sciendo

Ferry Crossing, Travelling and Change in the Northern Sudan

MACIEJ KURCZ

Institute of Cultural Studies,
University of Silesia in Cieszyn, Poland
maciej.kurcz@us.edu.pl

ABSTRACT

In the past few years, the transport infrastructure of Sudan has radically changed. New roads, transport hubs, or means of transport have had a significant impact on the culture of travelling, and many of the older institutions connected with the phenomenon are things of the past now. One of those dying out phenomena is ferry crossing on the Nile. It was not long ago that a ferry was the basic means of transport throughout the riverine area of Sudan. It was the way of transporting people and goods, both along the river and across it. Today, because of the new era of modern motorways and bridges, its time is coming to an end. What can we learn about the Sudanese travel practices from the perspective of the Nile ferry? This is a fundamental question I will provide an answer to. In the paper I refer to the field observations made in the Northern Sudan in the village of ad Ghaddar in 2013.

KEY WORDS: ethnographic research, ferry transport, Northern Sudan, spatial mobility

Introduction

In the context of Africa, much attention is devoted to a car infrastructure or cars as such (GEWALD – LUNING – VAN WALRAVEN 2009; HART 2016; GREEN-SIMMS 2017; BECK – KLAEGER – STASIK 2017, to name just a few). Rightly – these are phenomena with accelerating dynamics and significance, which, like in Europe or North America, can be combined with what sociologist John Urry (2008) called ”automobility" (a system "dominated" by a car, which affects many aspects of the contemporary culture or society)

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

(URRY 2008). Increasing the spatial mobility of people, goods, raw materials or services, the car has led in Africa to the emergence of new sources of wealth and to the correction of ways of economic competition. It led to the collapse of other means of transport or old caravan routes. In the post-colonial period, a car is connected with power and economic elites. Today, it is a first need “item” that shall be associated with nearly every aspect of African life. Without access to car transportation, work, food or medical care are more diffcult to obtain. The car even transformed the ways of waging wars (GEWALD – LUNNING – VAN WALRAVEN 2009:6).

The ”mobility turn,” which we can also observe in African studies from the beginning of this century, is sometimes criticized for the exaggerated valorisation of only one means of transport – a car. Less noticeable, however, there are other ways of travelling and the accompanying material infrastructure (VANNINI 2009, 2012; SHELLER 2014:45-54). In their case, we can also ask about "cultural biographies of things” or about specific social spaces (like stations, hotels, airports, hubs, resorts, ports, etc.) that are immanently associated with mobility today. Finally, as with the “automobile culture,” the key is the concept of “adaptation”. Only thanks to the process of modifying and adapting to individual needs, a given means of transport can be included in the local system, both in a utilitarian and symbolic sense. In other words: "alternative mobilities" or other travel concepts are locally of great importance, and should be in the field of interest of researchers.

In recent years the Sudan's transport infrastructure has radically changed. New roads, transport hubs or means of transport, financed by Asian capital, have had a strong impact on the culture of travel, and have pushed many old institutions associated with this phenomenon straight into the past. One of such just disappearing institutions is the ferry crossing on the Nile. Until recently, the ferry has been the basic means of transport in the entire riverine Sudan. In this way, people and goods were transported, both along and across the river. Today, with the era of modern highways or bridges, its time is probably coming to the end. This, of course, is a great loss for cultural heritage of that part of Africa. It is an institution of great significance that goes beyond its basic, transportation meaning. A ferry is a material "thing" in which a significant richness of practices and interactions is hidden. What can we learn about travel practices in the Northern Sudan from the perspective of a ferryboat? This is the main question I will try to answer. This article is a voice in the discussion about transport that is a part of social-related activities. In my opinion, the travel practices are an extremely creative and multifunctional phenomenon: they are created, transformed or petrified. For me, just like for the authors of the “Making of African Roads,” a transport infrastructure is not only physically, but also socially constructed (BECK – KLAEGER – STASIK 2017:3). All this is happening in the spirit of local culture dynamics; although the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

mobility in Africa, in spite of being derived from the outside world, is not a type of transplant, it is in many respects an original and unique variation of the global travel concepts. Travelling in Africa is often a collective practice that can be viewed from the perspective of the whole bunch of different practices: preparation for travel, loading and passengering and the travel itself . Each of these activities is combined with the processes of creating and negotiating space (WADELNOUR 2017:197-220). Each of them is also dramatized – it has its own stage, costumes, actors or spectators. Rituals and social performance rule here (ADLER 1989:1366-1391). Finally, all these elements are, more or less, noticeable when travelling by various means of transport, regardless of whether it is an airplane, a ferry or a bus.

Although this article has been prepared mainly on the basis of field observations made in the Northern Sudan in the village of ad Ghaddar in 2013 (these works were related to a research project entitled ”Sudan as a multidimensional borderland” – 0151/NPRH2/H22/81/2012), it can also be considered here as an outcome of previous research trips to that part of Africa related to different research projects. In fact, a “ferry culture” has been the object of spontaneous, but conscious observations carried out for several years (actually starting in 2000). This included traveling the riverine Sudan. Fieldwork consisted of participant observation, numerous spontaneous interviews and ferry crossings visits. Hence this kind of experience can be defined, as it is often called, as “personal ethnology.” I found the essayistic and impressionistic nature of this study to be the best way of presenting my thoughts.

Ferry Crossing

The river separates two areas that are intensively subject to human activity: farmlands and villages. In the Northern Sudan, man's life goes either on the right or on the left bank of the river. The ferry has been a link between these two parallel worlds for a long time. Its significance resulted from ecological conditions – the S-shape of a large fragment of the Middle Nile valley. For this very reason, generally there has been a constant need to cross the river by the ferryboats.

In the past, a simple raft from the acacia tree was used for conveying passengers and goods. Such a boat was operated with oars or carry a small square sail (HORNELL 1942:1-17; OWEN 2016:174). At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, an iron ferry with a steam and later a diesel engine appeared on the Nile. A widely held assumption is that the British had special attitude to the Nile. This river was of primary importance for their presence in this part of Africa. It was one of the raisons d`etre of their economic and military policy. Therefore, modernization investments – including those of a transport character – were intensively concentrated in the area of the Nile valley. Interestingly, these activities were not

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

entirely rational. Sudan is not Egypt. It is a truism which wasn`t always clear for the British colonial authorities. Both countries have different ecological conditions. This is clearly seen on the example of the Middle Nile, which is neither easy to navigate nor the shortest transport route between North and South. In the times of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, there was an imaginary picture of the Nile – a paradise river that irrigated the land and guaranteed all harvest. For this reason, for the most part, the position of ferry shipping was unwavering. Even when motorisation came to Sudan (which, incidentally, led to the collapse of another long-term means of river transport – a steamer), not only did the role of the ferry decrease, but it increased even further. Due to the growing car traffic, an even larger number of ferryboats appeared at that time. Then, in the second half of the twentieth century, we can speak about the "golden years" of ferry shipping in Sudan. Today this period belongs to the past. The reason is the new, modern transport infrastructure of the Northern Sudan built thanks to the support of Chinese and Malaysian investors (GRAWERT 2010:250). In recent years, several permanent bridges have been built. Above all, finally, the road network connecting Khartoum with Wadi Halfa on the border with Egypt was finally completed. From 2018 on, an asphalt road runs on both sides of the river. This is where the traffic is focused right now. These are the main and the only routes for local and long-distance transports. As a result, ferry crossings only remained in places away from the bridges. One of such places is located near Old Dongola. The ferry connects two villages there: ad Ghaddar and al Gaba.

Ferry Morphology and Work Organization

The ferry operates from sunrise to sunset – it transports people, animals, cars and all movable human belongings. It is a huge, rust-etched structure. At the back there is an engine room, above lies the captain's bridge, and at the front there is space for cars and passengers. The ferry is operated by two men: the captain and his helper, dealing basically with loading, preparing a driveway for cars and collecting money.

Although the ferry operates every day, the increased traffic on the crossing prevails on market days. First, one way, then the other way. Whoever arrives first at the crossing will have a chance to reach the market first. And that's a good omen. It is believed that this will translate into the price of products. First come first served, although trade fair practice contradicts it. It is a well-known practice that prices are highest in the morning, while the lowest around noon. Anyone who does not have to does business in the morning. This is probably the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

principle that operates in fairs, not only in Sudan, but also outside of it. Nevertheless, the best is to start each trip in the pale dawn – and finish before dusk.

Desert roads of Sudan are not usually physically marked. Each driver, like the ship's captain, sets the path himself in accordance with his experience and needs (WADELNOUR 2017:197). Individual trajectories cross parking places, security checks or ferry crossings. This is where the lives of people on the move are concentrated. Their needs materialize in the form of various infrastructures, of which I will discuss further on.

Waiting Room

A ferry always means a shorter or longer stop. A traveller cannot go onboard directly. He has to wait until it arrives from the opposite shore, and if it is night, he has to look for some accommodation. Even if he is lucky and finds a ferry on our side, it does not necessarily mean that it will be moving across the river in a moment. The ship – like most of the transport in Sudan – does not operate according to any fixed schedule. It starts when it is full of passengers or the captain decides that there is nothing to wait for any longer. Passengers are important, not time. The lack of a formalized and centralized ordinance is almost a universal feature of public transport in Africa. For this very reason, transport services are so strongly associated with social interactions (BECK – KLAEGER – STASIK 2017:1-24). Nearly everything is negotiable: from the beginning of the journey through loading to the final stop. The process is usually considerably extended in time.

The crossing slows down human mobility, periodically anchors "the traveller," forcing travellers to do certain things, like conversation, observation or play. The very moment of embarking – slow and precise – favours the creation of an invisible bond between the people: "unity in waiting." As German ethnographer Kurt Beck stated, it is by no means a time completely wasted or empty (BECK 2013: 426-445). In particular, the eyesight is activated. That is a unique "sociological achievement" (Simmel's term). As we know, relationships arise from looking at each other and interactions occur between individuals (URRY 2008:416, 417). What is more, while waiting for the crossing, travellers can make many interesting observations, for example: how the market promises to be or who comes home after a long absence. It seems that nobody and nothing escapes the attention of passengers who are just waiting to embark.

The waiting moment is a stimulus for the increased interpersonal communication. This is additionally favoured by various types of constructions – from simple, four branches and a

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

roof (so called rakuba), to restaurants or night shelters. Travellers find a moment of respite in them or they can simply "kill boredom."

Waiting for the ferry boat is also a moment in which institutions important for the local cultural system may let themselves known, such as the law of hospitality – fundamental for every Sudanese Muslim. The form of hospitality can be a cup of tea or a roof over your head when it turns out that the nearest ferry will be the next day. I have had the opportunity to convince myself about it many times. It is not so difficult. Hospitality in these sites is ennobling. It is always noticed. It becomes a source of respect and even fame. Hospitality of certain people is simply legendary. In this sense – waiting for a ferry seems to be an inherent element of the journey for the Sudanese. Although mobility is accompanied by breaks everywhere, in Sudan this phenomenon seems to be brought to the extreme. A poor infrastructure means that constant repairs, breaks to supplement food or just when people need to rest are necessary. During the break, everyone knows how to behave: get out, "stretch the bones," look for a place to use the toilet, pray, finally talk to others. Like everything else, these are most often collective activities. They are made together. It is rather unusual for a person to stay in his place. It would be very inelegant in the first place. Probably a question would be asked why is he alienating? Across Sudan, an accusation is often behind such a question. A "normal", godly man should not avoid his fellow men. Likewise, a lonely man is someone who is suspected, a sick person, an evil, hiding some sinister secrets. Outsiderness is usually suspicious.

On the main routes, on and off, you can find various types of parking spaces, with better or worse infrastructure. Kurt Beck paid attention to these institutions as specific cultural creations. Among the other things he noticed that they are just used to cultivate relationships between people (BECK 2013:426-445). In Sudan – as in all of Sub-Saharan Africa – travelling was always a collective and mass activity. People used to group together while travelling. It was a matter of security, but also of a culture in which belonging to a community was a kind of dogma. At least in case of Sudan this custom still seems to be actual. In Sudan, despite the irrespective of the arrival of "modernity" and the presence of various means of locomotion, the ordinary people seem still to prefer travelling collectively. They share a common space and time – night and day, together, and the vehicle periodically becomes a home like a deep-sea sailing ship (BECK – KLAEGER – STASIK 2017:1-24). From that very reason basically the anchoring of the traveller at the crossing from his perspective seems to be something natural, integrally associated with the phenomenon of travel.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

Loading and Passengering

Normally two, three cars and a few people can be on board. Firstly, cars drive onto the ferry. If they are parked properly, there will be even six of them; one next to another. It requires efficiency and organization. For this reason, the loading process does not always run smoothly. If things get complicated, micro-adventure breaks out between the drivers. It is all the greater when a car is scratched. Although none of the vehicles is not without spot or dents, even a small scratch is a reason for fussing. Harm is harm, no matter how big, it is damage to someone's reputation. And the Sudanese, as befits Muslims, are people of honour. So someone always has to play the role of the aggrieved party. Travelling – in particular being a passenger – means creating social roles (VANNINI 2011) or a whole branch of performative practices (Adler 1989). It is no different in this case when a large part of the local population – mainly men – will gather on a dozen or so square meters. Once all drivers are able to enter, people and animals move onto the ferry. Women on the stern, comfortably under the cover of the bridge, men next to their machines. In this way, at least the traditional division between men and women is preserved. A captain seems to be watching over everything, sitting on his bridge. His attitude to the world can be perfectly described by the inscriptions often placed on the steering wheel of ships: “Passengers are requested not to speak to the man at the wheel.” When the loading is finished, the captain soon gives a sign for unmooring; he hits something like a hammer against a metal element of the structure. First on the reverse (red string), then "full ahead" (black string). Even when the platform is raised, someone usually jumps on the ship. Nobody knows when the next cruise will be.

Cruise

The crossing lasts from ten to fifteen minutes. This time is used very often entirely for conversations. Not being particularly nosy, one can hear about grain prices, matrimonial announcements or politics – in a word, about the most important issues for the local population. The crossing is the first place where sensational messages are heard. It is also a place where messages are made or commented, where people pass on information that someone has just been born or died. It is here that rumour reigns on these several dozen square meters. The sight is maintaining the dominant position. Everyone is looking at everyone. For some, this is an inconvenience. Women are undoubtedly such a group, who are not accustomed to strangers’ looks in particular. Not only that, the eyes of a stranger may have sinister consequences. If someone is afraid of the power of the “evil eye,” then the ferry is a place where they should be particularly watchful. Remember, however, that the ferry is also connected with some opportunities for women. A man is standing next to a woman.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

Glance for glance. These are the rules of the expressiveness of the human body. This is a place where a boy can look at a girl and even talk to her. Paradoxically, such conversations are favoured by the ferry engine's rush. Perhaps the spoken words will forever be the secret of these two. A look or even a conversation will not outrage anyone.

Passengers are the subject of the ferry crossing. They are not a permanent group. However, they share their emotions and for a moment, temporarily, become a relatively integrated whole. Such an episodic bond also has some consequences. The ferry is one of those spaces where conventions are relaxed. Various divisions are obliterated: our man-stranger, man-woman. It is open to social interactions. Using the conceptual tools of modern anthropology, the ferry can to some extent be called a non-place ("non-place of pre-modernity"). Perhaps the only difference that it is not a place completely foreign and indifferent. The opposite shore is a home or a world close to home. Long-distance travellers are rare here. As a result, passengers do not feel particularly alienated. Therefore, the ferry has usually a joyful, cordial atmosphere, and people are very eager to interact.

The situation is similar with visitors. On the ferry, rather everyone knows who is their own and who is a stranger. Regardless of this, it is a moment of communication even across rudimentary divisions. This can be seen in photographs from the colonial times. River crossing was the setting for many of them, hence we can talk about a certain group of performances: "ferry photos." And the reason? It was one of the few occasions when a European could take a good look at the natives and without a special discomfort immortalize this moment on the film. In Anglo-Egyptian Sudan the Europeans and the natives lived separately in different spaces that were supposed not to meet. In this sense, the ferry was a specific "place of contact".

Reflection, Metaphysics and Border

The ferry crossing disturbs the process of travelling, it reminds of its phased nature. We already know that before the era of asphalt roads, the journey through Sudan's wilderness was stretched in time, divided into many stages, filled with repairs, replenishment of supplies, or just rests. Even a simple crossing to the other shore has something of the sanctity, it is surrounded by the aura of uniqueness. I have already mentioned freeing oneself from the existing social structures, turning towards interaction or changing the way people feel time. The moment of crossing is also deeply reflective. By ferry, simply, it is possible to cross the river. Travelling to the other side, though short, makes one think about what is close and far away, makes you think about the nature of travel or the world described as yours. To leave home – or return to it – first you need to defeat the Nile – a type of a gate. This gate opens to

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

otherness – it also protects against it. Thus, ferries co-create the image of the Nile as a kind of border – a space that joins, but separates at the same time; a real barrier, which – to overcome – you must take appropriate actions, suspend certain norms or customs. All this is to safely reach the opposite shore (KURCZ 2016:85-119). The crossing is not an ordinary journey. It is always an experience that arouses anxiety. Water is an element of fear. Accidents happen despite the experience of people working there. (That`s the reason one or two amulets (hijab) are commonly tied to the tiller of the boat). The river still surprises. It is simply unpredictable (the summer period is especially dangerous, then the river changes its level every day). The passage is, as one can say, a metaphysical experience. It often means a trip to orbis exterior (amazing, alien which, although analogically constructed, cannot be identical to ours). Already in the waters of the Nile, you can find evidence of the amazingness of the outside world. They are river angels or mermaids. They are part of the local folklore as the eternal inhabitants of the river depths. Neither bad nor good. They are also characterized by a truly human appearance. However, they are supernatural beings. Their main role seems to be to protect people during ground-breaking events, like birth or marriage. In the context of the river, taboos are obligatory. It applies especially to women – again – in crucial moments of life. Under no circumstances they are not allowed to travel to the other side. The ferry does not run at night, not only because of sailing difficulties, but also for magical reasons. Night is the time of ghosts, and of river creatures, which, disturbed by people, can harm them (KURCZ 2016:85-119). For this reason, no reasonable person will decide to cross the river at night or even approach it. It would be too dangerous, too frightening. Nubians are one of those African societies whose members still display a kind of "fear of the night," a time-space-sparing quality different from the day. The day is the time of people, and the night – the ghosts.

Ferry crossing often crowns and begins a human journey. It happens that this movement brings a fundamental change with it. Someone comes back from a pilgrimage or embarks on a honeymoon. In each of these cases, the place of crossing becomes the scenery of solemn meetings, the joyful squealing of women, singing and animal sacrifice. To take someone to the ferry is the best way to say goodbye to him.

Conclusion

Ferry crossing is one of the manifestations of the mobility culture in contemporary Sudan. It is not only one of the elements of the transport system of this country, serving the satisfaction of transport or economic needs of its inhabitants. This phenomenon is fully integrated with the local culture and society, which has been given many rudimentary values and meanings

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

over a hundred years. Ferry crossing is a multifunctional phenomenon; it transports people, goods or vehicles, but also serves economic exchange, communication, nurturing social bonds or propagating religious ideas. It is also deeply rooted in the global, but also in the local reality. It is thanks to this that we can learn so much about the local concepts of travelling. It reminds us of its phases, complexity and related practices and customs. We can acquire knowledge of mystical geography – Nile semantics and border categories particularly or even of everyday institutions (such as the law of hospitality or the concept of honour). The iron ferry boats were strictly connected with the modernization changes in the 20th century: proliferation of car transportation and increase of spatial mobility in the first place. This means of river transport shows that local culture adapts to new technical environment and incorporates it entirely to the "traditional" system of values and practices.

Bibliography

ADLER, Judith (1989): Travel as Performing Art. In *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94, No. 6, pp. 1366-1391.

BECK, Kurt (2009): The Art of Truck Modding on the Nile (Sudan): an Attempt to Trace Creativity. In Jan Bart Gewald, Sabine Luning, Klaas van Walraven (eds): *The Speed of Change: Motor Vehicles and People in Africa*. Boston: Brill.

BECK, Kurt (2013): Roadside Comforts: Truck Stops on the Forty Days Road in Western Sudan. In *Africa*, Vol. 83, Issue 3, pp. 426-445.

BECK, Kurt – KLAEGER, Gabriel – STASIK, Michael (2017): An Introduction to the African Road in Kurt Beck, Gabriel Klaeger, Michael Stasik (eds): *Making of African World*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 1-24.

GRAEWERT, Elke (2010): *After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan*. N.Y: James Currey.

HORNELL, James (1942): The Framless Boats of the Middle Nile. In *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXV, Part I, pp. 1-37.

KURCZ, Maciej (2016): Ekologia, kultura i zmiana nad środkowym Nilem – o roli rzeki w kulturze ludowej Sudanu Północnego. In Maciej Kurcz, Katarzyna Marcol (eds.): *Ekologia kulturowa*. Katowice: UNI-DRUK Wydawnictwo i Drukarnia, pp. 85-119.

OWEN, Richard (2016): *Sudan Days*. Leicestershire: Matador.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

SHELLER, Mimi (2014): Sociology after the Mobilities Turn. In Peter Adey, David Bissell, Kevin Hannam, Peter Merriman, Mimi Sheller (eds.*): The Routledge Handbook of Mobilities*. London, N.Y.: Routledge.

URRY, John (2008): Życie za kółkiem, (trans. P. Polak). In Piotr, Maria Bogunia-Borowska (eds.): *Socjologia codzienności*. Kraków: Znak.

WADELNOUR, R. (2017): Negotiating Desert Routes. Travelling Practices on the Forty Days. In Kurt Beck, Gabriel Klaeger, Michael Stasik (eds): *Making of African World*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 197-220.

VANNINI, Phillip (2009): The Culture of Alternative Mobilities. In Pgillip Vannini (ed.): *The Culture of Alternative Mobilities: the Routes Less Travelled*. Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

VANNINI, Phillip (2012): *Ferry Tales: Mobbility, Pace, and Time on Canada`s West Coast*. N.Y.: Routledge.

Maciej Kurcz is an cultural anthropologist, associative professor at the University of Silesia in Katowice. His research interests lie in culture dynamics in modern Africa both in the context of rural societies and urban centres. He has been engaged in researching Sudan since 2000. His works include the books: *Beyond the Third Cataract* (PTL 2007) based on field research in Northern Sudan in 2003 and 2004, and *How to Survive in an African City. A Man Faced to Bor- derness and Urbanization Processes in South Sudanese Juba* (Univeristy of Silesia Press 2012) based on ethnographic research in South Sudan in 2007 and 2008. Currently he is working on ethno-archeological project: *Soba – the Heart of Kingdom of Alwa*.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0001

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 2/2019

sciendo

Specific Form of Identity among Namibian Czechs

PAVEL MIŠKAŘÍK

Department of Ethnology and World Studies,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia
p.miskarik@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The main goal of the paper is to explain specific ways in which the group of so-called Namibian Czechs identifies itself and how we can conceptualize their specific form of identity. For this reason, the article presents specific theoretical concepts focused on identities such as diaspora or transnational and bicultural identity. In recent years, all three of these concepts are gaining more attention, and an ever-growing number of communities are labelled as diaspora, transnational, or bicultural. Affiliation with one of those categories can potentially lead to a variety of political claims for such a group. The article aims to explain which of the concepts is best suitable for the group of Namibian Czechs, a group of fifty-six former child war refugees, who were educated and accommodated in Czechoslovakia between 1985 and 1991.

KEY WORDS: bi-cultural identity, diaspora, identity, Namibian Czechs, transnationalism

Introduction

The paper is compiled from information gathered during four years research focused on a group of so-called Namibian Czechs. The term Namibian Czechs is an emic term because vast majority of my respondents used this term to identify themselves in their narratives. Information from the research was used in several different articles focused on specific topics such as the author`s dissertation thesis and will be used in a monograph which will present a

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

comprehensive material about the life story of this specific group. The dissertation thesis focuses on the processes of generating social identities of the members of this group.

One of the reasons for writing about this topic is the fact that only a few articles have been published about this specific group. Two articles were written by Tomáš Machalík (MACHALÍK 2007, 2008); one by Kateřina Mildnerová (MILDNEROVÁ 2018) one by Martina Jakubcová (JAKUBCOVÁ 2018) and partially by the author of this article (MIŠKAŘÍK 2019). These conditions are in sharp contrast with the amount of literature focused on similar group of so-called "GDR-children of Namibia", a children war refugees brought up in East Germany (AUKONGO 2009; ENGOMBE – HILLIGES 2004; KENNA 1999; KRAUSE 2009; NIEKREZEN – ARMBRUSTER – WITTE 2014; SCHMITT – KLEIN-ZIMMER – WITTE 2014; SCHMITT – WITTE – POLAT 2014).

The main goal of the research was to record biographical narratives of individual Namibian Czechs which will bring to light processes which affected their identification. This method provided us with insight into historical events that affected the lives of respondents. Those events significantly affected the identities of respondents because their socialization took place in two culturally different locations. Due to this fact, the article tries to answer the following questions: Can we perceive the identities of Namibian Czechs as transnational? Can we distinguish Namibian Czechs as diaspora? Can we regard Namibian Czechs as bi-cultural individuals?

Methodology

The four years research took place in the Czech Republic and Namibia between 2014 and 2018. During this time, two individual field-researches were conducted in Namibia. The first field research was sixteen days long and it was conducted in May 2017. The second one lasted for three weeks in January 2018. Interviews were recorded in several different locations in Namibia. Most of them were recorded in Windhoek, the country's capital, where most of the respondents live. Others were recorded in the north of the country, mostly in larger cities such as Oshakati and Ondangwa, or in surrounding villages, because another significant part of the group lives in those areas. Several other interviews were conducted in Walvis Bay, Grootfontein, Enana, or Swakopmund. During the research, we[1] interviewed thirty-one Namibian Czechs, four Namibian caregivers, six Czech caregivers, three Czech

[1] Field research was carried together with Kateřina Mildnerová.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

government representatives and two Czech adoptive families. Archival materials were obtained from the archive of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also from state district archives (Prachatice, Nový Jičín). Some respondents also provided us with their personal letters, photographs, and drawings.

During the research, we combined biographical, historical, and ethnographic approach. Several different techniques were used during the field research. Most frequently, we used the technique of biographical interviews, especially in communication with Namibian Czechs. Sometimes, we supplemented those interviews with semi-structured interviews and participant observations because of the scarcity of time in the field. Semi-structured interviews were used during the interviews with adoptive families, political representatives, and caregivers.

Theoretical Approaches

In the paper, we approach identity from a constructivist point of view. The identity can be seen as a dynamic process, which is socially constructed in the context of everyday communication and social interactions. As Erik Erikson points out in his book *Identity: Yuth and Crisis,* every individual and his/her identity is affected by solving specific social problems, which are predetermined by the individual`s age (ERIKSON 1968:93-95). The most crucial phase for forming an individual`s identity is adolescence. In the process of acquiring a specific identity, socialization plays a crucial role. Some social identities have been institutionalized by certain political powers, such as national or ethnic identities. The development of those categories of identity is described by Thomas Hylland Eriksen in his book *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (ERIKSEN 1993). However, in accordance with the work of Rogers Brubaker and his colleagues, we understand national identity and other forms of institutionalized identities as products of social classification and human categorization of the world (BRUBAKER – LOVEMAN – STAMATOV 2004:31; BRUBAKER 2015:87-89). Ethnical or national identity does not represent any given category or entity in the world; they are just categories of social categorization of the world in everyday practice. In the following chapters, the paper focuses on specific forms of composed identity, which are usually ascribed to bearers of dual identity in one domain.

Diaspora Identities

The popularity of the diaspora concept rapidly increased in recent years. Many academic papers are devoted to or are using this concept. Initially, Jewish and Armenian communities were labelled as diasporas. Those communities were forced to leave the countries of their

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

origin as a result of historical events. In the aftermath, they created relatively coherent communities in the countries they immigrated to. In contemporary literature, many other groups of people are often labelled as diaspora, even though the reasons for the emigration of those groups are considerably different (ANGOUSTURES – PASCAL 1996; BHATT – MUKTA 2000; SHEFFER 1986, 2003). However, if the concepts of the diaspora should retain any meaning, some primary attributes have to be met if we choose to label some group as a diaspora. The number and contents of attributes vary significantly among different authors; nevertheless, the primary content of those attributes is very similar. For this reason, only two different approaches to the diaspora in modern literature are presented.

William Safran, in his article "Diasporas in Modern Society" understands diasporas as "expatriate minority communities", with attributes such as:

a. Displacement from original "center" to at least two different "peripheral" sites,

b. Maintaining the myth, memory or vision of the original homeland,

c. The notion of the inability of full acceptance by the host society,

d. The perception of the original homeland as a place to which they could potentially return if circumstances permit,

e. Engagement in maintaining or renewing of the original homeland,

f. Group awareness and solidarity are defined by the continued relationship with the country of origin (SAFRAN 1991:83-84).

Unlike Safran, Rogers Brubaker, in his article "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora" reduces attributes of the diaspora to three main attributes:

a. Dispersion,

b. Homeland orientation,

c. Boundary maintenance (BRUBAKER 2005:5-7).

By the dispersion, Brubaker means forced or otherwise traumatic resettlement to an area behind the borders of one's homeland. As a homeland orientation, Brubaker understands an orientation to the real or imagined homeland which is a source of values, loyalty, and identity. This orientation is projected into myths about the homeland or the origin of the group. It can possibly result in the desire for a return to the homeland, renewal of homeland, or it can be a source of the group´s inner-solidarity. The criteria of boundary maintenance are understood by Brubaker as a tendency to maintain a different identity from the identity of the host society

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

(BRUBAKER 2005:5-7). This phenomenon may be the unintended result of social exclusion from the host society, or voluntary rejection of assimilation, or example by voluntary endogamy in the diaspora community.

Despite those basic criteria which are ascribed to members of diasporas, it is evident that not all members of the diaspora are going to substantiate all of those attributes. Even among diasporas which are considered to be "traditional diasporas" some of those attributes may not be present - for example, homeland orientation among Jewish diaspora in America. In a similar fashion, some other groups of people are labelled as diasporas even if they do not dispose of any of those attributes. The attributes of diaspora and its definitions are more of a model of an "ideal diaspora" rather than real events in the world.

Another problem with the diaspora studies is the fact that even if some diaspora appears to be "ideal", not all of its members must necessarily dispose of all the attributes. For this reason, Brubaker uses the differentiation among the diaspora members. He divided them into three categories: "core, dormant and marginal" (BRUBAKER 2005:11). The individuals can move between different categories, and the classification is based on the involvement in the diaspora activities. Core members of diaspora are those who openly identify themselves as members of diaspora entity, who are ready to act on behalf of their community. Dormant members are assimilated or fully integrated into majority culture but they know that they have origins in diaspora community. Marginal members maintain their ethnic communal identity but do not identify as such or distance themselves from the community (SHEFFER 2003:100).

Diaspora identity is formed as a result of specific historical events but the very essence of such a community is socially constructed. Diaspora does not represent a static entity in the world; more precisely, diaspora can be described as a project, practice, claims or attitudes.

Transnational Identities

The trend of a growing amount of literature focused on transnational identities is very similar to the one mentioned above in the chapter focused on diaspora. This fact is probably caused by the trend of growing migration into the countries of Western Europe and North America. Transnational identity is based on an assumption that most of the migrants will continue to maintain strong and lively relations with the homeland countries instead of assimilating into the majority culture of a national state. Steven Vetrovec in his book *Transnationalism* identifies reasons which make it possible for transnational identities to spread rapidly around the globe. The main reason is the drop in the prices of international transportation. According

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

to him, the main impulse is the spread of so-called "low-cost" airlines which allowed people to travel over long distances for reasonable prices. The communication among relatives and friends living in different countries became significantly more accessible after the spread of mobile phones and the internet which allow direct communication among them free of charge. Vetrovec points out that for the studies of transnationality, it is most important to identify and analyse wide-spread international networks which are created by individual migrants (VETROVEC 2009:156-162).

The most urging problem for the study of transnationalism is what Peggy Levitt and Sanjeev Khagrram or Csaba Szaló call "methodological nationalism" (LEVITT – KHAGRRAM 2007:23-34; SZALÓ 2009:60-63). Methodological nationalism can be described as a tendency among people and scientists to understand the national state and its boundaries as a fixed entity. If a scientist treats the national state as such an entity, he/she is unable to seize the flow, interconnections, and identities, which are crossing the boundaries of national states. For this reason, we look at national identities as socially constructed and at the national states as a result of the historical development and political actions of certain people.

The most important symbol of transnational identity is an active participation in social events in the country of origin, as well as in the country of present residence. Some authors, for instance David Hening, describe specific forms of the transnational identity of Moroccan women from Italy which he describes as a unique form of identity, different from Moroccan and Italian as well. He states: "they strike to belong and at the same time, define themself." (HENING 2009:179) Nevertheless, as Brubaker writes in his book *Ground for Difference*, transnational identity or diaspora identity does not represent the transcendence of nationalism, but they are rather the adaptation of nationalism to current and continuously changing conditions (BRUBAKER 2015:134-145).

Bicultural Identities

In the cases when an individual was exposed during his/her lifetime to several different cultural environments, it is very likely that his/her national identity will be composed of several different identities. The phenomenon of bi-cultural or multi-cultural identities is in detail described in Richard Crisp´s book *Psychology of Social and Cultural Diversity*. According to Crisp, there are two major factors affecting the identity of an individual who was exposed to several different cultural environments. The first one is the degree of motivation and enabling an individual to identify and participate in the culture of their origin. The second is the degree of motivation and enabling an individual to identify and participate in the culture of their present residence. The power ratio between those two factors

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

predetermines the degree of assimilation of individuals with the majority culture in the area. For analytical purposes, the degree of assimilation can be divided into four basic categories:

a. Assimilation with the environment: the individual adopts the behavioural patterns of the majority society and fully identifies with it,

b. Integration / bi-cultural: the individual identifies and participates in the culture of its origin as well as in the majority culture,

c. Separation: the individual identifies only with the culture of its origins,

d. Marginalization: the individual identifies only to a limited extent with both cultures (CRISP 2010:98-100).

A bi-cultural individual can switch between two or more different cultural identities. Such an individual can switch between different behavioural patterns accordingly with situation requirements. This process can be labelled as "identity switching" or "inter-domain identity switching". The degree of switching between individual identities can vary widely between individuals. That is why we can distinguish two basic models of behaviour, which can be used by bi-cultural individuals:

a. Identity switching: the individual changes his/her behaviour according to the cultural requirements of the situation,

b. Fused identity: the individual creates a third, inherent cultural model of behaviour which differs both from the patterns of the country of origin and from the dominant culture (CRISP 2010:92-94).

An individual`s ability to function in different cultural environments will likely have a predominantly positive impact on an individual`s life irrespectively of the degree of assimilation or behavioural patterns used by bi-cultural individuals. Those positive factors can be divided into three categories:

a. Integration complexity: individuals with extensive multicultural experiences can repeatedly switch between different cultural patterns based on changing stimuli from the environment. For this reason, they are likely to be able to develop more sophisticated models of thinking as opposed to people who do not have this experience,

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

b. Creativity: acquiring a diverse set of knowledge gives the individual the ability to use a broader range of ideas that can then use for his creative development,

c. Intercultural competence: the individual communicates and interacts with people from different cultures easily, and is more tolerant of different cultures (CRISP 2010:121-125).

Despite these positive effects, bi-cultural identity can also have some negative consequences for the individual. During their lives, bi-cultural individuals often have to face feelings of stress, isolation, and identity confusion. These negative effects are most likely caused by the attitudes of part of majority society in the residence country, which does not accept the ability of bi-cultural individuals to participate in the majority culture. Their stance may be the cause of the absence of fixed categories for bi-cultural individuals:

"However, individuals who engage in intra-domain identity switching receive less guidance from society about what it means to switch among these different identities or how to define their social identities, because society often has not yet established an understanding of what it means to possess multiple social identities within a single domain. In other words, since social identities are often socially constructed, society often does not have established categories for those who may possess multiple social identities within a domain." (CRISP 2010:70)

However, the absence of a fixed category may not be the only reason why bi-cultural individuals may face negative attitudes from the majority of society in the country of residence. The other reason is a fact that people tend to perceive people who are different from them as the ones deviating from normative standards which they consider to be fixed. People tend to create prototypical properties for certain groups of people. In-group properties are generally positive, and others are perceived as potentially dangerous. In this way, people create imaginary hierarchy in society. This process is closely described in Charles Lindholm's *Culture and Identity* (LINDHOLM 2007). In some cases, this may be a significant threat for individual bi-cultural identity and may lead to an individual's separation or marginalization, as was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. The following section deals with the story of the Namibian Czechs, followed by the application of theoretical approaches to this group, which leads to the conclusion where we describe what identity is most prevalent among them.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

Namibian Czechs

The Namibian Czechs are orphans, half-orphans, or children of former fighters for freedom of Namibia. They spent most of their early childhood in liberation movement camps[2] of South West Africa People`s Organization (SWAPO), located in the northern part of Namibia or in some of the neighbouring countries[3]. On May 4th 1978, the units of South African Defence Force surprisingly attacked the SWAPO`s camp in Kassainga in southern Angola which they considered a military base (DOBELL 1998:70). During this attack, more than 600 people were killed, mostly women and children. As a result of this action, SWAPO, the leading political organization representing the Namibian struggle for independence, asked for help from the former socialist countries because they already supported them through shipments of military equipment (ZÍDEK – SIEBER 2007:158-162). They asked to protect these children and get them out of danger. In 1979, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) issued am ordinance[4] in which the country pledged to create a boarding school for the children from the camps. Czechoslovakia also decided to participate in this project, and in the resolution from October 1985[5], the country officially approved this decision. The GDR sheltered 427 children between the years 1979 and 1989 and Czechoslovakia sheltered 56 children.

The key for choosing particular children is unknown, but the kinship of some children with high officials of SWAPO is apparent. Some of the high-ranking officials even had several children with different mothers which was a result of corruption and shady practices in the camps[6]. However, it is important to remark that all of the inhabitants of the camp were SWAPO`s supporters, and most of them held various posts in the camp`s administration. The children, aged five to nine, were picked up from different camps. Most of them were members of the Ovambo ethnic group. The main reason for this is the fact that the significant part of all activities leading to independence happened in the northern part of the country, where the vast majority of people were Ovambos. Ovambo became the dominant ethnic group of the whole Namibia as a result of repressive actions of the German occupation towards the Herero

2 Liberation camps were governed by political organizations and military personnel were present in those camps. For more detail about differences between refugee camps and liberation movement camps see WILLIAMS 2015.

3 For more information about SWAPO`s camps see AKAWA 2014; WILLIAMS 2015.

4 Maßnahmeplan zur Verwirklichung des Beschlusses des Sekretariats des ZK der SED vom 12.9.1979 über die Errichtung eines Kinderheimes für namibische Vorschulkinde DR2/12321a.

5 National archive Prague, NA, A ÚV KSČ, f.02/1. P142/85, k inf.3, č.9746/23, from 30. 10. 1985.

6 For more information about these practices, see AKAWA 2014.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

(and also Nama) ethnic group that lead to the death of more than 75% of the Herero population at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Before, Herero were the major ethnic group of Namibia (FIRST 1963:81-83). Most of the selected children had limited information about the identity of their parents or siblings because children in camps were raised in community nurseries where they were placed when they were approximately two years old. The memories of respondents from this period of their life are very blurred and fragmental. Most of the respondents remember only some occasional traumatic experiences connected with the war. The conditions in camps were not ideal, so most of the children were excited to go and see a different place. Eleven respondents remember their mothers from this period of life, and only six of them were aware of the identity of their fathers. Most of the respondents state in their narratives that they did not have any emotional connection with their parents.

Namibian children arrived in Prague on November 14th 1985. After their arrival, they were placed at the boarding school in Bartošovice. Thanks to friendly and kind Czech staff, most of them mastered the Czech language within a half year because Czechoslovakia did not have any special curriculum for those children; therefore, they were educated in the Czech language. There were efforts to prevent their integration in the Czech society, such as the lessons of national education or raising the Namibian flag every morning provided by six Namibian caregivers. Their main role in the program was to ensure that children do not forget their native language and customs from Namibia. During the day, children were accompanied by Czech caregivers, and during the night, Namibian caregivers were responsible for them. During the evenings and nights, speaking Czech was strictly forbidden among the children. If the children spoke Czech or misbehave in some way, they were physically punished by Namibian caregivers: *"Namibian aunties, they used to beat us. Put your head under the bed, and they beat you. It was part of disciplining us. You be afraid because if you do a mistake, you are going to be beaten."*[7] These cruel practices, mentioned by every single respondent, led to creating of aversion against things connected to Namibia*: "But we did not like it, because those Namibian caregivers used to be very strict, so we preferred to be with the Czech one, nobody liked those Namibian traditions."*[8] The children got accustomed to the new environment very well and most of them created strong relationships with the local families, children, and teachers. Many of them recall to these times as some of the happiest

7 Respondent n. 12.

8 Respondent n. 5.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

moments of their lives: *"It was a very happy childhood in Bartošovice, I will never forget that. We received such love, lots of love, that kind of love we never experienced before."*[9]

On 23rd November 1988, the group was relocated to the reconstructed premises of the boarding school in Prachatice. The children continued with their education as was scheduled in their curriculum. The Czech staff from Bartošovice was not accompanying the group; however, the majority of respondents state that they did not have any problems establishing relationships with the new members of staff. Only several respondents state that it was difficult for them to be secluded from the staff of Bartošovice. Half of the respondents created strong relationships with Czech people in Prachatice and they were considering them to be their adoptive families. In most cases, those adoptive families were families of members of staff from Prachatice. One respondent describes her relationship with the former cook of the group: "*They have given me true love, or the true meaning of family and love from the parents. Those people treated me like their own child."*[10] Except for those relationships, every child was involved in some leisure-time activity such as sports, dancing, tailoring, etc. The social interactions with the Czech environment, therefore, began to be more complex. The Czech language began to be the language of communication even among Namibian Czechs themselves. As one respondent states: "*Among each other, we only used to speak Czech. We never used Oshiwambo*[11] *with one another."*[12] The first Namibian caregiver left the group in December 1988 as a result of her health problems. In 1989, three more caregivers left the group because they wanted to participate in the first free elections in Namibia. Only two Namibian caregivers stayed with the group. Because the boarding school was understaffed, they decided to write a letter to the government of Czechoslovakia in which they demanded repatriation of the whole group. They insisted on all children to sign the letter; they manipulated some of the children to sign the letter voluntarily; others were forced to sign it under a threat from Namibian caregivers. "*I was one of the kids who did not want to go back because I knew that we are going to suffer there. We were forced to sing the letter that we want to go back, even if it was not true. Everyone signed. I was one of the last that signed."*[13]The letter was sent on July 29th 1991. The main reason for the repatriation was

9 Respondent n. 15.

10 Respondent n. 20.

11 This language was used as a language of communication in liberation movement camps and it is a majority language in Namibia at present.

12 Respondent n. 20.

13 Respondent n. 11.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

politics. Namibia achieved its independence, and Czechoslovakia began with economic and political transformation. Namibian people in exiles all over the world were returning back to Namibia, even the GDR group.[14] The direct threat for security in Namibia no longer existed, and none of the sides involved were to finance the schools. The repatriation took place in September 1991. Most of the respondents recall how difficult it was for them to leave Czechoslovakia; many of them consider this moment of their lives to be very traumatic; for instance, one respondent was accompanied by her "adoptive mother" until the very last moment at the airport: "*They did not want to let me go. They begged to keep me. They tried to speak to authorities, but it was not helpful. I did not want to go. It was extremely tough. I was holding her, I basically have to be pulled off her. I was grabbing and crying. Every time you recalled that moment to her, she will be crying. I was used to them. They were my parents that I knew. I did not want to go anywhere. I think that was the most difficult thing that I ever have to do in my life, I felt like I have been separated from my parents."*[15]

Nevertheless, the rapid political changes in both countries after 1989 deeply affected all the intentions of children living abroad at boarding schools. The feelings of the children were diverse. On the one hand, they were influenced by the Czech staff who warned them about the lower living standards in Africa which was mostly based only on their personal assumptions. On the other hand, the Namibian members of staff glorified the homeland, which resulted in a great curiosity among pupils. However, the main reason for the relocation of all children was still mainly political. During the long series of negotiations, it was decided to guarantee the independence of Namibia if the Cuban forces would be withdrawn from Angola. The process began in 1989 and the South African forces withdrew without any complications. The first independent elections took place in November 1989, when SWAPO gained the support of 57% of all voters (MELBER 2014:38-40). March 21st 1990 was pronounced Independence Day and Sam Nujoma was elected the first president of Namibia. Due to the accusations of the opposing political parties that the Namibian orphans had been sold, they wanted to ensure the return of all the children. On the other side, the Czechoslovak government faced many problems during the political transformation and they changed their interest in foreign policy. All of the children had to sign a formal approval of their

[14] For more details about reason for repatriation of this group see SCHMITT – KLEIN-ZIMMER – WITTE 2014.

[15] Respondent n. 20.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

displacement, although some of them claimed that they had been indirectly forced to do that. The relocation took place in September 1991.

The whole group arrived at Windhoek airport where the official delegation and the press were awaiting the children. Shortly after, the children were placed at the boarding school in Usakos. During the time in Usakos, the children were supposed to learn the English language and get used to the new environment. Afterward, they were picked up by their parents or relatives. Some children were not picked up by anybody, so they were transported to Windhoek and Ongwediwa. Some of them were picked up by their family relatives, but three respondents remained there until a foster family was arranged. It was a very traumatic experience for every member of this group. Most of the respondents state in their narratives that they were not even born in Namibia, and the whole environment was entirely new for them. "*I hate it. I was not ready to come here, and the worst part is that most of us were not even born here. We were born in exile. What is this country? Is this where I am going to live? And why? I felt like I am lost."*[16] Most of the respondents were afraid of their own parents or family members. *"My parents were like when you came back; you are like ignoring us. But how do you explain to them that I never grow up with you? What do you expect from me? I cannot just run into your arms and said: ooo, i missed you, mummy, I missed you, father. ... Ok I had some flashbacks, so I remember them, but some kids were even crying, that they do not want to go with their parents, they do not even know them. So lots of parents were disappointed. They were like: oooo, our own kids do not like us, they do not want us, some are even crying that we are not their parents."*[17] Every respondent states in his/her narrative that they experienced a cultural shock after the arrival. Firstly, they were not fully able to communicate with their surroundings. *"It was extremely difficult, I remember, when we came back, we hardly knew any English. You know, we were so much integrated into Czech society that we basically knew only Czech, Oshiwambo was non-existent. You had to learn everything from scratch. Most of the people failed very first grade when we came back."*[18] Apart from the language barrier, the respondents had problems with different cultural norms and beliefs: *"You think very differently from the majority, they also behave differently. You need to get to know others and learn how to cope with them."*[19] The situation was more manageable for respondents from wealthier families, but especially kids from poor rural families had many

16 Respondent n. 20.
17 Respondent n. 26.
18 Respondent n. 2.
19 Respondent n. 25.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

difficulties while adapting to a new environment. "*I had to learn a lot of things. How to take care of stock, how to walk in the field, many many things and it was terrible. But you just have to do it; you have to become like everybody else."*[20] In some cases, the respondents had to walk to school for more than three hours. Some parents or relatives could not even afford the education for them. Probably the most challenging thing for every respondent was the separation from other members of the group: *"We grew up like sisters and brothers, and then they separated us. It was very sad. ... even when our parents came to pick up us, some were crying because you are leaving your family*[21]*"* or *"even when I was with my family, I felt lonely. I missed my friends."*[22] Some of the respondents were fortunate enough to maintain contact with others from the group. Especially in Windhoek and Oshakati were such relations possible. Those respondents communicated with each other in the Czech language. Most of them state in their narratives that they were repeatedly reading Czech books, which they brought to the country with them in order to maintain Czech language skills. During this time, some respondents maintained contact with the Czech Republic and were trying to return back. After several unsuccessful attempts, one member of the group accidentally met with ambassador Pavel Vošalík[23], and with his selfless help and after fulfilment of several conditions, some of the children gained scholarships at Czech universities.

Between 1998 and 2002, fourteen of Namibian Czechs were granted a scholarship at various universities. They chose fields of study on their own. However, after the hoped-for return, they were confronted with a new social reality in the Czech Republic: *"I have to say that a child's imagination and reality are two completely different things.*[24]*"* There are no doubts that after ten years, the Czech society had to undergo some changes and transformation of their entire political and economic system. On the other hand, the children probably idealized their memories because of their difficult situation after the return to Namibia. They were also adapted to much smaller towns; Bartošovice had a population of only 1,500 during the time of their stay, and Prachatice had around 10,000 inhabitants. The university cities were much bigger, so they were more impersonal. Their study achievements were different, probably regarding individual efforts of each of them. Unfortunately, everybody from this group faced

[20] Respondent n. 20.

[21] Respondent n. 12.

[22] Respondent n. 25.

[23] 06/1997-10/2001 Ambassador of Czech Republic for South Africa, Namibia and Botswana in Pretoria.

[24] Respondent n. 23.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

racism. Most of the attacks were only verbal, but occasionally, even physical violence occurred. However, most of the respondents consider the majority of Czechs very friendly. After completing their studies, some of them decided to stay in the Czech Republic longer; some returned to Namibia because they did not want to undergo the bureaucratic process related to obtaining a visa. In 2018, there was only one Namibian Czech living in the Czech Republic.

At present, the situation in which Namibian Czechs live varies. According to the information, three members of the group have already passed away, one is in custody, and eight are unemployed. Many respondents work for the police or armed forces. Some work in administration or health care. Only two of them think that they are fully integrated into Namibian society. Others point out differences between them and the majority society of Namibia in their narratives. Most of the respondents have problems with establishing partnerships with local people. Women, in general, have a lousy opinion about Namibian men: *"Here in Namibia men do not treat women nicely, especially our colour. They do not marry. They just impregnate a girl and do not marry. They do not have the commitment to stay just with one woman. They prefer to cheat, and we ladies, we want to get married, but that they do not understand.*[25]*"* Male respondents, in general, do not complain about Namibian women that often, but the part of the group which studied at Czech universities do complain. They said that Namibian women are too materialistic and do not understand the concept of romantic love. The majority of respondents state that the Namibian society is classifying them: *"They always call you this name, you know, owaluki*[26]*. It is like you are classified in this group, which just want to get and do not want to do anything. So obviously you sometimes do not want to be classified with that group, because you tried really really your best to reintegrate yourself into society and became like everybody else.*[27]*"* Struggle-kids or exile-kids are other names used by Namibian society to label people who were born in exile. This group of people sometimes protests in front of government buildings in order to gain some benefits, because they think that because of their exile experience, they have been disadvantaged. After protests, positions in the police and armed forces were offered to some of them. Because of that, they are often stigmatized. With the help of modern

25 Respondent n. 15.

26 Some other respondents were using term "owaluki" as well. They state that the term is mainly used by majority population in Namibia as a label for the people who were raised abroad, especially in Europe. They also state that this term is associated with negative stereotypes.

27 Respondent n. 20.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

technologies, nearly every member of the group is nowadays in contact with each other. Every year the official gathering of Namibian Czech is organized. Nearly half of the respondents are still able to communicate in the Czech language, and others are still able to understand many words, but their ability to express themselves has faded. Most of the respondents still watch Czech movies, listen to Czech music, and follow the news from the Czech Republic.

Identity of Namibian Czechs

The biographic narratives of Namibian Czechs provide us with information about the identities of them. As most of the respondents state in their narratives, they consider themselves to be different both from Czech society and Namibian society as well. The purpose of this chapter is to select which one of the theoretical approaches dealing with specific forms of identity is most fitting for this group.

At the first sight, it may seem that the diaspora identity may be fitting for this group if we take into consideration William Safran`s attributes of diaspora (SAFRAN 1991:83-84). The category of displacement is met in this group because it experienced two traumatic displacements. The first displacement took place in their early childhood when they were relocated from the camps to Czechoslovakia. Probably because the respondents were very young during this displacement and the environment to which they were moved was far more comfortable and better equipped, this displacement was not as traumatic as the second one, and therefore was not so crucial for their identity. The displacement that took place in 1991 when the group was relocated from Czechoslovakia to Namibia represented far more traumatic experience in the narratives of the respondents and was very likely more important for their identity. The category of maintaining of myth or vision about the original homeland can be represented by narratives of the Namibian Czechs themselves. Since the members of this group repeatedly talk at different occasions about their life story and especially about their involuntary displacement from Czechoslovakia, their narratives are becoming the primary source of their cultural identity. The notion of the inability of full acceptance by the host society is experienced by majority of the respondents; only two of them think that they are fully integrated and accepted by the Namibian society. The group of Namibian Czechs also meets the attribute of perception of the original homeland as a place to which they could potentially return if circumstances permit. All of them want to at least visit the Czech Republic and half of them would like to live in the country permanently. Engagement in maintaining or renewing the original homeland is attributed, which is not met by the group. Even though lots of respondents maintain some form of contact with the Czech Republic or

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

its inhabitants[28] and some of them even express concerns about the future in Czech Republic, their ability to affect the situation in the country is very limited, and they do not and cannot maintain or renew the Czech Republic. Despite the fact that significant part of their socialization happened in Czechoslovakia, they cannot even consider the Czech Republic as their original homeland because they are aware of the fact that they were born elsewhere. The attribute of group awareness and solidarity is defined by the continued relationship with the country of origin and can also be seen as met by the group. The group solidarity is really strong among the Namibian Czechs; however, they do not feel this solidarity because they came from the same country but rather because they had the same traumatic experiences together and socialized in the very same environment. If we take into consideration the Brubaker`s attributes for diaspora (BRUBAKER 2005:5-7), the result will be very similar. It seems that the group of Namibian Czech meets the attributes of dispersion, homeland orientation and boundary maintenance. However, I do not think that Namibian Czechs can be labelled as a diaspora community. Because of their extraordinary life story, it seems that they are the diaspora community of Czechs in Namibia, but such a labelling will be very misleading and inaccurate. The main reason for this is the fact that the Czech Republic is only an imagined homeland for Namibian Czechs and they are different from other "classical diasporas". As Brubaker himself pointed out, some groups of people may dispose of some or most of the attributes of diaspora, however, labelling them as such will only lead to loosening of the original meaning of diaspora (BRUBAKER 2005:10-13).

Is it possible to label Namibian Czechs as bearers of transnational identity? Some of the respondents point out in their narratives that they do feel like they belong to Czech society, but their physical difference prevents their full integration, so they feel different from them at the same time. The respondents face similar attitudes in Namibia as well; they do not rise from their physical appearance but have origins in their different socialization from the majority. However, it is important to state that the ability of Namibian Czechs to influence matters in the Czech Republic is limited, which is a result of their weak networks with the Czech Republic. For this reason, I think that labelling Namibian Czechs as transnationals will be misleading as well. The only exception is the case of one respondent, which was living in Czech Republic during the field research. He was culturally assimilated into the Czech society, however because his different physical appearance, he underwent several racially motivated attacks and was discriminated more or less on a daily basis, therefore he still felt

[28] Such as online chat, reading of news, watching Czech television.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

like he was not fully accepted by the society. As he states during the interview he was actively involved in matters in Namibia, where he eventually wanted to return and he was using his "network" in Namibia, for different purposes.[29] I believe that only this one respondent can be classified as a transnational individual in the strong sense. Some articles focused on the Namibians raised up in the GDR also focus their attention on transnationality, but their focus is on transnationality in educational process during their childhood in the GDR. (SCHMITT – KLEIN-ZIMMER – WITTE 2014; SCHMITT – WITTE – POLAT 2014).

Unlike diaspora and transnationalism, the category of bi-cultural identity (CRISP 2010) is more general and flexible. All of the respondents have experienced and undergone socialization in two culturally different environments, so they fulfil the first attribute of bi-cultural individuals. Because we can divide bi-cultural individuals according to the level of participation in a particular culture, this category can more accurately describe attitudes of certain individuals towards their identity. According to the narrative of the respondents, only two of them state that they feel assimilated into Namibian society; however, they are still aware of their distinction, which is caused by their life story. Twenty-seven respondents state that they do feel like bi-cultural individuals.[30] Only two respondents can be put on this scale somewhere in between the category of separation and marginalization and it is most likely the result of a lack of contact between those individuals and the rest of the group. Accordingly, with the observation from the field research, most of the respondents used the strategies of identity switching in their interaction with the environment; however, it is possible that some of them on some occasions, are maybe using the strategy of fused identity as well. It will be necessary to conduct longer field research for the accurate assessment of strategies used by the Namibian Czechs in their interactions.

Conclusion

The majority Namibian Czechs can be considered as bi-cultural. Those respondents developed this specific form of identity as a result of their specific life story, which was caused by their socialization in two culturally different environments. Only two respondents stated that they feel like they are fully assimilated into majority culture, but despite that, they still felt that they are different from the others. Respondents in their interactions tend to

[29] For instance job applications, chats with friends and relatives, etc.

[30] They do not use this category in their narratives, they describe this by stating for example that they are: *"Namibian Czechs, Czech Namibians, Black Czechs, two in one,"* etc.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

switch between Namibian and Czech identity, according to situation requirements. They specific form of identity is also a result of daily interaction with others, and especially certain types of interaction, during which they are perceived as a different from majority. This group is a perfect example of the fact that social and even ethnic or national identities are socially constructed and they are never fixed and static.

This article also warns about the dangers of imprudent classification of certain groups of people which may lead to the weakening of the meaning of established theoretical concepts. In specific cases, some groups of people may bear certain attributes of theoretical categories used for labelling people such as diaspora or transnational identity. However, such a labelling will be misleading and inaccurate and it will make those concepts more loose and vague.

Acknowledgments

Funding for the research was provided by a scholarship from the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia.

Bibliography

AKAWA, Martha (2014): *The Gender Politics of the Namibian Liberation Struggle*. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliogaraphien.

ANGOUSTURES, Aline – PASCAL, Valerie (1996): Diasporas et financement des conflicts. In Francois Jean Rufin, Jean-Christophe Rufin (eds.): *Économie des guerres civiles*. Paris: Hachette, pp. 495-542.

AUKONGO, Stefanie-Lahya (2009): *God's Child: How the GDR Changed My Life*. Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag.

BHATT, Chetan – MUKTA, Parita (2000): Hindutva in the West: Mapping the Antimonies of Diaspora Nationalism. In *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 407-441.

BRUBAKER, Rogers – LOVEMAN, Mara – STAMATOV, Peter (2004): Ethnicity as Cognition. In *Theory and Society*, Vol. 33, Issue 1, pp. 31-64.

BRUBAKER, Rogers (2005): The „Diaspora" Diaspora. In *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (1), pp. 1-19.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

BRUBAKER, Rogers (2015): *Grounds for Difference*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

CRISP, Richard (2010): *Psychology of Social and Cultural Diversity*. Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell.

DOBELL, Lauren (1998): *SWAPO`s Struggle for Namibia, 1960-1991: War by Other Means*. Basel: P. Schlettwein Publishing.

ENGOMBE, Lucia – HILLIGES, Petter (2004): *Child Nr. 95. My German-African Odyssee*. Berlin: Klaus Hess Publishers.

ERIKSEN, Thomas Hylland (2010): *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press.

ERIKSON, Erik H. (1968): *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York: W. W. Norton &Company.

FIRST, Ruth (1963): *South-West Africa.* Middlesex: Penguin Books.

HENING, David (2009): Pohledy z druhého břehu: Transnacionalizmus, rituál a sociální změna. In *Sociální studia* 1/2009, pp. 175-192.

JAKUBCOVÁ, Martina (2018): `Jakeš`s Cildren`. Media Portrayal of Namibian Childs Refugees in Slovakia. In *Ethnologia Actualis*, Vol. 18 (2), pp. 54-77.

KENNA, Constance (1999): *The „GDR-Children" of Namibia: Homecomers in an Unknown country*. Windhoek: Klaus Hess Verlag.

KRAUSE Jürgen (2009): *The GDR-Namibia-Solidarityprojekt School of Friendship – Possibilitiesand Limitation Intercultural Education*. Oldenburg: BIS Verlag.

LEVITT, Peggy – KHAGRRAM, Sanjeev (2007): *The Transnational Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.

LINDHOLM, Charles (2007): *Culture and Identity: The History Theory, and Practice of Psychological Anthropology*. Oxford: One World.

MACHALÍK, Tomáš (2007): Czechoslovakia on the Battlefront of the Cold War, the Angolan Civil War and the "Namibian Czechs". In Tomáš Machalík, Jan Zahořík (eds.): *Viva Africa 2007. Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on African Studies*. Plzeň: Driada, pp. 205-220.

MACHALÍK, Tomáš (2008): SWAPO Children in Czechoslovakia from the Past to the Present. In Tomáš Machalík, Kateřina Midnerová, Jan Záhořík (eds.): *Viva Africa 2008. Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on African Studies*, Plzeň: Adéla, pp. 280-293.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

MELBER, Henning (2014): *Understanding Namibia – The Trials of Independence.* London: Horst and Company.

MILDNEROVÁ, Kateřina (2018): „I Feel Like Two in One": Complex Belonging Among Namibian Czechs. In *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society* 6 (2), pp. 55-94.

MIŠKAŘÍK, Pavel (2019): Swapo`s Version of History in Namibia. In *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 28 (2), pp. 149-167.

NIEKREZEN, Yvonne – ARMBRUSTER, Christian – WITTE, Matthias (2014): A Problematic Sense of Belonging. A Media Analysis of the „GDR Children of Namibia". In *Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture*, Vol. 15, pp. 95-123.

SAFRAN, William (1991): Diasporas in Modern Society: Myth of Homeland and Return. In *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies,* Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 83-99.

SCHMITT Caroline – KLEIN-ZIMMER, Kathrin – WITTE, Matthias D. (2014): Growing Up Transnationally between SWAPO and GDR. A Biographical Ethnographic Study on Namibian Refugee Children. In *Transnational Social Review*, Vol. 3, pp. 28-33.

SCHMITT, Caroline – WITTE, Matthias D. – POLAT, Serpil (2014*):* International Solidarity in the GDR and Transnationality: an Analysis of Primary School Materials from Namibian Child Refugees. In *Transnacional Social Review*, Vol. 4, pp. 242-258.

SHEFFER, Gabriel (1986): *Modern Diasporas in International Politics.* London: Croom Helm.

SHEFFER, Gabriel (2003): *Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SZALÓ, Csaba (2009): Transnacionalizmus a kritika metodologického nacionalizmu. In *Sociální studia* 1/2009, pp. 49-68.

VERTOVEC, Steven (2009): *Transnacionalism*. London: Routledge.

WILLIAMS, Christian A. (2015): *National Liberation in Postcolonial Southern Africa – A Historical Ethnography of SWAPO`s Exile Camps.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

ZÍDEK, Petr – SIEBER, Karel (2007): *Československo a subsaharská Afrika v letech 1948-1989*. Praha: Ústav medzinárodních vztahů.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

Pavel Miškařík (1990) is a social anthropologist working as researcher at the Department of Ethnology and World Studies at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia, where he teaches African culture and history. His research focuses on the processes of identity making and the history of Namibia, South Africa and Angola. Between 2017 and 2019, he carried out extensive fieldwork in Namibia. He has been a visiting scholar at Palacký University in Olomouc (Czech Republic). He is the author of "SWAPOS` Version of History in Namibia" (published in Asian and African Studies 2/2019.).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0002

sciendo

Women and Medicine: A Historical and Contemporary Study on Ghana

SAMUEL ADU-GYAMFI, KWASI AMAKYE-BOATENG, ALI YAKUBU NYAABA, ADWOA BIRAGO ACHEAMPONG, DENNIS BAFOUR AWUAH*, RICHARD OWARE**

Department of History and Political Studies,
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana
mcgyamfi@yahoo.com, kwasiamaboat@yahoo.com, ayimbil@yahoo.co.uk, nanabirago803@gmail.com

*Department of History,
Illinois State University in Normal, USA
awuahdennis53@yahoo.com

**Department of History,
University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Canada
richardoware18@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Women have always been central concerning the provision of healthcare. The transitions into the modern world have been very slow for women because of how societies classify women. Starting from lay care, women provided healthcare for their family and sometimes to the members of the community in which they lived. With no formal education, women served as midwives and served in other specialised fields in medicine. They usually treated their fellow women because they saw 'women's medicine' as women's business. They were discriminated against by the opposite sex and by the church, which regarded it as a taboo to allow women to practice medicine. This study points to a Ghanaian context on how the charismas of women have made them excel in their efforts to provide healthcare for their people. The study also focused on the role of indigenous practitioners who are mostly found

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

in the rural areas and modern practitioners who are mostly found in the peri-urban, urban areas and larger cities in Ghana.

KEY WORDS: Ghana, medicine, medical practice, society, women

Introduction

The traditional Ghanaian society confined the core functions of women to childbearing, farming and petty trading. Their social and economic security was guaranteed by their reproductive capacity especially when they gave birth to male children. In many rural areas of Ghana, people engaged in subsistence farming as their main economic venture and women played significant roles. Prior to the industrial period, women in different ethnic groups around the world performed different functions in the society in general and in particular, their contributions to agriculture (GIULIANO 2015:33). However, the type of agricultural technology prevalent in a region dictated the different functions performed by the women. There was specialisation of labour in terms of gender; men worked in the field outside of the home and women were exclusively responsible for domestic chores even if they had to lend a hand in the field (GIULIANO 2015:33). These arrangements became institutionalised with time and thus generated norms about women's role in society.

In the Ghanaian traditional societies, people predominantly believed that supernatural beings had power over their lives. To that extent, every disaster or calamity was believed to be caused by the gods. The sick were sent to the shrine for healing because of the belief that they might have offended the gods (ADU-GYAMFI 2015:9-10). As time went on, the pre-modern man began to question and doubt the power of the supernatural and relied more on their own observation of the world around them. They began to acquire the necessary skills and appreciated the need to study the diseases that affected them to proffer solutions to them in accordance with how they understood these diseases and ailments.

The education of women in traditional Ghana might have been constrained simply because such values predominated society. Female education was trivialised because of the understanding that women would eventually get married and be supported by their husbands (OPPONG – ABU 1984:21-39). It was said that females were meant to be in the kitchen and males were meant to be in school. In view of that, women were placed in the private sector while men functioned in the public sector (MANNATHOKO 1999:448). As children went through the process of socialisation, they were viewed as going through training for adult

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

life; this was to enable them to fit into gender roles. Significantly, the view of the private sector has been construed as that of an endless round of tedious, senseless, unpaid and undervalued activities linked to child rearing, housework and support of adult men. Mannathoko has described the public sector as that which produces rewards of social life in the form of status, power, money, freedom, self-esteem and personal development (MANNATHOKO 1999:448).

Recent commentaries show that currently women appreciate the feminine power and their uniqueness beyond traditional categorisation. However, the transition from women's view of the traditional self to the modern self has been slow. Nevertheless, the modern Ghanaian woman has all the right to participate in several activities including economic, social and political activities. Comparatively, in Europe before the twentieth century, women who had the technique to heal or cure would have access to medical text through oral reading (GREEN 2008:343-346). This access however came as a result of the mediation of men. This then, raises issues about the contribution of women to the generation of medical texts, medical reading and practice even during the twentieth century and beyond (GREEN 2008:343-346).

In the past, women's health did not receive the due attention as a significant topic. Studies conducted into diseases focused on male cases. Today, matters related to the health of women take center stage in society and people have come to realise that although both men and women tend to have identical diseases, their symptoms and treatment need not be the same. This emphasises the significance of research into the health of women and related matters. Besides the need to pay attention to the health of women, their role as healthcare practitioners must continuously receive attention in historical research. From time immemorial, women have cared for the sick, the new-borns and the elderly in their homes as trained midwives took charge completely of childbirths. Women were midwives and gynaecologists even without any formal education. They thus operated as medical practitioners without formal education, and that many acts of healing and therapy were possibly performed outside the context of the textual tradition of knowledge. Given the widely held belief that women in pre-modern times took charge of their health, they were viewed to exclusively control gynaecology and obstetrics. The implication of this is that women might have generated the written text on women's medicine with the sole intention of using them. Some women could not simply attend to male medical practitioners for medical care involving their sexual organs due to sheer embarrassment. Diseases such as cervical cancer, breast cancer and childbirth were attended to by women. This notwithstanding, women could not get qualifications needed to become proper doctors.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Significantly, the health of women and their participation in the delivery of healthcare is influenced by several factors including poverty, employment status, and family responsibility. Women are limited in their quest to provide adequate protection for their health and achieve optimal health status by gender-based inequalities like education, income and employment. Power relations are unequally distributed in society and this translates into unequal access to and control of health resources. Gender disparities in social and economic resource allocation like income, education, health care, nutrition and political voice correlate strongly with women's poor health and reduced well-being. Girls and women encounter differential exposures and vulnerabilities across a range of health problems that are often poorly recognised (ROSENFIELD – FIGDOR 2001:703).

It has also been reported that the health needs of women and matters related to their human rights in developing countries continue to decline. The increase in poverty among women corresponds with increase in diseases and death among them. Women's participation in the profession of medicine has been significantly restricted historically and in modern times. However, their informal practice of medicine in roles such as caregivers or as allied health professionals has been widespread. Women currently have equal access to medical education in most countries, yet they do not have equal employment opportunities and gender equality within medical specialties around the world (REICHENBACH – BROWN 2004:793). Meanwhile, several studies on healthcare place the performance of female doctors in the provision of higher-quality care (MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:297). This calls for the need to research into the contribution of women in the medical profession specifically as healthcare practitioners and the generation of textual tradition of knowledge. Against this background, the objectives of the study are to highlight some of the contributions made by women in pre-modern Ghana in the field of providing healthcare, some challenges they faced in their attempt to provide healthcare and how education has had impact on the transition of women who practice medicine in the modern world.

To achieve the set objectives, primary and secondary sources related to the subject under study were used as data collection instruments. The primary sources include reports on the history of medicine in the Gold Coast and in some cases, oral interviews. The secondary sources on the other hand include articles and books. The oral interviews featured indigenous female healthcare practitioners as well as clients who patronise the services of these practitioners. The criterion for the selection of participants for the interview was based on the longevity of practice, knowledge and experience specifically over a decade and the testimonies provided by their clients about the perceived efficacy of their medicine. A sample

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

size of thirty practitioners including modern health practitioners, traditional birth attendants and clients were selected for the study in Kumasi and its environs. In order to cover a wide variety of issues on the subject under study and to allow participants to express themselves, open-ended questions were asked accordingly. The affiliated healthcare institutions of participants include the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Hospital and the South Suntreso Hospital all in the Kumasi metropolis. The interviews were transcribed manually and presented in a narrative form to describe the healthcare services provided by women.

Synthesis from Related Literature

Women's Developing Identity

According to Anderson, women's developing identity refers to women's personal identity irrespective of society and the identity observed by people in the immediate family (ANDERSON 1986:43). She argued among other things that a woman's way of living might be influenced by her society. However, she maintained that the identity of a woman is a choice she makes irrespective of any external influence. The features of a woman's identity help to identify several general characteristics of stereotyping, role playing and sex differences that have exemplified the demise of women in the past and continue to do so today. The characteristics of women's identity place them in opportune positions for managerial work and to successfully pursue career in science and engineering. The skills with which women go into negotiations to define their professional identities in the historically male-dominated arenas have been receiving growing interest (GREED et al. 2000:181-185).

Women have been contributing to the changing world in relation to continuity and change in the evolving identity of women. In the earliest times, women were subordinate to men. Women had no right to make choices contrary to what has been assigned to them by their husbands or family. On the contrary, women in modern times have developed certain potentials that have affected their choices in life. The development of women's potentials has created cooperative patterns of behaviour that contrast with competitive modes established by men (MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:294).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Women in Medicine

Women in the preindustrial period have been defined in terms of the type of technology used in agriculture and forms of agriculture their societies practiced (GIULIANO 2015:33; BOSERUP 2013:V). In the earliest times, farming was a very dominant activity which identified the ethnic group of a particular family (GIULIANO 2015:33-34). Two technological regimes, shifting cultivation and plough cultivation broadly defined gender-based division of labour. Shifting cultivation made women to engage in majority of agricultural work whereas men mostly dominated plough cultivation (BOSERUP 1970:4). Oppong and Abu though not contrasting the argument of Giuiliano (op. cit.) and Boserup (op. cit.), argued that women in pre-modern period were not defined according to their type of agricultural practice only but also they were seen primarily as child bearers (OPPONG – ABU 1984:21-39). A female's ability to reproduce was the most important means to ensure social and economic security for themselves, especially if they bore male children (OPPONG – ABU 1984:21-39). Women worked to plough back the profit made into what was essentially an extended family enterprise. This traditional division of wealth placed women in positions subordinate to men.

In the Western world, women's status was founded in the civilisation of Greece and Rome where the men had the public status (MILES 1991). The women's role on the other hand was to bear children and manage the household. Gender discrimination exists at all levels in Ghana including the health of women. Gender disparities in social and economic resource allocation like income, education, healthcare, nutrition and political voice correlate strongly with women's poor health and reduced well-being. Women tend to lack access to job security and do not benefit from social protection, including access to healthcare because of the high probability of being left out of the formal market (ROSENFIELD – FIGDOR 2001:703-704).

The historical perspective and recent trends of women in medicine has received attention in the literature (JEFFERSON et al. 2015:6-7). Medical care before 1600 was based on the theory of humours, which involved "a wide variety of tactics, holistic lifestyle, prescriptions and diet" and it also involved "diet application of various substances alone in combination, bloodletting, cauterisation and cupping, use of holy relics and prayers as well as other ritual or magical actions" (ACKERKNECHT 1942:546-547). In pre-modern times in Ghana, diseases were believed to have been caused by the gods, witchcraft and malevolent spirits. The priest healers consulted the gods for solution and prepared medications for their patients (ADU-GYAMFI 2015:9-10).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Historically, from the ancient world through to present day, women have played significant role in medicine and healing. This has manifested in various forms and resulted in various conflicts along the way. Women took care of their children when they were sick without taking them to traditional healers (JEFFERSON et al. 2015:6-7). As 'peasant healers' became more successful, the church became increasingly fearful that the reliance on prayers would reduce. The church was thus much involved in discrediting the role of women as healers and encouraged witch-hunting throughout Europe. Women were only allowed to practice in one clinical profession – midwifery during the period of witch-hunting. This was due partly to the fact that midwifery was considered as a lower status occupation and thus did not attract male practitioners (JEFFERSON et al. 2015:6-7). However, over the period men were acknowledged as possessing more technical skills and allowed to attend to pregnant women in childbearing.

According to Kilminster et al. and Morants-Sanches, the contribution of women in medicine has not received significant consideration. This is because of the perception people have about women as weak and unqualified (KILMINSTER et al. 2007:39-40; MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:301). Concerning same, other scholars base their argument on the weakness of women on societal perception without considering the efficacy of their treatment. Other studies emphasise that women are being regarded as weak because they are compelled to look after their children which makes them less experienced with medical practices since health practitioners need enough time to be more experienced with medicine. Others also argue that changes in certain occupations may be responsible for discrediting the role of women as healers (KILMINSTER et al. 2007:39).

The existing literature further attests to the central role women have played to support the provision of medical care through domestic prescription of medication. In traditional/indigenous societies, their roles as herbalists cannot be gainsaid. Women acted in various capacities in the medical profession for which they were paid although they were not formally trained. These services which they rendered to the public included sick-nursing and wet-nursing, midwifery, performing minor surgery and general physician roles. Nursing itself manifests as caring and nurturing and as such, it was viewed as an aspect of the social role of women. However, the same understanding did not support the incidence of women becoming doctors (KILMINSTER et al. 2007:39).

It is now established that there is a large segment of women in the medical profession in general who were in the majority in some specialised fields. The Association of American Medical Colleges adds that the number of women who are training to pursue career in

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

medicine keeps increasing. Forty-six percent of women are training to become physicians and form about half of all medical students. In the academic faculty women constitute about a third (MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:292-293).

The status of women has always been a challenge to their choices in life. Studies of women in communal politics, formal education and wage labour show that women often face great problems in rising above 'household boundaries' (MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:293). This emanates from the demand of coping with local ideologies that define women as mothers and wives on one hand and national ideologies that emphasise women's contribution to national development (MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:294). Women and men in traditional Ghanaian society were relatively equal, but the growing division of labour in the modern economic sector is widening the gap in the productivity and in the income between them and men (TABI et al. 2006:54). Women's status is therefore lower in relation to that of men.

The skewed view of women has persisted from the middle ages (GREEN 2008:343; MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:295). A widely held belief in the Middle Ages was that women's medicine was business for women. Women exclusively took charge over gynaecology and obstetrics, indicating that they might have created the written texts on women's medicine purposefully to use them. The Middle Ages were thus considered as the 'golden age' for women's control over their own health care by those working in modern Europe or even doing cross-cultural comparisons. From the earliest times when compassion was the only medicine, women were the nurses for the sick and caregivers for the new-born and elderly. Trained midwives took control of childbirth. Catholic sisters tenderly cared for and comforted the sick and the dying. Nuns served in various capacities as cooks, laundresses, nurses and scrubwomen. Whereas there is a high probability that women collectively might have created the text on women medicine for use, they constitute the least likely group to have had the exposure to literate culture that will allow them to create or use such text. The evidence from medieval period does not support a supposition that 'women's health was women's businesses' (GREEN 2008:343; MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:292-294). A female may be predominant in a particular field but may not have voice enough to be heard given the fact that they have been underrepresented in academic leadership.

Challenges Women Face in Medicine

The wisdom of women, their experience and expertise in medicine have been known since the ancient cultures, which believed and placed medicine in the domain of women. Priestesses were the earthly representatives of the omnipotent goddess with control over life,

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

sickness and death. Women in all the cultures of the world have practiced medicine. They have equally been subjected to discrimination in their practice of medicine. The case involving the presentation of a petition to King Henry V to prevent women from practicing medicine was recorded in 1421 (BOWMAN et al. 2002:1). The most common type of health care giver until the nineteenth century was the female midwife. Labour and delivery were considered too 'dirty and debasing' for men. It was not until the nineteenth century that men began to enter into obstetrics/gynaecology in large numbers. At the same time, there was also strong vocal and open discrimination against women who were either practicing as physicians or wanted to enter the medical practice (BOWMAN et al. 2002:138).

Bowman, Frank and Allen have argued that women's wisdom, experience and expertise in medicine dates back to ancient cultures. Their beliefs were that medicine was the prerogative of women, as priestesses were recognised as the earthly forms of the omnipotent goddess who themselves commanded life, sickness and death (BOWMAN et al. 2002:144). Dankelman and Davidson, though not contrasting the idea of Bowman, Frank and Allen, stated that women's knowledge and skills are also consistently undervalued. Yet, women have always played the central role in informal education as custodians and transmitters of indigenous knowledge and culture. In all parts of the world, women have been actively involved in traditional medicine, farming, as well as the processing and preservation of food (DANKELMAN – DAVIDSON 1988:IV). Historically, the participation of women in the medical profession has been subjected to significant restrictions despite the widespread engagement of women informally practicing medicine as caregivers or as allied health professionals. Women currently have equal access to medical education in most countries, yet they do not have equal employment opportunities and gender equality within medical specialties around the world (REICHENBACH – BROWN 2004:793).

Three largely independent developments have been responsible for the increasing number of women who were studying to practice medicine from the 1970s. These include the elimination of institutional constraints to women's entry into medical education, the sharp expansion in the capacity of medical schools and the end of military draft for young men (ADAMS 2010:459; MORANTS-SANCHES 2000:292-293). Women were mainly constrained by legal and social norms in the periods that the practice of medicine was going through the process of becoming a profession. The same period also delivered the 'modern medicine' through scientific discovery and new laboratory techniques (ADAMS 2010:459-460).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Historically, in the Gold Coast, the inferior educational status of women was illustrated by the fact that the ratio of girls to the total number of pupils in primary schools in 1945 in the Gold Coast was 1:4. Formal education prepares the individual for employment in the economically and socially regarded formal sector of the society. Essentially, since women have less chance to enter the higher levels of educational system, their chances to enter formal employment, especially higher-level positions, are predominantly lessened (DSISI 2008:255). Social researchers and physicians have asked questions about what the growing presence of women in the medical profession imply. This concern emanates from persistent biases and prejudices against women which took the forms of issues about the reputation of women in professional medicine and their status (HURD-MEAD 1938:221-222). The subjective behaviour towards women in the medical profession aggravated as it manifested in denying women the professional opportunities, malicious gossips, sexual slurs and even sexual advances. It is significant to share that this is not only limited to the medical profession.

Women are directly and indirectly adversely affected by 'gender order' in society which handles matters related to men and boys 'normally' but views those related to women as 'special' (HAMBERG 2008:237). This order attaches greater significance to matters concerning men and boys than to those of women and girls and therefore, it subordinates the latter to the former. These tendencies may slow the advancement of women and girls and keep them in low paid jobs and low paid scales and could also have adverse psychological effect which may lower their self-confidence (HAMBERG 2008:237).

Sharma paid attention to the family as a great challenge to a woman's choice of profession. She purports that families can be negative powerful force responsible for stereotypes and discrimination against women (SHARMA 1983:25). In many families, a daughter is constantly told that medicine is a man's profession because a woman would not be able to combine a medical career with the family life. In addition, parents would want to finance their sons for medical education rather than their daughters. A mother has a great deal to do with the daughter's decision to enter medicine. Various family obligations have made some women physicians to specialise in some areas they did not originally anticipate. Usually if the mother is a professional herself, she serves as a role model of a woman combining a career with marriage. The guidance counsellor can also turn a girl away from medicine. Over the years, women have received the counsel that medicine is not a suitable profession for women. The girl child has been counselled that medical programme is a lengthy one; the girl

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

would not be able to combine marriage with medicine and possibly can cause a delay in her marriage (SHARMA 1983:25).

McDonald explained gender system as "the socially constructed expectations for male and female behaviour that are found in every known human society" (McDONALD 2000:427). He added that, "gender system's expectations prescribe a division of labour and responsibilities between women and men and grant different rights and obligations to them" (McDONALD 2000:427). The upbringing of women itself tends to generate social restrictions and confinement of women from childhood until they become helpless, mindless and dependent adults (MANNATHOKO 1999:448).

Earlier on, Aristotle laid the philosophical basis for this tradition when he defined justice as treating "equals equally, and unequals unequally" (OLUWOLE 1997:98). This definition by Aristotle later caused some intellectuals to claim that they had rationally and scientifically established the existence of permanent inequalities between male and female. From the Middle Ages down to the time of the Renaissance, scientists concluded that the entirety of the female members of the species are physically and intellectually inferior to the entirety of the male members of the species (OLUWOLE 1997:98).

One will have to review gender theories about education and training, activists, educators and policy makers in order to appreciate some of the contradictions and tensions that arise out of the interactions between men and women. These gender concepts and theories provide a basis for the descriptions and explanations on why and how the gendering of education and training leads to gender injustices (MOSER 2012:15). This provides some explanations to upward mobility attributed to differences in the quantity and quality of the opportunities available to women and minority groups.

A new tradition, called gender planning has emerged with the objective of facilitating women self-empowerment to achieve equality and equity with men in developing societies (MOSER 2012:15). The conceptual rationale for the key principles of gender planning was developed through emerging feminist theories and contemporary debates on women, gender and development. The debates explore the contribution of women to the overall development of society . roles and needs socially and politically. The socio-political dimension of gender roles and needs thus explores gender participation in decision-making about resource use both domestically and in public (LEFTWICH 2008:6).

As reported by Hurd-Mead, the valuable contributions of women in medical practice in terms of discovery, addition to knowledge, and the generation of the textual tradition over the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

centuries has been lost together with the personalities behind these works. The compilation of the history of women in medical practice has thus been always difficult and for some ages remains obscure (HURD-MEAD 1938:221). It is therefore relevant to study women and women's roles in healthcare wherever they might be. The case of Ghana for that matter cannot be gainsaid.

Discussions

This section of the paper focuses on women's role in healthcare with particular emphasis on their traditional and biomedical contributions under thematic areas. The discussion section is presented under thematic areas in order to give a clear and intelligible account on women's contribution to healthcare as well as the challenges they face in the course of discharging their duties as healthcare practitioners in Ghana.

Indigenous Female Healthcare Practitioners

Healthcare in Ghana is essentially provided by traditional healers. Conservative figures indicate that traditional healers cover about 80% of cases in Sub-Saharan Africa (KASILO et al. 2010:8). The power of the traditional healer in the traditional African healthcare system is not determined by the ability to diagnose the causes of the diseases and the prescription of remedy. It is rather by their ability to establish the intricate relationships between the patient and the broader environmental context. This context is defined in social, natural and spiritual terms (KASILO et al. 2010:8).

The traditional healthcare system in Ghana is a general one that integrates social ethics, religious morals and cultural values. The belief system establishes a link between people's health with the metaphysical and supernatural world with the Maker, divinities and ancestral spirits. Diseases in traditional Ghana are thus not just pathological but spiritual. The scientific theories of disease hold true and thus constitute an element in the admixture of a complex belief system. This explains why the traditional health care system applies both herbs and other natural products and spiritual and psychic powers for the treatment of diseases. In ancient times and even today in many societies and many cultures, every natural occurrence in man's environment, whether good or bad including natural calamities, pestilences and diseases of man was and still is attributed to either acts of God or deities and spiritual or mystical demons (ADU-GYAMFI – ANDERSON 2019).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

The forebears of Ghanaians and indeed across the world have practiced traditional medicine since time immemorial. The spiritual healers are the custodians of the knowledge and pass it on from generation to generation through 'on the job training'. It is possible to argue that many families across the country have some knowledge of traditional medicine, which they inherited from their ancestors. In that regard, Madam Afia Asantewaa echoed:

"I don't know why my family especially my children have refused to inherit the practice from me. None of the members of my household has knowledge of the practice; they feel proud about this. They describe it as old fashioned meanwhile they all used my medicine when they were pregnant or sick. This disinterest in our medical practice has reduced the number of female indigenous practitioners unlike it was in the previous century" (MADAM AFIA ASANTEWAA, personal communication, April 23rd 2018).

Older women with a great deal of experience in treating the health needs of their own children as well as of other adult household members often offer volunteer advice to young mothers and are frequently consulted for problematic illness. People see old women as equipped with the knowledge of medicine. Old women can prescribe medicinal herbs for both the young and old even though they are not formal practitioners (AMPONG, personal communication, April 23rd 2018). The community respects such women but they do not accept any form of payment in the form of cash for their services.

Women have always been healers. Women in their position as midwives, mothers, sisters, aunts and neighbours were another key component of the world of healing. As midwives, they travelled from one house to another and from village to village to render their services. They were the medical practitioners of the time and were acknowledged by their societies in various ways. In some places, people called them 'wise women' but the authorities called them 'witches or charlatans' (EHRENREICH – ENGLISH 1973:3).

Female indigenous practitioners who have acquired knowledge of different health problems but are more confident and have a long experience with treating pregnant women also play essential part in maternity care for pregnant women (MCKAY – WANGCHUK 2018:204-210). Other healers were identified by the range of diseases or conditions they could treat. These included both physical and non-physical diseases. In an interview with one Madam Dwomoh, an indigenous medical practitioner at Tafo[1], she hinted that she is very experienced

[1] Tafo is a suburb of Kumasi in the Ashanti region of Ghana.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

with treating pregnant women and postpartum issues. Madam Dwomoh affirmed; *"I have medicine for women who cannot give birth. Once I give a barren woman my medicine, she will get pregnant."* (MADAM DWOMOH, personal communication, April 23rd 2018).

The origin of medicine is closely linked to the supernatural. The primitive view of medicine has more to do with magic than what is considered medicine today (ACKERKNECHT 1942:552). Witchcraft or the practice of magic could be used to inflict illness or to take it away. Significantly, women who practice traditional medicine have always been tagged as witches by their male colleagues. People usually associate them with the use of some kind of magic in their practice. Our informant, Madam Dwomoh hinted that she is a Christian indigenous medical practitioner. In view of this, before giving her patients any concoction, she prays to the almighty God to guide her through the process (MADAM DWOMOH, personal communication, April 23rd 2018).

Testimonies about Female Health Practitioners

Women are very compassionate and can be described as good practitioners. Most people prefer to be treated by women more than men because they see women as more understanding than men. Women have always been practitioners by starting as lay carers to being qualified practitioners. Mothers cater for the sick members in the family which makes them special and respected. In an interview with Akua Frimpong, she stated that her mother has always been the first person she consulted for medical advice when needed which usually turns out to work for her in a good way (AKUA FRIMPONG, personal communication, April 23rd 2018). She hinted that she prefers a female indigenous practitioner to a male one. Largely, we infer that female indigenous practitioners are very knowledgeable and are very skilful in their practice especially in the area concerning prescription of herbs.

Female indigenous practitioners are the best when it comes to issues concerning pregnancy and childbirth. Indigenous traditional midwives deal with issues both physically and spiritually when it comes to pregnancy and childbirth. During pre-natal care, these practitioners give their patients potions to take which is believed to protect them from the pregnancy stage to the labour stage (SARPOMAH, personal communication, February 2nd 2018). After childbirth, babies are usually attacked with several diseases, both physical and spiritual. The physical diseases include yellow fever and measles while illnesses ascribed to

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

the spiritual include '*asram'*.[2] These indigenous midwives known as the traditional birth attendants (TBAs) give herbal preparations for the prevention and cure of these diseases. Akua Frimpong, a client, testified that when her child was attacked with '*asram'*, she was given herbal potions prepared from '*akonfem tikoro*'[3] which healed the baby completely (AKUA FRIMPONG, personal communication, April 23rd 2018).

Female indigenous herbal practitioners do not only deal with issues of childbirth but other diseases like menstrual disorders and sexually transmitted diseases. According to Madam Dwomoh, a traditional healthcare practitioner, menstrual disorder is something that affects the physical well-being of women making them weak and unable to do any work. It comes in two types, '*ne bedie*'[4] which is classified as the female type and starts on the first day of one's menstruation and '*ne nnyini*'[5] which is the male type which also start after the sixth day of menstruation. These menstrual disorders, according to Madam Dwomoh can cause barrenness if not treated early (MADAM DWOMOH, personal communication, 23rd April 2018). Mrs Akua Adomakoh, a client affirmed that:

"I had serious menstrual pain during my menstrual periods, which sometimes cripple me. I tried a lot of modern medicine but it did not work until I visited a female indigenous practitioner at Asante Agogo for treatment. At first, I had doubt concerning the use of herbal medicine because I regarded it as old fashioned. I paid GH₵ 50.00 for the treatment, which is less expensive than what I was charged at the hospitals. After taking the potion prepared from herbs by the healer, I was completely healed in less than a month" (AKUA ADOMAKOH, personal communication, April 23rd, 2018).

There are people who have been seeking treatment from female indigenous practitioners not because they do not have money but because of the efficacy of their medicine. The amount charged for treatment varies among practitioners in accordance with the treatment given. According to Madam Josephine Frimpong, there are some diseases which the modern

2 '*Asram'* is a traditional illness, which is believed to be caused by spiritual forces. The illness affects infants and has no clear scientific explanation. It causes the child to grow lean with big head and black/green veins and may eventually lead to death.

3 The *'Akonfem Tikoro'* is a special kind of herb used by indigenous herbal practitioners to prepare herbal potions for the treatment and prevention of childhood diseases especially those with spiritual connotations.

4 This term is used to describe the first day of a woman's menstruation in the Akan language.

5 This term denotes a woman's menstruation after the sixth day.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

practitioners charge millions of cedis for treatment but the chances of you getting treatment is less than 50% as compared to indigenous medicine where your chances of getting healed are 70%, with less expenses (MADAM JOSEPHINE FRIMPONG, personal communication, 23rd April 2018). This is to emphasize the less expensive treatment cost of diseases and ailments in the traditional medicine milieu.

Modern Female Healthcare Practitioners

Women now constitute a large part of medical students and the general medical practitioner workforce. The current discussion of the 'feminisation' of the medical workforce is a new phenomenon since men have for centuries dominated the medical profession (JEFFERSON – BLOOR – MAYNARD 2015:5). In the 1990s, public workers in the health sector constituted 59% of females (DOVLO 1998:40). On the other hand, the percentage of females who practiced as medical doctors were 17% as compared to their male counterparts who constituted 83%. However, the situation differs when it comes to specialisations such as Midwifery and Public Health Nursing where the number of females outweighed the number of males (DOVLO 1998:37).

It is apparent that the role women have played in healing and medicine is historically manifested, albeit in diverse forms and fraught with various conflicts along the way. The nineteenth century generated the era of 'modern medicine' through scientific discovery and new laboratory techniques. The time was also marked by professionalization and continued male domination of the medical training and practice. Women were excluded from undertaking the university medical training that was required to practice. There was historically a class and gender division in treatment. The university-trained medical practitioners who were predominantly men treated the rich who could afford their services. Other members of society received medical care from female healers also referred to as the 'wise women' or even 'witches'.

In the past few decades, the number of females involved in the healthcare practice has seen a sharp increase. Restrictions placed on the type of work that women could have undertaken in the field of medicine during the early nineteenth century led to most of the female labour force in the homes of well-to-do families working as household maids and home nurses. Some women went to great extents to hide their identity and pursue male professions incognito such as joining the army (ABABIO, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Challenges of Female Healthcare Practitioners

Today, the number of women in the field of healthcare has undoubtedly increased. However, that increase does not mean the healthcare sector can be considered as completely unbiased. Despite relatively better representation in the field, women nevertheless face challenges that come with their choice of career. A very big challenge women face in modern healthcare practice is connected with marriage and work life. Thus, trying to combine the work of a wife, a mother and healthcare practice is quite tedious and very challenging. It even gets so difficult to the extent that female practitioners sometimes have to compromise and it comes with consequences. Both marriage life and work life require undivided attention and often can lead to frustrations with an unquenchable desire to quit marriage, commitment or medical career just to give one thing to focus on fully. Knowing when to quit obviously requires a careful thought and consideration which can be difficult to arrive at and most women can spend a lot of time on this leading to a sense of sometimes considering themselves as failures (ARKOH, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018).

In addition, the relationship between female healthcare practitioners and patients seems on the average to be very cordial (KYERE, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018). Notwithstanding the fact that they are females, they almost never face any form of doubt from patients when it comes to providing treatment and care. Majority of male patients feel very comfortable to disclose their illness to women medical practitioners, which is surprising considering the gender inequality that plagues some indigenous communities. Nevertheless, there have been instances where patients, both male and female, were annoyed because they were assigned to female healthcare practitioners (DUAH, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018). These are challenges women health practitioners face. However, they focus on helping patients and closely work with their male counterparts at the hospitals.

Another challenge is male dominance. Interviewees hinted that some male colleagues have respect for female healthcare practitioners. However, the choice of a career which comes with many transfers where women meet different kinds of people, they meet some male practitioners who are problematic and create uneasy environment for their female counterparts. In some settings, male practitioners take over all the practice leaving women with barely nothing to do. According to a respondent, men in some hospitals in Ghana have hijacked delivery of babies. Even in the medical schools, a female who proves herself better than male colleagues is actually disliked by her male counterparts. This is strange in contemporary times as the realities are sometimes damning.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Concerning the issue of marriage, an interview with an expert informant (a paediatrician) at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital showed that females in the healthcare practice are happily married like other women pursuing different professions. She hinted that healthcare practice is quite demanding considering the day and night shifts you need to run from time to time. However, she finds means to balance work with marriage life. Due to this, her husband is very supportive and comfortable with her choice of career. In another interview, we inferred that some female healthcare practitioners feel the need to prioritise their profession. In order to maintain this, they choose to remain single. Prioritising their profession has sometimes led to unhealthy marital life and sometimes divorce (ABABIO, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018).

An interviewee reported: *"When I first got married, things were a bit easier but the moment I become a mother, things changed drastically. I had to put my family first. Because of this, I started doing part-time work to always have time to spend with my children. Seeing fewer patients each day at the hospital brought about a reduction in my salary because I had taken bulk of responsibility at home and I had little decision-making power not only my work hours but also in my practice as well. It got to a time that I started feeling guilty about getting pregnant and no one will give you a motherhood schedule except yourself. I had to go through all these waiting for my children to attain reasonable ages before I started full-time work when my husband and I carefully saw the need to hire outside help necessary for the toil of household life"* (ABABIO, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018).

Conclusion

Women in pre-modern Ghana were seen as bearers of children, retailers of fish and farmers. A female's ability to reproduce was the most important means to ensure social and economic security for them especially if they bore male children. In the field of healthcare, women really believed they had special skills to treat their fellow women in health matters more than men did. Women were midwives and gynaecologists even without any formal education. Many female medical practitioners were probably unlettered or many acts of healing and therapy were probably performed without recourse to any texts or textual tradition of knowledge. Being unlettered did not hinder many female practitioners from playing key roles in the evolution of medicine globally and also in the Ghanaian context.

Women's involvement in healthcare comes with great challenges; over the years, we have witnessed some marked improvements. Female practitioners still face discrimination from their male counterparts and some patients who also regard women as unqualified to be health

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

practitioners aggravate the situation. Some contributions made by women in the provision of healthcare have been over looked; sometimes the chauvinists consider them as weak and dull. This notwithstanding, women have gained access to equal education that they hoped for and are graduating in equal number with their male counterparts. Modern female health practitioners are indeed assets to healthcare in Ghana. Therefore, there is the need for health policy makers and stakeholders in Ghana to pay attention to the challenges that affect women in healthcare to achieve quality healthcare delivery in the country. There should be effective affirmative action strategies including quota system to admit women/girls into medical schools and hitherto specialised fields which were the sole preserve of men. These among strategies like public education aimed at empowering mothers and girl-children in Africa and Ghana in particular can yield many useful results in the health sector and the larger Ghanaian society.

Bibliography

ACKERKNECHT, Erwin H. (1942): Primitive Medicine and Culture Pattern. In *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 12, pp. 545-574.

ADAMS, Tracy L. (2010): Gender and Feminisation in Health Care Professions. In *Sociology compass* 4 (7), pp. 454-465.

ADU-GYAMFI, Samuel – ANDERSON, A. Eugenia (2019): Indigenous Medicine and Traditional Healing in Africa: A Systematic Synthesis of the Literature. In *Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines* 1, pp. 69-100.

ADU-GYAMFI, Samuel (2015): Spiritual and Indigenous Healing Practices among the Asante People of Ghana: A Testimonial from Twenty-First Century Practitioners and Recipients in Kumase. In *Journal of Basic and Applied Research International* 12 (1), pp. 42-54.

ANDERSON, Elisabeth (1986): Women in Medicine-Women's Developing Identity. In *Equal Opportunities International* 5 (3), pp. 43-44.

BOSERUP, Ester – TAN, Su Fei – TOULMIN, Camilla (2013): *Woman's Role in Economic Development*. London: Routledge.

BOWMAN, Merjorie A. – FRANK, Erica – ALLEN, Debourah I. (2002): *Women in Medicine: Career and Life Management*. New York: Springer.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

DANKELMAN, Irene – DAVIDSON, Joan (2013): *Women and the Environment in the Third World: Alliance for the Future*. London: Routledge.

DOVLO, Delanyo (1998): Health Sector Reform and Deployment, Training and Motivation of Human Resources towards Equity in Health Care: Issues and Concerns in Ghana. In *Human Resources for Health Development Journal* 2 (1), pp. 34-47.

DSISI, Smile (2008): Entrepreneurial Activities of Indigenous African Women: a Case of Ghana. In *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy* 2 (3), pp. 254-264.

EHRENREICH, Barbara – ENGLISH, Deirdre (1973): *Witches, Midwives, & Nurses: A History of Women Healers*. New York: The Feminist Press.

GIULIANO, Paola (2015): The Role of Women in Society: from Preindustrial to Modern Times. *CESifo Economic Studies* 61 (1), pp. 33-52.

GREED, Clara (2000): Women in the Construction Professions: Achieving Critical Mass. In *Gender, Work and Organisation* 7 (3), pp. 181-196.

GREEN, Monica H. (2008): *Making Women's Medicine Masculine: the Rise of Male Authority in pre-Modern Gynaecology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

HAMBERG, Katarina (2008): Gender bias in medicine. *Women's health* 4 (3), pp. 237-243.

HURD-MEAD, Kate Campbell (1938): A History of Women in Medicine from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century; Medical Women in Past Ages. In *The British Medical Journal* 2 (4047), pp. 221-222.

JANEWAY, Elisabeth (1983): Equality for Women. In *Science* 222.4624, pp. 565-565.

JEFFERSON, Laura – BLOOR, Karen – MANARD, Alan (2015): Women in Medicine: Historical Perspectives and Recent Trends. In *British Medical Bulletin* 114 (1), pp. 5-15.

KASILO, Ossy M. J. – TRAPSIDA, Jean-Marie – MWIKISA, Chris Ngenda. – LUSAMBA-DIKASSA, Paul Samson (2010): An Overview of the Traditional Medicine Situation in the African Region. In *African Health* Monitor 14, pp. 7-15.

KILMINSTER, Sue et al. (2007): Women in Medicine: Is there a Problem? A Literature Review of the Changing Gender. In *Medical Education* 41 (1), pp. 39-49.

LEFTWICH, Adrian (2008): *Developmental States, Effective States and Poverty Reduction: The Primacy of Politics*. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

MANNATHOKO, Changu (1999): Theoretical Perspectives on Gender in Education: the Case of Eastern and Southern Africa. In Crain Soudien, Peter Kallaway, Mignone Breier (eds.): *Education, Equity and Transformation*, New York: Springer, pp. 445-460.

MCKAY, Alex – WANGCHUK, Dorji (2018): Traditional Medicine in Bhutan. In *Asian Medicine* 1 (1), pp. 204-218.

MILES, Agnes (1991): *Women, Health, and Medicine*. London: Open University Press.

MORANTS-SANCHES Regina (2000): Negotiating Power at the Bedside: Historical Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Patients and their Gynecologists. In *Feminist Studies* Vol. 26, No. 2, *Women and Health*, pp. 287-309.

MOSER, Caroline O. (2012): *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*. London: Routledge.

OLUWOLE, Sophie B. (1997): Culture, Gender, and Development Theories in Africa. In *Africa Development/Afrique et Développement* 22 (1), pp. 95-121.

OPPONG, Christine – ABU, Katharine (1984): *The Changing Maternal Role of Ghanaian Women: Impacts of Education, Migration and Employment*. Geneva: International Labour Office (ILO).

REICHENBACH, Laura – BROWN, Hilary (2004): Gender and Academic Medicine: Impacts on the Health Workforce. In *British Medical Journal* 329 (7469), pp. 792-795.

ROSENFIELD, Allan – FIGDOR, Emily (2001): Where Is the M in MTCT? The Broader Issues in Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV. In *American Journal of Public Health* 91 (5), pp. 703-704.

SHARMA, Sarla (1983): Women in Medicine: Traditional Biases and Emerging Trends. In *Equal Opportunities International* 2 (4), pp. 25-31.

TABI, Marian M. – POWELL, M. – HODNICKI, D. (2006): Use of Traditional Healers and Modern Medicine in Ghana. In *International Nursing Review* 53, pp. 52-58.

Interviews

MADAM JOSEPHINE FRIMPONG, personal communication, 23rd April 2018

SARPOMAH, personal communication, February 2nd 2018

ABABIO, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018

ARKOH, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

KYERE, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018

DUAH, personal communication, April 2nd, 2018

MADAM AFIA ASANTEWAA, personal communication, April 23rd 2018

AMPONG, personal communication, April 23rd 2018

MADAM DWOMOH, personal communication, April 23rd 2018

AKUA FRIMPONG, personal communication, April 23rd 2018

AKUA ADOMAKOH, personal communication, April 23rd, 2018

Samuel Adu-Gyamfi (1979) is a Senior Lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). His research focus is on evolutions in health, public health, health policy, environment and sanitation, science and technology, traditional and integrative medicine as well as public opinion and social and political development of Africa and Ghana in particular. His current project includes 'Nurses and unconventional therapy practices: Implications for intercultural healthcare.' WASSCE History E-Book project among others.

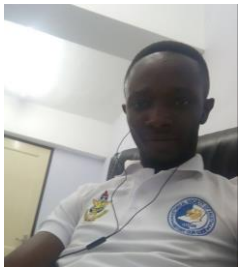
Kwasi Amakye-Boateng (1961) studied for a PhD in African Studies at the University of Ghana – Legon. He is a lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). His research interests are politics and development with a focus on Africa and development administration.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

Ali Yakubu Nyaaba (1980) is a lecturer at the Department of History and Political Studies. He has over 7 years of professional experience in research and teaching. He has been teaching various courses in History at undergraduate and graduate levels. Ali has special expertise in historical and social research (information gathering) and data analysis through the use of descriptive and statistical tools. He has researched into various aspects of the indigenous Political System in Ghana and the African Diaspora. Ali has published a considerable number of articles in reputable journals across the world. He is also a member of several learned associations including the Ghana Studies Council and the Historical Society of Ghana.

Adwoa Birago Acheampong (1994) is a graduate from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. She focuses her research on Gender and health. Birago is equally available for research in social history, women and health among others.

Dennis Baffour Awuah (1995) is an MA History Candidate at the Department of history, Illinois State University. His research focus centers on Health systems particularly in Africa, Health policy, History of Medicine in Africa and Gender History.



Richard Oware (1993) is a Teaching and Research Assistant with the Department of History and Political Studies at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. His research interest lies with Orthodox and Traditional Medicine within the Ghanaian and African context. Richard also works as an independent researcher and pays critical attention to issues of mental health, gender and society among other related themes in the history of medicine in Africa.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0003

sciendo

Axis Mundi in the Tropics: Uses and Abuses of Eliade's Phenomenology of Religion in the Schelean Maya Studies

ZUZANA MARIE KOSTIĆOVÁ

Department of Religious Studies,
Charles University, Praha, Czech Republic
zuzana.kosticova@htf.cuni.cz

ABSTRACT

Ever since the 1980s, the Maya Studies became seeped with influence of the theories of Mircea Eliade. The article traces the origins and contexts of this influence and evaluates both the results it yielded and the problems it brought to the discipline. First of all, it shows that the way Eliade's influence has been brought to the Maya Studies (mainly via the Maya Cosmos monograph) is seriously problematic, since it does not discuss or even acknowledge the Eliadian origins of its main concepts. This lack of theoretical reflection opened the door to simplifications and misunderstandings, which spread through the discipline. At the same time, the fundamentally empirical character of Maya Studies practically prevented any deeper conceptual discussion of Maya religion. The article therefore calls for a much needed theoretical and methodological self-reflection of Maya Studies and its concepts related to ancient Maya spirituality.

KEY WORDS: David Freidel, Maya Religion, Maya Studies, Mircea Eliade, Religious Studies, Linda Schele

Introduction

Every religious studies scholar that has read the major works on Maya religion of the last four decades must be duly surprised by the enormous influence Mircea Eliade's Phenomenology of Religion had on such books as *Blood of Kings*, *Maya Cosmos*, and other

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

classical Maya Studies works (SCHELE – MILLER 1992; FREIDEL – SCHELE – PARKER 1993; SCHELE – FREIDEL 1990). And all the more so, since this influence flourished long after Eliade's heyday in the religious studies was over. Only now have the Maya studies scholars begun to reflect on the theoretical background of their work on religion and to try to divest themselves from Eliade's shadowy omnipresence. The question of how this influence came to be has already been answered by such scholars as Cecilia Klein (KLEIN – GUZMÁN – MANDELL – STANFIELD-MAZZI 2002) and, specifically, Andrei Znamenski (ZNAMENSKI 2007). On the other hand, as far as I know, there has been no intent to take a closer look on the way Eliade's theories were used and interpreted in the Maya studies context. This article's main goal is to fill this gap and bring forth a kind of theoretical and methodological self-reflection of Maya studies and its concept of religion.

This goal is of course not new in and of itself. With the emerging awareness of Eliade's profound influence on the discipline, some authors have started to discuss the situation. I will draw mainly on one of the most telling examples of such reflection, which is Miguel Ángel Astor Aguilera and his 2010 monograph *The Maya World of Communicating Objects* (ASTOR AGUILERA 2010). I consider this book to be a model case of the slowly emerging criticism of Eliade's influence on Maya studies – specifically for the commendable sincerity with which the author states that, for years, he has been using Eliadian terms and concepts without the slightest notion of their original author. One of the main goals of Astor Aguilera's book is apparently to liberate himself from the Eliadian heritage and look for different approaches. As he states, these new approaches lay mainly in the realm of Foucauldian discourse analysis and, from the methodological point of view, an iconosymbolic reconstruction.

I consider this to be a typical example of the vast problem Maya studies finds itself in – and there is one chief reason for it: contemporary Mayanists are largely empirically oriented, and their methodological basis is usually to be found in the disciplines of archaeology, iconography/art history, and epigraphy/linguistics. This situation is due to the specific evolution of Maya studies. Unlike other disciplines, such as classical archaeology, there is still a great deal of work to be done in the actual excavations of the ancient Maya cities. Great discoveries are still made practically every few years, from single inscriptions and murals to entire cities and subterranean cave systems. All this requires an army of specialists, and, as a result, our knowledge of Maya city-states has been advancing in a rapid manner. At the same time, the great breakthrough in deciphering the Maya script came only in the 1950's and it was not until the 1970's that the rapid decipherment of entire Maya inscriptions started to take place. Naturally, quite a lot of work remains to be done in this field. Due to this, most Mayanists busy themselves either with archaeological and iconographical work or with the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

study of the Maya glyphs. Most of the scholarly publications made in the field of Maya religion are thus highly empirical or even factographic in nature, rarely recurring to any overarching theories whatsoever. As for the exceptions that are conscious of Eliade's influence (namely, Davíd Carrasco, Miguel Rivera Dorado, and others; see RIVERA DORADO 2001; CARRASCO 1990, 1991), they usually do not offer larger theoretical and methodological discussions in their works and tend to conform themselves with simply acknowledging Eliade's influence on their writings. I will elaborate on this point further below.

Now how did this situation arise? I intend to show that Eliade's concepts and theories seeped into Maya studies largely unnoticed and that this process is tied to the inner structure and methodological background of the celebrated monographs *Blood of Kings* and, first and foremost, *Maya Cosmos*. While scholars such as Andrei Znamenski or Kocku von Stuckrad (ZNAMENSKI 2007; STUCKRAD 2014) mostly focus on the way Eliade's influence helped to co-create neo-shamanism and to introduce its concepts into several academic disciplines, my goal here is different. I do not mean to criticize Eliade's theory *eo ipso* – as we will see, enough criticism of this kind has already been made, even in Maya Studies (ASTOR AGUILERA 2010). Instead, I wish to show that in Maya Studies, Eliade's theories have been stripped of context and largely disconnected from their original source in Eliade's writings, which were hardly ever explicitly mentioned. Instead, they became a reservoir of vague ideas, a dictionary of concepts and terms, a source of jargon, and (as Michael E. Smith complained, see SMITH 2005) sometimes even a heap of clichés. Consequently, instead of recognizing their specific historical and theoretical origins, Maya studies scholars tended to treat the core concepts and terms as an explicit part of the original, *emic* worldview of the ancient Maya culture.

To borrow an old Czech proverb (originally referring to fire), a theory is a good servant but an evil master. In other words, while we may apply any kind of theoretical approach to almost any kind of material, we must do it consciously and be aware both of the possibilities and limitations of the theory in question. It is true that Eliade's phenomenology of religion is considered severely outdated today, but its application to the ancient Maya culture yielded some important results. However, the way Phenomenology's theoretical apparatus was applied in Maya studies was flawed in the first place, both from the point of view of the rigors of scholarly interpretation and the formal standards of academic work. And, to some extent, the very empirical character of Maya studies is one of the reasons why this happened and why the reflection came so late.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

As I already stated, I am certainly not the first person to explore the connection between Eliadian terminology and Maya studies. The first in this respect was certainly Cecelia Klein and her team, who launched the first critical analysis of sacred Maya kingship in their 2002 article (KLEIN – GUZMÁN – MANDELL – STANFIELD-MAZZI 2002). Michael E. Smith followed suit – in his short 2005 article, he questioned the term "cosmogram" and the careless way it is used in the discipline (SMITH 2005). And, finally, a whole number of neo-shamanism experts came to assess the connection between Eliade, neo-shamanism, and scholarly disciplines. While some mentions appeared already in Robert Waliss' 2003 book (WALISS 2003), it was Andrei Znamenski who explored the theme at length in his 2007 monograph *The Beauty of the Primitive* (ZNAMENSKI 2007). Znamenski mentions Maya studies briefly, tracing an extremely important link between Mircea Eliade, Peter T. Furst, Carlos Castaneda, and David Freidel, but he remains focused on neo-shamanism and therefore less interested in the formal questions of the Mayanists' interpretation of Eliade. The same focus is apparent in *Scientification of Religion* by Kocku von Stuckrad published in 2014 (STUCKRAD 2014). True, Stuckrad dedicates quite a lot of space to the effect of Eliade's theories upon different disciplines, but due to the focus of the book on esoteric currents, the spotlight is directed towards the leading New Age and neo-shamanic figures. Consequently, the Maya Studies problem is left aside.

At the same time, Eliade's influence on the discipline has already been critically discussed by the Mayanists themselves. I already made a reference to Miguel Ángel Astor Aguilera's criticism, which appeared in the introduction to his 2010 monograph *The Maya World of Communicating Objects* (ASTOR AGUILERA 2010). In this sense, this article is not only closely related to Znamenski's and Stuckrad's book, but it also contains a direct response to Astor Aguilera.

Some Methodological Remarks

Probably the best way to grasp the problem methodologically is to make use of Michel Foucault's concept of *discourse* (FOUCAULT 1982; DREYFUS – RABINOW 1984). While Foucauldian theories have been appropriated to a great avail by philosophy, linguistics, history, etc., they remained largely unused by other academic disciplines. Until recently, this was also true for religious studies; however, there is a recent and rapidly growing group of religious studies scholars who make use of Foucault's discourse analysis and its tools. This is well attested by Kocku von Stuckrad's *Scientification of Religion*, probably the most important book that tries to apply discourse analysis in the realm of religious studies and the main methodological model that I hold on to in this text (STUCKRAD 2014). He shows the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

mutual influence between academic disciplines and different esoteric currents (such as astrology, neo-shamanism, and others) as well as the way individual thinkers are sometimes officially recognized by the academia, while at other times they are ridiculed and discursively cast away to the obscurity of esotericism. While there is tremendous potential in the application of discourse analysis to religion itself and the way its official doctrines and hierarchical organizations operate (mirroring the classical Foucauldian interplay between discourse and apparatus), here I will contend myself in following in Stuckrad's footsteps and remaining in the already much-explored land of the relationship between academic disciplines and their material.

Since this article is based in religious studies and intended mainly for a readership with a traditional Maya studies background, I can hardly avoid explaining some very basic things that, while obvious for a religious studies scholar, are very remote to a Mayanist. At the same time and for the very same reasons, I will have to start with a brief sketch of Eliade's most important theses and the reasons he upheld them. Since classical phenomenology of religion is well known to every single religious studies scholar and has been under a severe critical attack from at least the 1970's, the first section will have hardly any import for a seasoned theorist of religion. On the other hand, as there has been little or no serious reflection of Eliades's theories in the realm of Maya studies, a quick overview may certainly come in handy, since it may prevent future misunderstandings (as appear in ASTOR AGUILERA 2010, see below). Again, my main focus here will not be criticism and refusal, but simple hermeneutics. While we remain free to refuse Eliade's opinions (and one can find good reasons to do it), the criticism, I believe, must be fully contextualized.

In the second part, I will sum up how and when Eliade was introduced to Maya studies. This will require an overview of the discipline, working, in Foucauldian terms, with its different discourse formations. There are, I believe, three of them. The first is the early period culminating perhaps with Daniel Brinton – some of its discursive strategies were already brilliantly analyzed by Lindsay Jones and remain out of the scope of the present article (JONES 1997). The second is what I call the Thompsonian discourse formation named after J. Eric S. Thompson, the scholar who dominated the field during most of the first half of the 20th century. Finally, the third is the Schelean discourse formation revolving around Linda Schele, who was one of the greatest figures in the Maya studies of the second half of the last century and whose influence reigned supreme from the 1970's up till now. Most of today's leading Mayanists, both in USA and in Europe, are either Schele's direct colleagues/disciples or were crucially influenced by the monographs she co-authored. I will try to show how the Schelean formation draws inspiration from Eliade – and I will use the term *axis mundi* as an example, to show how this Eliadian inspiration, for good or for worse, survives in mainstream

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

Maya studies. At the same time (since I believe this is precisely the core of the problem), I will focus on the formal way Eliade is treated in the discipline. Finally, I will conclude by responding to Miguel Ángel Astor Aguilera's criticism to Eliade and, subsequently, make some suggestions for the future of the discipline.

Eliade's Phenomenology of Religion: the Context and Basic Points

Mircea Eliade was born in Romania, and taught first in Bucharest, then in Paris, and ultimately in Chicago. Although his first works date as early as the 1930s, it wasn't until the 1950s that his writings came to be known in the USA, reaching the peak of their influence in the 1960s and 70s. As we have seen, his most (usually critically) discussed work today is *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, which was first published in English in 1964 and took popular culture by storm (ZNAMENSKI 2007; WALISS 2003; STUCKRAD 2014). However, Eliade authored many other books, such as *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, *Patterns in Comparative Religions*, *The Sacred and Profane: The Nature of Religion*, etc. (ELIADE 1954, 1958, 1959, respectively). He also edited the massive multi-volume *Encyclopedia of Religion* that was published posthumously in 1987. Eliade is usually cited as the foremost example of what used to be called the phenomenology of religion – a study of the way people conceive of their religious experiences through specific sets of symbols and phenomena that are understood as more or less typical for religious experience as such. Even though he was somewhat inspired by Husserl's phenomenology, his main sources remain in the realm of religious studies and theology. One that figures prominently among them is Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*, a book that tried to capture the essence of religious experience; also Gerardus van der Leeuw's *Religion in Essence and Manifestation: A Study in Phenomenology*, a large treatise on the transcultural and comparative approach to religious phenomena, is one of the chief sources (OTTO 1936; LEEUW 2014) .

This group of authors is not to be confused with the contemporary phenomenology of religion, which is focused on accessing religious experience in its purest form and whose empirical methodology is based on interviews and observation. Contemporary phenomenologists of religion often accuse Otto, van der Leeuw, and Eliade of hijacking the term "phenomenology" and disregarding its essential focus on the human experience and perception. In Husserl's original view, we have no actual access to things themselves; we are only able to perceive is the way things present themselves to us; in other words, the image of the object in our consciousness. This is what Husserl calls *Phenomenon*. It is only natural that the problem of human perception became one of the key focuses of his philosophy.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

Contemporary phenomenologists of religion tend to criticize Leeuw, Otto, and Eliade for abandoning Husserl's key point and plunging themselves into writing book after book about different religions and their core features. As James V. Spickard puts it, "their approach might be better seen as describing the religions of various times and places really, really well" (SPICKARD 2014).

However, to do justice to this generation of highly influential scholars, we need to understand where they came from and what they intended to do. The point of their work was not to study the way people perceive and why they do that; their goal was to identify a basic set of religious phenomena or typical ways the "sacred" manifests itself in the world (Eliade uses the term *Hierophany* for this). The ultimate goal of phenomenology of religion is to find phenomena common for most peoples (if not for all humankind) and create a global, comparison-based theory of what religion is and how it works. In this sense, while contemporary phenomenology of religion is focused on the *intentionality* of human perception and the way it reacts to objects, subjects, and processes (thus making it a close kin to Husserl's original concept), the old phenomenology of religion set out to identify *universal religious phenomena* that appear cross-culturally and worldwide.

For a contemporary reader, this naturally seems to be a highly dubious and risky project: we immediately start to consider all the local contexts and specifics that must be omitted in order to make distant cultures and their religions easily comparable to one another. As Eliade himself clearly demonstrates in his introduction to *Shamanism*, the scholars were acutely aware of that:

Conceived in this spirit, this work cannot possibly exhaust any of the aspects that it approaches in its several chapters. We have not undertaken a complete study of shamanism; we lack both the resources and the will for such a task. It is always as a comparatist and a historian of religions that we have treated our subject; admitting which, we plead guilty in advance to the inevitable gaps and imperfections in a work that, in the last analysis, represents an effort towards a synthesis. We are neither an Altaicist nor an Americanist nor an Oceanicist, and it is probable that a certain number of specialized studies have escaped our notice (ELIADE 1964:xx).

What may now seem as a careless approach (at least Astor Aguilera deems it so, as we will see in the conclusion) was actually a great breakthrough and a positive achievement for the early 20th century religious studies. Before phenomenology, the discipline tended to study religions from different points of view that often bordered on reductionism and bias. Its oldest layers were inspired both by Christian theology and by atheist, positivist attitudes; generally speaking, the first religious studies scholars either tried to track the traces of the "one true

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

religion" in the doctrine of the "primitive" peoples, or wondered how anyone could ever have believed in such nonsense as supernatural agents. The latter approach was typical for Tylor (who was convinced that religion simply serves to explain the unexplained and will gradually disappear once science takes over), Durkheim (who emphasized the primary role of religion in maintaining social cohesion), Freud (with his idea of religion as a collective neurosis), and Marx (who thought religion was the ideology of the dominant class, and its goal was to subdue the proletariat). With this situation in the background, the newborn phenomenology of religion refused to analyze religion as a mere function of or a substitute for something else and to reduce it to psychological needs, power struggles, social cohesion, or primeval ignorance. Instead, the authors decided to study religion *as such* – to find what exactly is so specific about it, and what the most important building blocks and relationships that form most (or, in the ideal case, all) religions are. Naturally, this project required less attention to what was culturally specific, individual, exotic, and original – instead, it represented a constant search for common motifs, features, and structures. During this quest for universal similarities, many authors unsurprisingly fell prey to oversimplifications, eagerly overlooked what didn't suit them, and sometimes even ended up distorting the image of individual religions so that the resulting general pattern came out as more convincing. At the same time, the broadness of the scope necessarily relied on second-hand accounts, since, for a single person, a full insight in all the cultures of the world would be absolutely impossible to achieve. The phenomenologists were thus typical armchair scholars who mainly worked with secondary sources. And, as we have seen, they admitted it freely.

Before long, this type of methodology naturally incited strong criticism that pointed out omissions, misunderstandings, superficialities, and plain errors. Subsequently, the comparative quest for universalities was largely abandoned and gave way to other methodologies. On the one hand, the growing interest in cultural specifics and the yearning for more accurate pictures of different religions led to associating religious studies with anthropology. This gave birth to what was called "the cultural turn" (with such great names as Geertz, Luckmann, or Berger in its front line), which passed the spotlight to qualitative research and anthropological fieldwork, ultimately leading to the predominance of social constructivism in the discipline. On the other hand, the search for common motifs turned into the search for common structures. This brought together religious studies and structuralism. Both the cultural turn and structuralism appeared in the 1970s–1980's, and their reign continued until the first decade of the 21st century, when cognitive and evolutionary psychology became the hottest new fashion in the discipline. By that time, Leeuw's and Eliade's phenomenology of religion was forgotten for all practical purposes and firmly

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

relegated to university textbooks of the history of the discipline. That is, everywhere except for the Maya studies.

Eliade and the Maya Studies

In Maya studies, the main influx of Eliade's theoretical concepts came relatively late, more or less at the point when his heyday in religious studies was already over. Cecelia Klein and Andrei Znamenski convincingly show that the earliest traces of his influence are closely connected to Peter T. Furst, an influential scholar focused on the Huichol and based at the University of California (KLEIN – GUZMÁN – MANDELL – SANFIELD-MAZZI 2002, ZNAMENSKI 2007). Influenced by Eliade, Furst was mainly interested in the presence of Shamanism and altered states of consciousness in the indigenous religions of the Americas (FURST 1976). While the scholars who track the development of neo-shamanism strongly focus on his relationship with Carlos Castaneda (ZNAMENSKI 2007), Klein points out that Furst also made a fundamental re-working of Eliade's concept of shamanism. Eliade himself stressed ecstasy, management of spiritual allies, shamanic journeys, and complex symbolism; he also insisted on the systemic and archaic nature of shamanism, which requires a specific transmission and initiation of shamanic neophytes. At the same time, the Eliadian shamans fulfill a set of social roles: apart from being masters of ecstasy, shamans are also healers, magicians, religious specialists, poets, etc. In contrast to this concept, Furst suggested a common shamanic structure of the cosmos with *axis mundi* connecting a multilayered world, complex symbolism of the four cardinal points and the earth/sky binary opposition, animating life-giving force that connects all living beings, emphasis on man-animal transformation, and the central role of hallucinogenic trance in rituals (KLEIN – GUZMÁN – MANDELL – STANFIELD-MAZZI 2002:388). Compared with Eliade, these ideas were apparently strongly influenced by the spirituality of the counterculture, which was being born at the time, and which would culminate in the onset of the so-called "New Age", neopaganism and neo-shamanism.[1] Furst's works naturally influenced the scholars from California and the American Southwest, but the crucial point came when he presented a paper on possible Mesoamerican "vision quests" at the Second Palenque Round Table in 1974 (FURST 1976). Many influential Mayanists became acquainted with his ideas through this paper, which was

[1] As I already mentioned, the latter phenomenon has been extensively described, including mentions of Furst's role; however, the possible influence of the "New Age" and neopaganism on the Maya studies and related disciplines has never been examined. As for neo-shamanism, see ZNAMENSKI 2007, p. 141, 157-158, 180-187, 195.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

duly published in the conference proceedings two years later. True, Furst's work is often criticized, both for its ideological proximity to neo-shamanism and its somehow problematic methodology (Furst's probably harshest critic was Jay C. Fikes who cast doubt on his research and thus incited a long-standing animosity between Furst and himself, which in the end even escalated to a lawsuit; FIKES 1993). However, regardless of its possible flaws, I believe Furst's work was of a great import for the discipline. The new question of ancient Maya religious experience, rarely addressed by the previous discourse formations, opened new horizons for research and yielded some interesting and thought-provoking results.

As far as I was able to discern, the only Mayanist of that period who constantly and openly quoted both Eliade and Furst was Furst's disciple David Freidel. Freidel's early articles predating *Maya Cosmos* (such as FREIDEL 1992) strictly conform to the required formal scholarly routine – he acknowledges his sources in the text as well as in the footnotes and bibliography. Unfortunately, this was one of the last moments in the mainstream Maya Studies when Eliade openly featured among the cited sources. In 1986, Schele and Miller's *Blood of Kings* came out; a summarily important book on Maya art, which already featured some concepts borrowed from Eliade (SCHELE – MILLER 1992). The tome was published as an exhibition catalogue and therefore, although it contained large textual sections, it had no bibliography worth mentioning, only "suggestions for further reading": these only contained a short list of recommended Mayanist classics of that time and no theoretical treatise at all. True, there are some footnotes to be found in every chapter, but they remain faithful to the essentially empirical and factographic nature of Maya studies, citing articles related to archaeological finds, iconographical studies, and decipherment reports. The one and only fundamental exception is a footnote containing a reference to Peter Furst's abovementioned article published in the *Proceedings of the Segunda Mesa Redonda at Palenque* (FURST 1976). Here, Schele and Miller cite his idea that Maya bloodletting was essentially similar to the "vision quest" of the indigenous populations of the Great Plains (SCHELE – MILLER 1992:185, footnote 13). There is not a single mention of Eliade in the book's 335 pages. As for another important masterpiece, *A Forest of Kings* by Schele and Freidel (SCHELE – FREIDEL 1990), the situation is slightly better. Eliade's name appears exactly four times – in two brief footnotes and in the bibliography, where *Shamanism* is listed (SCHELE – FREIDEL 1990:427-428, footnotes 17, 19). Although this is undoubtedly better than complete absence, he is still not even mentioned in the bulk of the text, and there is no theoretical discussion either of his concepts or the possibilities and limits of their application to the Maya material. The same applies to Furst – two brief mentions of his name in the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

footnotes and his article of "Fertility, Vision Quest, and Auto-Sacrifice" listed in the bibliography. Nothing more.

Naturally, some objections come to mind. We may say, for example, that *Blood of Kings* was intended as a basic introduction to the classic Maya art and, consequently, there was no reason to drown the reader in complex religious studies context. And, in a similar fashion, the foremost goal of *A Forest of Kings* was to reconstruct Maya political history by means of decipherment and subsequent analyses: again, hardly an opportunity for extensive theoretical treatises. On the other hand, such discussion would be absolutely indispensable to a comprehensive monograph on Maya religion such as *Maya Cosmos*. Furthermore, the book's main explicit objective is to research the idea of ancient Maya shamanism – and it even bears the subtitle of *Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path*. Surely this would be an excellent opportunity to discuss Maya shamanism's theoretical background in its full extent.

Let us then have a closer look at this monograph, which came to be the Schelean formation's single most important publication fully dedicated to Maya religion. *Maya Cosmos* came out in 1993 as a joined effort by Linda Schele, David Freidel, and a creative writing teacher by the name of Joy Parker, who was hired to secure the book's readability and easier accessibility to the general public. The presence of Parker speaks volumes about the authors' intentions and so do the many short personal accounts of an outright emotional and spiritual nature that are scattered throughout the book and were probably meant to spice up the otherwise dry scholarly text. Naturally, this type of cross-genre approach renders the book particularly vulnerable to criticism focused on its subliminal spiritual message (which is, by the way, openly acknowledged in the Preface; FREIDEL – SCHELE – PARKER 1993:9-14). While the connection to neo-shamanism has been made several times, I believe that the context of the book crosses the confines of the neo-shamanic current and attests to the influence of the larger alternative spiritual milieu.[2] Incidentally, as we will see, the same traces of the so-called "New Age" may be found in the introduction to Astor Aguilera's work.

From a purely theoretical point of view, the book is a parade of reference to empirical research. Archaeology, iconography, history, epigraphy, and anthropology – all combined to

[2] This problem is too complicated to be discussed here in due extent. Briefly, as I pointed out in a recent article, the influence of alternative spiritualities on elite members of the academia is a pressing and basically unstudied problem even in religious studies. Naturally, the situation is far more complicated in disciplines such as Maya studies, which generally lack the necessary tools, context, and theoretical background for this kind of critique. To sum up my position, I believe the influence is not "wrong" in itself. Just as the wave of neo-shamanism in the 1960–80s enriched the discipline with new perspectives and topics, the contemporary alternative spiritualities make us less

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

create a general view of Maya religion as inherently based on shamanism with its multilayered, periodically centered world and altered states of consciousness. But even though the book is full of Eliadian concepts (*axis mundi*, cosmogram, the sacred, centering the cosmos, primeval time, etc.), there is only one mention of Eliade's name: we can find it in the preface, where the authors briefly mention Freidel had read his "Archaic Ecstasy" (sic, SCHELE – FREIDEL – PARKER 1993:12). Apart from this, there is no acknowledgement of the origins of the terms used throughout the book, let alone a discussion of the possibilities and limits of their application; I would also specifically like to emphasize that no work of Eliade is listed in the bibliography. At the same time, since Eliadian influence on Maya studies travelled through the writings of Peter Furst, we may at least expect a discussion of Eliadian ideas in Furst's rendering. However, Furst's name is not mentioned at all. Naturally, both of these omissions represent a serious formal flaw – and it had serious consequences. To an unsuspecting reader lacking religious studies background, the authors gave a clear impression that the concepts they are using are entirely of their own design. Furthermore, only a single theoretical work is listed in the extensive bibliography of the *Maya Cosmos*, and that is Edmund Leach's 12-page article "Two Essays Concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time" (LEACH 1961). With this one and only exception, the list remains purely empirical and factographic, focused on concrete findings, decipherments, and iconographical analyses. The authors clearly saw no reason to include any theoretical discussion either in the bulk of text or in the bibliography.

Had this happened to an unknown scholar in an article published in some obscure journal, it would have no lasting effect. But virtually every article about Maya religion that belonged to the Schelean discourse formation and was published during the last decade of the 20th century, as well as the first decade of the 21st, was largely based on *Maya Cosmos* and made extensive use of its concepts and terminology. This applies first and foremost to the co-workers and direct or indirect disciples of Freidel and/or Schele, ranging from Peter Matthews and Carolyn Tate to David Stuart, Karl Taube, Nikolai Grube, and others (a

narrowly focused on such phenomena as gods, religious institutions, and hierarchy and more receptive to other "dimensions of the sacred" (as Ninian Smart would have it) – personal experiences, altered states of consciousness, possible non-dualistic and/or holistic worldviews, etc. However, I believe such influence must be consciously reflected at all times, lest it turns to bias and prejudice and, instead of adding a new and refreshing outlook to our theme, we are blinded by yet another predominant, invisible worldview. In this sense, an analysis of the alternative spiritual milieu's influence on Maya studies would be extremely beneficial – as long as it does not transform either into a naïve welcoming party or into a cleansing crusade (KOSTIĆOVÁ 2018a, 2018b; SMART 1996, 2000).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

seasoned Mayanist easily recognizes here some the most influential names of the last two decades of the discipline). Perhaps the most telling – albeit not very influential – illustration of this is Elizabeth Newsome's *Trees of Paradise and Pillars of the World* (NEWSOME 2001). The monograph is based on a University of Texas doctoral dissertation supervised by Linda Schele, finished in 1991 and published by University of Texas Press ten years later. The book's goal is to interpret Waxaklajuun Ubah' K'awiil's Copan stelae as a cycle unified by the common theme of world trees, centering the world, visions, and altered states of consciousness. Despite our willingness or unwillingness to accept Newsome's conclusions, the book exhibits a fundamentally Eliadian outlook and actively uses a plethora of Eliade's original terms. In one interesting case, the author characterizes the term of *Hierophany*, one of the central terms of Eliade's theories, in the following way: the term „has come to usage to refer to a variety of astronomical or natural events that the Maya perceived as revelatory or divinely ordained" (NEWSOME 2001:233, footnote 3). No reflection of the theoretical context of the word outside of Maya studies is made – and, as the reader already suspects, not a single reference to Eliade appears.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that, as I have already mentioned, the methodological basis of the discipline is largely empirical, bordering on outright factographic. Most Mayanists were subsequently entirely unacquainted with *Maya Cosmos*' theoretical inspiration and took Freidel and Schele's concepts at face value. This created a paradoxical situation. The tools Eliade developed to analyze multiple religions and to find their common patterns were suddenly transposed to a single religion, in which the *etic* comparative scholarly terms were suddenly treated as native and *emic*. *Axis mundi*, as we will see presently, stopped to be an openly *etic* term that described the way different peoples of the world conceive of their relationship to the multiple layers of the world and the symbolic connection between them embodied in long vertical objects. Instead, as I will further document later, it was cast as *emic* and became synonymous with the Maya "world tree", the sacred ceiba that grew in the center of the world (and in every cardinal direction), connecting sky, earth, and the underworld. Few Mayanists realized that by adopting the term *axis mundi*, they were using a theoretical tool developed by a 20th century Romanian scholar; Schele and Freidel's books certainly gave them no clue as to this. And gone was the understanding that this concept (as well as other Eliadian concepts) was developed to examine the hypothesized fundamental interconnectedness of archaic religions by means of comparing their features.

That is not to say that there were no theorists with religious studies backgrounds, fully conscious of the heavy Eliadian influence the discipline was under. Probably the most notable among them was David Carrasco, an author of an eminent and frequently translated introduction to Mesoamerican religions and editor of a theoretical work focused on Eliade's

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

heritage (CARRASCO 1990, 1991). On the other hand, his summary of ancient Mesoamerican religions notwithstanding, Carrasco's main area of expertise lies mainly in the Aztec culture and religion, not in the Maya one. The Spanish archaeologist Miguel Rivera Dorado would be another case, just like the Slovak Mayanist Milan Kováč. In the works of these scholars, there is usually a marked difference to the typical Schelean approach: the use of Eliadian terms is conscious and therefore much more cautious; opposite to the typical case when the terms and concepts are simply stated, not discussed or even argued for (as Michael E. Smith pointed out in 2005 in his article about "cosmograms" in Mesoamerica: SMITH 2005). At the same time, in most cases the references are duly made and Eliade's name even sometimes gets quoted in the body of the text (see e.g. RIVERA DORADO 2001).

Another example, this time from Maya studies itself, is what I call the Mexican school – a group of scholars closely related to Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and the leading figures of its Maya studies, namely Mercedes de la Garza Camino, Martha Ilia Nájera Coronado, Laura Elena Sotelo Santos, and Alberto Morales Damián. The members of the Mexican school have religious studies training and as such are well-versed in classical Eliadian phenomenology of religion; consequently, they belong to the minority of Maya scholars who actually cite Eliade in their works (GARZA CAMINO 1984, 2002, 2007). Interestingly enough, the Eliadian influence among the Mayanists of the Autónoma is a very early one, predating even the Blood of Kings. The founding work in this respect is most probably Mercedes de la Garza's *Universo sagrado de la serpiente entre los antiguos mayas* (GARZA CAMINO 1986). The book exhibits a curious mix of Thompsonian and Eliadian influence, due to which I have been inclined to call this school "neo-thompsonian" (KOSTIĆOVÁ 2018a:157-160). In reference to religion, de la Garza and her colleagues tend to emphasize the inherent dualism Thompson attributed specifically to the divine figure of "Itzamna" (deciphered as "Itzamnaaj" by newer epigraphic research) and his function as harmony of opposites (male-female, earth-sky, lizards-birds, sun-rain, sky-underworld, etc.). Naturally, this works very well in combination with Eliade's concept of harmony of dualities, *coniunctio oppositorum* and *hieros gamos* of divinities embodying contrasting principles. Yes, Eliade's theories are accepted at face value and the authors do not specifically discuss them, instead only referring to them; in this sense, they function as a kind of Bible or another sacred text that is supposed to be reverently and enthusiastically quoted but not argued or disagreed with. However, at least the references to Eliade are constantly present throughout the most important monographs of this school, making their theoretical bases clearly visible. Again, we can argue for or against this theoretical background and its concrete usage in the hands of the Mexican scholars. But from the formal point of view, everything remains clear, fair, and above-board.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

Unfortunately, outside of this relatively small group of scholars it has become a habit to use Eliade's concepts without a single mention of his name or citation of his written works. While this is sometimes due to simple omission, in some cases, I'm afraid, the true reason is that the Mayanists in question are unaware of Eliade's very existence. Astor Aguilera's case attests to this most of all.

Eliadian Influence in Practice: the Case of the *Axis Mundi*

The core of Eliade's theory is best described in *The Sacred and Profane* and *Patterns in Comparative Religions*. While the former is mostly focused on, as Eliade says, the "archaic ontology", the latter deals with religious phenomena (such as the sun, moon, aquatic metaphors, vegetal metaphors, etc.) and the way they are conceived in different cultural backgrounds. Again I should stress that the goal is not to emphasize the specifics – in fact, it's quite the opposite. Eliade's method is essentially inductive: by means of processing a large quantity of data, he reaches a general conclusion applicable more or less to all of the cultures he worked with, irregularities notwithstanding. The results of this analysis serve as a map of the realm of the so-called "archaic mind". The very irregularities and original contents of the different religious cultures bring about creative moments through which different religious traditions contribute to the greater variety and ever more complex nature of humankind's religious landscape. As Eliade states in the introduction to *A History of Religious Ideas*, all the different religions show at the same time an essential unity and an incredible reservoir of novelty and originality. And while their core unity remains, the different novelties create religious innovations that consequently spread across the globe and enrich the humanity's spiritual treasury. Eliade postulates an ultimate deep and invisible unity of the history of human spirit (ELIADE 1978).

The word "ontology" used above is the center of the problem: according to Eliade, the "sacred" means "real" and the "real" means "order" to the archaic mind. Consequently, chaos is profane and unreal – human beings are unable to exist within it. In this sense, religions, specifically archaic religions, are a result of the strife to become real, to create for real and to live in a real world. In this sense, even though the shaman's ecstatic flight may be interpreted as essentially chaotic (or *liminal/antistructural* in Victor Turner's words) by a naïve bystander, for Eliade nothing can be further from the truth. By means of altered states of consciousness, the shaman reaches invisible worlds (experiencing the hidden order directly), touches the core of reality, and comes back with powers to restore the primeval order of things, usually sanctioned by gods. The creation and restoration of the order is the primary theme of some of Eliade's best known written works. Specifically, *Sacred and Profane* and

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

Myth of Eternal Return tackle the question of both spatial and temporal order established by the gods in the *illud tempus*, the so-called primeval time. The way the world was established in time is regularly replicated by the New Year rituals; the spatial blueprint of the world is mimicked by the outlines and/or core structures of cities, ceremonial centers, and buildings.

So what exactly is Eliadian in the *Maya Cosmos*? Briefly said, almost everything – the great theorist's presence is absolutely all-pervasive. The creation chapter reconstructs the *illud tempus* and the Maya temporal metaphors. The chapter on centering the world and to some extent ensouling the world and raising the tree deals with the spatial symbolism of the center and rituals that sanctify space – in this sense, these three chapters are direct heirs of the chapters on space and time in *Sacred and Profane*. The "Maya Souls" and "Dancing across the abyss" chapters with their stress on supernatural helpers, ecstatic trances, and vision quests are obvious children of Eliade's *Shamanism*. Even the last two chapters on sacred war and ballgame, which have no direct model in Eliade's books, are overflowing with Eliadian symbolism.

To illustrate the point on a concrete case, I will pick what is probably the most frequently mentioned Eliadian term – *axis mundi*, the central pole of the world (SCHELE – FREIDEL – PARKER 1993). This complex idea has been specifically reduced by Maya studies to the concept of a "world tree", based on the obscure Yucatec myth of tree-raising contained in Chilam Balam of Chumayel. The consensual scholarly interpretation reads it as an account of a great deluge and a subsequent re-creation of the world; Munro Edmonson in the 1980s insisted that, in fact, the text describes a ritual of a seating of the *b'ak'tun* (EDMONSON 1986). Schele and Freidel obviously interpret these trees as carriers of the sky, in other words, as mythical, symbolic objects – usually, the Maya studies use the term of *axis mundi* for them.

The *axis mundi* may safely be proclaimed as the most frequently employed Eliadian term of the Schelean discourse formation and, therefore, I will use it as an illustration of how Eliadian inspiration works in the monograph. In Eliade's theory, the term may be applied to any essentially vertical structure of an implicit or explicit heavy symbolical content, which is (or may be) interpreted as (a) standing in the center of the world, and (b) connecting its different strata, which (c) allows "shamans" (Maya kings included) to travel along its trunk. While sacred trees are naturally one of the candidates for such an epithet, Eliade mentions many other phenomena that serve as the *axis mundi* – a central pole of a nomad's tent or Siberian shaman's hut; a sacred mountain; a sacred city; a great temple. However, in the Maya context, the *axis mundi* became practically synonymous with the concept of the "world tree". Additionally, the discipline has established something close to a canonical depiction of the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

world axis, which is mainly seen in the carvings of Pacal's sarcophagus and the Group of the Cross at Palenque. In *Maya Cosmos*, the interpretation goes even further – the "world tree" is identified with the Milky Way, which thus becomes "the original" *axis mundi*. Interestingly enough, Eliade himself quotes such a case in the *Sacred and Profane* – among the Kwakiutl, he says, the sacred tree is identified with the Milky Way. It would be interesting to ask whether the recurrence of this same motif is a coincidence or if there is a causal link. In other words, whether the statement in *Sacred and Profane* was the original cause of the tree's identification with the Milky Way or whether it simply reinforces Schele's and Freidel's argument by transcultural comparison. Since no attention is given to *Maya Cosmos*' theoretical sources, the book itself gives no answers – moreover, the structure of its argumentation appears to suggest that the concepts, terms, reasoning, and conclusions are all Schele's and Freidel's. However, due to the omnipresent parallels between Eliade and *Maya Cosmos*, this is bordering on the impossible.

Another reason for the extraordinary interest in Maya tree symbolism may be found in another layer of Eliade's theories: the ideas of sacred nature and cosmic religion. According to him, the sacred manifests itself through the very structures of the cosmos and, subsequently, many natural phenomena acquire a sacred quality. Through this process, the cosmos becomes a secret code to be deciphered, overflowing with metaphors and symbols. The inherent sacredness of nature, as Eliade says, is often expressed through a metaphor of a "cosmic tree", which embodies the living nature of the world, its cycles of life and death, the qualities of immortality, eternal renewal, omniscience, omnipotence, sacredness, and ultimate reality. This is exactly how Schele and Freidel conceive the great *ceiba* of the Maya rainforest (FREIDEL – SCHELE – PARKER 1993:55, 71, 87-88, 251-252, 393-396). At the same time, they do not fail to make the connection with the myth of the creation. The *wakah chan* ("raised up sky") of the hieroglyphic inscriptions is identified with an authoritative certainty as the very same tree, most probably because of the Chumayel association. Not only spatial, but also temporal foundation of the sacred cosmos is reached – and we have come full Eliadian circle.[3]

[3] In much the same way, Schele and Freidel establish the term „cosmogram", whose indiscriminate use was rightfully criticized by Michael E. Smith (SMITH 2005). Again, the term is Eliadian in origin (although Eliade usually used its Latin equivalent *imago mundi*, see ELIADE 1958) and it denotes a global metaphor of the cosmos reflected in an inner order and specific type of foundation of a city or a temple. In Maya studies, the term is usually applied to cities with typical features (such as cardinal orientation and radial character). In a similar way, triadic structures tend to be interpreted as the reflection of the three stars of Orion that represent the three original hearthstones; curious

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

A Response to Miguel Ángel Astor Aguilera

I believe I have sufficiently shown that Eliade's theories have seeped into Maya studies largely unnoticed. At the same time, I gave the reader a taste of the effect it has had and the problems it has brought about. Now the question remains: what can be done with the situation?

Miguel Ángel Astor Aguilera has apparently reached a radical conclusion: we need to see through Eliade's flawed methodology and get rid of it as soon as possible. Here is the essence of Astor's opinion of Eliade:

I cannot help but come to the conclusion [...] that Eliade was convinced he could interpret what indigenous values and concepts were regardless of never meeting the peoples or speaking the language of those whose religion he purportedly understood. I do not doubt that part of what drove Eliade's universal concept of shamanism, sacrality, and an ever-present search by humans for the divine was based on what *he* considered respect for other cultures; however, respect to me means actually trying to understand indigenous concepts in terms of their own native value system, not a universal one based on one's own beliefs (ASTOR AGUILERA 2010:11).

So what should we do instead? Astor suggests a different approach based on Michel Foucault, seeking what he terms "holistic cosmological views" and "holistic, nonbinary views" (ASTOR AGUILERA 2010), which would do away with Eliade's flawed dualism of sacred/profane. In any case, he calls for a fresh and new theoretical approach.

There are some clear problems with this. For one, the Eliadian theoretical apparatus has been integrated into Maya studies way to deeply for it to be purged away easily. As we have seen, some central theoretical concepts used in Maya studies (such as the *axis mundi*) owe their very existence to Eliade and if we refuse the theoretical tool, they would fall apart completely. That, I believe, is ultimately unnecessary. The main problem of Eliadian influence in Maya studies is not the great homage, explicit or implicit, that is paid to Eliade in the discipline: in fact, as I hope to have amply shown, the main problem is the lack of reflection upon it. Maya studies need to recognize Eliade's impact in the discipline and accept his theories as they are: as a tool, a specific method designed for specific uses. First and foremost, we need to ask

structures with chaotic windows and no apparent practical function tend to be called „microcosms". While these interpretations may have their merit, their Eliadian theoretical origin remains basically forgotten.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

ourselves the question of whether the method has been applied correctly – and the question is all the more pressing since it has been given almost no serious attention up to now. This is closely tied to a pressing need for a larger theoretical self-reflection in Maya studies. While its empirical character has undoubtedly yielded great results in these past few decades, it urgently needs to be complemented with theory, lest it gets lost in another spontaneous and unreflected glorification of some future new icon.

And that is my second point. Astor rightfully criticizes intents "to comprehend Maya peoples through a Zen Buddhist lens, while heavily idealizing and romanticizing them, while trying to find oneself because one is disillusioned with being Western" (ASTOR AGUILERA 2010:15). But his own focus on the non-dualistic, holistic nature of Native American worldviews is full of core concepts of contemporary alternative spiritualities, trying to combat the dualistic concept of the cosmos supposedly born of the so-called "Carthesian-Newtonian paradigm" (which, incidentally, Astor mentions – and criticizes – as well; ASTOR AGUILERA 2010:7). Every scholar of the so-called "New Age" can immediately recognize this as a biased idea that serves the contemporary alternative milieu in its discursive war against both traditional religions (specifically Catholicism) and science (KOSTIĆOVÁ 2018b; see also HANEGRAAFF 1996; HEELAS 2009). Astor shows similar tendencies in his criticism of the concept of "religion", which, when applied to indigenous traditions of the Americas, is supposed to distort them and bring about many misunderstandings. In other words, while he loudly refuses one theory's implicit and unreflected acceptance, he at the same time invites an approach which is firmly based in contemporary alternative spiritualities. All of this without an explicit reference to them (and most probably unintentionally).

This fact does not negate Astor's import and the value of the rest of his book. In any case, the distinct flavor of alternative spiritualities is exclusively reserved for the theoretical introduction and the bulk of the monograph does not show the same tendencies. Nevertheless, here we have another reason why Maya studies should broaden its scope and begin a serious theoretical and methodological reflection: because the same thing could happen again.

Conclusion

So to sum up, the goal is not to get rid of Eliade: in fact, many points suggest that a conscious and methodologically rigorous analysis of the relationship between the Schelean formation and Eliade's theories may yet yield interesting results. To some extent, Eliade's phenomenology (after some revision) remains a useful tool – but it must be recognized for what it is: a Western *etic* approach. First and foremost, its inductive nature must be

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

recognized and the material must be consciously and diligently reviewed to see where the scholars made well-funded conclusions based on the primary material and where Eliade's theories themselves (or impressions created by their unreflected use) were the chief instigators of some types of interpretations applied in a deductive manner (as opposed to the essentially inductive nature of Eliade's approach). Let us illustrate the point on the case of *axis mundi*: we need to decide where the tool helps us to understand a specific dimension of a phenomenon – and where it rather obscures the phenomenon, misleading us or impeding us from seeing its other dimensions. For example, the practical questions may be the following: is the post-classic Chumayel myth relevant for analysing late classic iconography? Are the "world trees" of Palenque indeed fully symbolic in nature or were they real and tangible cultic objects that physically existed in the Maya cities? And if so, what was their *raison d'etre*, apart from possibly symbolizing some kind of *axis mundi*? And what about the visual quotes of some iconographical traits of these trees that can be found in some depictions of a Maya king? Do they simply mean the king was understood as an *axis mundi* – or do they have other functions as well? Without recognizing the term *axis mundi* for its *etic* nature we won't get far. On the other hand, acknowledging the theoretical concept for what it is allows us to apply it in a more creative and methodologically rigorous way. We don't have to throw Eliade out with the bathwater – as long as we are fully conscious of the theoretical framework we use. And the same applies to *Maya Cosmos*, which, regardless of its more problematic aspects, rightfully deserves an important place in the history of Maya studies.

All in all, wider theoretical and methodological reflection would benefit Maya studies in many other ways. As the discipline has been stuck in the realm of phenomenology of religion for too long, it has made little or no use of other exciting and possibly fruitful methodologies such as structuralism, from which the neighboring discipline of Aztec studies has greatly benefited.[4] There are many exciting methodologies out there and many inspiring theoretical approaches that, when combined, may help to create a more complex and multilayered understanding of the ancient Maya culture. To paraphrase the old Czech proverb once again, every theory is a good servant, but an evil master. We should carefully examine the masters we have allowed to rule us, transform their dominance into cooperation and, instead of expulsing them, we should invite as many of them in as we can. I firmly believe that instead of looking for the one "true" theory and demonizing the "wrong" one, we should strive for a greater theoretical and methodological plurality. Every theory has its possibilities and limits;

[4] See e.g. the studies made by Susan Gillespie, specifically Susan Gillespie, *Aztec Kings: The Construction of Rulership in Mexica History*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press 1989, p. 272.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

there is no single ideal approach. And the truth, as Urs von Balthasar has poetically written, is symphonic anyway.

Bibliography

ARNOLD, Philip (2001): Cosmic Trees. In David Carrasco (ed.): *Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Cultures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 267-268.

ASTOR AGUILERA, Miguel Ángel (2010): *The Maya World of Communicating Objects: Quadripartite Crosses, Trees, and Stones*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

CALLAWAY, Carl Douglas (2006): *The Maya Cross at Palenque: A Reappraisal*. Graduate Thesis presented at the University of Texas at Austin.

CARRASCO, David (1990): *Religions of Mesoamerica: Cosmovision and Ceremonial Centers*. San Francisco: Harper&Row.

CARRASCO, David (1991): *Waiting for the Dawn: Mircea Eliade in Perspective*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.

DREYFUS, Hubert – RABINOW, Paul (1984): *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. London and New York: Routledge.

EDMONSON, Munro S. (1986): *Heaven Born Merida and its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

ELIADE, Mircea (1954): *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Or, Cosmos and History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

ELIADE, Mircea (1958): *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. New York: Sheed and Ward.

ELIADE, Mircea (1959): *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harnes Books.

ELIADE, Mircea (1964): *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

ELIADE, Mircea (1978): *A History of Religious Ideas*, Vol. 1. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

FIKES, Jay Courtney (1993): *Carlos Castaneda, Academic Opportunism and the Psychedelic Sixties*, Victoria: Millenia Press.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

FOUCAULT, Michel (1982): *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London, New York: Routledge.

FREIDEL, David – SCHELE, Linda – PARKER, Joy (1993): *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path*. New York: Quill William Morrow.

FREIDEL, David A. (1992): The Trees of Life: Ahau as Idea and Artifact in Classic Lowland Maya Civilization. In Arthur E. Demarest, Geoffrey W. Conrad (eds.): *Ideology and Pre-Columbian Civilizations*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, pp. 115-133.

FURST, Peter T. (1976): Fertility, Vision Quest, and Auto-Sacrifice: Some Thoughts on Ritual Blood-Letting Among the Maya. In Merle Greene Robertson (ed.): *The Art, Iconography & Dynastic History of Palenque*, part III., proceedings of the Segunda Mesa Redonda de Palenque, December 14-21, 1974 – Palenque. Pebble Beach: The Pre-Columbian Art Research, The Robert Louis Stevenson School, pp. 181-194.

GARZA CAMINO, Mercedes de la (1984): *El universo sagrado de la serpiente entre los mayas*. Mexico: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Filologicas, Centro de Estudios Mayas.

GARZA CAMINO, Mercedes de la (2002): Origen, estructura y temporalidad del cosmos. In Mercedes de la Garza Camino, Martha Ilia Nájera Coronado (ed.): *Religión Maya*. Madrid: Editorial Trotta.

GARZA CAMINO, Mercedes de la (2007): Palenque como *imago mundi* y la presencia en ella de Itzamná. In *Estudios de cultura maya* XXX: pp. 15-36.

GILLESPIE, Susan (1989): *Aztec Kings: The Construction of Rulership in Mexica History*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

HANEGRAAFF, Wouter J. (1996): *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*. Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill.

HEELAS, Paul (2009): *Religion and Spirituality in the Modern World: Spiritualities of Life: New Age Romanticism and Consumptive Capitalism*. [Oxford]: Willey-Blackwell.

JONES, LINDSAY (1997): Conquests of the Imagination: Maya-Mexican Polarity and the Story of Chichén Itzá. In *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 99, No. 2, pp. 291-305.

KLEIN, Cecelia F. – GUZMÁN, Eulogio – MANDELL, Elisa C. - STANFIELD-MAZZI, Maya (2002): The Role of Shamanism in Mesoamerican Art. In *Current Anthropology* 43 (3): pp. 383-419.

KOSTIĆOVÁ, Zuzana (2018): *Náboženství Mayů* [*Maya Religion*]. Praha: Karolinum.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

KOSTIĆOVÁ, Zuzana (2018): Religion, Spirituality, Worldviews, Discourses: Revisiting the Term "Spirituality" as Opposed to "Religion" [online]. In *CEJCR* 2 (2), pp. 81-97, available online at http://cejcr.com/2018-02-spirituality.html.

LEACH, Edmund (1961): Two Essays Concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time. In *Rethinking Anthropology*. London: The Athlone Press, pp. 124-136.

LEEUW, Gerardus van der (2014): *Religion in Essence and Manifestation: A Study in Phenomenology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

MORALES DAMIÁN, Alberto (2002): Unidad y dualidad, el dios supremo de los antiguos mayas: coincidencia de opuestos. In *Estudios de cultura maya* XXIII, pp. 199-224.

NÁJERA CORONADO, Martha Ilia (1987): *El don de la sangre en el equilibrio cósmico: El sacrificio y el autosacrificio sangriento entre los antiguos mayas*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México 1987.

NEWSOME, Elizabeth (2001): *Trees of Paradise and Pillars of the World: The Serial Stela Cycle of „18-Rabbit-God K", King of Copan"*. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press.

OTTO, Rudolf (1936): *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*. London: H. Milford, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

RIVERA DORADO, Miguel (2001): *La ciudad maya: un escenario sagrado*. Madrid: Editorial Complutense.

SCHELE, Linda – FREIDEL, David (1990): *A Forest of Kings: The Untold Story of the Ancient Maya*. New York: Quill William Morrow.

SCHELE, Linda – MILLER, Mary Ellen (1992): *Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art*. London: Thames and Hudson.

SMART, Ninian (1996): *Dimensions of the Sacred: An Anatomy of the World's Beliefs*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

SMART, Ninian (2000): *Worldviews: Crosscultural Exploration of Human Beliefs*. Santa Barbara: University of California Press.

SMITH, Michael E. (2005): Did the Maya Build Architectural Cosmograms?, In *Latin American Antiquity*, 16 (2): pp. 217-224.

SOTELO SANTOS, Laura Elena (2002): Los dioses: energías en el espacio y en el tiempo. In Mercedes de la Garza Camino, Martha Ilia Nájera Coronado (ed.): *Religión maya*. Madrid: Editorial Trotta, pp. 83-114.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

SPICKARD, James V. (2014): Phenomenology. In Michael Stausberg – Steven Engler (eds.): *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 336.

STUCKRAD, Kocku von (2014): *Scientification of Religion: A Historical Study of Discursive Change*. Boston and Berlin: De Gruyter.

WALISS, Robert (2003): *Shamans/Neo-Shamans: Ecstasy, Alternative Archaeologies and Contemporary Pagans*. London and New York: Routledge.

ZNAMENSKI, Andrei (2007): *The Beauty of the Primitive: Shamanism and Western Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zuzana M. Kostićová (1980) is a Religious Studies scholar specialized both in the Pre-Columbian religions of Mesoamerica and the contemporary alternative spiritualities. She mainly moves on the intersection of these two themes, analyzing both the reflection of the Pre-Columbian worldviews on alternative spiritualities and the impact of alternative spiritualities on the scholarly interpretations of Maya Religion.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0004

sciendo

Mural Paintings of Ixmiquilpan. Barbarism and Civilization

MONIKA BRENIŠÍNOVÁ

Center for Ibero-American Studies,
Charles University, Praha, Czech Republic
monika.brenisinova@ff.cuni.cz

ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the 16th century mural paintings that cover the walls of the parish church of San Miguel Arcángel, a former Augustinian mission in Ixmiquilpan. The paintings represent warriors in battle and mixing the Western iconography with the prehispanic one. They are associated with the Chichimeca War (1540-1590), a conflict that threatened the existence of the Viceroyalty of New Spain (1535-1821). The article examines the images of "otherness" and related stereotypes conceiving the paintings as a place, where the identity of local inhabitants was discussed and putting particular emphasis on the pair of categories – barbarism and civilization. In terms of method, it is interdisciplinary and interpretative. It combines the classical historical, art historical concepts and methods with terms and procedures of anthropology and social science.

KEY WORDS: 16th century, Augustinians, Chichimecas, evangelization, identity, Mexicas, monasteries, mural painting, otherness, Otomís, stereotype

Introduction

The Ixmiquilpan murals, covered under several layers of lime, were discovered by accident in the 1960s during the reconstruction of the parish church. The murals come from the 16th century New Spain, yet they are abundant in prehispanic iconography. That is the reason why

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

they immediately have attracted the attention of scholars all over the world. (KAM NYE 1968:25, 33; PIERCE 1981:1).[1]

Ixmiquilpan is a municipality situated in the heart of the Mezquital Valley in Hidalgo State. In the 16th century, the Ixmiquilpan population consisted solely of Otomí people, a settled tribe of agricultures and farmers. Since the 15th century, the Otomíes were subordinated to the Mexicas[2] (CLENDINNEN 1991; CLENDINNEN 2010; GRUZINSKI 1992; HASSIG 2001; LEÓN-PORTILLA 2013; MORGAN 1984:191-220). They formed part of the Triple Alliance and Ixmiquilpan served as the Nahua capital of the Mezquital Valley. It lays on the northern border of Mexican Plateau. It is an arid, desert area, which, in the past, separated the settled Mesoamerican civilizations of Central Mexico from the North zone populated by the Chichimecas, unsettled nomad indigenous tribes and, hence, known as *La Gran Chichimeca*. The frontier between these two zones was flexible, but in the early colonial period, it was set by the Lerma and Pánuco rivers (BERNAND – GRUZINSKI 1998:351-354; JACKSON 2013:28-29; JIMÉNEZ NÚÑEZ 2006:68-70).[3]

The Christianization of the zone was started after 1530 by the Franciscan order. In the 1540s the Franciscans were followed by the Augustinians, who settled down in the Mezquital Valley (BALLESTEROS GARCÍA 2000:81; BORGES 1992:78-84; DUVERGER 2003:30-33, 37-38; JACKSON 2013:21-29).[4] In 1546 the discovery of silver ore deposits in Zacatecas changed the history of the region. This turning point caused several significant changes. Among them, in particular, the arrival of an increasing number of Spaniards, yearning for

1 The paintings were publicly presented for the first time by Jorge Olvera, a Mexican ethnologist, at the Congress of Americanists, an international event, which took place in Mexico City in August 1962.

2 In this paper I use the term Mexicas, which is used in the Occidental historiography to name the Mexicas, Nahua people who founded Tenochtitlan and became rulers of Aztec empire. Indeed, the Mexicas themselves used the term Azteca (from Nahuatl, *the people from Aztlan*) only for the period of their peregrination. After their sedentarization in the Mexico Valley, they began to use the term Mexicas (from Nahuatl, the ones from México), and/or Tenochcas (from Nahuatl, the ones from Tenochtitlan) referring to México-Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital. As Nahuatl speaking they belong to the Nahua indigenous people.

3 The zone of *La Gran Chichimeca* consisted of contemporary Mexican States of Nayarit, Jalisco, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas. In Nahuatl, the language of *Mexicas*, it was denoted *Chichimecatlalli* (from Nahuatl, country of Chichimecas).

4 The Franciscans concentrated their forces in the area around Tula (e.g. Tepeji del Río, Alfajayucan, Atotonilco de Tula, Tlahuelilpan, Tepetitlan, Huichapan, and Tecozautla), while the Augustinians occupied the Mezquital Valley (e.g. Mixquihuala, Actopan, Ixmiquilpan, and Ajacuba). The secular clergy, the priests, also operated in the area.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

wealth, and related lifestyle modifications (e.g. free grazing cattle, labor in mines, cultivation of European crofts, etc.) related to the construction of *Camino Real*[5] crammed with *presidios*[6]. Despite all these changes, the Chichimecas, who never had been subordinated to the Mexicas, continued to bother the local Spanish and settled indigenous populations all over the 16th century, refusing not only to subdue to the Spaniards' domination but also the efforts of missionaries to be evangelized. The constant conflicts between Spaniards and Chichimecas culminated in two wars: the Mixton War (1540-1542) and the Chichimeca War (1550-1590)[7] (BERNAL 2009:283-284; BERNAND – GRUZINSKI 1998:351-359; POWELL 2014; ROMÁN GUTIÉRREZ 1993:360-366).

The core questions of this article are: What the Ixmiquilpan murals represent and which is their contemporary religious and social context? How the categories of barbarism and civilization are displayed? How they were constructed and what stereotyped visions were hidden behind them? What do they tell us about the identity of locals and what can we induce about the contemporary processes of making identity between the authorities and local inhabitants? Briefly, what message is encoded in the paintings and how was it received by spectators?

The paper opens with a brief overview of methodological approaches, concepts and notions with which I am operating in this text. It then continues with an iconographical description and iconological analysis within a contemporary historical framework before presenting my proper interpretation seeking for better understanding of religious and social context and, eventually, summing up the conclusions.

5 The *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* (Royal Road of the Interior Land) was a trade route that connected the capital with the silver mines on the North.

6 The *presidios*, i.e. fortified bases, conformed during the Spanish colonial era the basis of defense system of mines, ports, trade roads and frontiers.

7 The work *La Guerra Chichimeca* (*1550-1600)* by Ph. W. Powell, which was for the first time published in 1952, remains up today the main source of information about the Chichimeca War. Powel argues that this war lasted from the 1550s to the 1600s. Nevertheless, there is no consensus among scholars on dating the conflicts with *Chichimeca* Indians. For example, José Francisco Román Gutiérrez dates them back to the 1530s.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Methodological Framework and Terminology

The main objectives of this article are:

1) to describe and interpret the paintings based on iconographical description and iconological analyses;

2) deconstruct the "images" of barbarism and civilization and using them as a tool of historical analysis, unveil the stereotyped visions of "otherness" hidden behind them;

3) reconstruct the religious and social context with the aid of anthropological and sociological concepts and induce appropriate conclusions.

The chosen methodology is interdisciplinary, it mingles the classical historical (e.g. study of written evidence and source criticism) and art historical methods (e.g. iconographical description and iconological analyses) with procedures and concepts of anthropology (symbolic anthropology) and social psychology (theory of identity). It follows that the work is interpretative, based on the deconstruction of images of barbarism and civilization and re-assembling the stereotyped visions of "otherness" contained in them. The interpretation is based on the study of personal research material, contemporary visual and written evidence, scholar literature, and induction.

According to the social psychology and the social identity theory (TAJFEL 1972; TAJFEL – BILLIG – BUNDY – FLAMENT 1971; TURNER 1985),[8] the perception of "otherness" occupies an important role in the processes of self-identification and social integration. In the course of these processes the individuals identify themselves with behaviour, morals, and habits of important individuals from their social environment (e.g. parents, priests, rulers and/or other forms of authorities). This implies that individuals tend to collaborate and share their identity within a group and at the same time to cultivate and protect their identity (in both cases behaviour aims to achieve a psychic safety).

[8] The social identity theory was developed by H. Tajfel, a British social psychologist of Polish origin at the beginning of the 1970s. It is a social psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in groups and intergroup relations, which nowadays contains a significant number of concepts and theories. It has generated a quantity of research and nowadays it is one of the most significant general theories on self, group, and their relationship. In the 1980s, one of the Tajfel's students and later colleagues and co-authors J. Ch. Turner (together with their graduate students) elaborated a so-called Self-Categorization Theory, which deals with the role of the categorization process in social identity phenomena and the theory of the group.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Simply said, we can state that the mere existence of social differences makes people evaluate the others, predominantly on behalf of their group (TURNER – TAJFEL 1986:7-24). It implies that the negative definition is the most effective and generally people tend to create their identity by delimitation, i.e. by setting boundaries between "us" and "them". It means that the "otherness" represents one of the key factors in the process of self-identification and social integration and that people generate within these acts ideas about themselves (auto-stereotypes) and others (hetero- or xeno-stereotypes). These are contained in the so-called images of "otherness" and as such can be observed (BLOOM 1990:23; LIPPMANN 2015:106-202).[9]

These images of "alterity" have many forms. They are present in human behaviour, mentality or gestures and are documented in visual, written and verbal evidence. The problem is that these images are based on experiences and perception, acts that are made up of processes of reduction, selection, and generalization, so the resulting images can not correspond to a complex reality or personal experience, on the contrary – they are based on simple organized forms and, as such they are rather abstract than real. It turns out that the images of alterity represent simplified schemes and clichés and embody what we call prejudices and stereotypes (KOSSSLYN 1980:19-22).

In the past, the "otherness" was perceived in many different ways. For the most of the Occidental history, the people tried to protect and enclose themselves from the "otherness". As an eloquent example, we can take the image of the Orient that played a significantly important role in the process of making the European identity, as shown by E. W. Said, a Palestinian American professor of literature and one of the founders of postcolonial studies (SAID 1994) and Tz. Todorov, a French philosopher, literary theorist and essayist of Bulgarian origin, in the case of Latin American Studies (TODOROV 1987).[10] By the same way, the minorities and other groups of Occidental society has been othered such as peasants,

[9] The term stereotype (in modern psychological meaning) was coined by W. Lippmann, a North American journalist, in a variety of his articles and columns, particularly in his book *Public Opinion* (1922). In following decades, the notion of stereotype has been elaborated especially in relation to such phenomena as national identity, state and nationalism. *Cf*. W. Bloom.

[10] Said's study *Orientalism* (1978) is considered ground-breaking as it launched a wave of discussions about Europe's relationship with non-European cultures and has influenced many other researchers not only in the field of historiography. Said's approach was, for example, particularly important to Tz. Todorov, a French philosopher, literary theorist and essayist of Bulgarian origin, and his work *La conquista de América: el problema del otro* [The Conquest of America: The Question of The Other].

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Jews or women. The identity of individuals and social communities as well is constructed of different layers. In the early Modern Era, these components were, primarily, the consciousness of estate, professional and above all religious awareness; other factors, such as the relation to the birthplace (or landscape in general), family or family clan and to the state could have also an important role.

In this paper, the 16th century monastic architecture together with its artistic decoration are conceived as a form of symbolic communication. A monastery is seen as a liminal place, which stood out of time and space, and as such allowed to make up new identities using the – at the same time contradictory and complementary – dynamic between two modalities of human society – "structure" and "communitas" (TURNER 1969:96-97, 125-130; TURNER 1982:44-51, 58-59). Simultaneously, the missions served as the "theatres of the power", where the authorities performed social, cultural and religious concepts of the dominant culture. So according to Cl. Geertz, the missions – along with all the set of missionary activities (e.g. sermon, catechism, religious theatre, etc.) – provided a "cultural frame", from which the dominant culture defined itself and based its superiority and legitimacy (GEERTZ 2003:15-16). In this sense the visual arts presented to the audience the models "of reality" and "for reality", introducing the viewers to the worldview of the dominant culture along with its mindset and instructing them how to live in it (GEERTZ 2003:90-92).

As regards the terminology being applied in this article, several points need to be clarified. The category of barbarism is universal, it stems from the contradiction between civilized and non-civilized society, and as such it was well known in both traditions, the Western and the Mesoamerican ones. In this paper, both terms are used as tools of historical analysis, i.e. in their contemporary meanings and without any evaluative, causative and/or even racist connotations (ALVA 1992; BEAUFILS – FERRO 2003; GRUZINSKI – FERRO 2014).[11] The significance of these categories has changed in space and time. As regards the history of Occident, the term barbarism has a long tradition going back at least to the Antiquity, when barbarians were considered those, who did not share the culture and language with Greeks and later with Romans; till the Christians began to associate this category with faith and

[11] In this point, I have to underline that I am conscious and familiar with debates on the postcolonial discourse and/or rights of native Americans. In this light, it is necessary to admit that up to the 20th century, all the native cultures were viewed as barbaric and, hence, the colonization was perceived as necessary as shown by the application of traditional (colonial) terminology stressing the Eurocentric gaze for the description of the history of Americas (e.g. use of terms such as *despoblado* [from Spanish, unoccupied] for the description of American territory unsettled by white men; or *guerra* [from Spanish, war] for designation of an indigenous defence, etc.).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

considered barbarians all the pagans, i.e. those who did not believed in Christ. The notion of civilization arose later, in the course of the 18th century, and as such it does not figure in written materials of the studied period (MORGAN 1984; ELIAS – DUNNING – GOUDSBFOM – MENNELL 2000).[12] Nevertheless, the Spanish used instead of the modern notion civilisation the term *la policía* referring to the organized, political life that can be viewed as synonymous to its more modern equivalent.

As regards the Mexicas, they understood these two categories in a dichotomy of nomadic and sedentary life. While the nomadic life was considered barbaric and associated with gathering and hunting, the sedentary life was perceived as civilized and it was valued in the first place for its socio-political organization (e.g. *altepetl*[13]; see VYŠNÝ 2015:196 and *calpulli*[14]; see VYŠNÝ 2012:26-33, 57-58, 101-102), economy (based on agriculture, markets, and long-distance commerce), complex polytheistic religion and other characteristics associated to Mesoamerican civilizations (KIRCHHOFF 1943:92-107; WILLEY – ECKHOLM – MILLON 1964:37-39).[15] The Mexicas used the word *chichimeca*, associated to the various

[12] There is no consensus among scholars on the definition of the term civilization. The concepts of barbarism and civilization became especially important in the 18th and 19th centuries and this from the point of view of universal theories on the development of humanity as evidenced by the entries of encyclopaedias. In 1877 the book Ancient Society of American anthropologist L. H. Morgan appeared, where he presented his tripartite scheme of the evolution of humanity leading from the savagery, through barbarism, to the civilization. Although his definitions were vague – he defined the savagery as the period of hunters and gatherers, the barbarism as the era of the domestication of plants and animals and the civilization as the epoch of the state – his ideas influenced the thinking all over the 19th century (e.g. K. G. Marx and F. Engels) and the first half of the 20th century. The book The Civilizing Process. Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations by N. Elias, a German sociologist is considered to be the most important work of the 20th century on the theme of civilization.

[13] An *altepetl* is a *difrasismo*, which literally means "the mountain full of water". It belongs among the most important cultural concepts of Mesoamerica and designates at the same time an ethnic entity as territorial. This geographical location glyph was used not only to designate peoples but also their temples; and among other things, it refers also to the importance of water and the general image of the Mesoamerican world.

[14] A *calpulli*, i.e. “large house”, is a main organizational unit of Mexica society. Each *altepetl* was divided into several *calpulli*. These were responsible for diverse social (e.g. education), religious (e.g. organization of religious festivities) and economic tasks (e.g. distribution of land and agriculture).

[15] Mesoamerica is a cultural and geographical concept designating the region extended from Mexico through Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, western part of Honduras and Nicaragua to Nicoya peninsula in northwestern Costa Rica where an array of advanced civilizations (Aztec and Maya civilizations) with common cultural elements (e.g. a complex calendar system, agriculture based on maize, ballgame, human sacrifice, etc.) was formed. The notion of Mesoamerica comes from a Mexican anthropologist with German origins Paul Kirchhoff, who introduced it in the 1940s. In the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

nomad ethnic groups of hunter-gatherers (e.g. Huachichiles, Zacatecos, Cascanes, Pame, etc.) living in the north (GÓNZALEZ TORRES 1995:63; SIMÉON 1977:96),[16] in counterpoint to the term *tolteca*,[17] related to the noble and habile craftsmen and artists; while the first term designated barbarism, the second civilization (PIERCE 1981:1; GÓNZALEZ TORRES 1995:180; SAHAGÚN 1981:210; SIMÉON 1977:713).

In this text I am using the terms Spaniards, Natives and missionaries. These are mere abstractions, since in reality the Europeans who came into the Americas were confronted with a rich variety of people of different social statuses, ages, professions, etc. (despite the pressure of Spanish Crown on the homogeneity of Spanish colonization). The same goes for the category of "Indians", who started to identify themselves as such only after the coming of Spaniards in direct contradiction to them (BERNABEU ALBERT – GIUDICELLI – HAVARD 2013:9-31; GRUZINSKI 2013:94).[18] Since the 20th century and the rise of indigenous populations' rights, the term Native American (or Natives) is preferred to name the indigenous peoples of the Americas, in view of the fact that it recognizes their primacy. In this text, I am referring to the narrower groups of Natives, whose names are based on shared language and history, such as the Mexicas, Otomíes and Chichimecas (DUVERGER 1993:9; LIMÓN OLVERA 2012:292-293, 390).

1960s this concept was revised by G. R. Willey, G. F. Eckholm and R. F. Millon in relation to the publication of Handbook of Middle American Indian.

16 The definition of the notion Chichimecas significantly varies. Generally, it has been translated as "inhabitants of Chichiman, land of milk", "the one who sucks or breast") or as "lineage of dogs". For inhabitants of Mexican Valley, it had both, positive (noble savage) and negative (barbarian) connotation, since it was used to name the settled Mesoamerican civilizations (e.g. Tolteca-Chichimeca, Nonoalca-Chichimeca), as well as the northern nomadic ethnic groups (e.g. Nahua-Chichimecas, Oton-Chichimecas, Cuexteca-Chichimecas). Allegedly, the Chichimecas were also ancestors of the Mexicas. Eventually, the Chichimeca tribes are sometimes excluded from Mesoamerican cultural area (see the note 10), because of their nomadic way of life.

17 The term Toltecas had for the Mexicas various meanings. It was used to denominate the inhabitants of Tula, the various ethnic groups that came into the Central Mexico in the 10th century and dominated different regions of Mesoamerica with their dominion known as Toltec Empire (900-1200) and, eventually, artists and artisans, masters or skilled craftsmen.

18 S. Barnabéu Albert, Ch. Giudicelli and G. Harvard use the notion indianización (from Spanish, indigenización) to name the process of transformation of various indigenous ethnicities to one homogenous group. However, other authors, e.g. French historian S. Gruzinski use the same term to express the processes of appropriation and assimilation of western culture by the indigenous ones, mainly of Christianity.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Primary Sources. Written and Visual Evidence

The main source of this paper represents an audio-visual material collected during field research that I carried out in 2013 at the territory of Central Mexico.[19] For the comparison and contextualization, I worked with two different groups of primary sources dating from the 16th century: first, a collection of written evidence (e.g. chronicles, letters, and annals, etc.); second, an assembly of visual evidence (e.g. maps and colonial codices, etc.), which are listed below. While the first group was elaborated by white European men (solely by regular and secular clergymen, royal and vice-royal officials, Spanish conquerors and colonizers), the second one was made by native painter-scribes known as *tlacuilos* (SIMÉON 1977:583; TOWSEND 2017:xviii), who became – after the European intrusion – part of colonial administration. It turns out that the written evidence, which was meant to serve to royal, vice-royal, ecclesiastical or individual purposes, speaks more about the western imagery than about the native one. The visual evidence, which should serve solely to the intentions of the former native aristocracy, testifies about native imagery, although it speaks rather about the elite worldview than that of regular people (e.g. indigenous farmers, workers, and artisans). Moreover, in both cases, we have to take into consideration a significant time gap together with a high number of mediators (e.g. scribes, archivists, historians, translators, editors or anybody who stands between the reader and the resource itself) that may have contributed to the distortion of described events, persons and phenomena.

Ixmiquilpan Murals. Iconographical Program and Iconological Analysis

The set of studied murals covers the wall of the former monasterial church of San Miguel Arcángel, which, nowadays, serves as a parish. A former Augustinian monastery was founded between the years 1546-1550 and built between 1550-1560. The majority of specialists on the theme agree that the paintings were commissioned in the 1570s in direct relation to the Chichimeca War and the General Chapter of the Augustinian order, which was held there in 1572. Although there is no consensus on the personality of the patron of the paintings, the friar Andrés de Mata is most frequently mentioned as a maecenas of the iconographic program since he was the founder of the monastery and was in the office of its

[19] In 2013 I had the opportunity due to support of the Mexican Government Scholarship for International Students to carry on a vast field research during which I visited and documented 116 monasteries situated in the area of Central Mexico (Ciudad de México, Estado de México State, Morelos State, Puebla State, Tlaxcala State and Hidalgo State), the Ixmiquilpan monastery was one of them.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

prior till 1572. In any case, we can state that the paintings were elaborated by the indigenous painters and commissioned by the Augustinian order (ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:9-10; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1982:9; KUBLER 2012:109, 620; McANDREW 1965: 127, 482; PIERCE 1981:1).[20]

The paintings are polychromous, executed in tones of brown, yellow, green and blue and contoured by a black line. They are composed of two large decorative friezes that are situated at eye level and cover the nave almost all along its length. The background of the friezes is conformed – in accordance with the Renaissance mode – by the acanthus leaves. While in Occident this type of paintings is traditionally known as grotesque, in colonial Mexico it has been labelled as *pintura a lo romano* (KUBLER 2012:444; TOUSSAINT 1965:220-226; VOCABULARIO 1975:385).[21] They gained other names, such as *frisos* or *grutescos monumentales* (in English, monumental friezes or grotesques) (ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:9-10; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1982:1, 9-10), pointing out their significant dimensions. In addition, there are four other paintings that are iconographically related to the iconographic program of the friezes: two monumental paintings located in the tympana under the choir and two scenes hidden in the church vaults, one in the presbytery, and another in the choir. Unfortunately, the iconographic program is not complete giving the lack of apse painting, which remains a pivotal problem that complicates, if not precludes, the attempts at an overall interpretation of the paintings. I am trying to overcome this lack by comparing the studied set of painting with other Augustinian iconographic programs from the area (e.g. Actopan and Santa María Xoxoteco).

Concerning the elaboration of the paintings, they combine Western and Mesoamerican elements and techniques. Since the prehispanic iconography predominates, they represent one of the most striking examples of the Indochristian art. (MORENO VILLA 1986; REYES-VALERIO 2000).[22] To the Western tradition, we count the elaboration of the friezes with the

[20] G. Kubler places the execution of the paintings in the 1570s, when the construction of the convent was likely to be accomplished and when the paintings of nearby Augustinian monasteries in Actopan or Oaxtepec were achieved too. The majority of authors agree with E. I. Estrada de Gerlero. She proposed that the friezes could be painted on the occasion of the general assembly of the Augustinian order which was held here in 1572. The main topics of the assembly were the wars against Chichimecas and Huastecas, which were both proclaimed fair.

[21] The definition of the *pintura a lo romano* can be read in *Ordenanzas de los pintores y doradores* (1557) (in Spanish, Decrees concerning painters and gilders), which were published in *Arte Colonial in México* by M. Toussaint.

[22] The monastic artistic decoration in the form of murals and sculptural reliefs was generally created by indigenous artists and craftsmen in collaboration with European missionaries. They were

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

help of cartoons with the acanth motive along with Occidental artistic techniques such as foreshortening or shading. On the other hand, the incorporation of indigenous symbolism and iconography, the predominant representation of all the figures from a profile, together with the lack of perspective and the construction of space with help of superposition of individual elements and use of complementary colours, such as blue and orange, belong to the Mesoamerican artistic conventions. There are also a series of indigenous innovations, such as the zoomorphic beings wearing sandals.

Respecting the iconographic program of the decorative friezes, we distinguish the southern and northern bands. On the northern band, we observe knights wearing characteristic prehispanic military insignia. The knights are wearing military costumes typical of prehispanic Central Mexico (BERDAN – ANAWALT 1997:184-185; HEATH 2002:nepag.; HASSIG 1992:270-283). The basic elements of these dresses were *ichcahuipilli*, a suit of padded cotton armour, and *chimalli*,[23] a circular shield. This basic uniform could be complemented by elaborate feather insignia: *tlahuiztli*,[24] a feathered bodysuit, *copilli*,[25] a simple crown or feathered headdress, plus *pantli*,[26] a battle standard. Besides, they have

educated in European techniques and forms and for this reason this art is a combination of Western and Mesoamerican artistic forms and techniques. That is why it was labelled mestizo, *tequitqui* or lately Indochristian. The term *tequitqui* was coined in the 1940s by Mexican essayist J. M. Villa in order to name the colonial artistic production that mingled Spanish and Indian elements. The notion means "tributary" and was born from the comparison with the Spanish Mudéjar art. Since the term emphasizes the European tradition and, moreover, implies a subordinated position of indigenous artists and craftsmen, it has been since 1970s rejected. However, the discussion on an appropriate nomenclature of colonial Latin American art has not been finished yet.

23 The shields varied in ornamentations. We can distinguish, for example, Twisted Gourd shield (*xicalcoliuhqui*), Huastec Nose Ornament shield (*cuexyo*) or the Silver Stone shield (*teucuiltlateteyo*). It seems likely that they had no connection to the military rank or costume. *Cf.* Matrícula de Tríbutos (e.g. fol. 3r, 4r) or Lienzo de Tlaxcala (e.g. cell 46).

24 The Mexicas had a rich variety of warriors' costumes, among theme, for example, Huaxtec (*cuextecal*), Butterfly (*papalotl*), Jaguar (*ocelotl*), Coyote (*coyotl*) or Claw (*xopilli*) dresses. Some of them had different colour variants, e.g. Huaxtec of Jaguar uniforms. *Cf*. Matrícula de Tríbutos (e.g. fol. 3r and 3v, 12r), Codex Mendoza (e.g. fol. 23v, 23r, 26r, 31r, 34 r, 41r, 46r), Florentine Codex, XIII (e.g. fol. 34r).

25 A *copilli* is a pointed coin-shaped had that makes part of Huaxtec costume.

26 The Mexicas used during battles several types of back banners (e.g. *quaxolotl*, an umbrella like banner; *tlecocomoctli*, in form of a headdress in fire, or the *papalotl*, in form of a butterfly), which were worn on warriors' back. According to Pohl or Hassig their use was solely functional, (although their symbolism was rooted in the Mexica mythology), since they served as signal flags to coordinate the movement of different Aztec units. In Ixmiquilpan, the whole frieze is divided into repeated scenes, which are divided by standing men holding *pantli*. *Cf.* Codex Mendoza (e.g. fol. 67) or Lienzo de Tlaxcala (e.g. cell 29, 40).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

huaraches,[27] traditional sandals on their feet and are dotted with *macahuitl*, an obsidian-bladed sword made up from wood, and *tepoztopilli*, an obsidian-bladed spear. And some of them are equipped with trophy heads[28] (holding in hands or hanging at the waist). The knights are fighting with lightly clad warriors. These wear only loincloths and/or *tilmas*, robes tied on the shoulder. They are armed with *tlahuitolli*, arcs, and *yaomitl*, arrows, and some of them are grasping *chimallis*, or stones. The knights are accompanied by men's heads represented from profile and spreading from the acanthus foliage, and two zoomorphic beings. These beings wear *huaraches* and they are dotted by bows and arrows and trophy heads.

The first one possesses a horse body and human arms and face, its head is decorated by a headband of feathers, it grabs a *chimalli* along with a bow in its right hand, while in his left hand it has three arrows, a white trophy head tends from his waist (BARBA AHUATZIN – BANCO PADILLA 2009:24-27, 106-110; DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:187-188).[29] The other one holds in his dextral hand an arch, its left foot is human, its tail ends in a small reptile and the sharp fangs shine in its jaws. In his sinister hand, he carries a half-naked warrior, who is holding a *macahuitl* in his left hand, while in his right one we observe a stone. A beaded bracelet and earplugs represent his only ornament. The defeated and captives are from the ranks of poorly clothed fighters and phytomorphic creatures. Furthermore, the northern frieze is completed with two significantly deteriorated medallions. Both scenes are symmetric and organized along the central axis. The first medallion depicts a pair of fighters, on the left side

[27] According to Codex Mendoza the warriors had the right to wear the sandals from the number of two captives and higher. It follows that only high-status men such as warriors and the emperor's emissaries used to wear shoes.

[28] According to the Codex Mendoza the use of feathered military costumes was regulated by the number of captured prisoners: a cotton armour to one captive, a Huaxtec costume corresponded to two captives, a Butterfly costume to three captives, a Jaguar costume to four captives (these had four variants, yellow, red, blue and green) and a Claw costume for five or six prisoners. Nevertheless, there is an abundant variety of other costumes and styles depicted in visual resources whose rank is not clear. In general, we can state that common warriors (*macehualtin*) used to wear only loincloths (or animal skins when they advanced in the warrior hierarchy) along with plain shields and cotton armours with feather suits were intended for the noble (*pipiltin*) and priest warriors *Cf*. Codex Mendoza (fol. 64r). According to B. Sahagún the symbol of warrior's rank was his *manta*, a cape rather than the feather suit.

[29] As M. Domínguez Torres pointed out, the trophy heads were not worn during the battle. She asserts that since they were not a part of military insignia as they are painted in Ixmiquilpan, they represent rather a stereotyped vision of Mexica warfare. This is true, but in Maya art, we can find several examples of trophy heads represented dangling from the belt and/or laying on laying on the ground. Generally, they are depicted in relation to the presentation of the tribute to the ruler or with Water Lilly Jaguar. The Jaguar has also a strong funeral symbolism and it is linked to the cult of the dead.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

we observe a coyote warrior clutching in his left hand a *macahuitl*, who, by the gesture of his right hand, subjects a slightly clad warrior represented on the right side. The captive is kneeling and seems to hold a stone in his right arm. The second medallion displays a figure of an Aztec warrior armed with *macahuitl*, wearing a *copilli* and a quiver. The warrior seems to bear an object with four darts (Figure 1).

Figure 1: *A Medallion with Mexica Warrior and Chichimeca Captive*. A fresco secco wall painting, c. 1570, church, San Miguel Arcángel ex-monastery, Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo State. Photo: M. Brenišínová.

The southern frieze displays semi-naked phytomorphic creatures with women's heads and round bellies, whose delicate parts are covered by the acanthus leaves. These are armed by nothing more than round shields and are struggling against Mexica knights (Figure 2). Word scrolls come out from the mouths of all the figures suggesting that there are talking and/or singing.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Figure 2: *View of the Southern Wall*. A fresco secco wall painting, c. 1570, church, San Miguel Arcángel ex-monastery, Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo State. Photo: M. Brenišínová.

The same goes for the pair of monumental paintings that fulfil the tympana. Both scenes are situated under the choir and they are framed by decorative belts at their bottom. While the northern one is preserved in relatively good conditions, the southern is unfortunately considerably damaged. The northern mural is situated by the entrance to the baptistery, which interferes with the overall layout of the painting and causes the fact that the main part of the scene is situated on the right side. Here, we observe a pair of giant beasts, a jaguar on the right hand and an eagle on the left, with a coat of arms at their feet. The jaguar and eagle are represented in the first plan, speech scrolls emanate from their mouth and beak and the eagle wears a headdress of quetzal feathers. The coat of arms combines Western and Mesoamerican

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

forms. It displays a traditional European coat of arms with a barely discernible armlet and a column in the middle of a simplified mountain with a water spring at the bottom. In the left half of the scene, we observe another image of a jaguar represented on a smaller scale. In his right paw, he holds a bow and in his left paw he clutches an arrow, his head is decorated by a quetzal headdress and speech scrolls are coming out of his mouth. The second plan is being conformed by a typical local landscape – an arid desert covered by nothing more than rocks, cacti and mesquite plants (Figure 3).

Figure 3: *View of the Northern Tympanum Wall Painting*. A fresco secco wall painting, c. 1570, church, San Miguel Arcángel ex-monastery, Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo State. Photo: M. Brenišínová.

Unfortunately, the mural painting of the opposite, southern side is vastly deteriorated. The whole scene is divided into two halves along a central axis. In the middle and at the top of the scene, a spectator can recognize a monumental image of an eagle. The eagle is represented with a pair of wide-outstretched wings with a quetzal headdress on the top of his head. He is sitting on a pair of plants – a nopal and possibly a verdolaga (*Portulaca orelacea*) and a speech scrolls come out from his beak. He is surrounded by a pair of jaguars, whose contours are blurred, so they are barely discernible. Both reptiles are wearing quetzal headbands and a jaguar on the right side holds a *macahuitl*. The background of the mural consists of the same landscape as in the aforementioned case (Figure 4).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Figure 4: *View of the Southern Tympanum Wall Painting*. A fresco secco wall painting, c. 1570, church, San Miguel Arcángel ex-monastery, Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo State. Photo: M. Brenišínová.

The final pair of paintings that are related to the iconographic program of the friezes is to be found in the vaults of the nave. The first one is located in the presbytery, the second in the choir. Both scenes display an eagle similar to the picture described above. The eagle wears a quetzal headdress, bears a long battle banner and his chest is decorated with a circular pectoral. In front of the eagle's beak the speech scrolls are floating. This mural suggests that the original iconographic program had to be much larger, but unfortunately other paintings have not been preserved.

As far as the content of the paintings is concerned, there is no consensus among scholars. The truth is rather opposite and the range of opinions on the significance of the Ixmiquilpan murals is particularly vast and disperse. It follows that in this part of the paper, I will discuss some of these opinions trying to bring the light into this diverse tangle of different stands and, eventually, I will present my own opinions and interpretations (the truth is that since the Ixmiquilpan iconographic program is incomplete and without any direct written evidence,

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

any explanation would be a mere interpretation, which still can bring the reader to a more likely image of historical reality).

Concerning the iconological analysis of the northern frieze, the identity of two differently clothed groups of warriors remains problematic. Generally, the uniformed fighters are related to the Mexicas warriors since they were a uniforms and regalia typical of Mexica army and are carrying characteristic wooden weapons with obsidian blades *macahuitl* and *tepoztopilli*; and identified as the local inhabitants Otomíes (CARRILLO Y GARIEL 1961:27; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:11; KAMM NYE 198:27-30; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:157-158, 159; WRIGHT CARR 1998:91-92).[30] Nevertheless, given the fact that Ixmiquilpan served – before the coming of Spaniards – as an outpost of Aztec influence in the north and its inhabitants protected the northern frontier of Aztec Empire against the dreaded Chichimecas, there is no reason to question the relation of these warriors with former Aztec dominion and its armed forces. Besides, this is confirmed by the presence of two *altepetl*, the pre-Columbian site glyphs, as well as by the contemporary written evidence, since archival documents demonstrate that the locals continued to perform the same service even after the conquest, only now for the Spanish Empire (DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:183, 194; PIERCE 1981:7-9).[31]

On the other hand, from the study of the same documents, it turns out that the 16th century indigenous warriors used to wear timeworn European clothes, swords and rode horses (as well as Chichimecas at that time). It implies that the Ixmiquilpan paintings do not represent the historic reality of 16th century New Spain, they are allegoric and their aim was rather symbolic. They were aimed to communicate some message. On the other hand, D. L. Pierce who studied a set of colonial codices (e.g. Codex Mendoza or Annals of Tlatelolco), demonstrated that the traditional prehispanic military uniforms continued to be used throughout the 16th century on the occasion of public ceremonies (ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:16-17; PIERCE 1981:2-7). Even in colonial art, we can find various

30 H. Kamm Nye believed that the Ixmiquilpan paintings embodied the mythology of both Mexicas and Otomíes within a general Christian layout.

31 In Tlatelolco Codex we see several indigenous warriors in traditional prehispanic uniforms with European swords going to Mixton War in 1542 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex_of_Tlatelolco#/media/File:Codex_of_tlatelolco.JPG).

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

examples showing that the Natives used to wear pre-Columbian warriors' dresses during the religious and/or secular festivals up to the 18th century.[32]

As for the identity of the scantily dressed autochthonous warriors, the majority of scholars agree that the men in loincloths represent Chichimecas, who had never been subjected to the Mexicas, and after the coming of white men, they rebelled against the efforts of Spaniards to be evangelized, conquered and acculturated (JACKSON 2013:146; PIERCE 1981:7; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:157-158; WRIGHT CARR 1998:74-75). They also continued to bother the Spanish as well as the sedentary indigenous population – mainly Otomí – all over the 16th century. The written and visual evidence approves this theory. D. L. Pierce studied a corpus of pre-Columbian documents that narrate the story of immigrations (e.g. the Xólotl, Quinantzin, Tlotzin, Tlaxcala codices, etc.)[33] towards the Valley of Mexico and these show without any doubts the evolution of weapons in relation to the transition from the nomadic to the sedentary life, i.e. from the bows and arrows to the *macahuitl*, the *atlatl*, a spear thrower (which was rarely depicted), and the *tepoztopilli*. It follows that the sedentary indigenous populations of Central Mexico were aware of the difference between both sets of weapons and used the depiction of the bow and arrows (along with the shortage of clothing) as a symbol of the word *chichimeca*, first, to designate the Chichimecas themselves, second, to indicate the northern border and third, to express the idea of nomadic way of life. However, even the iconography of the Chichimecas was symbolic and did not correspond to the historic reality. The Chichimecas were a compound of a variety of indigenous ethnics and tribes with different religious, social and political practices, and hence also military ones. In addition, unlike the Mexicas, the Chichimeca warriors used to wear typical red body paints that is not present in Ixmiquilpan.

Moreover, the Chichimecas represented the biggest threat for 16th century New Spain, threatening not only its expansion, but also the functioning of Viceroyalty itself including the

32 *Cf*. Anonymous painter. *El palo volador*. Viceroyalty of New Spain, c. 1651-1700. Oil painting, 107 x 505 cm. Museum of the Americas, inventory number: 0653 (http://ceres.mcu.es/).

33 D. L. Pierce studied prehispanic codices and maps coming from various schools, such as the Texcoco School documents (e.g. Map of Quinatzin, Map of Tlotzin, Boban Aztec Calendar Wheel, Codex Xolotl) or the Mexico-Tenochtitlan School texts (e.g. Codex Telleriano-Remensis or Tolteca-Chichimeca History) that tell the story of arrival of the Mexicas to the Valley of Mexico plus the documents that originated outside of Mexico Valley (e.g. Lienzode Tlaxcala, Annals of Cuahtinchan) and compared them to the colonial set of visual and written evidence (e.g. Codex Mendoza, Florentine Codex, XIII). She underpinned the fact that also the documents coming from the outside of the Valley of Mexico (e.g. Annals of Cuauhtinchan, Lienzo de Tlaxcala) use the symbol of the bow and arrows in the same way.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

mission of the Christianization of Natives (in particular, if we contemplate the high costs of unceasing clashes with Chichimecas). In fact, the study of written evidence shows that the missionaries not only approved but eventually supported the war campaign against the Chichimecas, who in the second half of the 16th century attacked several missions and killed their inhabitants (ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:17; GRIJALVA 1985:173, 204).[34] According to Ph. W. Powell the missionaries were not capable to face the attacks of the Chichimecas:

"Thus, the missionaries, [...] were virtually useless in the enterprise of pacifying the Chichimecas during much of this forty-year war" (POWELL 2014:10).[35]

As for the significance of the battle itself, the scholars' opinions can be divided into two different groups.[36] The first group considers the paintings rather an expression of Occidental tradition, while the second emphasizes on the Mesoamerican tradition. The majority of these authors accepted the A. Carrillo y Gariels' conviction that the paintings represent at the symbolical level the European timeworn theme of psychomachy (EARLS 1987:237),[37] i.e. the Battle between the Good and Evil (CARILLO Y GARIEL 1961:24; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1982:9; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:157-158; WRIGHT CARR 1998:90).[38] Moreover, some of them are convinced that besides the moralizing motive the friezes depict the Chichimeca War presented within the Christian idea of the just war theory (*bellum iustum*) (ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:18; DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:185-

[34] The Chichimecas attacked, for example, the Augustinian convent in Xilitla in 1587 and a year later in Chichicaxtla. Indeed, Ixmiquilpan itself was attacked in 1570. Many religious men supported the war against the Chichimecas, as evidenced by their anti-Chichimeca opinions, among them, e.g. Juan de Zumárraga, Gerónimo de Mendieta, Vasco de Quiroga, Alonso de la Veracruz, Pedro Moya de Contreras, Pedro de Ayala or Juan Focher. The *Chichimecas* were the theme of several synods, congresses, and ecclesiastical councils.

[35] „*Así, los misioneros, [...], fueron virtualmente inútiles en la empresa de pacificar a los chichimecas durante la gran parte de esta guerra de cuarenta años"* (trans. by the author).

[36] The authors themselves frequently underline the complexity of symbolism and multi-meaning of the Ixmiquilpan paintings. Some of them changed their minds over the time or presented simultaneously multiple hypotheses. Thus, the classification of their opinions has been very complicated.

[37] In Christian iconography, the psychomachy (Battle of Virtues and Vices or Battle of Good and Evil) is an allegorical representation of the conflict between the soul and flesh or good and evil that is based on 5th century poem *Psychomachia* written in Latin by the Spanish poet Prudentius. The poem, as well as its representation, became quite popular during the High Middle Ages and Renaissance and it is linked to the doctrine of seven deadly sins.

[38] D. Wright Carr disagrees with this stance arguing that there is no model in the Old World that would represent a psychomachy through the depiction of battle.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

186; JACKSON 2013:151-152, 164; PIERCE 1981:7; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:159-160, 169) or the then-popular *Dance of Mexicas and Chichimecas* (HARRIS 2000),[39] an adaptation of the *Dance of Christians and Moors*, a popular tradition that had come to Mexico from the Iberian peninsula (DEBROISE 1994: 155-172; WAKE 2010:254).[40] The adherents of Mesoamerican tradition conceive the paintings as expression of Nahua concept of war (HASSIG 2001:2-3, 24-27, 34-35, 106-107; JOHANSSON 1993:118-125)[41] whether it was *atl tlachinolli*, a conquest war, *xochiyaolotl*, a flower war (DUVERGER 2003:163) or *yaoyolotl*, a sacred war that was linked to *tonatiuhilhuicatl*[42] (JACKSON 2013:151-152, 161; WRIGHT CARR 1998:74-78, 86-90),[43] a Nahua idea of heaven having them or for a demonstration of indigenous resistance (GRUZINSKI 2001:195).[44]

[39] The religious theatre (e.g. The Conquest of Jerusalem, The Conquest of Rhodes, etc.) was one of the missionary methods applied by the missionary orders during the process of Evangelization of Natives (for the specialized literature on see the works by B. Aracil Varón, A. Partida or O. Rivera). It became very popular among Indians and part of all sorts of festivals and ceremonies including religious and secular processions. The drama could also have a form of a dance (e.g. the original Spanish Dance of Moors and Christians that evolved in New Spain into the Dance of Mexicas and Chichimecas) or mock battles.

[40] E. Wake argued that the Ixmiquipan paintings represent a theatrical staging of an *otoncuicatl*, an Otomí warrior song and she related some Ixmiquilpan iconographical elements with song contained in *Cantares Mexicanos*, a manuscript collection of Nahuatl songs or poems recorded in the 16th century.

[41] The Mexicas distinguished several types of wars: (atl) tlachinolli, a conquest or punishing war, xochiyayotl, a ritualized flower war and yayotl, a sacred war.

[42] The *tonatiuhilhuicatl* was the Mexica third celestial stratum. It was associated with the West and was intended for warriors and women who died during childbirth.

[43] D. Wright Carr identified a set of prehispanic symbols and iconography related to the *yayolotl* and proved that this prehispanic iconography was used until the 17th century.

[44] S. Gruzinski interpreted the paintings as a Christianized version of *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, a sophisticated iconographic program designed by indigenous and missionary elites, which, however, incorporated also hidden of prehispanic mythology.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Figure 5: *View of the Northern Decorative Frieze with Mexica Warriors Struggling with the Chichimecas*. A fresco secco wall painting, c. 1570, church, San Miguel Arcángel ex-monastery, Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo State. Photo: M. Brenišínová.

Unfortunately, the warriors are not represented in the number of seven and it is difficult to determine which knights were meant to be Virtues and which ones Vices, although it is still possible that the paintings were interpreted by the missionaries as representing a battle between Good and Evil. Some allusions would fit such a didactic reading and we cannot omit that the artistic decoration was used as a didactic tool. Giving the fact that the patron of the ex-monastery was Saint Michael, I would suggest that the warriors represent *milites Christi*, an image that the spectators could refer not only to the Bible (e.g. Book of Ephesians) but also to the warriors going to the Holy Land on a Crusade and/or the Reconquest and what is

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

more important to themselves and their struggle, contra Chichimecas. Knights struggling in the company of monumental eagles could be related to the crusading activities (e.g. Constantine the Great, Heraclius, Charlemagne) and the conquest of Mexico was till the beginning accompanied by symbolic erections of crosses. Hernán Cortés fought in the sign of Holy Cross and the reverence for the True Cross and the Virgin Mary were some of the first things the missionaries taught Indians (Figure 5). Moreover, giving the fact that in Ixmiquilpan they celebrate the Festival of the Holy Cross up today (PEÑALOSA 1969:198-203)[45] that has been celebrated by processions and *Dances of Mexicas and Chichimecas*, I think that is likely that the friezes refer to the Legend of the Holy Cross (e.g. apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus),[46] in which we meet Archangel Michael, the patron of the monastery. Saint Michael was chosen intentionally to replace the local cult rendered to Huitzilopochtli, the main Mexica god since their colour was blue, they had similar weapons (while Archangel had a fire sword, Aztec tribal god had a *xiuhcoatl*, a fire snake) and they were both associated to the water and rain. In this sense, the northern frieze embodies also the *Otomí* worldview, since the *Otomíes* related the North to the blue colour and summer, during which they celebrated the festival of *Xocotl Huetzi*, the Great feast of the death and the gods Yozipa (Xiuhtecutli) and Otontecuhtli. Therefore, the Legend of the Holy Cross (EARLS 1987:39, 89-90) would shield all the aforementioned motives, since it makes it possible to incorporate both the prehispanic concepts of the sacred war and heaven together with Otomí worldview with the psychomachy, (since in the literature of that time the crusades were frequently seen as an allegory of the battle between Good and Evil). Eventually, the crusading ideology provided also an explanation of contemporary events in form of Chichimeca War from the Christian viewpoint, as well as an example to lead since the martyrdom could serve as an inspiration to the young worshippers and encouragement for their recruiting.

As for the content of the southern frieze, the major commotion has been raised by the question of the identity of enigmatic phytomorphic creatures. Based on the specialized literature, I have distinguished three different standpoints among scholars. The first group of authors

[45] The festival of the Holy Cross of El Maye, the Holy Cross mountain, is up to this day one of the most important festivities of Ixmiquilpan. It is celebrated on May 3rd. On this day the cross kept at the chapel on Deshitzo Mountain is descended and brought up to the chapel in a procession that starts at the Maye Church and goes up the mountain to leave the cross.

[46] This legend is based on the *Golden Legend* by Jacopo da Voragine and narrates the history of the wood, from which became the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified and its later triumph. The most famous depiction of the Legend of the Holy Cross are the polychromous frescos by Pierro della Francesca at the Church of San Francesco, Arezzo (c. 1452-1466). Moreover, the Fray Andrés de Mata lived in Italy, where he allegedly worked as a painter.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

suggests that they represent *cihuateteo* (in Nahuatl divine women), a pre-Columbian spirits of women who died in childbirth[47] (ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:11; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1982:9; WRIGHT CARR 1998:88). In pre-Columbian tradition childbirth was seen as an equivalent of war and, hence, the *cihuateteo* were conceived as the opponents of the spirits of deceased Aztec warriors. While the women stayed in a dark place in the west called *Cihuatlampa* (in Nahuatl the place of women), the men dwelled in *ilhuicatl-Tonatiuh*, the third celestial layer in Mexica mythology where the Sun dwells, and they together accompanied the sun on its quotidian way to the west. As for the iconography of *cihuateteo*, their traditional attributes were elements emphasizing the unaccomplished women's fertility, e.g. bare breasts or thin waist, and the link to the earth and darkness, e.g. loose hair and skirts with snakes. According to my opinion, various facts speak against this theory. First, the *cihuateteo* are linked to the west, whereas in Ixmiquilpan they are displayed on the southern wall. Second, in Ixmiquilpan paintings the attributes of female fertility, e.g. round belly, are emphasized, while the prehispanic iconography stresses the unrealized motherhood. Third, the fact that they are struggling with Indian knights instead of collaborating with them fits into this logic neither. The second theory has the phytomorphic creatures for pregnant women, the goddesses of the Moon, the religious cult spread among the Otomíes (KAM NYE 1968:22-23). I cannot agree with this theory either. Firstly because of the mistaken reference to the pregnancy, secondly because of the obvious references to the Mexica and Otomí mythology that will be discussed below. The third thesis affirms that the presence of pre-Columbian attributes, such as feather headbands, should serve to the satanization of prehispanic deities (VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:159; DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013: 59, 168).[48] However, this interpretation is disproven by the presence of the same attributes on the side of the Indian knights, who have a positive connotation here.

Concerning my opinion, the iconography – displaying these women with long loose hair and round bellies – corresponds more to the Western medieval and Renaissance models than to the Mesoamerican ones and makes possible to relate these images to the ideas of wild, savage

[47] The significance of *cihuateteo* was ambiguous, on one hand, they were related to fertility and childbirth, on the other to war and sacrifice. H. Kamm Nye related these phytomorphic beings with the legends associated with the Aztec New Fire Ceremony, which was celebrated every 52 years and during which the pregnant women were put under guard, so they could not attack and harm their husbands.

[48] M. Domínguez Torres identified some of these creatures as pre-Columbian deities such as Xipe Totec, because of his pink feather headdress called *ehuatl*, one of the attributes of this god of vegetation.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

life and, hence also to paganism.[49] Furthermore, the comparison with the nearby Actopan and Santa María Xoxoteco paintings allows us to connect them to the doctrine of the sins and vices and, hence also to the psychomachy.[50] Some authors relate them as well to the Chichimecas since the Chichimeca women used to participate in the battles on a common base (POWELL 2014:61). Similarly, the southern frieze corresponds to the Otomí worldview since the predominant colour of the southern frieze is green, and the Otomíes associated the South to the winter and green colour. During the hibernal season, they used to honour the god of the vegetation Xipe Totec[51] along with Huitzilopochtli and they made ritual battles between eagles and jaguars to help the Son regain its forces.

The question of the interpretation of the depiction of zoomorphic beings belongs also to the complicated ones. A. Carrillo y Gariel identified them as centaurs and dragons (or griffins) and many other authors have continued his opinion (CARRILLO Y GARIEL 1961:18, 40; DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:186; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:10-11; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1982:9; GRUZINSKI 2013:47). It is not even clear to which side they belong. Some authors have them for conquerors since some of them possess beards (KAM NYE 1968:29) others associate them with the Chichimecas warriors given the fact that they are equipped with the bows and arrows (PIERCE 1981:7; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:165-166),[52] others with Mexica warriors (DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:186) and certain scholars suppose that they embody the Evil (CARRILLO Y GARIEL 1961:18; ESTRADA DE GERLERO 1976:11; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:167-168). Given the fact that they are dotted with trophy heads and wear sandals, a symbol of high social status, I would incline to the third opinion. Moreover, the Mexicas never stopped using bow and arrows,

[49] The picturing of wild people has a long tradition in the Western history of art. As an example, we can take the Book of Hours of Henri d'Angoulême, where we can observe a representation of the *Death of the Centaur* (fol. 41v), where the centaur along with the wild women represent a personification of Vices. The wild people were generally displayed as naked or covered by hair and frequently served as a metaphor of wildlife and paganism. Examples can be seen on engravings of such masters as Albrecht Dürer or Martin Schongauer that were used as templates in both the Old and New World.

[50] See note 37.

[51] M. Domínguez Torres and I. E. Estrada de Gerlero identified one of the warriors of the southern frieze as Xipe Totec, because of the presence of pink heron feathers, an attribute of this prehispanic deity. See note 41.

[52] A. Vergara Hernández states in his chapter that the Chichimecas already used to ride horses at that time. He states that as the centaur is rescuing a Chichimeca warrior, it is possible that the representation of the centaurs is related to the Chichimecas and the fact that they started riding horses since 1570.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

even though they used their depiction as a symbol of barbarity. From the western point of view, the centaurs (as well as other zoomorphic beings) can be related to the animality and barbarism. (DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:186-187; VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:168). It follows that although the contemporary written evidence confirms the Spanish habit to associate the Chichimecas with animals and bestial life was common in 16th century New Spain (MENDIETA 1993:732; OROZCO Y JIMÉNEZ 1922-1927:183-187),[53] the zoomorphic figures in Ixmiquilpan are more likely related to the Mexicas since they wear trophy heads, huaraches and headdresses (VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ 2013:168-169).

The two medallions, often neglected by scholars, bring the light into the whole issue since they both represent the poorly dressed warriors in a subordinate position to the uniformed ones pointing out the difference between their weapons (*macahuitl*/stone) and clothing (loincloths/military armour and suits). Especially the representation of taking captives has a long tradition in both traditions[54] and as such permitted to conceive and represent Chihimecas within the language which would be understandable to both cultures, i.e. as barbarians living at a lower level of life that can be, therefore, subjugated and enslaved.

Referring to the paintings in the choir, they both contain a depiction of an *altepetl*, toponym being more illustrative the one of the southern walls. This was identified as a toponym of Tenochtitlan-Ixmiquilpan, since it displays a pair of plants associated with this two city-towns – a nopal in the case of Mexico-Tenochtitlan and a verdolaga plant (*Portulaca orelacea*) in that of Ixmiquilpan[55] (SERRANO AVILÉS 2006:55). It is clear evidence of *translatio imperii*, which shows Ixmiquilpan as the capital of Spanish dominion in the middle of still non-conquered northern territory putting emphasis on both the famous prehispanic history and the continuity of power.

This stance is supported by the omnipresence of eagles and jaguars, whose meanings in both traditions are multi-layered and abundant. From this point of view, the images of eagles and eagle knights embody the symbolism of sun-light-day-life, while the pictures of jaguars and jaguar knights represent a symbolic line of moon-darkness-night-death, which is typical of

53 Among 16th century chronicles, Bernardino de Sahagún, Diego Muñoz Camargo, Gerónimo de Mendieta, Juan de Torquemada y Diego Durán comment on Chichimecas.

54 A typical gesture of taking captive can be observed in pre-Columbian art since the Olmec civilization and remained the same until the coming of Europeans. In the western tradition, a similar gesture was used solely to express the patronage over a vassal.

55 Ixmiquilpan means in Nahuatl "lugar de cultivos como navajas" and in Otomí language, *nts'utk'*, i.e. verdolaga plant.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Mexica worldview and cosmogony, but at the same time it also perfectly suits the Christian *imago mundi* based on the contradiction of heaven-faith-virtue-life on one side and hell-paganism-sin and vice-death on the other. (BARBA AHUATZIN – BLANCO PADILLA 2009:31-33, 163, 166, 167 171-176, 147-154).

In the Christian tradition, the eagle is an attribute of Saint John the Evangelist and the lion of San Mark, but they can both symbolize Jesus Christ – the lion his resurrection and the eagle his ascension (MONREAL Y TEJADA 2000:436-437, 513). In the pre-Columbian tradition the jaguars and eagles – as they are represented on the northern wall under the choir – were seen as the protectors of *altepetl*, an Aztec conception of city-state, as we can read in *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España (1570-1580)* by Bernardino de Sahagún:

"Tiger dais, eagle dais, that is, the forts live there, the robust no one can beat them there [...] there is the tiger wall, the eagle wall, so that the city is protected, that is, the water, the mountain" (SAHAGÚN 1981:244).[56]

The Ixmiquilpan paintings have been considered unique within the context of the 16th century New Spain mural painting from two main reasons. First, because of an abundant presence of prehispanic iconography; second; because of its secular, military theme. However, the representation of military motives within religious temples was common in both traditions.[57] And, indeed, as M. Domínguez Torres pointed out a grotesque represented a particularly convenient place not only for military scenes but also for the representation of the Battle of Virtues and Vices or to bring honour to the patrons of the building (DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES 2013:178-181). For example, in nearby Actopan we can observe a wall painting representing two *caciques* Juan Inica de Actopan along with don Pedro de Izcuincuitlapilco in the company of fray Martín de Asebeido in the sign of mutual cooperation between the missionaries and indigenous aristocracy.

[56] "*Estrado de tigre, estrado de águila, quiere decir, allí viven los fuertes, los robustos nadie puede vencerlos [...] allí está en pie la muralla del tigre, la muralla del águila, con que es resguardada la ciudad, es decir, el agua, el cerro,*" (tran. by the author).

[57] In Christian context the military scenes within a religious structure are often represented to commemorate some important local battle, e.g. the Siege of Constantinople from 1453 painted in the exterior walls of monastic churches in Voronet and Moldovita in Romania or mural paintings decorating the apse of a small Spanish country church of Nuestra Senora de la Asunción depicting the battle of Nájera from 1367. The most famous example is the Hall of Battles depicting Spanish military victories (including that over Moors) in the El Escorial Monastery.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Despite the obvious presence of the prehispanic iconography which has attracted a significant attention, I am firmly convinced that the main aim of the paintings is to channel basic Christian categories concerning solely the History of Salvation (the cult of the Holy Cross), moral categories (the doctrine of Seven deadly sins, Virtues and Vices) and Western worldview (social hierarchy, worldview, mutual rights, and obligations). My opinion is based on the contemporary relations between artists and patrons and the conception of authorship that made impossible some content intrusions that the missionaries would not notice. And also on the comparison with other Augustinians iconographic programs (e.g. Metztitlan, Actopan, Santa María Xoxoteco) (BRENIŠÍNOVÁ 2017:143-152), which illustrate that the Augustinians developed in the region of Mezquital Valley a specific iconography based on a conscious work with pre-Columbian symbolism and elements[58] in order to shape the indigenous religiosity and make the Christian doctrine more comprehensible and easier to understand and accept.

In my doctoral thesis, I demonstrated that the 16th century monasteries continued to serve – even after the conquest – as Mesoamerican calendar and made possible the orientation in the agricultural year. From the study of liturgical calendars, it also turned out that the missionaries intentionally changed the dates of the Christian calendar in order to adapt it to the pre-Columbian ones (BRENIŠÍNOVÁ 2017:95-96). The fact that Ixmiquilpan paintings embody the Otomí worldview perfectly suits this logic. So from my point of view, from the point of Natives, the northern frieze represents at the symbolic level the ensuing. In the presbytery, we see the eagle and the lion protecting a mountain. The mountains were seen in the prehispanic era as reservoirs of water and corn (in Spanish, *cerro de los mantenimientos*). (FLORESCANO 1999:80-83).[59] In pre-Columbian times, the religion was strictly related to the state, the people believed (unlike Christians) that they can influence the actions of Gods and that is the reason why they used to bring the offering and sacrifices. The sacrifices were

[58] The use of autochthonous elements has had a long tradition in the history of Christian Church that dates back at least to the times of Pope Gregory I. (c. 540-604). In accordance with this tradition, the missionary orders, who had had to face a wide range of problems at the beginning of the evangelization process in the New World (e.g. ethnic and linguistic diversity, dispersion of indigenous population, idolatry, etc.) founded in 1541 the *Unión Santa* (Saint Union) and in cooperation with the first viceroy Antonio de Mendoza (c. 1495-1552) elaborated a complex set of missionary methods based on learning indigenous languages and the use of chosen prehispanic elements in order to facilitate to the Natives the acceptance of the new Christian faith.

[59] According to the Mexica beliefs, the temple pyramids represented an incarnation of the *tonacatepetl*, (in English, maintenance hill). It is the symbol of the origins and creation of the three levels of the cosmos and entry to the underworld where maintenance and water are found.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

seen as a contract between humans and deities due to which the Sun continued moving, the earth obtained rain and people maize. After the conquest, The Festival of the Holy Cross began to be celebrated on the May 3, but frequently the celebrations began already on April 25, on the day of Saint Mark. It is a time of expectations of first rains, when the Sun is coming to the zenith and people are celebrating water, trying to support fertility and rain by rituals and sacrifices, preparing the corn to be planted. The Festival of the Holy Cross relates to the original Mesoamerican myths about the origin of rain and to the symbolism of the mountain as a source of water and corn (and also caves as dwellings of beasts and gods). Afterwards, a few days later, usually on May 5, ritual battles between eagles and jaguars were held in order to help Sun regain its forces. On September 28, the day of Saint Michael, the dead are coming and their one-month stay among the living begins, the people give them food and drink since they believe that the dead have the power to bring the rain and fertility (because they once already served as offerings to the earth), so the living and the dead (overseeing the rain and growing corn) work together to maintain a balance of natural forces and harmony to keep the world going.

Thus the Ixmiquilpan paintings illustrate the connection between corn, mountains, and rain, which has been crucial for Mesoamerican inhabitants for thousands of years. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the religion was a matter of the state; after their coming, this role (of word order and running guarantor) was transferred to the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church adopted it and adapted the Christian religious holidays to suit the Mesoamerican agricultural year. So the paintings in Ixmiquilpan represent a social contract (HARRIS 2000:119-121, 128-131),[60] a treaty between the Otomíes and the missionaries stating that each part would fulfil its duties, the Otomíes would fight in the sign of the True Cross for the Catholic Church against the gentiles and venerate new God and the Catholic Church would keep the Sun alive.

Picturing the "Others". Barbarism and Civilization

In this part of the text, I will address the images of "otherness" contained in the Ixmiquilpan paintings. I will deconstruct them using the categories of barbarism and civilization as the main tool of historical analysis in an attempt to unveil the religious, social and political

[60] Indeed M. Harris mentions in his work that the Indians used to play mock battles between uncivilized Chichimecas and civilized Mexicas to assure the missionaries of their alliance, although it does not rule out that it could also be an expression of Indian resistance to the Spaniards.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

concepts hidden behind them. Furthermore, I will discuss, how these stereotyped visions were constructed and how they were used in the process of making the identity of local inhabitants. In brief, what was their main message?

The elements associated with barbarism were: sporadic clothing, bare feet, bow and arrows, stones, darts, the gesture of capture and dead (closed eyes) along with phytomorphic creatures (the women). The elements related to civilization were Aztec military uniforms and insignia (*tlahuiztli*, *copilli*, *huaraches*, and feather headdresses), the *altepetl* of Ixmiquilpan-Tenochtitlan, *macahuitl* weapons, trophy heads, back-banners, jaguars and eagles and zoomorphic creatures (centaurs and griffins). The elements in common were: speaking scrolls, *chimalli* and loincloths.

Let us see which basic facts and general statements we can induce from the aforementioned elements and their distribution. The paintings depict a conflict between two different military groups. These are represented with different attributes and, hence, in different social statuses. Since the representation of the indigenous warriors combines Western and Mesoamerican iconography and does not correspond to the historical reality, the visual language of the murals is ideal, symbolic and syncretic.[61] The "images" of warriors were stereotyped and stemmed from both traditions. Given that the paintings were commissioned by the Augustinian order, the overall layout was the Western one as the technique of execution of the paintings (e.g. the use of cartoons, shading, acanthus foliage, etc.) or the presence of *centaurs* and *griffins* reveal. The obvious presence of prehispanic symbolism and iconography should serve to transfer the Christian ideas and categories (and make them circulate) in the visual language that would be understandable to the Spaniards, as well as to the Otomí indigenous people, who very likely played on selected occasions the roles of the Mexicas and Chichimecas. (We cannot forget that the apse paintings that would illuminate the entire program have not been preserved.)

So, how the hetero-stereotype looked like? The "others", the Chichimecas were associated with the lack of clothes and lower level of weaponry. It turns out, that their society was

[61] The missionaries, who came to the Americas, not only observed their new reality, they also, naturally, compared their experiences to their stereotyped visions searching for appropriate expressions of their new reality. So their ideas about the Mexicas and/or Chichimecas arose from the place between their personal experiences, knowledge, readings, discussions with others on the one hand and abstraction and generalization on the other. So the "images" of warriors are the result of comparison and deduction, searching for similar and naming the other. It is based on personal experience but constructed with the help of already known ideas and notions.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

presented as lower and simply organised. Given the fact that the correlation between the clothing and weaponry and social and political hierarchy is universal and the clothes and weapons often serve as a symbol of social status in hierarchised societies, we can state that this stereotyped vision of Chichimecas should serve to dehumanize them, i.e. to express the idea of their subhumanity and lower level of their nomadic way of life.

The idea of superior and inferior people implies the inherent right of a superior group to subordinate and govern the subordinate one and it is well known to both cultures. In the Western tradition, we can trace it at least back to Aristotle, while in Mesoamerica it has also very long roots as the practice of systematic destruction and/or rewriting of enemies' codices based on historical consciousness and importance of genealogies testifies. It follows that the "law of cultural dominance" (M. D. Sahlins) or "colonial imperialism" (M. Weber) was well known to both hegemons whether it was Aztec Empire or the Viceroyalty of New Spain.

The northern frontier was tangible, it influenced the humans' lives as well as the history of states before and after the arrival of Spaniards. The boundary between the zone of *La Gran Chichimeca* and Central Mexico crossed not only the country but also the mentality stressing the differences between the ways of life, social and political organization or religion. The representation of Chichimecas had a long tradition both in prehispanic and in colonial Mexico and as such, it became an appropriate tool of shaping identity between "us" and "them".[62]

In both cultures the "image" of *Chichimecas* revolved around the category of barbarity. They were both universalists and expansionists presupposing the dissemination of the culture of civilized society to non-civilized cultures, and, at the same time, they justified the expansion of their civilizations by referring to the barbarity of societies they wanted to subordinate. Spanish chroniclers and other authors frequently appreciated the Mexica society and characterized it as civilized. They admired solely the social and political organization of their society, as well as Tenochtitlan, as can be read in *Historia general…* by Bernardino de Sahagún:

[62] For the description and representation of the Chichimecas see note 33.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

"And they did not lack the police: they lived in a village, they had their republic," (SAHAGÚN 1981:602).[63]

It follows that the "image" of Chichimecas – constructed on the basis of individual and social experiences – did not correspond to the historical reality, although it became constant in the 16th century written and visual evidence since it served as an appropriate tool that helped shape the colonial identity.

On the contrary, the Ixmiquilpan community (auto-stereotype) is represented as a male community consisting of warriors of different military ranks as shown by a variety of their uniforms along with insignia and superior armour and weapons. It turns out that it is represented as organised, socially differentiated and hierarchised society. The association with eagles and jaguars together with toponyms points out the historical continuity and shows the Ixmiquilpan community as having access to power and religion.

The fact that these two different groups of warriors are represented as struggling shows the war as a tool of spreading not only the power but also the social and religious ideas, concepts and practices. The dialectic between barbarism and civilization served as an intentional tool of elitism, whose aim was to contribute to shaping a new identity, which would be based on the Christian faith, western worldview, and values, and, which would lean simultaneously on the Mesoamerican tradition, iconography and the glorious history of Ixmiquilpan-Tenochtitlan (*translatio imperii*). This dialectic was reinforced by the dichotomy between two modalities of society, the "communitas", in this case, represented by the Chichimacas because of the emphasis put onto the equality, and the "structure" embodied by the Mexicas shown as a hierarchised society with access to the power and religion. Such an image should strengthen the identity of sedentary Otomíes, since they represented them as morally and culturally superior.

After the military conquest, the missions along with their artistic decoration (especially in the form of wall paintings) became the crucial spaces where the new political, social and

63 "*Y no carecían de policía: vivían en poblado, tenían su república*" (translated by the author). The same stands towards Mexica society based on the positive evaluation of its social and political organization can be observed in many other Spanish colonial evidence, e.g. in the second letter by Hernán Cortés to Charles V, King of Castile and Aragon and the Holy Roman Emperor. Nevertheless, the Spaniards appreciated the social and political order of the Mexicas but they disapproved of their polytheistic religion related with human sacrifices and ritual cannibalism or the polygamy of Mexica aristocracy.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

religious concepts were promoted. They turn out to be a tool of social control pointing out the superiority of the Spanish Empire and Christian faith. In the worlds of Cl. Geertz, they showed the spectators how the world is organised and how to live in it. So the paintings were meant to reassert the values of new colonial order, whether social or religious and, at the same time, to maintain the privileged position of the Spanish and their indigenous allies by promoting shared history and values (and, hence reduce the potentially dangerous diversity) and also an emotional relation to the town (and to the state) and its authorities by evoking the Christian Virtues, Crusades and Sacred war as a measure of good governance and legitimacy.

Conclusion

To sum up, the Ixmiquilpan church and its walls became the place where the missionaries intentionally shaped the identity of local indigenous inhabitants by conceptualized and stereotyped images of Mexica and Chichimeca warriors by pointing out the differences between "us" and "them", as well as the civilization level, social organisation and position of these two groups within the new colonial order. The difference between barbarism and civilization should imply the conflict between Christianity and paganism and Good and Evil. And an idealised image of war – based on the sacred past of both involucrated cultures – should anchor the identity of Otomíes and, at the same time, imply the necessity to subdue the nomadic indigenous tribes (and bring them into the Catholic Church). Simultaneously, the paintings provided an explanation of contemporaneous events (Chichimeca War) and how to handle them. And, what is probably the most important thing they made possible the reinterpretation of the past accepting and reintegrating the Mesoamerican history (e.g. references to the Mexica Empire and Tenochtitlan, the Coatepec or Five Sun myths, etc.) into the universalist story of the West, which is the History of Salvation. In this light, every event or newly discovered territory is seen as another possibility to save the world and finally accomplish its history; and, every war is a crusade, whether the Christians fight against the Moors or the Spaniards (along with their indigenous allies) against the Chichimecas.

Acknowledgments

This article was written with the support of the European Regional Development Fund-Project "Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success in an Interrelated World", No. CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16_019/0000734. This work was financially supported by the research program of Charles University PROGRES Q09 – History, the key to understanding the globalized world.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Bibliography

Primary sources

BERDAN, Frances – ANAWALT, Patrcicia Rieff (eds.) (1997): *The Essential Codex Mendoza*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

GRIJALVA, Antonio de (1985): *Crónica de la Orden de N.P.S. Agustín en las provincias de la Nueva España*. Ciudad de México: Editorial Porrúa.

Lienzo de Tlaxcala (http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/tlaxcala-lienzo.htm).

Matrícula de Tributos
(https://mexicana.cultura.gob.mx/en/repositorio/detalle?id=_suri:MEDIATECACODICE:TransObject:5bc4ebf77a8a0222efe681ea).

MENDIETA, Gerónimo de (1993): *Historia eclesiástica indiana.* Ciudad de México: Porrúa.

OROZCO Y JIMÉNEZ, Francisco (ed.) (1922-1927): *Colección de documentos históricos, inéditos o muy raros, referentes al arzobispado de Guadalajara* I. Guadalajara.

SAHAGÚN, Bernardino de (1981): *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España (1570-1580) II*. México: Editorial Porrúa.

TLATELOLCO CODEX
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex_of_Tlatelolco#/media/File:Codex_of_tlatelolco.JPG).

Anonymous painter: *El palo volador*. Viceroyalty of New Spain, c. 1651-1700. Oil painting, 107 x 505 cm. Museum of the Americas, inverntary number: 06530 (http://ceres.mcu.es/).

Secondary Literature

ALVA, J. Jorge Klor de (1992): Colonialism and Postcolonialism as (Latin) American Mirages. In *Colonial Latin American Review* 1-2, pp. 3-23.

BALLESTEROS GARCÍA, Víctor (2000): *Los conventos del estado de Hidalgo: expresiones religiosas del arte y la cultura del siglo XVI. The Monasteries of the State of Hidalgo: Religious Expressions of the Art and the Culture of the Sixteenth Century*. Pachuca: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo.

BARBA AHUATZIN, Beatriz – BANCO PADILLA, Alicia (coord.) (2009): *Iconografía mexicana IX y X: flora y fauna*. Ciudad de México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Historia.

BEAUFILS, Thomas (dir.) – FERRO, Marc. et al. (2003): *Le livre noir du colonialisme: XVIe-XXIe siècle, de l'extermination à la repentance*. Paris: Laffont.

BERNABEU ALBERT, Salvador – GIUDICELLI, Christophe – HAVARD, Gilles (2013): *La indianización. Cautivos, renegados, "hommes libres" y misioneros en los confines americanos. S. XVI-XIX*. Arnajuez: Doce Calles.

BERNAL, Ignacio et al. (2009): *Historia general de México*. Ciudad de México: El Colegio de México.

BERNAND, Carmen – GRUZINSKI, Serge (1998): *Historia del nuevo mundo. Los mestizajes, 1550-1640*. Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

BLOOM, William (1990): *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BORGES, Pedro (1992): *Religiosos en Hispanoamérica*. Madrid: Editorial MAPFRE.
BRENIŠÍNOVÁ, Monika (2017): *Del convento al hombre. El significado de la arquitectura conventual y su arte en la Nueva España del siglo XVI* (Ph.D. thesis). Prague: Universidad Carolina.

CARRILLO Y GARIEL, Abelardo (1961): *Ixmiquilpan*. Ciudad de México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

CLENDINNEN, Inga (1991): *Aztecs: an Interpretation.* Cambridge (Mass.): Cambridge University Press.

CLENDINNEN, Inga (2010): *The Cost of Courage in Aztec Eociety: Essays on Mesoamerican Society and Culture.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

DEBROISE, Olivier (1994): Imaginario fronterizo/identidad en tránsito. El caso de los murales de San Miguel Ixmiquilpan. In *Arte, historia e identidad en América*. *Visiones comparativas. XVII Coloquio internacional de Historia del Arte* 1, pp. 155-172.

DUVERGER, Christian (2003): *Agua y fuego: arte sacro indígena de México en el siglo XVI*. Ciudad de México: Landucci.

DUVERGER, Christian (1993): *La flor letal. Economía del sacrificio Mexica*. Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

DOMÍNGUEZ TORRES, Mónica (2013): *Military Ethos and Visual Culture in Post-Conquest Mexico*. Farnham: Ashgate.

EARLS, Irene (1987): *Renaissance Art: A Topical Dictionnary*. New York: Greenwood Press.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

ELIAS, Norbert – DUNNING, Eric – GOUDSBFOM, Johan – MENNELL, Stephen (eds.) (2000): *The Civilizing Process. Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations.* Malden/Oxford/Carlton: Blackwell publishing.

ESTRADA DE GERLERO, Elena Isabel (1976): El friso monumental de Ixmiquilpan. In *Actes du XLII e Congrés International des Americanistes* X, pp. 9-19.

ESTRADA DE GERLERO, Elena Isabel (1982): La pintura mural durante el virreinato. In *Historia del arte mexicano* 6, pp. 1-17.

FLORESCANO, Enrique (1999). *Memoria indígena*. Ciudad de Méxco: Taurus.

GEERTZ, Clifford (2003): *La interpretación de las culturas*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

GÓNZALEZ TORRES, Yólotl (1995): *Diccionario de mitología y religión de Mesoamérica*. Ciudad de México: Ed. Larousse.

GRUZINSKI, Serge (2013): *La colonización de lo imaginario. Sociedades indígenas y occidentalización en el México español*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

GRUZINSKI, Serge (2001): *O pensamento mestiço*. São Paulo: Editora Schwarz LTDA.

GRUZINSKI, Serge (1992): *The Aztecs. Rise and Fall of an Empire*. New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers.

GRUZINSKI, Serge – FERRO, Marc (2014): *The Eagle and the Dragon: Globalization and European Dreams of Conquest in China and America in the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge: Polity.

HARRIS, Max (2000): *Aztec, Moors and Spaniards. Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

HASSIG, Ross (2001): *Time, History and Beliefs in Aztec and Colonial Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

HASSIG, Ross (1992): *War and Society in Ancient Mesoamerica*.

HEATH, Ian (2002): *Armies Of The 16th Century 2: The Armies of the Aztec and Inca Empires, Other Native Peoples of the Americas and the Conquistadores 1450-1608*. Great Britain: Foundry Books.

JACKSON, Robert H. (ed.) (2013): *Conflict and Conversion in Sixteenth Century Central Mexico: the Augustinian War on and beyond the Chichimeca Frontier*. Leiden (Netherlands)/Boston, Mass.: Brill.

JACKSON, Robert H. (ed.) (2014): *Evangelization and Cultural Conflict in Colonial Mexico*. Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

JIMÉNEZ NÚÑEZ, Alfredo (2006): *El Gran Norte de México. Una frontera imperial en la Nueva España (1540-1820)*. Madrid: Tébar.

JOHANSSON, Patrick (1993): *La palabra de los Aztecas*. Ciudad de México: Trillo.

KAMM NYE, Harriet (1968): The Talking Murals of Itzmiquilpan. In *Mexico Quarterly Review* 3, pp. 24-34.

KIRCHHOFF, Paul (1943): Mesoamérica: sus límites geográficos, composición étnica y carácteres culturales. In *Acta Americana* 1, pp. 92-107.

KOSSSLYN, Stephen Michael (1980)**:** *Image and Mind*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

KOSSSLYN, Stephen Michael (1996): *Image and Brain. The Resolution of the Imagery Debate*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

KUBER, George (2012). *Arquitectura mexicana del siglo XVI*. Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

LEÓN-PORTILLA, Miguel (ed.) (2013): *Visión de los vencidos: relaciones indígenas de la conquista.* Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

LIMÓN OLVERA, Silvia (2012): *El fuego sagrado. Simbolismo y ritualidad entre los nahuas*. Ciudad de México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

LIPPMANN, Walter (2015): *Public Opinion* [ebook]. USA: First Star Publishing.

MCANDREW, John (1965). *The Open-Air Churches of Sixteenth Century Mexico: Atrios, Posas, Open chapels, and Other Studies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

MONREAL Y TEJADA, Luis (2000): *Iconografía del cristianismo*. Barcelona: Acantilado.

MORGAN, Lewis (1984): *Ancient Society*. Chicago: Charles H. Keer & Company Co.

PEÑALOSA, Joaquín Antonio (1969): *La práctica religiosa en México. Siglo XVI*. Ciudad de México: Editorial JUS.

PIERCE, Donna L. (1981): Identification of the Warriors in the Frescoes of Ixmiquilpan. In *Research Center for the Arts Review* 4, pp. 1-8.

POHL, John (2001): *Aztec Warrior AD 1325-1521*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.

POWELL, Philip Wayne (2014): *La Guerra chichimeca (1550-1600).* Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

ROMÁN GUTIÉRREZ, José Francisco (1993): *Sociedad y evangelización en Nueva Galicia durante el siglo XVI*. Zapopán: Colegio de Jalisco.

SÁNCHEZ VÁZQUEZ, Sergio (2008): Religiosidad y cosmovision. La fiesta de la Santa Cruz en Ixmiquilpan. In *Cinteotl* 3 (https://www.uaeh.edu.mx/campus/icshu/revista/revista_num3_08/portada_cinteotl3.htm).

SAID, Edward W. (1994): *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.

SERRANO AVILÉS, Tomás (2006): *Y se fue… Los municipios hidalguenses de muy alta migración internacional*. Pachuca: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo.

SIMÉON, Rémi (1977): *Diccionario de la lengua náhuatl o mexicana*. Ciudad de México: Siglo XXI Editores.

TAJFEL, Henri (1972): Social Categorization. English Manuscript of "La catégorisation sociale". In *Introduction à la Psychologie Sociale* 1, pp. 272-302.

TAJFEL, Henri – BILLIG, M. – BUNDY. R. P. – FLAMENT, Claude (1971): Social Categorization and Intergroup Behaviour. In *European Journal of Social Psychology* 1, pp. 147-177.

TODOROV, Tzvetan (1987): *La conquista de América: el problema del otro*. Ciudad De México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores.

TOUSSAINT, Manuel (1965): *Arte colonial en México*. Ciudad de México: Impr. Univ.

TOWNSEND, Camilla (2017): *Annals of Native America. How the Nahuas of Colonial Mexico Kept their History Alive*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

TURNER, John Charles – TAJFEL, Henri (1986): The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour. In Stephen Worchel, William. G. Austin (eds.): *The Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, pp. 7-24.

TURNER, John Charles (1985): Social Categorization and the Self-Concept: A Social Cognitive Theory of Group Behaviour. In Edward J. Lawler (ed.): *Advances in Group Processes: Theory and Research* 2. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, pp. 7-122.

TURNER, Victor (1982): *From Ritual to Theather: the Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications.

TURNER, Victor (1969): *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publications. Co.

VERGARA HERNÁNDEZ, Arturo (2013): Nómadas contra sedentarios: manifestaciones artísticas sobre la guerra chichimeca, siglo XVI. In Arturo Vergara

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

Hernández (ed.): *Arte y sociedad en la Nueva España*. Pachuca de Soto: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, pp. 145-171.

Vocabulario arquitectónico ilustrado (1975). Ciudad de México: Secretaría del Patrimonio Nacional.

VYŠNÝ, Peter (2012): *Štát a právo Aztékov* [State and Law of Aztecs]. Trnava: Typi Universitatis Trnaviensis.

VYŠNÝ, Peter (2015): *Hitoricko-právne súvislosti dobytia Nového sveta Španielmi* [Historical and Legal Context of Conquest of New Spain by Spaniards]. Trnava: Typi Universitatis Trnaviensis.

WAKE, Eleanore (2010): *Framing The Sacred. The Indian Churches of Early Colonial Mexico*. Norman (Okla.): University of Oklahoma Press.

WILLEY, Gordon R. – ECKHOLM, Gordon F. – MILLON, Rene F. (1964): The Patterns of Farming Life and Civilization. In Robert C. West (ed.): *Handbook of American Indians* I. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 37-39.

WRIGHT CARR, David (1998): Sangre para el sol: las pinturas murales del siglo XVI en la parroquia de Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo. In *Memorias de la Academia Mexicana de la historia correspondiente de la Real Madrid XLI*, pp. 73-103.

Monika Brenišínová (1983) is a graduate of the Center for Ibero-American Studies at Charles University in Prague. Since 2017 she has been teaching and researching at Charles University. Her research is focused on art history of Latin America, the issues of evangelization of indigenous cultures and the history of science. She specializes on the history of Early Modern Times and interdisciplinary approaches. She has attended numerous conferences both home and abroad and published extensively in scientific and popular journals. She is a co-author of the monograph *History of Art of Latin America.*

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0005

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 2/2019

RESEARCH REPORT

sciendo

Ethnographic Documentation of Professional Seamstresses of Folk Clothing in Selected Localities of Southeast Moravia

KLÁRA BROŽOVIČOVÁ

Institute of Cultural Studies,
University of Silesia in Cieszyn, Poland
klarabrozovicova@seznam.cz

ABSTRACT

The article aims to point out the continuity of folk clothing creation and to document the active creators - professional seamstresses who have been sewing parts of folk clothing. The research was carried out in the Moravian Slovakia region, namely in the Strážnice and Veselsko areas. The text follows the previous long-term researches of the last generation of folk clothing wearers who wore folk costumes every day in the area. Wearing folk costumes is a dying phenomenon today. The text documents a generation of professional seamstresses working in Strážnice at the beginning of the 20th century which still existed at a time when folk clothing was worn on a daily basis mainly by women. The personalities of Anděla Tvrdoňová – Baňařová (1907) and her mother Marie Tvrdoňová (1878) were described to the detail. These women lived in Strážnice and worked as professional seamstresses and made clothes for the inhabitants of the surrounding villages. The research of this generation of seamstresses used the family chronicle and memories of the respondents Marie Baňařová, the daughter-in-law of Anděla Tvrdoňová-Baňařová, both very unique sources of information that provide authentic testimonies. The article also publishes photographs from a family album depicting work and sewing and embroidery training.

Subsequently, the research is focused on the current generation of professional tailors who continue the work of previous generation. Two seamstresses Ludmila Kočišová from Strážnice and Alena Šikulová from Kněždub were chosen. They are both engaged in making folk clothing professionally, but not commercially, i.e. they don't have their own business in this field. The research focuses mainly on the transfer of know-how and therefore in-depth interviews with respondents of the current generation were used. The study does not deal

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

with material study of folk clothing and its typology. The today´s generation of seamstresses of folk clothing defines a number of problems that prevent from maintaining the traditional aesthetics of clothing, such as the lack of typical materials (fabrics and lace). The respondents also pointed out the overall transformation of clothing aesthetics and its impact into the wearing of folk clothing. The contribution of the article to the field of ethnology consists in the description of way of intergenerational transfer of knowledge associated with folk clothing and its aesthetics.

KEY WORDS: folk clothing, folk costume, Moravian Slovakia region, seamstresses, tradition

Introduction

The following text aims to point out the continuity of folk clothing creation and to document the active creators – professional seamstresses who sewed in the past and also have been sewing parts of folk clothing. The research was carried out in the area of Moravian Slovakia, mainly in the Strážnice and Veselsko areas. Documentation of active creation is important especially to capture the way of transfer of folk clothing sewing technologies between generations. Folk clothing has very specific cutting forms which is not simple at all and at the same time very varied in individual municipalities. There were only few professional tailors in the village, often only one male and one female tailor, even for the surrounding villages. Cutting patterns and technology, however, were not trained officially or universally, i.e. know-how was transferred between generations.

It is interesting to observe the continuity and the reasons why the current generation of professional tailors who are engaged in creation of folk clothing began to be oriented to this area, as well as the sources of technological knowledge of sewing individual costume parts. In this way, the transfer of knowledge and the social context of folk clothing creation can also be observed.

Folk clothing is considered in most ethnographic studies as a part of material culture where it is possible to study its form and function (KŘÍŽOVÁ 2001), eventually to collect and to document iconographic sources presenting folk clothing of individual regions in the past (TARCALOVÁ – KŘÍŽOVÁ – ŠIMŠA 2013:168). Traditional approach of the study of folk clothing is the classification and gathering of documentation for individual ethnographic areas or monographically for individual municipalities (JEŘÁBKOVÁ 2014). Processing folk clothing into atlases according to geographical division is a complex way of studying it and its individual components (DROŻDŻ 2015:35-50). There are even less detailed

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

technological studies on folk clothing in Central and Eastern Europe. The exception is M. Šimša´s work on the technology of making and cutting men's trousers (ŠIMŠA 2015).

An empty space in the research on folk clothing can be seen in the documentation of its social and everyday use, in this regard the study "Traditional life and clothing of women in the Strážnice region" (BROŽOVIČOVÁ 2017) can be mentioned. In the study, the author documents the last generation of women who wore folk clothing every day as common clothing. A completely unexplored area is the way of wearing folk clothing for special occasions and forms of folk clothing which are related to the religious events (way of dressing in Advent, fasting, Easter, etc.), as well as precise combinations of individual clothing parts. These exact rules are still kept in spite of the fact that folk clothing is withdrawing as popular everyday clothing. Furthermore, the last generation of wearers and witnesses is dying out and the awareness of the combinations is gradually disappearing.

Methodology

The research of seamstresses making folk clothing is closely linked to the research of the last generation of traditional costume wearers which took place in the years 2007-2013. A great deal of information about the oldest seamstresses was successfully gathered on this occasion. The oldest seamstress known as the “auntie Tvrdon“ was very often remembered by the wearers of folk clothing (women born in the 1930s and 1940s) who had their folk clothing made for everyday wearing when they were young.

The research of the oldest generation of folk clothing makers drew from the family chronicle of the Baňař´s family and also a family photo album was used as the respondent Marie Banerova was willing to share it. Furthermore, the research focused on the material study of folk clothing and cut and the individual parts and techniques of making details were documented (eg a bride´s wedding cap and the detail of curly lace).

Two respondents from the young generation (born in the 1950s) working at present in the region as folk clothing makers were mainly interviewed to focus the research on material study of folk clothing, technology of production and cuts, while documenting the procedures. At the same time, in-depth interviews were conducted to document the biographical path how they got to this job. In-depth interviews and biographical narration were used for both generations of respondents. In the first case, because Anděla Tvrdoňová is no longer alive, the memories of her daughter-in-law Marie Baňařová, the wearer of the folk clothing, were used. In the case of the younger generation of respondents, interviews were conducted directly with them.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

Free interviewing was used in all cases. Although the structure of basic questions was kept, the narration and the possibility of completing the story were entirely left at the choice of the respondents. "The aim is to discover new aspects of a selected area of inquiry (including biographical aspects), through the everyday practice of various social (interactive, biographical) processes that act hidden behind the known external facts. This cognitive intention excludes any specifications or use of restricted categories that would lead to attention deterioration and the formulation of closed battery questions" (SCHÜTZE 1999:40). In the research process, the role of the researcher cannot be completely separated from the examined environment because the respondents react to her presence and they can change their behaviour because of her presence. As for the locality, it is necessary to mention self-reflection of the researcher who is connected with the region. It was her birthplace but she is not involved directly to the process of traditional folk clothing wearing neither in folklore activity.

P. Bourdieu adds to the researcher's self-reflection: "In short, there is no need to choose between the active observation, necessarily a fictitious immersion in a foreign environment, and the objectivism of a "distance view" which keeps the observer at a distance, a distance to himself or herself and a distance to the object of his interest. The active objectivization is not dealing with exploring the 'lived experience' of the knower, but with the social conditions of the possibility - and therefore the effects and possibilities - of that experience, and more precisely, of the act of objectivisation itself. It seeks to objectify the subjective relationship to the object, which by no means leads to relativistic and more or less anti-scientific subjectivism but it is one of the conditions for real scientific objectivity" (BOURDIEU 2003: 19).

The data was processed in programme Atlas.ti (FRIESE 2014) where all transcripts were loaded into the program and coded (FRIESE 2018:277-309) by consecutive re-reading according to the focus of the interview parts. Atlas.ti is mainly used in "grounded theory", but the aim of the work is not to create a grounded theory generally valid but to analyse a local specific case.

Older Generation of Folk Clothing Seamstresses – Anděla Baňařová (Tvrdoňová): Dressmaker, Auntie Tvrdoňova from Mizerov

Anděla Tvrdoňová (1907) was a famous dressmaker from Strážnice who made the same type of clothing for people in a small town and adjacent villages, i.e. Petrov and Radějov. Considering a big amount of clothing she made, her impact on the development of folk clothing in the locality was considerable. References to Anděla Tvrdoňová are also found in

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

the testimonies of witnesses, especially those who wore folk clothing. The references are more or less scrappy in the context of another statement, more detailed are the memories of Helena H. from Radějov who was telling of how her sister, one year older, had a winter short coat called "kacabaya made." „*At that times, "kacabayas" were made, in Stražnice, at the Tvrdons, Anděla had a new one, her mum made one for her. Anděla remembered when a seamstress was making the "kacabaya" she did not even have a meter to measure her size she used a cord. Imagine that! She put the measurements and she made a knot…And it was at the Tvrdons, here in Mizerov. And today, even in Stražnice nobody wants to make it"*.[1]

It is possible to obtain the most information about Anděla Baňařová (n. Tvrdoňová) from Marie Baňařova who provided several interviews on this topic. Marie starts telling: *„Our granny, my husband´s mum, was a dressmaker she made clothes and many people of Radejov came and had their clothes made here. She sewed also typical skirts of Stražnice, look here, there´s something like it…it´s her, our granny, she is sewing and embroidering.*[2]" In this way, Marie Baňařova commented on the following photo (Figure 1).

Another very valuable source to trace the line of tradition inherited in the gender line is the family chronicle. It is undoubtedly an extraordinary achievement which, in many ways, facilitates the work of a researcher and provides another possible view on tradition directly from the position of a family member. The reports in the chronicle are based on a close knowledge of family life style and circumstances, which is why Anděla Tvrdoňová is described internally and in the context of her sisters and her mother who also dealt with folk clothing.

1 Respondent Helena H. (1924) from Radějov narrated in the interview. When she comes back to the past telling the story about "kacabaya", she compares herself with her sister. Her elder sister had a newly made coat while Helena bought it almost new, second hand one. It is possible that this was the fact why the story stayed on her mind for ever and she referred to her sister´s detailed narration. The story can be a little confusing in spite of the fact that her mother´s name (Marie Tvrdoňova) and her sister´s name (Anděla Tvrdoňova) were the same. It is not evident when she is telling about her mother or about her sister, they were both famous dressmakers.

2 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice..

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

RESEARCH REPORT

Figure 1: *Anděla is embroidering a wedding little cap with pearls at her house. Strážnice, in 50s, family archives.*

Anděla was born on 2 May 1907. Like her two sisters, she was interested very much in sewing and all the art associated with this work. After leaving school, she stayed at home helping in the family farm. In spite of this, she was keen on embroidering and sewing folk costumes. In winter, all four women sit at the table because there was less other work to do and she was sewing and embroidering and completing orders. She received embroidery lessons from her mother and her aunts Rybecká. Her mother observed their daughters and when she did not like it, when it was not done well, she said: " I ´ll slap your fingers, do it better and watch me how I am sewing it and put a stitch after a stitch." She provided the most of work for Mrs. Janková who had an embroidery shop. In 1934 she attended a machine embroidery course which took place in the Vavříks´ inn in the valley. She also embroidered or sewed things of her own. On 25th September 1928 she married František Baňař from no. 580 Nová Street

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

and settled in a house no. 55. They all worked together land farming. The homestead was growing due to the contribution of the land of the young farmer Baňař […]. "[3]

Figure 2: *The birtplace of Anděla Tvrdoňová (married Baňařová), Strážnice, 1926. The family chronicle.*

When Marie Baňařová tells stories about her husband's mum as a seamstress, she highlights the complexity of the Anděla´s tailor art. "*My grandma sewed the whole men's and women's folk clothing she could sew every piece besides that, pants, she didn't make them. No pants, Vavřík made them, he was an experienced tailor. But the wide shirt, the narrow shirt, the "kordulas"(vests)…, she could made all these things.* "[4] Marie further emphasizes that the craft was particularly demanding because of adapting garments to different figures, so all garments were tailor-made. *„She made everything, she had cut patterns for them, she did not have that one for "kordulas", but she could also have them, she sewed for strangers like anybody, every person was differently built, and she could cut according to the figure and*

[3] A report from the Baňař family chronicle. The transcription is exact and has not been modified.

[4] An extract from Marie Baňařová´s narration 1932, Strážnice.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

the person had to come again and she adjusted it, a little bit. And the female "kordula" as well, she had to bring the other "kordula" and she cut according to it, everyone was differently strong, with a different length, she assembled every "kordula" and she called for them and now she had to check it, here, at the neck, not to be choky she had to shape it out,... she had that tailor's chalk, made a sign that she had cut it out to fit it better, and a woman's skirt too, she had to come to try it on. I saw that she wrote notes on the patterns, I notice that certain women, she had individual patterns for certain women she wrote notes on the patterns. She, however, measured them, it was wider by a centimetre, a woman was stronger, so she had to make it five centimetres wider according to her body. Yes, there were too many people (to have the clothing sewed)."[5]

As it was mentioned in the excerpt from the family chronicle, Anděla Baňařová mastered the craft since her youth, which was probably also due to the instigation of her mother, Marie Tvrdoňová who was also a renowned seamstress of folk clothing. The influence of the mother on her daughters is obvious because the two sisters of the Anděla Baňařova (Tvrdoňova) were engaged in the production of folk clothing but each of them knew how to do something, as stated Marie Baňařová: „*Everyone knew how to do something but together they made everything.*"[6] While Anděla tended to sew and she embroidered only hats and "kordulas" when she replaced the embroidery with pearls, but her sisters concentrated on embroidery and toledo. "*There were Marie, Anděla and Anna, they were her daughters and they all were making embroideries. They embroidered, therefore, only the grandma embroidered with pearls, but they embroidered also in colours. But the aunt Tvrdoňova could embroider also with these pearls, our grandma, also for male kordulas, so she made the embroidery with pearls. The auntie Tvrdoňova did not sew but embroidered like those blue aprons, scarves were nicely embroidered, these Sunday church ones, also she embroidered antipendia to the church, the curtains, in the church on the altar as there were, and with white and red pearls embroidered, on the Saint Spirit there were red and they sent power to nurses, they embroidered aprons, and male sort of aprons with pearls and colourful threads. The grandma, she was not…, she did not prefer sewing, she made the kordulas with pearls but she did not embroider, used threads.*"[7]

5 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

6 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

7 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

Figure 3: *Anděla Tvrdoňová (married Baňařová) in the left, Marie Tvrdoňová, Anna Tvrdoňová (in the middle), the family chronicle.*

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

Mentioning the Tvrdoň´ sisters, Marie Baňařová as the daughter-in-law of Anděla Baňařová, (Tvrdoňová) may be confusing. She simply calls her mother-in-law, her grandma (sometimes grandmother), her sisters are called aunts and she adds the proper surname that they were using at that time, i.e. Múčkova and Tvrdoňova. For a complete explanation, it can be added to Marie Baňařova's interpretation: "*They were three sisters of the Tvrdoňs, she (Anděla) married Baňař and he married and settled here, that is like Tvrdoň's house, and the other married Múčka and one was single, she stayed there, in Skalická street. She inherited the aunt's house from her aunt who was also single*."[8] In the family chronicle of the Baňař family, all the sisters are presented in individual photographs.

Marie Baňařová speaks about Marie Tvrdoňová, the mother of Anděla who was also a famous tailor from Strážnice, she gives only incomplete and mediated pieces of information, which is logical due to the time gap between two generations. Yet we have learnt quite a lot thanks to the carefully run family chronicle.

Figure 4*: Marie Tvrdoňová, a photograph from the family album.*

"Marie was one of the sisters Rybecký who was born on 6 April 1878 in Strážnice in No. 231 Bednářská Street (old system). As all her sisters were talented in embroidering and costume work in her youth, she had an even greater interest and love for folk embroidery and

[8] Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

crocheting and sewing costumes for all occasions. At that time, the folk clothing was worn more often, both on ceremonial occasions and at home, at work, both women and men. After completing her schooling, she trained her skills with Mrs. Baňařová, a peasant seamstress in Bednářská Street for 3 years to work later in this field. Everything was sewn by hand at that time. She was performing the work at home while she was learning it, because her teacher was satisfied with her work and she could do it by her own. She was very pleased with her and Marie did a good job even then. And also because sewing of folk clothing was more demanded and cash was needed. She enjoyed the work and moreover, she had enough time. After having finished her apprenticeship, she performed sewing on her own at home at her free time. After getting married and moving to Mizerov (Vinohradská) she still enjoyed sewing and embroidery. She sewed even in the evenings under poor lighting. At that time, they used a home-made sort of candles (a bowl of fat with a wick). This was very smoky. They also used kerosene…

She had a good character, she was cheerful and kind-hearted. Together with her husband František Tvrdoň, they lived in the back wing of a house No. 55. She bought a sewing machine called Singer (shuttle) after some time. The work went faster. This lasted until 1927. When they moved into a newly built house, she bought a new Bobbin sewing machine. She was very satisfied with this sewing machine which lasted until her death. Together with her husband František they raised three daughters."

Marie Baňařová remembers Marie Tvrdoňová well. Marie Baňařová had her clothes made by her when she was a single girl, and later, after getting married her clothes were sewn by Anděla Baňařová (n. Tvrdoňová). "*She could sew everything, a camisole, a "kacabaya", as well as skirts, every shape of skirts she could make, the skirts of the aprons… they were all dressed in folk costumes, so was she, all the seamstresses who were in Stražnice, were able to make the skirts but not the camisoles, they could not make the "kacabayas". However, my grandma could sew everything as well as camisoles; also for me, she sewed also a camizole once and a "kacabaya". Oh maybe not, it was my old grandma Tvrdoňová, I had it at my wedding, so it was my old granny Tvrdoňová who made it when I was still single. She lived over there in the street, in Skalicka street, I could not quickly remember. I used to live there, too…* "[9] Marie in her interpretation continues and captures just the very important moment of the situation after getting married to the family: "*It was at time I haven´t been here, in this family, yet, but the old grandma Tvrdoňova used to live here, in our street, Skalická street,*

[9] Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

so we had the kordulas made here, she made them, for everyone, but then I got here and my grandmother sewed me a "kacabaya" with those big statues. I had one, but she sewed me one more, I had two, I had a warm one, and she made me a thinner one which I wore in this way... "[10] Marie admits the influence of her mother-in-law, the clothing she made was a kind of financial support so Marie was not motivated to leave folk clothing, and she also literally mentions this fact: "*I used to wear my home dress until I got married and since that time I have got a costume all the time*."[11]

According to Marie Baňařová's memories, the overall atmosphere in the family had to be influenced by the professional interest of Anděla Tvrdoňová and her sisters. Typically, peasant livelihoods were supplemented by income from tailoring and embroidery, but according to Marie, interest in folk clothing was often prevailing and the potential gains from this activity were higher than from field work, which was, on the contrary, the priority in other families. *"[…] my grandmother said that during season work she preferred to hire people from Radějov to help in the fields, and she and her sisters would embroider at home. They enjoyed it, and they liked it, they had money from it and they paid those workers in the fields. At least that was what my granny said.*"[12]

The decision to hire farmworkers did not have to be solely due to self-interest or a matter of hobby; there is a practical point of view. Field work and permanent contact with the soil dry hands and create cracks and agnails that prevent fine work with materials such as silk or brocade from which folk clothing in the Strážnice area was made. The same is true of embroidery work, field work would make it impossible to earn by embroidering and therefore they preferred to hire and pay labour. [13]

In the family chronicle, the sisters are captured in courses of cooking, sewing and embroidery that took place in the late 1940s. [14] Obviously, they were interested in self-improvement, as the photographs show. The family chronicle mentions Anna, Anděla´s sister: "*Anna attended sewing and embroidery courses at the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent in Strážnice, which*

10 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

11 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

12 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

13 It was an idea of Helena B. from Strážnice, a professional tailor who was the consultant to the text, expert in lexicology of sewing and tailoring who told the author about.

14 Dated back according to the record in the family chronicle, a photograph of a cooking course held in1948.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

Miss Šebestová held, and they made embroideries mainly for the church." [15] When the part of the chronicle was read (a daughter of Marie Baňařová read it), Marie added information during the interview: "*You see, it used to be there a street, a small street, going from the parish church down, at the bottom, there were such houses and that´s where Miss Šebestová used to live. She was quite small, I think, she was single and very pleasant*." [16] The organization of the Sisters of Charity in Strážnice was therefore significantly involved in the development of education spreading modern technologies at that time among the female population in the locality.

The following photo depicts Anděla Tvrdoňová during a machine embroidery course, which was held at the "Na Dolině" inn in Strážnice, probably because of larger premises. A photograph of embroidery "toledo" is also preserved. [17]

Figure 5: *Machine embroidery course held in "Na Dolině" in Strážnice. Anděla Tvrdoňová in the middle, with a white collar, a photograph from a family album.*

Marie Baňařová revives her memories and adds her comments to the photographs, stating that the experience did not always come to its use: "*Grandma then had the embroidery*

15 Chronicle of the Baňař´s´ family.

16 Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

17 See pictures added to this chapter.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

machine but she did not use it, I do not remember[18]". The period after the 2nd World War and the early fifties was the last era of trainings and courses in the area. One of the reasons was that the Sisters of Charity left Strážnice, but also women started to work away from their homes, which no longer allowed them to make handwork to the same extent as before. Marie Baňařová compares the position of women of the previous generation with her own situation: *"There were courses of cooking and sewing, which used to be mostly over the winter, they worked in summer and they gathered together in winter, the sewing courses were very useful. I didn't participate there, only women older than me, then the courses were not organized anymore, women had to go to work, they were no longer at home in agriculture, they worked in factories, in the Šohaj factory, there used to be Grauburn's, a workshop there*."[19] This statement shows a break point that occurred in the 1950s and early 1960s when women who entered factories and agricultural cooperatives left traditional clothing because of their wear and maintenance requirements.

New Generation of Folk Clothing Seamstresses – Alena Šikulová from Kněždub a Ludmila Kočišová from Strážnice

Alena Šikulová, like Ludmila Kočišová, is a professional tailor who actively does this craft and they both make and customize their clothing according the customers' needs. Not only they are able to sew contemporary clothing professionally, they are experts in the design and manufacture of folk clothing parts. Their skills are so high that they are able to make even the most complicated parts, such as the "kacabaya" - a short women's costume coat that extends to the waist and forms two waves at the back. This ruffle consists of a special cut and a reinforcement of parts, and the sewing know-how of this part had to be restored after making experiments. The two seamstresses are also researchers who are keen on the reconstruction of folk clothing and renewing the technological knowledge necessary to maintain it.

Unlike the older generation of seamstresses working in localities in the first half of the 20th century who used to dress the clients on a daily basis, contemporary tailors supply the costumes used for the ceremonial use and performance of folk ensembles. While the first group still lived in a community where folk costume was a common style of clothing, it is a specific one now. During the research, respondents were asked how they got to make folk

[18] Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

[19] Interview with Marie Baňařová 1932, Strážnice.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

clothing. Alena Šikulová considers her work in the "open-air museum" to be the first impulse where she made her first ordinary costume. The next step was to sew for her grandson´s performance, then she began sewing the costume for a granddaughter and she added individual parts until she learned to make the entire costume wardrobe. Another way was described by Ludmila Kočišová working in Strážnice who stated how she was asked from a neighbouring village to make one: "*I was asked to make it, just from Radějov. The first attempt was a contract from Radějov when I sewed the pants. I tried it, I did it, they were nice, so I kept trying. And since then I've got into everything, also sleeves.* "[20]

At present, both respondents can make not only all women's but also all men's costume parts. It means they are able to create the parts of the most complicated cuts such as ladies' sleeves, ladies' shirts (long-sleeved shirts which are pocketed on the arms), as well as winter men's and women's costume coats. The seamstress Ludmila Kočišová described it literally: "*Well, I can sew everything today, the whole folk costume – a „kordula" (a vest), sleeves, „kacabaya" (a short women's coat), a camisole, petticoats, top skirts, shirts (women's shirt with long sleeves) children´s costumes, simply everything."* [21]

Because they are professionally trained, both tailors master the complex making of any garment and consider making folk garments as a kind of bonus to their abilities. They accept orders not only from the location where they work. They are also able to produce parts from other regions such as Wallachia (Valašsko). However, in making it they always strictly follow all the specifics of the garment, even in details. The part is always made according to the original the clients bring and the exact copy is made, the material should correspond to as well.

Alena Šikulová who is embroidering the folk clothing points out that it has to be a local pattern. She comments: „*Firstly you have to watch the region, area, there must be original local ornaments.*" [22] Strict adherence to the local specifics is also necessary when choosing embroidery for individual parts, for example white embroidery of men's shirts is allowed to be made by machine while male aprons are embroidered exclusively by hand, as Alena Šikulová stated: "*The boy's apron must be embroidered by hand as… there is not other possibility, not by machine, only by hand."* [23] Similarly, both respondents point out the

[20] Ludmila Kočišová, interview from 10 January 2020, Strážnice.

[21] Ludmila Kočišová, interview from 10 January 2020, Strážnice.

[22] Alena Šikulová, interview from 8 January 2020, Kněždub.

[23] Alena Šikulová, interview from 8 January 2020, Kněždub.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

necessity to dress the folk clothing in a coherent way, i.e. in particular skirts and petticoats should form one line.

A major problem currently facing folk clothing tailors is the lack of some costume-specific materials, for example some typical and popular cloths for the back skirts, as Alena Šikulová mentionned: "*… the material is less and less available and you have to take what is produced. The girls can't get the material anymore*. "[24]

Another problem is unified lace which is being used across areas. Moreover, there is not sufficient variability in size and width of the lace. Such a lace is then unsuitable for children's costumes: "*Now you buy lace, maybe in Brumovice and it has all the same width and now imagine that you should put it on such skirt for a child (fěrtušek), so you have to adjust the ratio. So I have embroidered to the cloth*."[25] It is obvious that in this respect the folk creators must have a lot of imagination and they are able to make it up.

Both respondents agree on the transformation of some body proportions and thus on the change in the aesthetics of wearing folk clothing. A marked change is in the shape of the breast which was different because women did not wear bras. "*Today it is different, aunts used to wear their breasts down and today girls have bras. When the breasts fell, the vest (kordula) was flatter and tucks were not done*."[26] As for children´s costume, certain variability was needed because children grow up. At the waistcoat (kordula) the fabric was commonly added in width, the waistcoat was additionally narrowed to allow to be extended it when the wearer put on weight. Likewise, girls' tops and bottom skirts were extended in the whole perimeter. The parts thus served the child for several years during the child's growth. It is interesting that just like the older generations of seamstresses who made cut patterns for their regular customers, today's tailors also make clothing for their clients on measure. The tailors not only copy the patterns exactly according to the older components, but they also keep these patterns for their individual customers: "*I cut the patterns according to the old clothes, according something they had brought. Everybody is different and everybody has different shoulders and then it doesn't fit.* "[27]

[24] Alena Šikulová, interview from 8 January 2020, Kněždub.

[25] Alena Šikulová, interview from 8 January 2020, Kněždub.

[26] Ludmila Kočišová, interview from 10 January 2020, Strážnice.

[27] Ludmila Kočišová, interview from 10 January 2020, Strážnice.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

The knowledge of cuts and shear patterns was shared among a narrow community of experts and, with the gradual disappearance of folk clothing from everyday life, a detailed knowledge of cut design of clothing also left. A good example of renewed knowledge of technical solution is the reconstruction of the cut of a women's winter coat, the so-called "kacabaya". It is a short jacket made of velvet or black fabric that extends just above the wide skirt and is lined with flannel. At the back, the jacket is shaped so that the back of the jacket protrudes slightly and creates waves. Creating such a shape is quite difficult both in terms of cut and in the solution of the reinforcement.

Ludmila Kočišová has reconstructed the cut pattern according to the model of an older „kacabaya“ and she states: “*Here I unseamed the old kacabaya to see what is inside. And there was given paper and also a sort of material, such as rough canvas, thin as organza, as if it were soaked in starch. I don´t know what kind of material it is*.“ [28] The inner materials are often replaced by modern ones but with the same characteristics, e.g. the material must be rigid but flexible so that the rear part of the coat stayed elastic. The original procedure for the manufacture of reinforcement in „kacabayas“ has not been preserved, so the tailor has no choice but to be creative and replace the material when making new parts.

The similar case is the transfer of knowledge in the embroidery of folk clothing. Alena Šikulová talked about learning the special techniques of embroidering called “šlingrování” (embroidery of holes) on men´s shirts. This is pinhole embroidery where the individual holes are embroidered with white threads as in the so-called "toledo". She learned this technique requiring precision from Mrs. Chudíčková who at the time of passing on the knowledge was almost confined to bed. “*Tommy had his costume embroidered whole I had gone to see the auntie Chudíčková, she advised me. And the auntie, though she was nearly immobile and her fingers were so twisted from rheumatism but she was still embroidering. I went to her and said… Auntie I don't know how ... so she looked at it….well done, sewed well. It´ll take you some time until you learn the technique*.” [29] Thanks to the willingness to pass on knowledge, the details of the technique are being preserved and allow the continuity of the traditional process.

At present, folk clothing tailors not only produce folk clothing parts and thus supply the dance ensembles and people living in villages with missing parts, they also contribute to the preservation of the tradition by collecting things. Each of the seamstresses gradually made

[28] Ludmila Kočišová, interview from 10 January 2020, Strážnice..

[29] Alena Šikulová, interview from 8 January 2020, Kněždub.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

sets of cuts for all types of folk costume parts and Alena Šikulová has also collected patterns of local embroidery. She received the first embroidery samples from her teacher, Mrs. Chudíčková, as she remembers: "*As I used to go to the auntie Chudíčková, when I began to embroider, so it was her who gave me samples on paper saying: there you have samples of everything, like cross embroidery on shirts, on skirts, aprons, bows. The aunt used to make it up.*" [30] She is expanding her collection of patterns on the occasion of the village holidays: „*You go round the village, you hang out, people show you their embroidery you can even take a photo of it you have a sample. You go to the feast, you take some photos, especially photos of lace, even the faces don't have to be there, the most important are the samples (she is laughing)*."

In this way, tailors play an important role in the preservation of traditional clothing and its form. Tradition, however, depends on the preservation of specific knowledge which is often impossible to obtain because the creators of the original components died a long time ago. In some cases, the skills of contemporary creators who are able to restore cuts and patterns help. Another difficulty is often the secret information and knowledge transmitted only in families, such as pleating back skirts on the wire. If the knowledge of the pleating technique remains in only one family, there is a high probability that this technique will disappear with the lack of interest of one of the generations and the part of the costume will be replaced by another technique that requires less maintenance.

The aim of the paper was to document professional tailors working in the villages of Strážnice and Kněždub and their contribution to the local tradition of folk clothing. Thanks to the archive materials of the Baňař family from Strážnice, the folk clothing creators who worked in the area at the beginning of the 20th century were successfully documented and their biographical data recorded. As for contemporary creators, the aim was mainly to document the transfer of tradition and the way of learning and maintaining professional knowledge related to the specifics of folk clothing. The success is the permanent interest in folk clothing but also the ability of creators to cope with the pitfalls when the knowledge is lacking and there is no-one to advise them how to keep the original appearance and characteristics of the folk costume parts. Finally, it should be emphasized that it is necessary to preserve not only material costumes, but also special knowledge about the maintenance and creation of folk clothing which play a key role in the continuity of this tradition.

[30] Alena Šikulová, interview from 8 January 2020, Kněždub.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

Bibliography

BOURDIEU, Pierre (2003): Zúčastněná objektivizace: Huxleyho přednáška. In *Biograf* 30, pp. 3-17.

BROŽOVIČOVÁ, Klára (2017): *Tradiční život a odívání žen na Strážnicku*. Ostrava: Šmíra-Print Enterprises, a.s.

DROŻDŻ, Anna (2015): Micro-historical Inspirations in the Interpretation of the Archive Collections of the Polish Ethnographis Atlas. In *Trames Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 19 (1), pp. 35-50.

FRIESE, Susasnne (2014): *Qualitative Data Analysis with Atlas.ti 2. Afl*. Sage: London.

FRIESE, Susasnne (2018): Computergestützte Analyse: das Kodieren narrativer Interviews. In Christian Pentzold, Andreas Bischof, Nele Heise (eds.): *Praxis Grounded Theory. Theoriegenerierendes empirisches Fosrchen in medienbezogenen Lebenswelten. Ein Leh- und Arbeitsbuch*. Springer VS: Wiesbaden, pp. 277-309.

JEŘÁBKOVÁ, Alena (Ed.) (2014): *Lidová oděvní kultura: Příspěvky k ikonografii, typologii a metodologii*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

KŘÍŽOVÁ, Alena (2001): Lidový oděv a historický kostým (poznámky k terminologii, formě a funkci oděvu). In *Národopisná revue* 1 (11), pp. 5-9.

SCHÜTZE, Fritz (1999): Narativní interview ve studiích interakčního pole. In *Biograf* 20, pp. 33-51.

ŠIMŠA, Martin (2014): Mapová aplikace Lidový oděv na Moravě a etnokartografická prezentace kabátového oděvu. In *Národopisná revue* 3 (24), pp. 217-231.

ŠIMŠA, Martin (2015): *Analýza konstrukce, sémantika a ikonografie součástí lidového oděvu na příkladu soukenných kalhot v západních Karpatech a středověkého kalhotového oděvu.* Disertační práce. Masaryk University: Brno.

STAŇKOVÁ, Jitka – BARAN, Ludvík (2004): *České a slovenské lidové kroje: Díl I. Čechy*. Praha: Ottovo nakladatelství.

STRÁNSKÁ, Drahomíra (1949): *Lidové kroje v Československu*. Praha: Ottovo nakladatelství.

TARCALOVÁ, Ludmila – KŘÍŽOVÁ, Alena – ŠIMŠA, Martin (2013): Lidový oděv na Moravě a ve Slezsku I. Ikonografické prameny do roku 1850. In *Slovácko: společenskovědní sborník pro moravsko-slovenské pomezí*, 55 (1), pp. 168-170.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0006

REPORT

sciendo

Spring School: Ethnography of Socialism (Project Report)

ŠTEFAN IŽÁK

Department of Ethnology and World Studies,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia
stefan.izak@gmail.com

As a PhD. student of ethnology, I traveled to participate at the project in the Republic of North Macedonia at the beginning of May (1st-5th, 2019). North Macedonia is a Balkan country which just recently changed its name to open negotiations for accession to the European Union and NATO. I have spent some time in this former Yugoslav republic in the past, so I knew that this country offers many areas and inspiration for ethnological research.

The project was called Spring School: Ethnology of Socialism and it was organized by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje. The project took place during the first ten days of May in a small town Kriva Palanka, located near the Bulgarian border. The town was an industrial center of region during socialism but at the time of political and economic transformation factories went bankrupt and many people lost their jobs. Thus, Kriva Palanka is a very interesting place to study the period of socialism with its present-day overlaps.

Besides me, the project was attended by students from Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania. The school was divided into two parts: theoretical and practical. In the theoretical part, we had lectures in English from lecturers from Macedonia, Bulgaria, Russia and Poland. Lecturers

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0007

dealt mainly with topics of everyday life in the period of socialism and with the comparison of socialist systems of the former Eastern bloc states and socialist Yugoslavia.

The second part of this school was field research. We did it in two-member groups. Together with my colleague from Slovenia, I examined the perception of socialist Yugoslavia among the inhabitants of Kriva Palanka, while my colleague helped me to translate those part of our interviews with respondents which I did not understand. He focused on the perception of the present and their views on the future of Kriva Palanka or in the wider context of North Macedonia.

Kriva Palanka has proven to be an interesting area for ethnological research. Within the framework of the research, several potential topics for further research have opened up for me. But this would have to go beyond the (time) framework of this project. One of the possible topics includes work mobility between the former Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. During those few days, I talked to the few Macedonians who worked in Košice or in the nuclear power plant in Jaslovské Bohunice during socialism.

We finished ten days of inspiring lectures and fieldwork with local people by public presentation of our researches in the Municipal Museum with the presence of the Mayor and the public.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0007

BOOK REVIEW

sciendo

Zmiešané manželstvá (manželstvá s cudzincami) ako sociokultúrny fenomén [Mixed Marriages as a Social and Cultural Phenomenon]

TERÉZIA KOPČÍKOVÁ

Department of Ethnology and World Studies,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia
t.kopcikova@gmail.com

Silvia Letavajová is an ethnologist and culturologist who focuses on the research of traditional culture in Slovakia as well as on family and family customary traditions. She also focuses on migrants, especially refugees, and so-called new minorities.

In her publication *Mixed marriages (marriages with foreigners) as a socio-cultural phenomenon* she deals with the increasingly widespread phenomenon of mixed marriages, i.e., marriages of partners who come from religiously, ethnically, racially, socially, linguistically or politico-economically different groups. The theme of marriages of Slovak citizens with residents of other countries has so far only been marginally studied by social science disciplines, which, according to Letavajová, needs to be changed due to the increasingly intensive migration and contacts with people from other cultures and countries. In her publication, she, therefore, attempts to *"give a picture of mixed marriages as a broad-spectrum and multilayered social phenomenon, as well as a specific social category"* (LETAVAJOVÁ 2018:10).

The publication thus consists of a theoretical part - the processing of the issue from different angles (traditional culture, legislation and so on) and author's research. The research itself consists of two parts. The first part of the research is to find out the public's reflection on

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0008

mixed marriages. The second part consists of field research focused on marriages with foreigners of the Muslim religion. The author focuses on research of the reflection of mixed marriages of partners who are in such a relationship, as well as research of strategies of their family, social and partner life.

The first chapter presents the methods and techniques of the research. The public opinion on mixed marriages was examined by a questionnaire method, and the research sample consisted of 221 respondents - 109 men and 112 women in 3 age categories. She carried out this part of her research in 2016 and 2017 in Prievidza.

She conducted field research on marriages with foreigners of Muslim religion through interviews, but also through participating and non-participating non-standardized observation techniques, which were used to verify the respondents' statements. In this case, the research sample consisted of 29 respondents who gave a picture of 22 mixed marriages. In each of these marriages, the woman has Slovak citizenship, while the man is a citizen of another country. Respondents in this marriage are either still together or divorced (the average duration of both marriages and divorces is 8 years); the research criterion was that they had to live at least part of their marital life in Slovakia.

The respondents came from Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt. The author justifies her choice because the proportion of migrants from these countries and mixed marriages with them is statistically significant. As far as women are concerned, respondents come from several Slovak cities, so there is no spatial limitation.

The author also added 12 respondents, who know or are friends with Slovak and foreign partners, and with whom she also conducted interviews on the topic of mixed marriages. The field research was carried out in 2014, 2015, and 2017.

In the second chapter, the author presents the theoretical background and historical aspects of the study of mixed marriages. It focuses on marriage as such, marital preferences, separately mixed marriages as a separate social category and migration processes, thanks to which such unions occur.

The third chapter is devoted to mixed marriages in Slovakia. In the first part, the author deals with the choice of a partner in a traditional rural environment. She explains the perception of what is "ours" and what is "foreign", as well as how the individual groups differ visually and thus separate (e.g.,Evangelicals and Catholics). She also deals directly with mixed marriages - i.e., marriages of locally, religiously and ethnically different partners, and the selection of a spouse in connection with migration processes. The author concludes this part with the

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0008

reflection on the above-mentioned mixed marriages in customary and folk traditions in Slovakia.

The second part of this chapter deals with the legislative conditions that determine the establishment and functioning of marriages with foreigners in Slovakia.

The third part is devoted to statistical data of marriages of Slovaks with foreigners, focusing on data concerning foreigners in marriage markets in our territory (it also independently deals with Muslims) and marriages of Slovaks with foreigners in Slovakia; the author also pays attention to divorce rate and illegal migration in the form of smuggling carried out for the purpose of marriage of convenience.

The fourth chapter is the empirical part, i.e. the results of the author's research. The first part of this chapter discusses public opinion. It focuses specifically on what the respondents mean by the term "mixed marriage" and what their preferences are for a partner from a similar group. Subsequently, it deals with their preferences regarding ethnicity, religiosity, nationality, continent, language, or race. The author also studied whether the respondents had any personal experience with mixed marriages and what their recommendations were regarding the marital preferences of their offspring.

The second part of this chapter deals with mixed marriages themselves. The author discusses several aspects of marital or family life. She deals with the introduction of partners and the subsequent marriage, partner, family life and the related upbringing of children.

As can be seen from the present summary, the publication is thematically extensive, and the same applies to separate chapters. However, each chapter is divided into many subchapters, which make the publication very clear and easy to navigate.

The broad thematic scope of the theoretical part offers the reader a comprehensive picture of mixed marriages in Slovakia. The reader is acquainted with the issue in several ways and consequently, its better understanding. Letavajová's book is thus an excellent primary source for any work that deals with mixed marriages, regardless of the specific type of mixed marriage.

The author believes that due to the increasingly widespread globalization and migration, the number of mixed marriages in our territory will also increase, which will also give rise to new challenges and issues that society will face. I myself can tell that approximately half of my friends are in a family relationship with foreigners. This topic is actual and needs attention. However, other types of mixed marriages could also be processed or investigated.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0008

BOOK REVIEW

Cultural diversity is enormous, and there are significant differences among people from different countries and cultures, which brings numerous other challenges.

Reviewed Literature

LETAVAJOVÁ, Silvia (2018). *Zmiešané manželstvá (manželstvá s cudzincami) ako sociokultúrny fenomén.* Nitra: Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa. 287 p.

DOI: 10.2478/eas-2020-0008