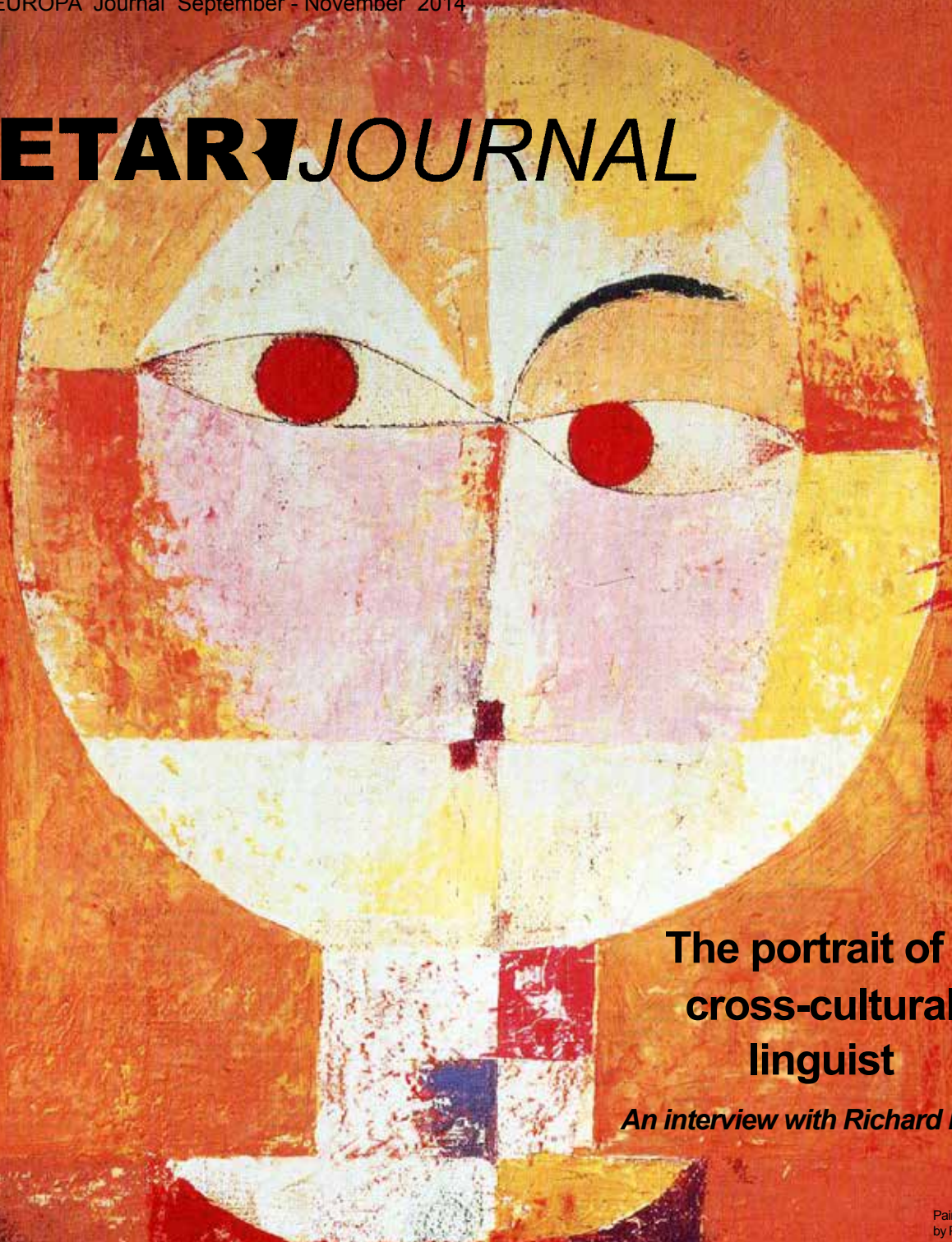


# SIETAR JOURNAL



**The portrait of a  
cross-cultural  
linguist**

***An interview with Richard Lewis***

Painting 'Senecio'  
by Paul Klee 1922

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## Impressum

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# SIETAR Journal

## Editorial

### Personal Excellence in Intercultural Communication

“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.” Confucius, writing 2500 years ago, expressed the universal striving of human beings. Cross-cultural linguist Richard Lewis, our interviewee for this issue, has those keys.

His life story is remarkable. Born in a miner’s family in stark northwest England, Lewis discovered at an early age that he had a unique talent for foreign languages. Armed with a positive outlook on life and the will to improve his horizons, he mastered 10 languages and, doing so, learned the subtle ways of getting along in different cultures.

His intuitive understanding of the nuts and bolts of human communication led him to write the best seller “When Cultures Collide”, a must-read for all practicing interculturalists. Story begins on page 3.

For my part, I’ve taken up the challenge of examining the “empathy craze” which seems to be taking the world by storm. There appears to be a great deal of confusion about what we actually mean by the word. My aim is not to attack the need for empathy, rather to lay the groundwork for a discussion of what it truly implies. It’s an important subject for interculturalists and I expect to receive a lot of comments. Read all about it beginning on page 12.



Dan MacLeod brings us back to Richard Lewis, specifically his organic approach to language. Fluency, it turns out, is a many-splendored thing. Take a look beginning on page 9.

Should you have the time and curiosity, don’t miss out on SIETAR France’s upcoming congress, October 29th to November 1st in Lille. It’s an exciting program on the theme *Frontiers and Identities: Navigating Worlds in Motion*. Likewise, SIETAR Deutschland is having their 2014 Forum in Jena, Germany, October 2-4 with the theme *The Welcoming Culture in Germany* and SIETAR Poland is hosting *The New Era of Expat* congress in Warsaw, October 24-26. For more information on all three events, click to pages 19-22.

Finally, we all at SIETAR Europa wish to offer our sincere condolence to Maura Gallagher, who passed away last July. A dedicated member of SIETAR Ireland, she was on the founding committee of SIETAR Europa back in the 1990s.

Patrick Schmidt,  
Editor-in-chief

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# Richard Lewis

## An interview with a unique cross-cultural linguist



*A linguist is a person who thinks and works while superimposing multiple language-based realities, a person inherently fascinated by the dialectic nature of thought, words and behavior. It's a profession that enhances analytical reasoning, critical thinking and argumentation, clarity of expression. As a result, linguists often make unusual observations and come to surprising conclusions, which they aptly communicate to the wider community. Richard Lewis perfectly fits this description.*

*Born to a family of miners in northwest England in the depressed 1930s, Lewis discovered that he had a knack for languages at a very early age. Armed with the conscious desire to change his family's circumstances, he began systematically learning as many foreign languages as possible; by the age of 30, he spoke 10 fluently.*

*The hard-headed drive that comes of being from a mining family led to his being university table tennis champion of England for two years before becoming an innovative entrepreneur, opening language schools across Europe and Asia and providing people — from university students to heads of state — he linguistic and cultural know-how to be globally competent.*

*He's also a prolific writer, with over 20 books on language, communication and culture. His blockbuster 'When Cultures Collide' has sold over a million copies thus far. His always in-*

*structive, always entertaining style penetrates the soul of cultures and entices you to read on.*

*A keen observer of cultural conditioning, Lewis develops, then presents his findings with a straight-forward model of how people interact, dividing the world into three main groups: linear-active, multi-active and reactive. His diagrams of the diverse communication styles are second to none. An "authoritative roadmap to navigating the world's economy", to quote the Wall Street Journal.*

*Taking advantage of his presence at Peter Franklin's 2014 Dialogin Conference in Konstanz, I was able investigate the remarkable personality that is Richard Lewis.*

***Arguably one could say you're one of Britain's foremost practical linguists. What were the early life experiences that lead you to becoming a polyglot?***

I was born and grew up in Billinge, a district of Wigan which is about 16 miles northwest of Manchester. My home town was the coal capital of the world from 1870 right up to the First World War. At one time, there were 100 coal mines in Wigan itself.

My grandfather left school when he was nine and spent his whole life down in the mines. My father was the first one in his family not to be a miner — he worked at the railway. So, I am the son of a railway man and a grandson of a miner, brought up in very modest surroundings.

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# Richard Lewis

## — *continued*

*The Ashton Grammar School in Wigan, where Richard Lewis received a solid education in languages.*



In Wigan, you grew up speaking two languages — North Country English and the Wigan miners' dialect, which was more a Viking-Saxon-Celtic language. As my mother did not let me go to school until I was nearly seven, I hardly ever spoke North Country. I was particularly proficient in the miners' dialect since I had an excellent model in my grandfather. In those television-less days, people talked to each other a lot.

My father and grandfather both liked walking, visiting brothers, cousins, friends and colleagues; they lugged me along with them. Wherever we went my grandfather was the great storyteller, evening after evening. This meant that I asked for things in dialect, planned and complained in dialect, dreamt and had nightmares in dialect.

Looking back on these early experiences, I realize the immense strength of oral culture and the unlimited powers of language absorption that a child possesses. You still hear so much about the dangers of exposing a young child to two languages that it will cause him to stammer or interfere in some strange way with his identity. I've always held this to be nonsense: I know a good number of well-balanced grown-ups who spoke three or four languages at the age of six without ever ruining their parents' furniture.

Just before World War II began, my grandfather passed away. To make up for the loss of his story-telling, I took to listening to

the radio. My fascination was with foreign-language reports. The BBC was broadcasting how many German planes were shot down, day by day. I used to listen first in English, then immediately afterwards in Norwegian and Danish. After a few months I began to understand the gist of it, picking up several hundred words like *bomber*, *attack*, and *fighter* in both languages.

When I went off to grammar school at the age of 11, I spoke a kind of facsimile of the two Scandinavian languages. This might explain why I found French — taught by a brilliant teacher — to be ridiculously easy. Within a year, I was speaking French fluently. Nobody could understand how I'd learnt French so quickly. And I couldn't understand how my schoolmates failed to learn something so simple.

When I was 16, a year after the end of the war, I was one of three English schoolboys sent to France on an exchange scheme. I stayed a month and went every summer afterwards. At the same time, I started learning Spanish and Italian on my own. I entered university at 18 and received three degrees in three years — French, Spanish and Italian. I also took a degree in education as well as a Cultures and Civilizations diploma in France, at the Sorbonne.

***Just listening to that...you were a "Mozart" of languages at an early age. Did you sense they were your calling in life?***

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# Richard Lewis

## — continued

*Richard Lewis founded his first language school in Helsinki, using the Berlitz method.*



Oh yes, I was lucky to know that at an early age. And my language teachers knew it too, so it's no accident I did well. My English teacher was so good at teaching me that I was publishing newspaper articles about rugby matches at 15, 16. I've still got some of them and I can't believe I actually wrote them.

And my mother and father also sensed it and understood I had to go abroad as quick as possible. They fully supported me going to France at the age of 16. It was always clear it was my destiny to be a language teacher. It wasn't clear I'd be a cultural advisor; it became so at the end.

### ***After university, you went to Finland to learn Finnish? Why, of all languages, Finnish?***

Because the 1952 Olympic Games took place in Helsinki. I spent 16 months there, working on a farm, where half the laborers spoke Swedish and half spoke Finnish. I not only picked up two languages, but also potatoes, peas and corn as well.

Then I went to Cologne to learn German and spent two years as a news announcer for *Deutsche Welle*, a radio network, which still exists. I was one of the first of three English announcers. I also worked for Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, who started making speeches both in English and German to the Allies. He didn't say much in English but it had to be right. I handled two or three of Adenauer's speeches because his English lacked humor, I was looking at style rather than content. That

eventually became a skill — I wrote speeches for three or four Finnish prime ministers and for the Emperor of Japan.

After Germany, I returned to Finland and spent three years opening up Berlitz language schools, including one in Norway. Then I went to Portugal and spent five years opening up more language schools. Berlitz America asked me to open schools in Japan, where I stayed for another five years and was appointed tutor to Empress Michiko. My wife and I became friends of the Imperial family and we're still in contact.

Finally my family and I returned to England and opened a residential language school at Riversdown House, fifty miles southwest of London.

### ***How did you become an expert in cross-cultural relations?***

After 20 years of hiring, and working with, over 1000 teachers of different nationalities, I developed a stronger interest in the cross-cultural field. My conclusions led me to write *When Cultures Collide*. The book is essentially about the management of diversity — what you have to do when cultures collide.

My method is to gradually get a sense of cultures by recognizing patterns and putting them into three general categories. Linear is quite clear — Germans, Americans, Dutch, Swedes are straightforward, want facts. Latins and Arabs are multi-active. They all start with the importance of the family, emo-

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# Richard Lewis

## — continued

*His book 'When Cultures Collide' became an immediate international best-seller when it was published in 1996.*



tions, importance of religions. Reactive people are polite and restrained, such as Japanese, Vietnamese, Koreans and Chinese.

***When reading "When Cultures Collide", I noticed your writing flows, making it very easy for the reader to understand. Writers say that good writing is capturing the rhythm of the language. As you speak so many languages easily, I assume you feel the rhythm of languages, which translates into good writing.***

Perhaps. There are different theories about language learning. For instance, a lot of people will tell you that good linguists are good at music. Well, I don't agree. Some are, some are not. Probably the tendency is that if you are a musician or singer, you learn a language a lot quicker. But I know of many exceptions, I think it's only a tendency.

What is sure is if you're exposed to two languages when young, you tend to learn other languages quickly. To come back to your question, from the age of five I was speaking not only English but also a fearsome coalminer's dialect. I was bilingual and had a rhythmic sense of languages, talking to relatives in dialect and using English at school. Plus, I have a good memory so I don't forget words.

***In other words, you sense the appropriateness of the situation.***

That's right. Wherever you turn to, you adopt the language around you. I've done that in recent years with different kinds of Japanese, different kinds of Swedish. I can change the register, the ability to put into context the language with the person I'm talking to. This is especially true in Japan, where you have to speak honorific, middle or rough Japanese.

***In your book, you discuss the interlocking nature of language and thought. Could you expand on that?***

Popularized by the linguist Benjamin Whorf, in particular. I think he was absolutely right and I've written a few things about it. For instance, there are 39 words in Zulu for green. I got hold of a Zulu chief at Cambridge University to convince me. He took a leaf and asked the color and I said green. He waved it in the sun and asked again. I said green. But he said, it's not the same green, it's green with sunlight on it. In Zulu, it's another word. He dipped it in water and asked again, and I said green again. He said, it's another green. Then he went 20 yards away and the color changed again.

We didn't get to 39, but to about 20. I asked him why he needed 39 words for green. He said, "Well, not so long ago, in the country where the Zulus lived, you had to make long trips and there weren't traffic lights or road signs, you had to know where you were going by identifying where you were. Therefore, you needed a different vocabulary. You talk about different colors, hues, and so on. It boils down to more words for description."

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# Richard Lewis

— *continued*



*In the Zulu language there are 39 different words for the color green.*

However international, multicultural or all-embracing I wanted to be, there was no way I could perceive the color green the way he did because I didn't have the language to do it with. Each people is imprisoned in a linguistic straightjacket, which deals with the life they have to live.

A Japanese doesn't insult people with words because the language isn't equipped to do so. You're supposed to be polite in Japanese. Even uneducated people — peasants — are polite because it's the nature of the language. But a Japanese person finds other ways of being rude, by actions. Writing on the back of your business card, for example, or making you sit behind the driver of his car. Whereas Finnish is just the opposite—the language has huge swear words, a tremendous vehicle for swearing.

***Very insightful. But are today's global companies really aware of the need for intercultural competence?***

I advised some 700 companies and three or four governments as well banks. It varies. I will say that there are a surprising number of good companies that still haven't yet seen the light. They go to China without any cross-cultural training and make a big mess. Then they become very good at it.

Take Coca Cola, which used to be so American in its outlook. They made an awful mess of getting into Japan when I was there. But today, they understand interculturalism and spend

a fair amount of money on it. There are other companies—Siemens, Unilever, Kellogg's, Nippon Steel, the accountancy firm DeLoitte — who understand the problem perfectly.

Yet many companies don't. About 20 years ago an engineering company in Philadelphia hired me to set up a program of ten seminars. I was able to do the first three — two in England, one in Finland — but suddenly the CEO said he was sick of "this culture thing" and cancelled the rest. He didn't see an immediate rise in income. That happens all the time.

***You've obviously had a strong influence on many people and organizations. What sorts of feelings go through your mind as you train others to be intercultural sensitive?***

It's a source of unending pleasure for me to feel the knowledge I've acquired of ever-recurring cultural patterns enable me to bring people closer together. I save some companies a lot of money but what I stress is that diversity is good for us. We should strive to avoid irritants and recognize pseudo-conflicts for what they are; we should laugh at our own follies.

At the end of the day, we should remain faithful to our true selves while remaining sensitive to others.

***Richard, on the behalf of SIETAR Europa, I thank you for a most fascinating talk.***

It's been my pleasure.

*Interview conducted by Patrick Schmidt*

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# Interaction Styles

as viewed by Richard Lewis



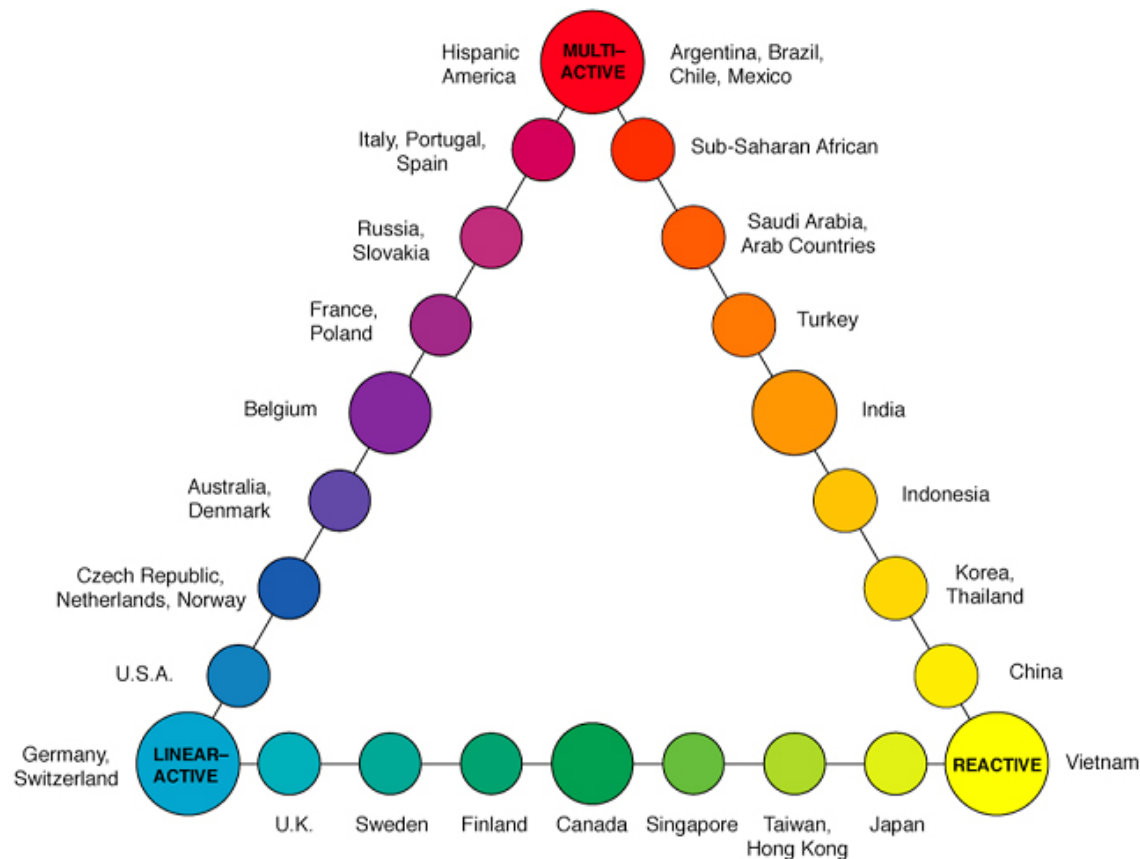
**Linear-active characteristics:**  
facts, planning, products, time-lines,  
word-deed correlation, institutions, law



**Multi-active characteristics:**  
family, hierarchy, relationships,  
emotion, eloquence, persuasion,  
loyalty



**Reactive characteristics:**  
Intuition, courtesy, network, common  
obligations, collective harmony, face



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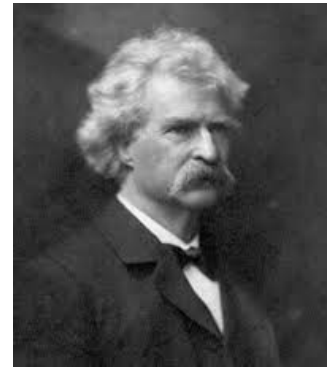


Reporter's Sketchbook  
 ...an American in Montreal

# A Double Barrelled Detective Story

by Dan MacLeod

Mark Twain introduced the sound of  
 American speech to English literature.



...is of course the Mark Twain title, so let's call this "A Double-barrelled Investigation".

I was extremely taken by Richard Lewis' view of formal language versus dialect, and especially his suggestion that mastery of a language must include a smattering, at least, of the latter. As a journalist, whether speaking English with blacks in Alabama or French with Algerians in Paris, an open cultural mind and linguistic ear have been my constant companions. My joke, at the end of a summer perfecting my German at the *Goethe-Institut* in Berlin, was that our final exam should be a conversation with a drunk missing teeth at the bar down the street: "That's fluency!"

In fact, my own personal final exam was like that, except the conversation was with an *Ossi* (East German) marionettist, only slightly drunk, who had a full set of teeth. It was August 13th, the day the Berlin Wall went up overnight, but it had been down for nearly five years. It wasn't for an article, I just wanted to see what Ossis were saying in their part of the city on this ex-anniversary. I was guessing they'd be reminiscing, somewhat nostalgic.

Linguistic sidebar: the Wall went up in 1961 but you can trace the changes to everyday language from 1945 and the advent of the *Deutsche Demokratische Republik*. New terms, new expressions, a systematic, propaganda-based

reworking of public discourse — what people were supposed to say, also what they were no longer allowed to say. And, in an informant-ridden society, "public" quickly came to include conversations with neighbors, friends, even family, even lovers.

Two generations later, *Ossi-sprache* was a linguistic reality; we talked about it in class, a list of official expressions (even the "popular" is official in a Soviet world). What I found frightening was the regime lasted only 44 years but 17 million people now "talked different"...and would for another generation or two. Language like a scar.

I took an *S-Bahn* to the Eastern edge of the city, found a café full of student-and-artist types, wound up talking to a guy in his mid-thirties, my age. "What did you do before the Wall came down and what do you do now?" He looked at me as if I were an idiot — "Same thing, of course."

He was a puppeteer, it had been a regular salary, now it wasn't, puppeteers were having a very tough time these days. Still, he had a show the next day, would I come? He had a lot to say about capitalism which, by 1994, even mainstream America was calling "savage". He talked about being adrift in a society where everyone was left to his own problems, where everyone was in competition and everything was measured in money.

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# A Double Barrelled ...

## — continued



*“Good Bye Lenin” brilliantly portrays the East-West gap after the fall the Berlin Wall.*

This was my personal challenge to myself, to survive a one-on-one discussion about social issues, art, whatever. And it had to last at least half an hour and I had to actually get what was said. Mr. Lewis will no doubt understand when I point out that expressing myself wasn't a problem. As I said at the time, “When I talk I get to choose the words.”

We spoke together for over an hour, a real East-West cultural exchange and, what was funny, it was almost like he knew this was my own personal final exam — he was impatient when I didn't quite understand, when he had to repeat or explain. As if saying “You're supposed to be fluent, concentrate and be fluent.” But that was the Prussian in him, not the DDR upbringing.

...

When I got off the bus in Dalhousie, New Brunswick — 625 miles north of Boston — I was expecting to spend a year playing hockey in Canada while putting my American high school French to use. The town was 60-40 franco-anglo, maybe I'd get a French girlfriend, become semi-bilingual as a trade-off for going to college a year late.

That girlfriend became my common-law wife, I never returned to the States, did a degree in French at *l'Université de Moncton*. “I'll be a better writer of English” was my ra-

tionalization. I'd been planning to major in English Lit. back home, then work at the Boston “Globe”. Instead, most of my professional career as a journalist would take place in French. And I'd end up being able to speak (and write) four kinds of French.

Basically, I have an Acadian accent, immediately identifiable to any Canadian francophone; I lived in New Brunswick from age 18 to 26. From the beginning, people told me “Don't talk like us, speak proper French.” I found that sociologically-interesting and later learned what they meant — when I moved to Montreal, I was usually treated as a “hick”, a rustic rural, *cute*.

Acadians are a separate tribe from Quebecers, the two are from different parts of France, settled in different parts of Canada and evolved separately for over three centuries. When the English took over Canada, they deported most of the *Acadiens* (Louisiana's “Cajuns”) but left the *Québécois* with French newspapers and schools and their Napoleonic code of law. Quebec developed naturally, kept its culture and kept up with the times.

The Acadians who remained in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick were forced to live in English from 1755 to 1969 and nearly disappeared via assimilation. Their “spoken language”— not a dialect — was passed on more

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## A Double Barrelled ... — *continued*

*Against all odds, the Acadians overcame deportation and assimilation; today the culture thrives as never before.*



or less privately, mostly in the home. As a result, they now combine recent “book French” with 18th-century terms and expressions, the whole of it peppered with English. Quebecers and Acadians sound as much alike as New Yorkers and West Virginians. Ironically, the French detect no difference at all and refer to both as *Canadien*, something that doesn’t bother Acadians but drives most Quebecers crazy.

...

All mass media seeks to homogenize, the better to increase the mass. This is true of Soviet-style propaganda and just as true of MTV, CNN and Fox News (sic). In the case of *Radio-Canada* in the '80s, regional French was taboo and not only on the network, even in the regions themselves. In *Acadie*, virtually all of the on-air personnel and most of the producers in both television and radio had been parachuted in from Quebec. They spoke a language known all over French Canada as “*radio-canadien*”: a condescending tone of needlessly-complicated syntax and lexicon in a French-from-France accent. They spoke like that outside the office too.

My big “scoop”, as a first-year freelancer, wasn’t the result of investigative digging but the fact I was engaged to a girl from Sainte-Anne, hung out with her brother, played music with her brother-in-law, was often mistaken for a cousin. I sounded like a guy from a few villages away. And I learned

that the most famous Acadian book ever, *La Sagouine*, was absolutely despised by a sizeable portion of the local population — the “below-the-tracks” peasants who form the basis of the story.

Because I had a degree in French, because I’d been editor of the university paper, because I was now working for *Radio-Canada* on a regular basis, I was able to get the story on the air. But only because I could pass for a local was I able to *get* the story — first hear about it, then get the people in it to talk to me as if I were one of them (despite the tape-recorder).

Not a scoop, a translation of cultural reality across two borders. The first was local, socio-economic: reporters and producers and the Acadian upper-crust they frequented had no real connection to the majority of the society they lived in, especially out in the villages. My producer — Acadian and not a snob — went out on a limb for me, booked a five-part series.

The second was an actual border, that with Quebec. But it was a surprising story about a book everyone had heard of and from a far-flung, usually boring region. Montreal had me do a long piece for the national current affairs show and two shorter ones for arts’ shows — I’d made the network!

People called it a scoop but it wasn’t that at all, just ears and ear.

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# Deconstructing the “Empathy Craze”

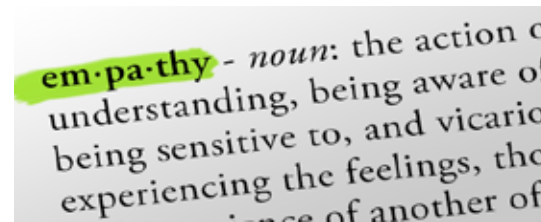
by Patrick Schmidt

As any good practitioner of intercultural training will tell you, empathy is deeply embedded in—and inseparable from — intercultural and interpersonal sensitivity. It’s a way of conscious-shifting, extending one’s boundaries, or as Milton Bennett puts it, an “attempt to understand others by participating in their different experience of the world”. The ability to adapt is key to effective, appropriate communication.

Curiously, the word “empathy” itself is relatively new, dating from 1850, but with increased international contacts it’s no surprise we’re being flooded with books like “The Empathy Gap”, “Teaching Empathy”, “Empathy in a Global World” and “The Empathic Civilization.” They represent a seismic shift in how we view the world.

Some neuroscientists now theorize that the human brain possesses neurons which allow us to feel what is taking place in other people’s heads and trigger empathetic comprehension.

But empathy is by no means a new concept brought upon by globalization. The Roman philosopher Cicero (106 – 43 B.C.) warned that “the whole foundation of human community is threatened by treating foreigners worse than fellow Romans”. And, in the 18th century, Immanuel Kant wrote that “respect for dignity is owed to all humans regardless



of their standing in the community.” His Scottish contemporary David Hume developed the idea of concentric circles of empathy, meaning people are loyal to their family first, then their village, region and nation in diminishing degrees. But as the world has continued to evolve, the concept has been turned on its head.

Given our multi-media, global-consumption lifestyle — satellite tv, smartphones, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube — we find ourselves increasingly identifying with people in the outermost circles. Virtually everyone on the planet quickly learned of the death of Princess Diana in a car accident in Paris. When Elton John sang “*Candle in the Wind*” at her funeral, hundreds of millions of people around the world simultaneously shared a personal sense of profound sadness.

But does empathy give you sounder morals or make you more compassionate in intercultural relations? While being empathetic makes people more sensitive to the problems and perspectives of others, it’s not clear whether it actually motivates us to take more ethical action. In fact, morality is a culturally-conditioned response.

Various researchers have investigated the connection between empathy and moral action, finding it to be weak at best. City University of New York philosopher Jesse Prinz summed things up in a recent paper: “These studies sug-

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# Deconstructing empathy...

— *continued*

*We may feel sorry for a homeless woman, but if giving is too high a price, feelings of sorrow often stop.*



gest that empathy is not a major player when it comes to moral motivation. Its contribution is negligible in children, modest in adults, and non-existent when costs are significant.” Others term empathy a “fragile flower,” easily destroyed by self-interest.

Research found that feelings, such as a short spurt of joy, generate a stronger influence on human actions than empathy. In a famous experiment carried out in the 1970s, researchers placed a 10-cent coin in a phone booth. An amazing 87% of those who found the dime offered to help a person who accidentally dropped some papers nearby a few seconds later. Of the people who didn't find the dime, only 4% offered to help.

Empathy can be seen more as an intellectual, cognitive action. It orients you toward the understanding and sharing the feeling of another but, if there's a personal cost, the process usually stops. You feel sorry for the homeless woman across the street but it's unlikely you're going to cross that street to give her a Euro.

In the internationally-acclaimed “*Special Flight*” undocumented immigrants are filmed in a detention center in Geneva. Viewers sense that Swiss prison officials are struggling to reconcile humane values with the harsh reality of deportation. When the immigrants are handcuffed before

being led onto the plane to take them back to their home country, the guards are visibly affected and try to show human solidarity with soothing words — “Don't worry, it's going to turn out all right”. Everyone knows it's not true but everyone also knows there's nothing anyone can do. This modicum of kindness, of respect, does both groups good.

One border away, the world was horrified when some 300 African refugees drowned trying to reach Lampedusa. The Italian government ordered its navy to save “boat people” in the future but, when other E.U. nations were asked to share in the cost, the response was no.

Prinz points out that empathy also has dark sides. You're likely to care more about cute malnutrition victims than ugly ones. You're more likely to hire someone you know than an anonymous candidate even if the latter is far more qualified. You react to shocking events like hurricanes but are somehow able to ignore the rising CO2 emissions and global warming that cause them.

What Prinz and others are arguing is that empathy has become a catchword, an emotional shortcut to experience moral solidarity without actual “human” feelings. To put it in another way, it's to share in the illusion of ethical progress—political correctness — without having to do the dirty work of getting emotionally involved, making judgments and decisions. We're teaching

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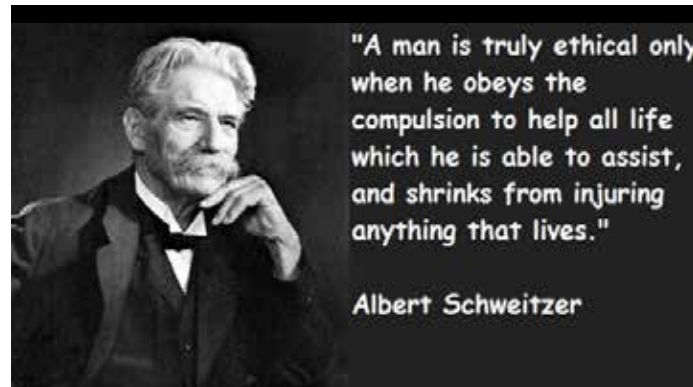
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# Deconstructing empathy...

— continued

*The philosophical code of  
Albert Schweitzer*



people to cognitively sympathize while doing nothing to help them. Everybody is for empathy, but it isn't enough.

The real movers, those who truly want to change their objective reality and make the world a better place, follow their emotions: anger, disgust, guilt, admiration. Feelings shaped through cultural conditioning that provide the sentimental groundwork for morality, which translates into values and "sacred" codes. The codes that compel people to perform pro-social actions at whatever cost.

They are often the people the world admires most, such as Albert Schweitzer, awarded the *Nobel Peace Prize* in 1952 for his years of selfless work with lepers in Gabon. There's no doubt that he had empathic feelings but they were a sideshow compared with his sense of obligation to the social, religious and philosophical "certainties" he developed through cultural conditioning.

These cultural codes made him react to other people's suffering, not just sympathize. Empathy told him a leper was feeling pain, isolated, lonely, but it was Schweitzer's primal anger and disgust that obligated him to act.

International conflicts can be understood according to *sense of duty*. What Ukraine, Russia, Israel and Gaza all have in common is that they're fighting for their existence,

for the cultural codes so fundamentally important to them. Debate over which side is morally right is impossible when propaganda takes the place of communication.

The point is that these codes aren't just a set of rules but the basis of one's identity. They reflect passion and joy, material and psychological comfort, ethnocentric emotions and personal commitments. Empathy is just an add-on, a means to understand the behavior of others, nothing more.

Interculturalists who hope to improve on the existing world need to help people understand, admire then debate, modify certain beliefs and put their feelings and slightly rethought codes into action. Invariably there will be conflicts but it's only then we become professionally relevant.

*For further readings on empathy:*

Bennett, Milton, *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication - Second Edition*, Intercultural Press, 2013

Brooks, David, *The Limits of Empathy*, NYTimes, Sept. 29, 2011

Calloway-Thomas, Carolyn, *Empathy in the Global World — An Intercultural Perspective*, Sage Publications, 2011

Prinz, Jesse, *The Emotional Construction of Morals*, Oxford University Press, 2008

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*A review of Samyukta Mullangi's article*

## The divergent languages of business and medicine

*Published at KevinMD.com*



*Samyukta Mullangi is an MD/MBA joint degree student at Harvard Business School and Harvard Medical School, with a passionate interest in narrative medicine. She is fascinated by the difference of vocabulary at the two different schools and has put her thoughts on the divergence in this highly praised article.*

In the essay, she writes about a discussion her business ethic class had on the case of Cipla Pharmaceuticals, an Indian generic drug manufacturer that has drawn the anger of large international pharma by ignoring international patents or employing reverse engineering to produce low-cost generics. Cipla's founder, Dr. Yusuf Hamied, defended his actions by stressing Cipla's goal wasn't to steal from the companies like Merck and Eli Lilly, but simply to help the world's poor gain access to life-saving medications.

Many class students passionately sided on the pharma's cause, arguing their need to amortize their cost through sales. They claimed that Cipla was cannibalizing their pricing model and directly stealing customer segments. Others disagreed and argued that the world's poorest represented a market that would have been priced out of its products anyway.

Then, one student from the Middle East, on the verge of crying, raised his trembling hand and told of how his father, when he contracted diabetes, would not have been living today if it had been the availability of such generic drugs. He ended by saying, "This entire discussion disgusts me." The class was vis-

ibility shaken by his story and most everyone looked down to the floor, feeling ashamed.

At this point, Mullangi shares her experience in medical school, where conversations evolve around global health, social justice, structural violence, institutional discrimination, empathy with the patient. At the business school, students use words like incentives, value proposition and return on equity. The more liberal business students find it almost inappropriate to talk about human rights and moral obligations. Instead, they have to carefully couch their thoughts, saying things such as individual governments could leverage their bargaining power, purchase medications in bulk.

She argues that the vocabulary used in the respective two schools can limit and block each side from understanding one another. She goes on to point out that the language of medicine and the language of business don't simply diverge on technical points. It's more than a banker's inability to interpret lab data, or a physician's impotence at discounting cash flows. It's the very definitions of access and rights and economics and morality.

She brings her essay to a conclusion by stating that it's indispensable that we talk with citizens of both spheres, knowing that the divergence lies even deeper, in fundamental views of the world and in considering how humans ought to care for each other.

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## Book Review

### Dancing to a Different Tune

Essays, interviews and commentaries on the intercultural experience

by Patrick Schmidt

Euro 19.95, 186 pages

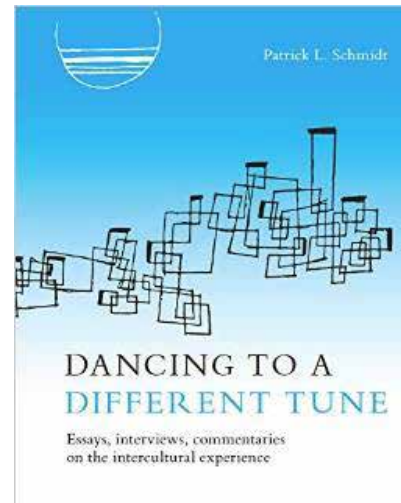
Published by Meridian World Press

For some years now, Patrick Schmidt, once president of SIETAR Europa, has extended his commitment by editing our regularly appearing organizational newsletter, the *SIETAR Journal*. This newsletter generally features a topic of intercultural significance, sometimes dealt with from several perspectives, along with an interview of a notable contributor to the intercultural field, reviews of important new literature, and a listing of upcoming noteworthy events and resources.

*In Dancing to a Different Tune*, Patrick has woven an anthology of pieces, threads from the newsletter issues that he himself has written, into the general framework mentioned above, and sought the collaboration of SIETAR Europa to bring it out in book form. In all, it gives us perspective on how we as individuals and as an organization are dealing with the intercultural challenges of everyday life as well as difficult assignments in an increasingly globalized world.

The book has four principal sections. The first deals with the topic of intercultural sensitivity; the second addresses the cultural concerns of business; the third and most diverse, quite specifically and graphically examines the impact of various cultural differences as part of the search for cultural competence; finally, the fourth offer's a potpourri of Patrick's reviews of and commentaries about print and other media.

Perhaps the most pleasing feature of the book is that it pre-



serves the liveliness of the SIETAR Europa newsletter itself, with user-friendly layout and copious pictures in both color and black and white. I believe that this is an important step, given that we are seeing more and more of it in today's print publications.

"Readership" is no longer satisfied with line after line of text, no matter its quality. Further, there are things the text cannot do that images will. We have been long used to the fact that a "figure" inserted into a text might serve to explain the text a bit; today the weight is often on the other foot—the text does its best to reflect what is contained in a salient image.

So perhaps, we are invited, nay, compelled to think graphically, particularly at a time when media enable action, interaction, and speak to us with their own voice, bear their own message and engage us in multi-sensorial experiences. This book then furnishes us not simply with intriguing views, interviews and reviews, but it challenges us with one small preview of at least the visual direction in which we need to go on a regular basis if we expect to be effective educators and communicators today.

So, congratulations and thanks to Patrick, not just for this publication, but for the extensive contributions he has made to our *SIETAR Journal*, which provided the material for this release, a tribute to his work for SIETAR Europa. *Reviewed by George Simons*

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# Book Review

## Cultural Intelligence

CQ: The Competitive Edge for Leaders Crossing Borders

by Julia Middleton

Euro 22.95, 208 pages

Published by Bloomsburg



In this beautifully-designed book, Julia Middleton takes on the ambitious task of laying down a roadmap for people to acquire the skills, connections and inspiration to cross cultural boundaries successfully. And she writes from experience; in addition to being an author, she's the founder of *Common Purpose*, an international charity that runs leadership-development programs around the world.

Her premise is simple: organizations often choose leaders for their analytical brains — their IQ, more or less — but these leaders often lack emotional intelligence, or EQ. Our interconnected world needs something more and, according to Middleton, it's called cultural intelligence (CQ). This is the necessary ingredient to get through all kinds of borders, finding ways to break down barriers and operate effectively despite unfamiliar surroundings.

“As no one person could ever be an authority on it”, she methodically interviews a variety of leaders who, she believes, possess CQ. Her strength lies in getting these people to talk candidly about how they develop trust, deal with intolerance and use their core values. Their stories lead the reader through diverse issues and answer the question “Why do I need CQ?”

Her themes—developing your CQ with core yet flexible values, “experiencing experience”, even how to deal with the opposite of CQ — are well chosen. Her summaries generate strategies such as being brave with core values, having courageous conversations with hard-hitting questions, leaving with a real relationship and not

just an exchange of business cards, being generous and helping others. Moreover, the writing flows and abounds with insight.

At the same time, our notion of culture and its influence on behavior were hardly touched on—surprising in such a work. She discusses the characteristics of global leadership at length but is not especially systematic in doing so and a certain depth of discussion is lacking. Simply put, she doesn't seem to have studied the vast amount of research already accomplished in the intercultural field.

Still, as she puts it, she wanted to hear first-hand how world leaders think and work without any preconceived notions. “The book is a work in progress. It's meant to be the start of a journey, not the last word on it, because CQ is complicated, messy, without neat resolutions that can be summarized in bullet points.”

For Middleton, CQ is a deep, sincere interest in people whereby anyone, regardless of social position, can learn from others. It's about persuading people from diverse backgrounds to believe they can serve a common purpose and find ways to achieve goals that they couldn't arrive at alone.

The book is written with passion and shares hard-hitting, personal stories from both the author and the interviewees. The reader learns about Middleton's rethinking of her own history and feelings of appropriateness. An interesting inside-view of someone discovering the inner thoughts of leaders. *Reviewed by Patrick Schmidt*

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*SIETAR Europa is happy to announce a new publication:*

## DANCING TO A DIFFERENT TUNE

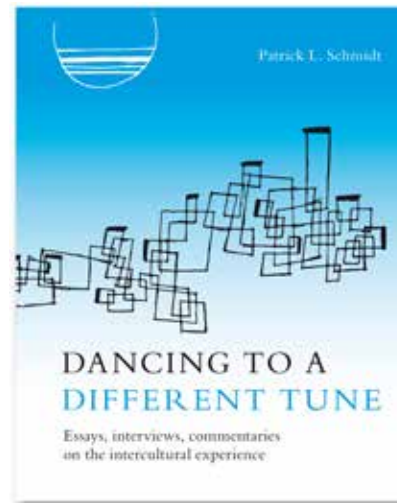
Interviews, essays and commentaries on the intercultural experience

Welcome to the the rhythmic world of globalization. *Dancing to a Different Tune* is a collection of interviews, articles and critiques from the *SIETAR Europa Journal*, offering a unique portrait of the inner workings of the intercultural world.

It also recounts the personal journeys of the founders and builders of interculturalism as a new field of social science and an increasingly important way of life.

This book goes on to apply the concept — usually focused on international business or political negotiation — to areas such as history, sociology, linguistics and education. A review of noteworthy books, as well as a pertinent film, completes the work.

*Dancing to a Different Tune* is shrewd, lively and multifaceted, translating the heartbeat-cadence of the cross-cultural experience.



186-page trade paperback,  
19.1 x 23.5 cm,  
index, illustrations,  
by Patrick Schmidt,  
Meridian World Press  
ISBN 978-0-9685293-4-8

*Price including postage*

**€ 19.90**

Can be ordered directly from  
SIETAR Europa. For more  
information write to:

office@sietar-europa.org

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LILLE, 29th October to 1st November, 2014

## FRONTIERS & IDENTITIES: NAVIGATING WORLDS IN MOTION

### FRONTIERES ET IDENTITES : REPERES DANS UN MONDE EN MOUVEMENT



As the world becomes a more global place, events in one area can have a very rapid and direct impact on people living on the other side of the world. People are crossing and creating borders, encountering new frontiers both physically and virtually. Inequalities in the distribution of wealth are inciting millions of people to seek a better life outside their native country. The traditional and historical limits of borders and identities are being questioned as they change and become more or less permeable. In some places, forms of cultural isolationism appear to be gaining ground.

Within this more global world we have Europe; a Europe that is evolving rapidly and which will continue to evolve in ways which are difficult to anticipate. At the heart of this evolving Europe we find France, a country that has traditionally welcomed people from all around the world. The face of France is changing and creating new challenges and opportunities for the people who live and work there.

These changes may challenge our identities, our sense of belonging and our affiliations and raise questions for which there is no one, simple answer. Migrations are not all of the same nature. The differences between forced migration – unprepared, full of risks, driven by dreams that only very rarely come true – and professional or economic migration – prepared with the help of more and more qualified HR personnel and expatriate services – need to be more fully understood.

SIETAR-France is happy to welcome you to Lille, a truly international city strategically situated to be at the centre of the debates around the changing face of France and the place of the evolving Europe in today's global world. Come and join the actors of the intercultural professions for 3 days of conferences, workshops and sharing of best practices as we explore together the implications for individuals, organizations and countries of the current changes to frontiers and identities and the challenges of navigating worlds in motion.

*For more details on congress registration click below:*

[www.sietarfrancecongres.com](http://www.sietarfrancecongres.com)

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**REFRESHING THE CULTURAL PARADIGM** — Sharing stories, theories, next practices

VALENCIA CONGRESS 21st -23rd MAY 2015

Be a congress presenter at the **SIETAR Europa Congress** Valencia, Spain see link below

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

This congress welcomes all those whose life and work puts them at the interface of cultures, from the perspectives of economy, society, and education with the aim of reshaping intercultural discourse, questioning our current cultural paradigms and exploring new thinking to help us navigate complexity in our emerging global world. Thus our congress title mirrorsthis need.

With an aim to re-examine our cultural dimensions, understandings and paradigms, we invite submissions that question, explore and refresh our cultural paradigms and theories, share new methods and best practices. We invite those engaged in business, training and research (including independent consultants, education, organisations) shaping European public sphere (NGO's, governmental organisations and institutions) as well as media and arts to share contributions from all disciplines and fields that deal with intercultural issues.

The location, Valencia, Spain, has been chosen as a strong, visible example of the mixing of the cultural heritage and modern technology. Its exposure to the Mediterranean shores and its historical mixture represents the potential of cultural synergies.

This is an exciting opportunity for researchers, practitioners and individuals at the interface of cultures in media, the arts, government and NGO's, particularly in the European context, to exchange ideas shaping our intercultural world. Click on the link below for further details.

**Paper submission:** <http://www.sietareu.org/activities/valencia-congress-2015/call-for-papers>

**Call for films:** <http://www.sietareu.org/activities/valencia-congress-2015/56-general/congress-2015/352-call-for-films>

**To register as a participant (starting October, 2014):** Click to [www.sietareu.org](http://www.sietareu.org)

**For any further queries, write to:** [valencia2015@sietareu.org](mailto:valencia2015@sietareu.org)



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## The Welcoming Culture in Germany: Challenges for the Economy, Society, and Education

October 2-4, 2014 at the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, Germany

Coaches, HR Representatives, Consultants, Entrepreneurs, Instructors, and Intercultural Experts from different areas will meet in Jena, Germany. They are looking to find out what “Welcoming Culture” really means, exchange views with other people and discuss the subject. The congress forum will be held mainly in German.

Pre-Conference  
Workshops

Keynotes by  
well-known  
experts

Lectures and workshops  
by economists, adminis-  
trators and educationalists

Welcome reception,  
flying dinner, business  
theater

Information and registration: [www.sietar-events.de](http://www.sietar-events.de)

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We would like to invite all professionals interested in intercultural issues to attend

## New Era of Expat

**Congress, 24-26.10.2014, Warsaw Poland**

The general theme of the Congress foreshadows a discourse on new challenges of increasing mobility and diversity in Poland, coming from changes in employment such as an increasing number of foreigners in the Polish labour market. According to Tholons Top 100 Outsourcing Destinations, Poland (Krakow) is the first top destination in Europe!

We will confront different views on the phenomenon of contemporary economic migration and the expansion of international companies. The Congress will bring together various perspectives including corporate views (among others: UniCredit - Austria, Repsol - Spain), expats' own experiences (which include: Canada, China), consultants' perspective (among others: how to recognise best relocation programmes, what is intercultural coaching), as well as the psychological background of being an expatriate (identity and family issues).

The Congress is aimed at supporting members of SIETAR Poland and SIETAR Europe, representatives of international and Polish companies, representatives of non-governmental organizations and expats themselves (who can even attend Polish lessons during the Congress!).

### **Join the Congress if you want to:**

- \* get to know how to develop intercultural competence and explore how companies can prepare expats for their international assignments
- \* understand the psychological background and challenges of being an expat
- \* get to know the latest trends and standards of intercultural competence trainings and development programmes for employees
- \* be inspired by best practices presented by HR Directors from the corporate world
- \* build your own network of professionals in the field

Find more details at: [www.sietarpolskakongres.pl](http://www.sietarpolskakongres.pl)



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# Events, workshops, congresses

## SIETAR Europa's webinars

Sign up on the Sietar Europa website: <http://www.sietareu.org/activities/webinars>

20th Sept.: 4.00 pm – 5.30 pm (CET)  
Rudi Camerer and Judith Mader: "Language: Source of all misunderstanding"

26th November: 8.00 – 9.00 pm (CET)  
David Trickey: "The X-factor- why successful corporate expats need to be magically in two places at the same time (and how to do it)"

## Bath, U.K.

15-19 Sept. 2014, 12-16 Jan. 2015

*Developing Intercultural Training Skills* This 5-day course is for those, wanting to develop their knowledge and skills to design — deliver intercultural training into their current courses.

22-26 Sept. 2014, 23-27 March 2015

*Designing and delivering intercultural training.* This 5-day course is a follow up to the above course, also suitable for trainers who already have experience in the intercultural field. Courses in 2015 may be eligible for EU funding under the new Erasmus+ programme. More information at [www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm](http://www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm) or contact [adrian.pilbeam@lts-training.com](mailto:adrian.pilbeam@lts-training.com)

## Amsterdam, Holland

1 - 3 September 2014

*Intercultural Communication: Diversity in Practice* This 3-day course provides knowledge and skills for cross-cultural work in international teams, project management and education. More information at [info@cic-amsterdam.com](mailto:info@cic-amsterdam.com)

## Jena, Germany

2 - 4 October 2014

*Willkommenskultur in Deutschland* Sietar Deutschland is proud to announce its next forum: 'Welcoming culture in Germany'. Topics are demographic change, diversity and the increasing number of immigrants. More information at <http://www.sietar-deutschland.de/>

## Milan, Italy

3-5, 6-7, 10-12, 13-14 Oct. 2014

*Constructivist Foundations of Intercultural Communication, Embodied Culture, Sustainable Intercultural Development and Internal Intercultural Consulting* Milton Bennett, Ida Castiglioni and Dianne Hofner Saphiere expound on the different aspects of the intercultural field. 15% discount for SIETAR members. More information at <http://www.idrinstitute.org/>

## Warsaw, Poland

24 October - 26 October 2014

*New Era of Expat* Sietar Polska is organizing this conference on

what is needed for today's manager to work effectively in an international environment. More information at <http://www.sietar.pl/>

## Lille, France

29 October - 1 November 2014

*Frontières et Identités, Repères dans un Monde en mouvement* Sietar France is having its bi-annual congress with the theme of enhancing the dialogue of cultures. More information at [www.sietar-france.org](http://www.sietar-france.org)

## Valencia, Spain

21 -23 May, 2015

*Refreshing the Cultural Paradigm* This congress explores the interface of cultures, questioning our current cultural paradigms in our emerging global world. Thus our congress title mirrors this need. More information at <http://www.sietareu.org/>

### Online Everyday

The SIETAR Europa group, discussing

**"Can we actually educate leaders in Global Leadership Competence?"**

on LinkedIn, has now over 8000 members. Plus it offers videos, articles, books, tools for the intercultural profession.

For more information, contact George Simons at [diversophy@gmail.com](mailto:diversophy@gmail.com)

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