposition of the referee, such as utilitarian, liberal, and egalitarian position. Out of these, the utilitarian one seems to be closely related to the Weberian ethics of responsibility.

Three vertical levels of ethical issues in the migration crisis of 2015 are debated in the paper: global, national, individual. Globally and nationally, it addresses the responsibility of the rich North vis-a-vis the poorer South and the values related to the European community that the host countries form (burden sharing, solidarity, brotherhood). It asks about the national obligation to repay debts to international community and the historical validity of such debts. It also addresses the issue of holding a country accountable for the effects of its foreign policy, as in the case of the American policies in the Middle East, debating if it is possible at all to effectively reconstruct the cause-effect relationship in foreign policy and deal with the difficulty of nations historically carrying burdens for previous centuries and generations.

On the individual level, the ethical issues raised include the differentiation between migrants (between someone who flees war, someone who flees poverty or dictatorship, and someone who wants to earn more regardless of the initial conditions of his/her life), the liberty of a migrant to choose the host country and the relationship of that liberty to the liberty of the citizens of the host country, the problem of competition for resources between the migrants and the poorer citizens of host countries, and the struggle between two goals: of ethical migrant policy and of social order.

In conclusion the paper holds that ethics of ultimate ends (justice, equality, compassion) can be achieved through ethic of responsibility in migration policy - what is utilitarian in the case of EU migration policy serves ultimate ends of "higher" ethics. Demographic and market needs as utilitarian arguments should be incorporated in European migration policy for the sake of safeguarding and sticking to ethics of ultimate goals.

**JOHN SUNDHOLM, Stockholm University**

**Memory is where we have arrived rather than where we have left. Agency, acts and future, and other key coordinates for studying migrants' memory practices.**

My presentation will build upon my own work about migrants' minor cinemas in Sweden, that is, independently produced short films made by amateurs, or semi-professional filmmakers, as well as, on work done within a COST-action working group on memory and migration. However, the trajectory starts in Toronto 2008 and a workshop at York University that resulted in the book *Memory and Migration*. The main title of my paper is also a direct quote from Julia Creet's introduction to that particular collection of essays (Creet).

In my presentation I will stress the following points:

**Future.** Migrants' memory practices are directed towards the future. We should of course not generalize the multi-diversity group of migrants, a group that is composed of different generations, genders, social classes and cultures. But, what in general characterizes the situation of the migrant is that he or she is placed in a new situation that requires the creation of a new context. This may be theorized as the production of locality, in Arjun Appadurai's well-known wording (Appadurai). Relating to memory studies this implies that the migrant's past has to be renegotiated in order to create a future. It is the future that is the central concern for the migrant (Sundholm).

**Agency.** If one of the crucial points of memory studies is that memory is dynamic, on the move, and, an ongoing renegotiation of the past, this is emphasized in the situation of the migrant. If history establishes the past as **the** frame of reference, in memory studies one investigates how this frame is being changed in the present. To study migrants' memory practices means that you focus on how the past is constructed and changed in order for the migrant to make a manageable future. Hence, we are analysing processes, changes and becomings. Thus, we need to have an agential understanding of migrants' memory practices.

**Acts.** Together with a colleague of mine, philosopher Steffi Hobuss, have we argued for that we should study memory acts instead of memory representations. To talk of memory representations leads to a dualism in which past becomes a referent or place that we somehow may access. But, we should instead focus practices and acts in the present. Writings, oral narratives and films made by migrants should rather not be approached as representations of a past but as acts and practices that enables an entangled past **and** present to unfold in the moments when they are made and received.

As a part of my presentation I will also show film clips from migrant minor cinemas.

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**JUSTYNA TABASZEWSKA, Institute of Literary Research, Polish Academy of Sciences**

**Are We Not All Migrants? Affective Ambiguity of the Migrant within Polish Cultural Discourse**

The question of migration and displacement was – at least from the nineteenth century – one of the major issues for Polish cultural discourse. Until the end of the twentieth century migration of Poles was a direct result of such political events as The Partitions of Poland, two World Wars and Soviet domination (from 1945 to 1989). After the breakthrough of the year 1989 Poland saw at least three waves of migrations that were of purely socioeconomic nature. It means that – for Polish culture – the topic of migrations is not entirely new, but its current form demands a novel approach as Poland is no longer a country from which people migrate, but is also becoming a destination country for migrants of diverse backgrounds.

In my paper I would like to investigate how, if at all, the Polish experience of migration affects the social and political discourse about the present inflow of migrants and refugees, especially those coming from Africa. I would like to investigate the link between the experience of Poles as economic migrants and the current Polish attitude towards migrants and refugees.

There are several important reasons for posing the question of the Poles' attitude towards migrants in this manner. The primary among these questions is that of whether the similarity and universal character of migrancy breeds the kind of emphatic openness towards the incomers that one would expect, or is it just the opposite, and instead of empathy the shared experience arouses resentment. The importance of this problem is proportional to the importance that theoretical investigations on the subject of migration ascribe to the fact that migration is one of the fundamental social phenomena.

Contemporary publications addressing the phenomenon of migration, especially the books of Thomas Nail (*The Figure of the Migrant*) and Gregory Feldman (*We Are All Migrants. Political Action and the Ubiquitous of Migrant-hood*) underscore the need for a redefinition of the concept of the migrant. Nail points out that:

The migrant was treated as an exception to the rule of already existing theoretical frameworks. What I wanted to show was that the migrant is not the exception, but rather the constitutive condition of contemporary politics.

Nail analyzes migration as a mass-scale phenomenon that is persistent and recurring. He assumes that although there are many kinds of migrations and – what follows – figures of the migrant (for example: the nomad, the barbarian, the vagabond, and the proletariat), they all share one common trait – movement. That is why a redefinition of the phenomenon of migration must be accompanied by a change in thinking about society:

If we take the figure of the migrant as a primary or constitutive figure of politics, it requires more than a mere accommodation of this figure into the existing frameworks of liberalism, Marxism, multiculturalism, and so on. It requires a whole new theoretical starting point that

does not begin with stasis and the state, but with the more primary social *movements* that constitute the state, as well as the social alternatives that arise from those same movements.

Gregory Feldman shares this outlook on migration. He points out that the conventional distinction between "citizens" and "migrants" does not make much sense in a globalized and, at the same time, atomized world. Nevertheless, Feldman emphasizes that in such a world the act of self-definition occurs through, among other things, describing the relationship with places and the ways in which we inhabit with others.

The thesis of the universality of the migrant condition, although seemingly useful, scarcely solves any problems, as even the countries that experienced migrations (like Poland) meticulously distinguish their own experience from that of others.

This distinction is clearly visible in the coverage of the influx of migrants to Poland presented by conservative news media. The migrants are depicted as strange, unfamiliar and possessing a sense of false entitlement. The radical resistance towards migrants is an outcome of the need to provide and maintain a clear division between the citizens and incomers, it is a way of preserving the distinction that Feldman criticized.

That is why the figure of a migrant Pole is constructed in an entirely different manner than that of a migrant – incomer. Even migrations motivated by the same kind of hardship, for example financial, that occur within a single cultural sphere, like the Polish experience of migrations to Germany and the Ukrainian experience of the same kind of migration to Poland, are still being described by pointing out the differences and not the similarities between them.

In my opinion there is much evidence to support the claim that the more attention is paid to the similarities by some media, the more resistance it causes. An interesting example of this phenomenon, which I will attempt to describe in more detail in my paper, can be seen in three cycles from the newspaper „Gazeta Wyborcza”: the first outlined the working conditions of Ukrainians in Poland, the second described the emigrant experience of Polish women, the third was an account of mass-migrations of Poles during wartime and the migration of refugees from war-torn countries to Poland.

The reactions of ultra-conservative media to the above mentioned articles clearly show that the question of migration and the attitude towards it must be – at least in countries such as Poland – interpreted in relation to the specific goals set by the politics of memory. Denouncing the similarity of experience and highlighting differences is only in part motivated by the simple need of justifying the refusal of aid. The actual rationale behind this stance seems to be dictated by a strategy of projecting an image of Poland as a sovereign nation that does not require any external aid and therefore is not obliged to provide any kind of aid to some other entity in any way whatsoever.

**MAREK ZALESKI, Institute of Literary Research, Polish Academy of Sciences****Why do we fear migrants?**

The exteriorized evil imagined in the sinister "other" arouses fear and disgust, as well as generating readiness to symbolic violence and an inclination to construct a phantasm of hostile otherness – these are the two factors which precondition the individual and collective identity, as psychoanalysts and anthropologists have assumed. The migrants easily fit the image of those who are ugly, dirty and bad. Therefore the hostility towards migrants can be interpreted as a symptom of what is repressed in the symbolic order and what prevents the traumatic content from coming into its own.

In other words, this symptom is an attempt to repair a symbolic order, an attempt to fill the lack in Lacanian Big Other, that is to remove the defects, gaps and dissonances in the symbolic order.<sup>19</sup> And these attempts are considered necessary measures to establish identity. The image of the migrant exemplifies the "sublime object of ideology": that is a phantasm of a sinister alien standing up against the values we share. But at the same time the figure of the migrant stands for a verso of the "unblemished other", our fellow-citizen, someone who is accepted or even stands for an object of respect and admiration. The discourse that animates these two ideological phantasms offers the feeling of safety and stability to the subject. Both phantasms are coupled. All the lack and anxiety felt by the subject are projected onto the "other" and all the vices the subject is ashamed of are transferred onto the figure of the migrant, now demonized and considered the Defective Other. The dependency on the evil personified in the figure of the disgusting "defective other" is considered a condition to fill the lack in the symbolic order and to form the subject's identity. One may risk the presumption, that in Polish society, as well as in other post-communist societies marked by "civilizational incompetence", post-colonial mentality and resentful narratives on their history, this pattern is stronger than in western societies of welfare and democratic states.

Repugnance toward "others" seems to be ineradicable as far as it is an epiphenomenon of the ideology taken as ontology of social entity, a construction indispensable to live and to function in the symbolic order. We can find a similar explanation of etiology of hostility in the thinking of Julia Kristeva, rooted in psychoanalysis and in Mary Douglas's anthropological writings on rituals of purity and pollution. Disgust is one of the main factors in the process of constituting our subjectivity. The borders between the subject and the object, its interiority and exteriority, are strictly determined by the culture, and when these borders seem to be in danger, the bodily effect of disgust is the act of the subject's self-defence and one of its disciplinary measures. The disgust is provoked by the things considered to be abject. The confrontations taking place in the process of individualisation, or strictly speaking unsuccessful confrontations with bodily, material and physiological facilities produce the disgust. It helps the subject to construct its "ego ideal". The ego ideal depends on phantasmatic support from

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<sup>19</sup> For example, what is excluded from the Symbolic (from the frame of the corporatist socio-symbolic order) returns in the Real as a paranoid construction of the 'Jew'. S.Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, Verso, London-New York, 1989, p.144. One can easily exchange the "Jew", "a point at which social negativity as such assumes positive existence", as Zizek puts it, for the "migrant" and we see how it works today.

outside: from the family, the native community, the church, a political party, a political leader, etc. In times of crisis, be it political or economic, the “ego”, threatened with dissolution of its boundaries, transfers the pressures from inside to outside objects, trying to enforce an armour of “ego ideal” and reacting aggressively toward the imagined enemy.<sup>20</sup>

These affective dimensions active in forming identity are as difficult to eliminate as long as the hostility toward migrants is not considered politically incorrect, because it is not perceived in terms of racial prejudice. And in the opinion of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, the authors of “Empire”, it goes obviously that way today. Racist prejudices are articulated in a new type of rhetoric now. Theories based on biology are of considerable historical meaning now, and were replaced by theories based on sociology, economy and culture. Old prejudices are exchanged for economic threats now: anxiety of being deprived of work, rivalry for social benefits, and, especially, cultural fear: the fear of invasion of an anti-culture and of loss of European identity. Cultural differences are absolutized and considered unsurpassable. The modification of racial theories helps to assume a succession of what traditionally was considered anti- racial attitude and make it an instrument of segregation and separation, which is – as usual – a tool for building an identity.

Shortly speaking: the figure of the migrant ominously meets today the characteristics impinged on the Jew in Europe before the WWII and this is what I find the most disturbing thing.



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<sup>20</sup> See Klaus Theweleit, *The Male Phantasies* (1977), vol.1, University of Minnesota Press 1987 and vol.2, 1989.