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### *Movement to Another Place. Cultural Expressions of Migration as Source of Reflection Contributing to Social Theory*

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*Movement to Another Place.  
Cultural Expressions of Migration as Source of  
Reflection Contributing to Social Theory*

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**Abstract**

Methodologies are explored to enriching *migration theory*, with an inter-disciplinary look into cultural expressions resulting from migration. Cultural and migration maps offer a comparative and diachronic insight into migration impulses and waves. Migration of ideas and techniques is also examined through artifacts resulting from forced or intended movement of people and experts. Two contemporary plays evolved from the stories of migrants/refugees offer probing and open-ended speculation about itinerancy, vagrancy, resettlement and economic emigration as part of social plurality. The tangible, visceral qualities of expression may shed light on issues too complex for verbal theory only. Approached is comparative examination of *stylization in art* and abstraction in *theoretical inquiry*. Asking: What kind of procedures and institutions retain connection to the vitality of the samples studied or portrayed? Proposing inquiry not only focused on issues in the world but also on how they are represented, measured and defined.

**Keywords:** Migration, Enactment, Inter-Disciplinary

**Introduction**

In search of new insight and the means of enriching *migration theory*, this paper offers an inter-disciplinary look into cultural expressions in arts, artifacts, music and communal sharing inspired by or resulting from migration. The cultural elements themselves are envisioned as a starting point. The paper intends to sketch possible reflective methodologies or simple ways in which social sciences and other disciplines can interact and utilize *summation* and the *essentialness* offered by art and cultural activities. In opening and bringing art and culture to multi-disciplinary migration discourse we cite the work of Hein de Haas Research Officer at International Migration Institute, James Martin 21st Century School, University of Oxford. In his paper *Migration and development. A theoretical perspective* (de Haas, 2008) de Haas writes about complexities, different disciplinary focus and waves of interest and forgetting in searching for unified migration theory:

The lack of theoretical rootedness and largely descriptive nature of much empirical work has haunted the improvement of theories. As a result of the general lack of a common theoretical thread, most empirical work - especially from outside migration economics - remains isolated, scattered, and theoretically underexplored. Real progress in the understanding of the factors determining the fundamental *heterogeneity* of migration and development interactions is only possible if more empirical work is designed to test theoretically derived hypotheses and, hence, to improve the general-

ized understanding of migration-development interactions (de Haas, 2008,abstract, p.2).

de Haas points how the economic development model of looking at Migration issues can obscure and simplified the broader theoretical search. Just as how the important study of trafficking and illegal immigration is not the only perspective for describing migration. Hein de Haas writes:

The optimistic views on migration and development that often prevail today testify to a lack of awareness of the substantial body of empirical and theoretical literature as well as past policy experiences with the issue. This amnesia explains why much current empirical work hardly builds on and connects to prior empirical work. The accumulated empirical evidence highlights the sheer *heterogeneity* of migration-development interactions in migrant-sending communities and regions, which should forestall any blanket assertions on migration- development interactions (de Haas, 2008, paper, p. 1).

To support his view of optimistic development, de Haas quotes a statistic that can obscure the working conditions, exploitation and initial limited employer choices most migrants face.

This interest has undoubtedly been triggered by a striking increase in remittance flows. Remittances sent back to developing countries rose from \$31.1 billion in 1990 to \$76.8 billion in 2000 to \$167.0 billion in 2005. There is a growing belief that remittances are a more effective instrument for income redistribution, poverty reduction and economic growth than large, bureaucratic development programs or development aid (de Haas, 2008, paper, p. 1).

H. de Haas argues that often the scholarly debate has artificially separated the developmental causes and the impact of migration from more general processes of social dynamics and changes that include cultural expressions:

[...] a full understanding of contemporary migration processes will not be achieved by relying on the tools of one discipline alone, or by focusing on a single level of analysis. Rather, their complex, multifaceted nature requires a sophisticated theory that incorporates a variety of perspectives, levels, and assumptions (Massey *et al.* 1993, p. 432).

The following topics are an attempt to contextualize the inclusion of the cultural sphere into the multi - disciplinary migration debate and reflection.

## 1. Artifacts

Observing the objects people carry in larger *group migrations* may be different from the distribution of goods as an outcome of trade. The material culture resulting from the *migration of ideas and techniques* or movement of small groups or individual experts are a subcategory of migration studies. Most importantly the *artifact interpretation procedures* that are usually from the point of view of dominant nations, can be enriched or challenged by migration perspective and careful study of oral traditions.

In the paper *Elymian Regional Interaction in Iron Age Western Sicily: A preliminary neutron activation study of incised/impressed tableware* by Michel J. Kolb and Robert J. Speakman (2005) it states: “Western Sicily is the only part of the

Mediterranean where Greeks and Phoenicians settled in close proximity to one another, and nearby an indigenous tribe known as the Elymians” (2005, p. 795). These scholars describe how the origins of the Elymians are difficult to trace, however many scholars consider them descendants of local peoples and Anatolian or Italic immigrants. The authors point that according to literary sources such as Diodorus, Pausanias, and Thucydides, the Elymians occupied the far western reaches of Sicily, controlling two important strongholds near the western coast: Segesta and Eryx very close to the Phoenician colony of Motya (est. 720 BCE) and the Greek city of Selinus (est. 628 BCE).

Research that was conducted by Kolb and Speakman for ten years, approximately from 1994 to 2004, in western Sicily has shed new light on indigenous ceramic production and use. The production was distinguished by decorative attributes and fabrication type, produced between the 9th and 5th centuries BCE. Stylistic types defining Elymian ceramic was characterized by a series of short inscriptions found at Segesta written using Greek script, but are thought to represent a non-Greek Elymian language. This language is hypothesized as not related to Indo-European languages but an archaic, orally transmitted, indigenous language of Asia Minor.

However obliquely and faintly this example points to traces of migration left on and by artefacts. It is also a testament of pre-classical and ancient navigational routes and continues habitation at significant strategic, maritime, trading and sanctuary locations.

Sylvia Poggioli, Senior European Correspondent for NPR wrote the article *Venice Exhibit Traces the Migration of Culture* (Poggioli, 2007). The exhibition was held in 2007 at the Doges’ Palace with the title *Venice and Islam*. She commented on the Doges’ Palace construction and decorative details as being directly influenced by Muslim public buildings and Mosques:

Cultural cross-fertilization was constant, and the latticed grilles and pointed arches on many other Venetian buildings also bear the mark of Islamic influence. Venice sent its best painters to Istanbul to paint portraits of the sultans, while it was the Arabs who taught the Venetians the art of glass-making - still the city’s quintessential art form today.

Poggioli continues and briefly points to the *migration of ideas* into European culture that happened not only through Medieval Muslim Spain but also through Venetian trade routes:

One striking example is a 14th-century painting of a Madonna and Child in which her robe is rich, golden brocade embroidered with Islamic decorations. Venice was also a crossroads through which the science, medicine and philosophy of the Middle East arrived in Europe. Young Venetian noblemen were often sent to the East to learn Arabic, Persian and Turkish, and some Doges were born and grew up in the Middle East (Poggioli, 2007,online source).

The objects and locations cited in this section are only samples of conceptual thinking that observation and study of *migration artifacts* can bring. Elymian example is a pointer that almost anywhere in the Mediterranean the cultural interactions of indigenous people with refugees or colonizers left remarkable cultural histories, objects and often hybrid building types. Including informed reading of non-verbal signs and traces left by artifacts can enrich observations of ancient migration patterns and routes and offer context and antecedence for contemporary migration analysis and enrich summations.

## 2. Cultural and migration maps

A possible methodology for summarizing heterogeneous cultural influences by actual or imagined maps is focused in this paper on the Mediterranean, watershed of Asia, Africa and Europe. Examples offered are maps of diverse cultural influences, migrations of people, movement of artifacts and transmission of ideas that are larger than the geographic atlas of the Mediterranean shores. The earlier example of Elymians inhabiting western Sicily's geographically important point for ancient navigation in close proximity to Greeks and Phoenicians provides a rich case for studying the movement of diverse people. Giuseppe Contu in his paper *Sardinia in Arabic Sources* writes: "The map of historical times we can draw that shows an original Sardinian Civilization, known as Nuragic Civilization, born in about the XV century BC. This Nuragic Civilisation coincides with the presence of 'the Peoples of the Sea' in the Middle East, and remained up to the Roman Occupation of the Island". Contu writes that in the VIII century BC the Phoenicians were well established in Sardinia, "[...] we find archaeological evidences for their[Phenician] presence including the famous *stèle* on which they gave for the first time their denomination of Sardinia, the Semitic root SRDN (Srdn), the same one which Egyptian and Akkadic sources used (1400-1220 BC) for the name of one of the Sea Peoples" (Contu, 2005, p. 289).

Contu addresses also an historically closer time and opens up a treasury of references usually ignored by nineteenth and twentieth century established descriptions of the Mediterranean: "Greek and Latin sources give credit to the idea that armed groups and mercenaries of Lybian origin came to Sardinia with the Phoenicians, both from Iberia and North Africa and mixed with the Nuragic population, becoming in time elements of resistance to the Carthaginian conquest and to the Roman occupation later on" (ibidem, p. 289). Contu's remarkable body of work in the linguistic field of ancient, medieval and modern Mediterranean languages, draws a map of continuous crossing and movement of people passing through or settling in Sardinia.

### *Mediterranean Water Currents*

Each ocean and sea has its own characteristics that influence, shape and participate in the making of history. Migration outcomes and intention greatly depend on understanding of routes, ways and logistical obstacles: natural, territorial and bureaucratic. The variety of contemporary scientific geographic and hydraulic *water currents* diagrams of the Mediterranean could be almost a representation of Ulysses' journey described in Homer's *Odyssey*.

The lines from the play we shall examine later, *Tarantella, Tarantula* (2006), the introductory narration, loosely based on the scientific paper *Mediterranean Sea Circulation* (Robinson & Leslie, 2001), express the richness and idiosyncrasies of the Mediterranean faced by the travelers, emigrants, refugees and merchants:

Deep-water currents jet from Spain to Algeria across the Mediterranean. Further east, the deep but narrow current widens and fans out horizontally as it approaches the island of Sardinia. The unstable currents create eddies many miles wide which meander up the coasts. Cyclonic eddies stir the sea for days, but the anti-cyclonic eddies churn for weeks or even month in the depths. The open sea eddies often alter the expected currents, channeling the waters into unstable and unpredictable

patterns, particularly present in the waters of Sicily. Two jets join just south of Corsica to form the powerful Catalan current.

Anglers and merchants from Illyria, Crete, Phoenicia, Egypt and Greece braved these currents to establish colonies and settlements away from home. They sought - and brought- grapes and goats, linen and lavender. They carried gold and tin, cheese and salt, olive oil, wine, and purple dye. They traded in herbs and medicines. And their stories, songs, and dances came with them.

#### *Atlantic and Phoenician Trade Routes*

At the most western point of the Mediterranean where Africa and Europe almost touch and Spain and Morocco are facing each other, the Atlantic and Mediterranean meet and mix at the narrow Gibraltar Straits, almost 15 kilometres wide, approximately 9 miles. There are similar water differences occurring at the meeting of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Compared with the Atlantic, the Mediterranean Water is heavier, warmer and richer in salt. The saltier waters, before merging completely with the Atlantic create currents a mile or so long out into the open ocean, while the lighter Atlantic water rushes in and creates coastal currents pushing towards the east. Phoenicians, master navigators have used these currents to reach and return from ancient Britain (Cunliffe, 2001). trading and bringing tin, the essential ingredient that with copper alloys into bronze. With navigational and strategic know-how, the Phoenicians were able to protect their interest and dominance of the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic for a thousand years.

Phoenicians knew the currents within Mediterranean centuries before Greeks caught up with the knowledge. They seem to particularly use the general anti-clock direction of the currents, navigating from island to island and then the coast of southern France, Spain, going west and following the African coast going east. Phoenicians understood shipbuilding and ship defense and were invincible until the Roman period of the Punic Wars. They also understood the economy of demand and supply and traded in specialized products like silver, tin, and purple dye. They introduced the idea of silver coinage and supplied the raw material. Like Venetians in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Phoenicians brought prosperity to wherever they settled.

#### *Venetians and Neighbouring Watersheds*

Paul Lunde (2005) writes about the Venetian co-dependency on Arab maritime power in the Middle Ages that had grown out of the Arab merchants' precise understanding of the monsoon patterns in the Indian Ocean watershed. He also analyses the origins of the word monsoon, which sheds light on the importance and cosmopolitan influence of Arab maritime power prior to European sea exploration. He further describes how the regular sailing of the Venetian convoys, the *mude*, were synchronized with the Indian Ocean monsoon trade winds. Lunde writes: "The economies of northern Europe were similarly linked—indirectly, like a train of interlocking gears—to the Indian Ocean monsoon: From Venice, after the return of the *mude*, spices and textiles travelled overland and by internal waterways to the trade fairs of northern Europe. (Another set of gears driven by the monsoon linked the Indian Ocean economies with China)" (Lunde, 2005, online source). The Venetian trade monopoly in the Mediterranean was established after the Venetians led the 1204 crusade against Constantinople, and secured treaties with the Mamluk Sultan.

### 3. Maps as summation

Given that our theme is Migration, it may be interesting to briefly look at physical and elusive boundaries of the Mediterranean, the *Middle Sea* or *White Sea*. The map of the cultural influences of the Sea in a *middle* of a territory extends beyond and is larger and somewhat differently shaped than the geographic map. These cultural maps may contribute to understanding the direction and waves of migration. Even the climatic fact of the cultivation of Mediterranean defining botanical species like olive, laurel and lemon trees, broadens the map from the shores of the *Middle Sea* to neighboring seas and watersheds. Another example is the pre-classical Egyptian interest and accurate connection to the sanctuaries of the ancient world, points to a waste territory beyond the Nile. Hercules' labors for the classical period, seen as a map of Mediterranean sphere of influences, may offer another model and a starting point. In this myth Prometheus chained at Caucasus reveals to Hercules, who liberated him, the hidden location of the Garden of Hesperides on the Atlantic coast. This larger and layered map offers possibilities for comparative and diachronic insights.

In the ancient Greek world the oracles from Delphi were tied to the workings of the city-states and permeated daily life. A map of documentary or hypothetical spread of Delphic influence would offer an image of a cultural epicenter in east Mediterranean. Similarly one from Cumae would focus on central Mediterranean. The *Oracle of Amun* at the Oasis of Siwa in western Egypt consulted by Alexander the Great will offer a new picture. If combined these three or more Oracle Sanctuaries' maps will show areas of overlap of shared or contrasting influences. A map of ancient shipwrecks in the Mediterranean painstakingly compiled over years from available data by nautical archeologist Mathew Harpster, shows an astonishing number of wrecks in the port of Marseille and none in the sand covered seabed at Nile delta. Although on the map of shipwrecks there are few at the Nile delta, the maritime activity and migration from the African coast into the Mediterranean islands and costal areas can be traced through linguistic, ethnographic and materials research. There have been many epic heroic journeys from and back to Africa even today equal to Homer's *Odyssey*. Contu in the paper we cited earlier *Sardinia in Arabic Sources*(2005) presents results of his in depth research, that may fine contrasting responses among scholars but they are definitely a testament of migrations:

[...] in a passage of the *Tarih* of Ibn Haldun when he talks about the area of origin and diffusion of the Berbers. Of Palestine origin, the Berbers left their land, after the death of Galut/Gotiath and after being defeated in Egypt fourth wars against the Afariqa and Ifrang and finally established themselves in Northern Africa, the Iberian Peninsula and the Great Islands of the Mediterranean Sea. The origin of the Berbers from Galut is also given both by Idrisi and Ibn Hawqal: Idrisi indicates Galut's father Nafgaw as the ancestor of Nafzawa, a Berber tribe present in Ifriqiya around Tuzer; in the same source (*The Nuzba*) Idrisi refers to the Mount of Galtut al-Barbari in Egypt, where Goliath and his cavalry took shelters, after he had been defeated by David (Contu, 2005, p. 288).

G. Contu in the fragment we cite below recounts a similar festival practice found in North Africa and Sardinia:

Another mark of a probably very similar way of life and beliefs between Sardinians and among Berber is to be found in some rituals still present both in Central Sardinia and among Berbers in Carnival performances when groups of men cover their faces with animal masks and move in a dance similar - as one researcher has pointed [...] (ibidem).

Classical Greeks tended to Hellenize worldview that includes African culture and folklore in many ways as they have Greek names and explanation for Egyptian deities. Always Contu writes about a Hellenic myth of origin or assimilation of Greeks into North African people that clearly reflects great trajectory and a migration map:

The Greeks transmitted a myth to us according to which Iolaos, son of Hercules, moved from Greece to Lybia, where with his family and several warriors he entered and inhabited Sardinia. Diodorus Siculus narrates to the same myth adding that after the interruption of contacts with Motherland Greece the descendants of Iolaos became Berbers (ivi, p. 289).

The question for the emergent post-reductionist observation and critique is: What kind of mechanisms of observation and sensitivities are to be developed to understand and evaluate the inner working and the outer manifestation of unfamiliar and diverse values of different people and subgroups? The reflection on the complexity of Migration viewed through cultural maps may contribute to an inclusive, open discourse.

#### 4. Cognition through arts

Cultural Expression is a field of study situated between the *reality* of society and social *investigation and theory*. The tangible, visceral qualities of expression may shed light on issues too complex for verbal theory only. The paper *How Arts Training Influences Cognition* written by a consortium of experts from the University of Oregon (Posner *et al.*, 2008) presents neurological and psychological aspect of learning through cultural expressions. The University of Oregon paper explores the evidence that arts training influences cognition. The authors state that the intricate brain network aiding *attention* and *perseverance practices* are directly related to motivation to express oneself:

Moreover, we hypothesized that the enthusiasm that many young people have for music, art, and performance could provide a context for [them] paying close attention. This motivation could, in turn, lead to improvement in the [personal neural] attention network, which would then generalize to a range of cognitive skills. Our training study supported this proposed theory about the mechanisms by which training in the arts can have a persistent effect on a wide variety of cognitive processes. The theory is based on the idea that each individual art form involves separate brain networks. In Fig. 1, we summarize some of the specific brain areas involved in different art forms. Diagram Illustration the correlation between the Arts and cognition.

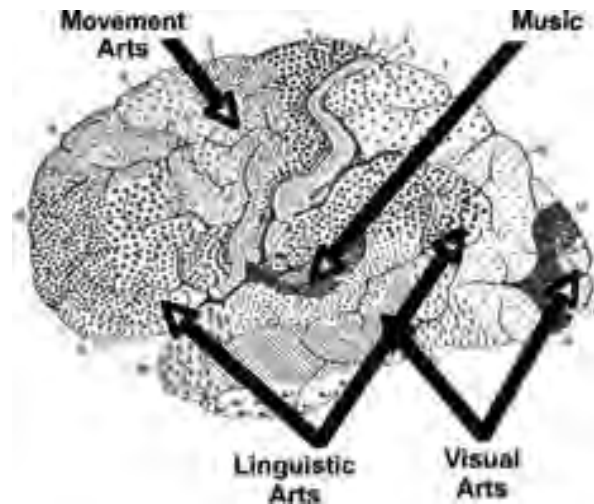
These multiple stimulus centers within the brain activated by cultural expressions are of interest to us as a source of reflection contributing to social theory. There is a link to be made between various aspects of cognition and included in the paradigms of investigating and presenting societal phenomenon.



Meltzoff and Decety from the University of Washington's Center for Mind, Brain & Learning wrote in the paper *What imitation tells us about social cognition: a rapprochement between developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience*:

Our ability to imitate others' actions holds the key to our understanding what it is for others to be like us and for us to be like them. The past two decades of research have significantly expanded our knowledge about imitation at the cognitive and neurological levels. One goal of this article is to discuss striking convergences between the cognitive and neuro-scientific findings (Meltzoff and Decety, 2003, p. 491).

Fig. 1– Specific brain areas involved in different art forms



Source: Posner et al. (2008). How arts training influences cognition. In C. Asbury & B. Rich (Eds.), *Learning, arts, and the brain* (pp. 1-10). New York: Dana Press.

These scholars make a three-point theoretical proposal: i) imitation is innate in humans; ii) imitation precedes mentalizing and theory of mind (in development and evolution); and iii) behavioral imitation and its neural substrate provide the mechanism by which theory of mind and empathy develop in humans.

Meltzoff and Decety tell us that they use the terms 'theory of mind' and 'mentalizing' interchangeably in their paper. Their view of *Developmental Science* presents the concept that *infant imitation is the seed and the adult mentalizing, theory making capacity is the fruit*. They are proposing a 'linking argument': Through imitating others, the human young come to understand that others not only share behavioral states, but are 'like me' in deeper ways as well. This propels the human young on the developmental trajectory of developing an understanding of other mind.

The study by Meltzoff and Decety brings the articulations of human *imitative function* to the root of empathy and mutual understanding and helps us appreciate portrayals of human condition either as cultural expression or scientific exposition.

Keith Oatley in his article *Does Art Imitate Life? Fictional characters seem real, but they are of the mind* (2011), states the idea that art may imitate life is at least as old as Aristotle's *Poetics*. The book, according to Oatley is the most widely recommended text on how to write fiction in the west. K. Oatley comments: "The idea of imitation comes from the central concept of *Poetics: mimesis*, which is about the relation of a piece of fiction to the world. In English, it is almost always translated as imitation, mirroring, copying, or some such" (Oatley, 2011, online source).

Oatley continues by pointing to the articulations of Halliwell, that meanings of *mimesis* have another parallel reading as *simulation* or *world-making* close or springing from *imitation*, the cognitive process we described earlier. Oatley quotes S. Halliwell's *The aesthetics of mimesis: Ancient texts and modern problems* (2002).

Reduced to a schematic but nonetheless instructive dichotomy, these varieties of mimetic theory and attitude can be described as encapsulating a difference between a “world-reflecting” [conception] (for which the mirror has been a common though far from straightforward metaphorical emblem), and, on the other side, a “world simulating” or “world creating” conception of artistic representation (Halliwell, 2002, p. 22).

In closing this section we looked at processes of cognition through art and cultural phenomenon toward possibilities of integration of *reflective* and *expressive* modes enriching paradigms of theoretical thinking. Admittance of the full range of cognitive capacities and perceptions into the emergent inter-disciplinary and inclusive research may open the door for previously overlooked, suppressed or rejected material.

#### 4. Two contemporary plays

Material evolved from the stories of migrants/refugees offers probing and open-ended speculation about itinerancy, vagrancy, resettlement and economic emigration as part of social plurality. The observations in this paper are based on two examples from a number of plays and a large-scale community initiative that Artship Foundation carried out over the past twenty years. The type of reflection approached is facilitated by Artship Foundation being a *cultural research* and *culture-making* institute. The performances provide an appraisal, celebration and evaluation of the validity and necessity of hearsay, oral histories, storytelling and performative reconstruction in helping understand *immigrant/emigrant* experience and articulating meta- questions.

##### *First Example*

*Tarantella, Tarantula* is a delicate and poignant story of immigration and assimilation, rich with ancient Mediterranean folklore, that is a confluence of cultural elements from Africa, Europe, and Asia that persist to this day, brought to California and across America by immigrants from southern Italy. Ancient Practices and Modern Needs could sum-up San Francisco 2006 and Prague 2007 performances of *Tarantella, Tarantula*<sup>1</sup>.

The protagonist of the play is a young Italian immigrant girl who works as a cleaning lady in a hospital. She was forced to emigrate with her mother and sister after all the male members of her family and neighbours from her village were killed in the First World War. She was highly trained by her grandmother in the tradition of the healing dance Tarantella Pizzica. This is tradition that is practiced in intimate and protected places often temporally adopted within a home or communal spaces. These activities, gatherings and festivals are led and performed for and by women. Since these events were only carried out among the women, written documentary evidence is barely existent. Similar oral traditions to those are prac-

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<sup>1</sup> Artship Ensemble 2006 Home Season, San Francisco, ODC Theater.

ticed today in some parts of North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean including Southern Italy and Asia Minor on the border of Iraq and Iran.

There are two forms from this family of traditions that had more ethnomusicological and anthropological research than the others, they are the healing dances and music of Egyptian Zar and Southern Italian Tarantella. Athanasius Kircher, ask a question in 1641 in his encyclopedic work *Magnes, sive De Arte Magnetica* (1643) published in Rome: "Why cannot those poisoned by Tarantulas be cured otherwise than by Music?"

This contemporary performance and traditional practice are not only about an antidote to a spider Tarantula's bite but also about the age-old yearning to cure 'The Dark Night of the Soul'. It is about human need, in spite of all possible social dysfunctions, to help each other and to continue the search to recover closeness. For migrants these issues are of paramount importance.

The production links modern needs to passionate, age-old practices of community, ritual, and healing. Karol Harding's (1996) description of the Zar singer/healer with her knowledge, harmonizing abilities, understanding of repression and means of relief, paints a picture of a highly trained experienced person leading a deeply structured process.

The protagonist of the play *Tarantella*, *Tarantula* Giovannina helps, at the climax of the performance the first Italian born American trained young doctor through professional crisis and surviving traumatic betrayal and smear tactics by his more established, privileged non immigrant colleagues. Although she was thought illiterate and not intelligent enough, Giovannina guides him through the Tarantella process, as he came upon it by accident. He did not know that only women traditionally danced that dance. This and other elements of the performance are a representation of the unexpected adoption and transformation that happen when traditional ways meet a new environment and a country. As we stated several times through this paper, the portrayal of the multi layered complexity immigrants experience can be comprehended, contained and expressed towards greater understanding of *migrants positions* through plays and cultural expressions leading to reflection.

### *Second example*

*Same River Twice*<sup>2</sup>, 2004 theater performance of the play that explored and commentated on the themes of uprooting, cultural displacement, and the search for home as seen through the eyes of emigrants/immigrants. This Dance/Theater performance addressed the complex and mutable relationships immigrants have to their original and adopted homes. It also reflected on the consequences of displacement and the great growth that can result from going beyond one's own place of origin. Home, the loss of home, and the yearning for home are investigated through 14 interrelated stories that explore the issues of political repression, destruction of national identities, and the suffering of refugees, as well as a passionate, uplifting, and lyrical story about change as seen through the eyes of a young girl. Ultimately, the *Same River Twice* creates a world that is both deeply intimate and universal, diminishing boundaries between different generations, waves of emigration, views of reality and cultures.

An important element of any theater production is the possibility of representing different events at the same time. But significantly this presentation showed internal and external reality of the main character simultaneously. Outwardly she was

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<sup>2</sup> Artship Dance/Theater 2004 Home season, San Francisco, ODC Theater.

definitely a first generation immigrant assimilated to a greater extent compared to her parents, also part of the play. But as if unknown to the players but only to the audience her internal feeling, quandaries, support and doubts were portrayed as personified figures of mixed and unexpected origins. They follow protagonist Mira on her return to her country of origin as sensitively as weathervanes of emotions expressing through parallel scenarios every tremor of her trepidation, expectation and reality of returning. The closing words of the play are uttered by one of the internal characters, the only voice whose occasional narrations from within parallel to the protagonist's narrations of outer events and remembered family history. Otsugava the conjurer says:

I have to leave, but the vacuum I leave will be filled with your purest desire. Like you, I have to go to my roots, back, back, up to old Silk Roads through Bulgaria, Turkey, Afghanistan, to the other side of Himalayas. Like you, I have to experience for myself that there is no really coming back. Somehow the old place is the new place, home is a nowhere land of memory and desire. But having nowhere to go one might arrive.

Such mutable, complex inner realities of emigrants are almost always absent from the Migration Theory as it defies boundaries, national identity and even logic. Enacted and expressed as a parallel scenario in a play, may open discourse, discussion and inclusion.

## Conclusion

In closing the paper looks briefly for some possible antecedent of interdisciplinary work between *culture making* and written *migration history and theory*. This search is open and (continues). One example is the interdisciplinary work of Holloway, in his paper *The Classical Mediterranean, its Prehistoric Past and the Formation of Europe* (1997) he sketches out vast migration context:

[...] the central Mediterranean, including Italy, Sicily and the Aegean, acquires its claim to a distinct and potent form of social and political life, based on elements small enough to maintain a tradition of citizen peers in government but endowed with the potential to form alliances and finally federations through regional sanctuaries. It is no exaggeration to say that the force of united Greece and of Roman Italy sprang from these prehistoric roots (Holloway, 1997, online source).

In summarizing our inclusion of artifacts as sources of tracing the movement of people, ideas and objects that are potentially significant for migration study, R. R. Holloway observation may be of interest:

The most recent discovery (Bacci Spigo, 1992/1993) to emphasize the interconnections of the Aegean and central Mediterranean at the dawn of the Bronze Age was made at Messina in 1991. During the excavation of a settlement of the Piano Conte Culture there was found a small grey schist figurine of the so-called "violin" type. Although this piece is unique in Italy or Sicily, such objects are well known in Anatolia and the Aegean at this period. Thus, there is little question that the figurine was imported. [...] is it the signal that the central Mediterranean, the Aegean and western Anatolia were fundamentally unified, although in a way not emphasized by the archaeological record?

From the reading of ancient objects and the obscurity of time, we turn to the migration specialist de Haas we cited at the beginning of the paper where he points

out how an economic development model of looking at Migration issues can obscure and simplify the broader theoretical search:

Policy and scholarly discourses naively celebrating migration, remittances and transnational engagement as self-help development 'from below' also shift attention away from the relevance of structural constraints and the real but limited ability of individuals to overcome these as well as the important role states and international institutions continue to play in shaping favorable conditions for social and economic development to occur (de Haas, 2008, p. 49)

The sense of de Haas' observations can be extended to many inter-related fields. That is why we introduced reflection on the complexity of Migration viewed through cultural maps. Map offers verbal and non-verbal possibilities for comparative and diachronic insights. A possible methodology for summarizing heterogeneous cultural influences by actual or imagined maps may contribute to an inclusive, open discourse.

To broaden the view of sources for Migration theory we introduced in more detail the possible role of cultural expressions. To open cultural discourse we cited research into multiple stimulus centers within the brain activated by cultural expressions. There is a link to be made between various aspects of cognition and included in the paradigms of investigating and presenting societal phenomenon.

By describing the issues raised by two contemporary plays we touched upon mutable, complex inner realities of emigrants that defy boundaries, national identity and even logic. Being enacted and expressed in a play may open discourse, discussion and inclusion.

As we mentioned in the abstract our interest is in the integration of processes of stylization in art with abstraction and meta-thinking in inquiry. The open question remains, at what point does an abstraction lose connection to its source and becomes reduction. These kinds of generalizations can become *cliche* in art and *truism* in thinking. What kind of procedures and institutions retain connection to the vitality of the samples studied or portrayed? The aspiration of this paper is to voice a possible future cross-disciplinary collaboration where scholars and artists study and articulate societal issues for migrants that will be incorporated in the play or written hypotheses. These studies would not only focus on issues in the world but also on how they are represented, measure and defined.

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