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Editorial

The Upcoming SIETAR Europa Congress in Tallinn, Estonia

We devote this issue to Estonia, a nation of fascinating contrasts, which also happens to be our host country for the next SIETAR Europa congress. A land of forests and coastline imbued with a rich tapestry of history and legend, this Baltic country is an absolute gem to discover. Read more from Sietar member Kati Volt, who provides us with a passionate view of what it means to be an Estonian. (pages 11-15)

The SIETAR Europa board has chosen Tallinn, the capital, for September’s Congress. A UNESCO World Heritage site known for its well-preserved Hanseatic mediaeval architecture, the old town both inspires and energizes—the ideal place for exchanging intercultural experiences. For more information about this event, and to register, click on page 23.

A pre-congress workshop kicks things off and the concurrent film festival will feature “Editing Your Own Video for Work and Personal Purposes”. Sietar members Vittorio Canavese and Sergio Di Giorgi have written a delightful article on how video films are revolutionizing the internet world. (page 8)

For our interview we’ve chosen Peter Franklin, an outstanding researcher and trainer in intercultural communication and management, who talks about some of the issues facing the field. What makes him fascinating, in addition to his work in the British and German academic worlds, is the passion he brings to the table, as demonstrated in the Dialogin.com website he created and runs. (pages 3-7)

And Dan MacLeod, our Canadian-American correspondent, takes us on a journey...back to what most of us left behind when we left high school — science! (pages 15-17).

Patrick Schmidt
Editor-in-chief
The study of intercultural management — how people of different cultural backgrounds come together and "make a deal work" — has become an important and exciting field of research. And rightly so — with the exponential growth of globalization, there has been a demand for a more systematic understanding of the diversity and complexity of people’s behaviors.

Intercultural management is continually evolving and certainly more sophisticated than it was 30 years ago. Then, researchers naively assumed that work behavior was universal — what was true for Americans was also true for people from other countries working worldwide. We now know this was fundamentally wrong. Although cultural differences are often hard to decipher, and may appear bizarre at first, we've learned that cross-cultural management works. But it requires developing a profound and dialectic understanding of attitudes, thinking patterns and behavior. In short, intercultural competence.

One person who seeks to advance our knowledge while developing the best practices for international companies is Peter Franklin. Professor at the Konstanz University of Applied Sciences and co-author of the books 'The Mindful International Manager' - an expanded edition is coming out in 2014 - and 'Intercultural Interaction', he’s a British national who is perfectly integrated with the German academic world. He created and manages the highly-acclaimed “dialogin.com” website as well, providing interculturalists with a platform for forums, book reviews and articles. And with a German wife and three bilingual children, he thrives at juggling British and German values—an interculturalist par excellence.

Wanting to know more about Peter Franklin's background and his on-going activities, I visited him at his home in the German village of Hemmenhofen on Lake Constance.

Let’s begin with your roots. What were the early experiences which led you to become an intercultural researcher?

Well, I was born in the port town of Dover in southeast England. We lived in Deal, a few kilometers up the coast. On a clear day we’d look across the English Channel and say, “Oh, you can see France today.” I suppose the continent of Europe was more present in my life for me than many other Brits. My parents were open to the outside world, though they themselves had very little traveling experience. My mother did go on a school exchange to Dortmund, Germany in 1936 but it was only for a few weeks. Still, they obviously thought contact with other cultures was important because they encouraged me to take part in two school exchanges with the city Koblenz. This certainly influenced my subjects at A levels, when I chose English, French and German.
I was accepted at Cambridge University where I studied modern and medieval German, Swedish and English. I expressly chose Swedish because I wanted the experience of learning a foreign language from zero as an adult. I knew what it was like to learn French and German as an eleven-year-old but at 18, you approach the task in a different way. So, just before beginning my studies I went to Sweden for six weeks to start learning the language.

Then I went to West Berlin for four months. This was in 1974 and it was an absolute eye-opener for a young man like me. I got to know the German way of life and spent a lot of time going to concerts and plays - and bars and pubs. And I worked in the Wertheim’s men’s department on Kurfürstendamm selling shirts and ties, my first real intercultural experience!

That’s a question I ask myself at times. You could say that my interest in interculturalism developed through a number of chance events.

While I was at Cambridge, I decided to spend a year in Innsbruck, Austria, working as a foreign language assistant. I, like many other language teachers, had this belief that successful cross-cultural communication was simply a good mastery of the language. Very quickly, I learned otherwise.

On my first day in Innsbruck, I went to the train station to pick up my baggage. I thought I could speak German, but the railway official spoke with a broad Tyrolean accent--I had no idea what he was talking about! It was a big surprise for me and at the same time a good lesson in intercultural humility.

Despite this small setback, that year teaching English to Austrian children was a wonderful experience and made me realize that teaching was my calling in life. So, after finishing my studies, I took a job teaching English at a language school in Cologne. My plan was to stay in Germany for two years but, after 18 months, I received an offer to teach English and cultural studies at the Aachen Technical University. That was an interesting intercultural experience because the city is located where Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands met. After six years there, I was hired at the University of Duisburg, which is close to the Dutch border.
It was in the late 80s and early 90s that I really got interested in looking at communication models, many influenced by American and British insights, but these models didn’t fit in with my experiences. So I looked at the influence and impact of culture and more closely at cross-cultural communication. At the same time, I started working with Vincent Merk (former President of SIETAR Europa) on a number of EU-sponsored projects. We were trying to bring intercultural and business elements to the teaching of English and German at Polish and Slovenian universities. In 1998, I was offered a professorship in business English and intercultural communication in international business at Konstanz University of Applied Sciences.

You have spent most of your adult life in Germany. Would you say you have now gone “native”?

Many people ask me that. I say yes, and it’s quite natural-German family, house in Germany. Some people who know me say I’m more German than British; then I say I’m 80% British and 60% German. I’ve retained many British values while taking on German ones and, together, the whole is more than the sum of the parts. It’s a mix of interlocking pieces.

Growing contact with the other culture means that you get insights into your values and norms, or at least become aware of them. Definitely a dual perspective, but it doesn’t mean you lose the entirety of your culture of origin. When you’re in Britain, you criticize the British and defend the Germans and when you’re in Germany, you criticize the Germans and defend the British. The important thing is to be able to take on the other perspective, intellectually and emotionally.

In the book “Intercultural Interaction”, you discuss how one becomes a qualified intercultural trainer. Could you say something about that?

Many students ask me, “How do I become an intercultural trainer?” I generally say, “Don’t do it!” They have an academic background but no real experience of living in another culture, let alone the business world. A person needs to spend at least two or three years working abroad to gather the emotional experience of another cultural reality. This is a key point: for trainers to be credible, amongst other things they have to have genuine intercultural experience.

If you haven’t worked abroad, you aren’t taken seriously. And if you want to be an intercultural trainer in business, you need to have sound business and management experience. And not that of an intern, who’s really just an observer. You actually need to be confronted with business and management realities which have serious consequences for you. And you need to have a few grey hairs...

I do quite a lot of work for companies and organizations, where I meet people who are fully engaged in international management. The experiences I get there and the stories I’m told...
I take back into my teaching and research. It's a two-way cross-fertilization process. It's very important for my credibility at the university and in business to be able to have this dual view.

You also write in your book that schools can provide a better place for learning intercultural competence. Could you explain that?

You need to first ask yourself what does it take to be successful across cultures? And my answer is you need intercultural interaction competence. It's a multi-faceted phenomenon: the 'right' knowledge, the 'right' skills and the 'right' attitudes. These are three classical elements of intercultural development, repeatedly cited in publications.

Cultural knowledge, raising awareness of one's own culture, facts and figures--this is something that can be done in your classic two-day intercultural training. But skills need to be practiced. You can help people develop relationships, enlarge their repertoire of communication styles, talk about active listening. And then you have attitudes: open-mindedness, flexibility, acceptance, taking the other perspective. These are the sorts of things the trainer should be striving for and they can only be developed over time.

Interaction competence, if you look at its full scope, is something that can only be partially developed in short-term courses. And this is where you need credibility, so you can make the case for long-term training. If you do a six-month program, it will be better and you'll have more sustainability. And that's why school and university are better places to develop this competence. The students are there for longer and you can work on developing this competence over a longer time period.

**What are the biggest challenges in the intercultural profession?**

I'm worried by the fact that anybody can do intercultural training, they just have to sell it to the client. The entry-barriers are minimal, a bit like the translation business--anybody can claim to be a translator. The client may not be in a position to judge quality. Very often, "quality" just means the customer is happy. That doesn't necessarily mean the trainer has done a good job.

Plus training has become a very desirable profession for a lot of young people who have spent a year abroad, done some intercultural courses at university, then an internship. I'm very uneasy of what this means for the profession. What you need is a set of standards. The profession, and SIETAR in particular, need to think about assessing the qualifications of a trainer. It would help not only the profession, but also help the client to judge that they would get a minimum quality. The translation profession has introduced a qualification assessment process. Translators don't need to have formal qualifications. They can get their experience recognized as being equivalent to a certain level of competence.
Another challenge is making new research available to trainers and developers. If you have up-to-date insights, it enhances your credibility as a trainer. We need a three-pronged approach involving the trainer, the researcher and business.

Let me explain by means of an example. An intercultural trainer is brought in to support a new international project. The trainer responds with a classic two-day course and the company is happy because they’ve done something. But the trainer could say, “In collaboration with researchers and academics, how about a longitudinal support-process? We won’t just look at international teams generally, we’ll also look at your team as it works over a period of time. Researchers will observe, interview and generate insights. Trainers will take these insights and develop modules—best practices for the people in this team and other teams.” That’s the value-added a company can get, a customized product.

There’s a lot of research out there in business and international management. It seldom reaches the trainer. We need concerted cooperation to generate new insights. Researchers are not necessarily able to convince organizations they can help them. But if trainers show there’s a real value-added, organizations might be more willing.

Can you give examples of research being used in training?
I headed a study for the European Commission on developing intercultural competence in the context of foreign language teaching in ten European countries. One of the interesting insights was that intercultural competence should be regarded as a transversal skill. In another words, it shouldn’t just be taught in foreign language courses but also be an element in other subjects, across the curriculum. This has important implications. School teachers, who are handling some very complex situations, are now working with intercultural insights.

When I was appointed at Konstanz University, there was already an awareness that international communication was more than knowledge of the foreign language. My university established an innovative program called Asian Studies and Management, a combination of 50% language-culture-communication and 50% business administration. I was able to move into that program and help contribute to the research, development and teaching of intercultural management.

What are you working on at the moment?
I have got three books in the pipeline. A new and expanded edition of The Mindful International Manager with Jeremy Comfort. A collection of case studies on intercultural management, edited together with Christoph Barmeyer and including cases by Nancy Adler, Fons Trompenaars as well as by well-known trainers. And another co-authored book, this time on culture and change management. I really like the close cooperation involved in the creation of a satisfying text. So I have quite a bit on my plate for now and the next two years!
The Tallinn SIETAR Film Festival

Learning from Web Docs
A new challenge for trainers

by Vittorio Canavese and Sergio Di Giorgi

Once again - after Sofia, Granada, Krakow - at the SIETAR Europa Congress in Tallinn, documentary films will play a leading role. Marianne van Eldik Thieme, Sietar Europe Board member and Film Festival organizer, has just made the finishing touches to the program. In addition to film screenings with Q&A sessions with the directors, the program will include a pre-congress workshop ‘Editing Your Own Video for Work and Personal Purposes’, a webinar conducted by John Twitchin on his updated version of the referential ‘CrossTalk’ video series and a masterclass on documentary conducted by award-winning Dutch filmmakers Peter and Petra Lataster, who teach at the Film Academy in Amsterdam.

We believe the SIETAR community, that is trainers, educators and researchers, has much to learn from documentary films and filmmakers. We ourselves have learned many things from filmmakers who have been invited since 2007 to the “ForFilmFest”, a festival dedicated to ‘Cinema for Training’ organized by AIF-Italian Trainers Association and the Cinematheque of Bologna, www.forfilmfest.it. Professional trainers are discovering interesting similarities and correspondences between the skills that nowadays are more and more required in adult learning processes and the filmmakers competencies.

These are not only “attitudes” (such as curiosity or intuition) but more often are what we call ‘meta-competencies’. They are the capacity to plan, implement and monitor actions and their effects as a continuous ‘work in progress’, without predefined script or detailed maps; to adapt rapidly to changes in the scenario and objectives; to watch and listen carefully to the context as well to other people; to combine rational and emotional thinking; to go beyond the usual frame and ‘comfort zone’, and so on.

In recent years, acquisition of these new skills has been stimulated by the fact that the traditional documentary has met the web. Broadcast companies that usually produced documentary films originally conceived only to be distributed through television or cinemas, have created ‘cross-medial platforms’ for on-line documentary versions hosted on the web. In 2011, at the Sietar Film Festival in Krakow, Italian filmmaker Sergio Basso gave a powerful example of this trend. First, the audience watched and commented on some sequences of his “Giallo a Milano” (Made in Chinatown), a documentary focused on the Chinese community in Milan. Then, the director himself showed to the audience how, immediately after its theatrical release, Made in Chinatown became a web cross-media platform with new stories, characters, and different narrative paths, mixed with those of the original documentary!

Closely linked to the cross-medial scenario is the growing production of web documentaries (webdoc) that is often related to intercultural issues. In the last few years the techno-
Learning from web docs... 
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Logical evolution has made creating a webdoc much easier and cheaper, making it one of the most distinctive Web 2.0 formats. Several production platforms have been realized, allowing almost everyone to edit videos, photographs, audio clips and links without being a multimedia geek and/or web languages expert.

Such platforms are often open and free and may require a small budget; some of them even allow web publishing functions, on YouTube or other social media, or in private channels, often with collaborative features. The important thing is that the transition from linear (sequential) to non linear (hypertextual) editing tools does not imply special technical difficulties.

On the other hand, things change from a narrative point of view. Traditional script is no longer adequate. From the textual, sequential form of a traditional documentary, you should better switch to a graphic layout that allows for organizing content defining the links between the single parts and elements of the webdoc. The objects used are no longer just video and audio clips, graphic and animations, but also links to documents, websites or social media. The multiplicity of available resources expands the narrative possibilities: a webdoc, beyond audiovisual features, offers the opportunity to choose alternative patterns, deepening in or jumping over the sequences, or linking to other web sites or video resources or other kind of documents.

So, if Sergio Basso’s “Made in Chinatown” can be considered a good ‘first generation’ webdoc, well designed and conceived but with no links to social media, an increasing tendency in webdocumentary production is to open up to the world of social media and social networks.

In the web page http://mrl.li/YORTI3 we have highlighted some recent examples - in chronological order - of webdoc dealing with intercultural issues, designed for educational purposes.

In the first 2009 example, the webdoc project Vues migratoires, a webdoc on migration, had its strong points on graphics and multimedia research, though at the expense of usability and clarity of content.

In many cases, traditional techniques of documentary film - such as interviews - come into play, providing materials that can be explored and commented on according to non-sequential paths. The webdoc Une certaine idée de la France gives an opportunity for social activity on the web, by allowing the user to connect to the Facebook page of the television channel ‘Arte’ (even if, in this example, social networks play a secondary role).

Multikultyfactory puts the user in migrant people’s shoes. The ‘new citizen’ talk about their new lives through audiostories...
Learning from web docs...
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and evocative sketches. Social space – such as news from the press and interactive tools - are integral part of the webdoc; using only audio clips and graphics seems to facilitate users’ involvement. Another interesting point is that the webdocumentary was created by the software application Klynt, one of the most comprehensive and relatively simple to use platforms to achieve professional goals without having to know programming languages or page description codes.

*Stigmatises* wants to be a participatory webdoc, but the goal is only partially achieved, because of the low number of contributions, available only as videos on a platform outside the main webdoc. Even with these limitations, the product is very professional and intriguing.

*Kinshasa FM* relies on the power of the oldest medium, the radio; the technical features could be aligned with the most advanced webdocs for those who have fast connection or could be very ‘light’ in order to be enjoyed within countries where high speed connection is rare.

A special format is *Seven billions others* - a free collective project, started in 2003, rich of useful material on the topic of multiculturalism.

Today, we can find in the web an increasing range of different tools for the creation of webdocs, offering new formats for storytelling and creativity, mainly through social networks. Webdoc libraries can help trainers to build learning programs specific to their needs, also on crosscultural issues. Libraries collect and offer materials from many different national and cultural contexts, sometimes specifically designed to work on cultural diversities; in this way, webdocs libraries themselves become platforms that can be used for training purposes, thanks to the possibility to extract information through research instruments and/or cloud that allow to browse the contents, that often are already classified by different topics and to use interaction through social media and networks.

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*Sergio Di Giorgi* is an independent trainer for managerial and cross-cultural topics. Film critic and audiovisual expert for adult learning. Since 2007 coordinator of AIF (Italian Trainers Association) “ForfilmFest” (Movie for Training Festival).
People’s Misconceptions of Estonians
Who is an Estonian and how would you identify an ethnic Estonian? Because of the cultural heritage and mix, it’s not an easy answer. When people guess our origin, their most common guesses are Scandinavian, German or Russian. So what are the common misconceptions?

- **Estonians are a Baltic people, Eastern Europeans**

  Though Estonia is geographically grouped as one of the Baltic countries, ethnic Estonians are not Balts. We are ethnically and linguistically unrelated to the Baltic peoples of Latvia and Lithuania. As an ethnic group we are a Finnic people and feel close affinity to them. We also consider ourselves as Northerners, not Eastern Europeans.

- **Estonians are one of the youngest indigenous people in Europe**

  Different stories exist about the origins of our ancestors and how they arrived here. The first known inhabitants lived in the current country about 11 000 years ago. We are proud to be one of the oldest indigenous peoples in Europe.

- **Russia has strongly influenced Estonians**

  From the 8th to the 11th century, the present-day country was known for its fearless Estonian Vikings. They destroyed and killed just like their Norse counterparts until they had to accept defeat in the High Middle Ages, leading to their downfall. After the Middle Ages the country endured 150 years of different wars resulting in plague and numerous losses of our ancestors who hoped to unite the country and save it from invaders. Deep inside we are rebellious and obstinate, but due to history, we have had to keep our needs and wants to ourselves.

  Starting in 1215, Germans, Danes, Poles, Swedes, and lastly Russians successively conquered the present-day country with its different parts. All these invaders have influenced and left their mark on ethnic Estonians. German influence lasted for 700 years when the elite spoke Low German, leaving Estonian for the commoners in the countryside.

  Tallinn was under Danish rule between 1219 and 1346, and, according to one theory, the name “Tallinn” itself meant originally “Danish castle” (Taanilinn); the etymology, however, is by no means certain.

  Swedish times are known as the Swedish Golden Age when education flourished. Estonian Swedes are one of the oldest minorities, arriving in the 13th century. Gustav II Adolf founded the University of Tartu, the oldest university in Estonia, in 1632. The rule of Poland lasted in Southern Estonia from 1562, until Sweden captured the town of Tartu in 1625.

  Estonia was under the Russian Empire from 1710-1918, with the power belonging to the Baltic-German nobility, seen as foreigners by Estonians. In the late 1880s, Alexander II forced
Estonia
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Tallinn’s mediaeval Old Town with authentic Hanseatic architecture is a UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site. Discover the diversity of Tallinn at the next SIETAR Europa Congress, September 2013.

through his Russification plans. Estonia managed to establish its independence in 1918. But from 1940 to 1991, Estonia was annexed to the Soviet Union by the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Russian became the official language so Estonians had to speak in Russian with Russian speakers. Finally, Estonia has been independent since 1991.

Because of the suppression by the invaders, we chose to adapt many cultural traits from them that we liked, not to mention those we may be unconscious of. We also learnt to keep our opinions to ourselves if these were contradictory and did what was asked of us, even if we disagreed. Most important we developed over the centuries inner determination to keep Estonianism alive and hope for freedom.

Language: Different Perspectives

Estonia’s official language is Estonian, one of the national languages with the fewest speakers in the world (1.1 million people in Estonia and tens of thousands in various communities around the world). It is closely related to Finnish, not Russian. Estonian is based on the dialects of Northern Estonian, but Estonian has different dialects in different regions of the country, e.g., we can distinguish Mulgi, Tartu, Võro and Seto dialects in the South.

There are older people who say that at one time the Estonian language took second place after Italian in a beauty contest, with the sentence “Sõida tasa üle silla” (Go slowly/gently over the bridge). This phase also gives you an idea of what is important to us.

One Soviet legacy remains: how to deal with those ethnic Russians who relocated to Estonia when it became part of the Soviet Union after WWII as part of the plan to russify Estonia. When it comes to the Russian-speaking population (25.6% of Estonia), there are those who learn Estonian, speak it and want to be part of the mainstream. However, we don’t know if these attempts are a way of political correctness or come from the heart. On the other hand, there are those who feel a connection to Russia and have difficulty under the current circumstances. According to recent research, Russians have developed a new type of ethnic cultural identity as “Russians of Estonia.” Some Russians proclaim a third identity, i.e., the “European Russian.”

The common language tends to be English between those ethnic Estonians who don’t speak Russian and those whose mother tongue is Russian and who don’t speak Estonian; this is mostly the case with those Russian-speaking individuals who come from Ida-Viru, the county bordering Russia, where Estonians were not allowed during the Soviet era. There, only 20% of the population is ethnic Estonian. There are families in which one parent’s mother tongue is Estonian and the other’s is Russian.

However, the current situation has put ethnic Estonians at a
disadvantage. Ethnic Estonians of the younger generation don’t necessarily speak Russian well enough. On the labor market, preference is given to candidates who speak Estonian, Russian and English. The young generation of Russian-speaking population tends to speak all three. However, some resist meetings at work being held in Estonian, while others who don’t mind and like to speak in Estonian and want to fit in. Ethnic Estonians tend to resent those Russian-speaking individuals who insist on speaking Russian to them. Bear in mind that many Estonians popularly define their nationality through language and ethnicity, making it more difficult for other people, such as the Russians, to feel at home.

And to make things even more complex the capital city, Tallinn, can be considered a bilingual city. I think you can best summarize the linguistic problematic in Estonia through a quote from Raivo Vetik, academician at Tallinn University, “One of the challenges for Estonians is to separate the state from the nation. The Estonian and Estonian Russian communities live separately. Estonian society is preparing itself for a slow but a complete and indefinite export to the West.”

Estonian Behavioral style
Ethnic Estonians would like to be masters in their ancestors’ country. This is what they have always hoped for — to do things their way. “My own room, my own permission.” They don’t like to be told how or what to do and are often characterised as being stubborn, but this trait, along with inner determination, helps them move forward. The ‘Skype’ software was invented by Estonians, hence making them known as innovative and open to new ideas.

On the negative side, Estonians can come across as being selfish and uncooperative as well as excluding others. When you praise an Estonian, you usually get a response downplaying it, e.g. “Oh, no. I didn’t do a good job.” This stems from their modesty and wanting to be polite: shunning compliments and praise, preserving personal privacy, behaving correctly and not intruding on others’ space.

Many Estonians tend to worry and ponder on their own a lot. Anguish is said to be the national illness. J. Petrone, author of My Estonia. Passport forgery, meat jelly eaters and other stories, has come up with a nice story to illustrate this Estonian mentality, “An Estonian, a French and a German are in a room with an elephant. The German is thinking about the animal’s structure, the French about dinner and which wine would go with it, and the Estonian is sitting in the corner thinking, “Oh God, what does the elephant think of me?” This illustrates the Estonians’ acute aversion to others’ opinions and beating themselves up with what others think of them.

Estonian at the workplace
The tendency is to talk about solutions and not problems.
There’s great respect for education and rationality. Being specific and to the point is important. Estonians usually get frustrated and tired of long, lengthy discussions that don’t get to the point quickly enough. If it’s possible to say it in two sentences, do so.

Managers tend to behave in the Western style, at least on the surface level. The management style depends on the manager, many have had international work and/or study experience. There are those who consider their way of doing things the only correct one, and there are those who listen to others’ opinions. There are many young managers (those in their 30’s) who fully embrace new technological tools, are computer savvy and not resistant to change. In many cases, preference is given to the young who are easily manipulated and often lack life experiences to the disadvantage of the older generation.

What is important for ethnic Estonians?
The Protestant work ethic, respect for nature though Earth Believers (Maausulised) and Taaraism, (Taara-usk), the indigenous religion of our ancestors still instilled in us that survived the imposition of Christianity by the Teutonic Order. The motto of the Taaraists is, “I believe in tomorrow, I believe that tomorrow will be better than today. I believe that tomorrow will be better than today if I help make it so. Taara will help!”

Equally important are the survival instinct, the struggle for national survival, tradition and continuity, national pride and respect for the elderly. Overall, many Estonians tend to prefer the known and the secure.

As Earth Believers, nature is important deep down to most Estonians. Its followers often use natural remedies or believe in trees with mystical powers, etc. The country has many traditional healers and many people seek their advice, even when a diagnosis has been given by modern medicine.

Many ethnic Estonians are very sensitive to any outside influence. Even today, many Estonians feel that the EU is exerting unnecessary influence on their affairs. This can come across as being nationalistic and racist, not always open to others, which means they tend to be careful with strangers. It takes time to build trust. Likewise, they tend to avoid conflict situations instead of voicing their opinions (“silent protest”), though the younger generation is becoming more outspoken.

There’s a strong value of freedom in the country. Estonia’s history has been complex and has shaped the people living there. What has helped them survive has been the hope for freedom and uniting for a single cause. This explains in part why Estonians like to be independent of others and do not easily ask for help or acknowledge problems.

Katrin Volt is an Estonian interculturalist, currently living in southern France. She can be reached at kati.volt@gmail.com
Of Balance and Social Biology

by Dan MacLeod

Two words immediately popped out at me upon reading the interview with Peter Franklin: “cross-fertilization” and “transversal”.

When I began this column four years ago, my goal was to examine interculturalism from an omnicultural standpoint. Drawing on my work as a field reporter, a look not only at ethno-linguistic groups but also socio-economic context: material wealth, education or lack thereof, belief in religion or in science, exposure to democracy, to capitalism…In our famously “global world”, interculturalism has a lot more parameters to consider.

Until recently, I considered myself to be something of a Renaissance Man.

I was born in Boston, emigrated to Canada alone at age 18 and later lived in Europe for two years. I read and write five languages, have degrees in French Lit. and Musical Composition, have had three separate careers—twenty years in journalism, ten as a professional musician and three as a hockey coach.

Until recently, as befits the renaissance theme, I thought of myself as “scientifically-minded”. Good at math, an intuitive understanding of geometry, a conceptual grasp of physics.

In short, a typically enlightened person with general knowledge in all fields.

Last November, writing about the social equilibrium necessary to exist within two cultures, I quoted a “bioecology major” named Sarah, who provided an Earth Sciences view on the balance between behavior and milieu.

Last Christmas we got engaged and I now know that, until this past year, I knew virtually nothing about science. I was like the occasional traveler who mistakes conversations in a foreign language with cross-cultural competence. As Milton Bennett would say, I was in denial.

As are most of us, as far as science is concerned. We all had a few courses in high school, we watch the occasional “nature documentary”, maybe even read “Nature” from time to time. We feel we’re cognizant of the world that surrounds us and we’re comfortable discussing virtually anything.

Whether or not deep-water petroleum drilling is necessary, for example. Whether genetically-modified foods are acceptable. Or the degree to which human activity contributes to global warming. Serious, complex issues of which most of us have no real understanding. Yet, like the occasional traveler who claims to “know” a country, we are oblivious of the extent of our ignorance.
Of balance and ...
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My fiancée sees the world entirely differently and, as I help her prepare for exams in courses like Taxonomy of Invertebrates and Vegetal Biology, I’m sharpening my basic perceptions and widening my own perspective. I’m going through an accelerated phase of what Bennett calls “developing sensitivity” and scientists call osmosis, becoming a new person in the process. It’s a curious experience and, as Peter Franklin points out, one of uprooting. I sometimes feel like a person after an earthquake, who knows the ground isn’t as solid as we think.

Chemicals, for a start. When I was 20, I spent a summer in a factory, running electrical current through vats of acid to do the finishing-work on printed-circuit boards. We used sulfuric acid and cyanide; there was no ventilation and we didn’t have masks; after a few weeks my nose started bleeding and wouldn’t stop and I had to have a vein cauterized. Obviously I knew it was not a healthy place to be but it was only for one summer. Most of the guys I worked with were immigrants; they’d be doing this for the rest of their lives. I now know just how insane that job was--fear after the fact--and I have far more respect for, and fear of, chemicals in general.

Even my piece in February, the phenomenon of immigrants helping out individuals from other ethnic groups when they have nothing to gain from doing so. I thought the social behavior of “sharing” was uniquely human and came from the same place art comes from, the mind, the “soul”. Turns out it’s called commensalism and has been known to both animals and plants since the beginning of life on the planet.

Anyway, my biologist-to-be puts great trust in balance, ecologists are like that. Which brings me to the U.S. Supreme Court, health care and homosexuals.

We are watching America change. After thirty years of reactionary politics and an exponential economic divide, the pendulum swings back. Anyone with an education will be rejoiced at the return of science to the nation that weighs the most in the planetary mass. A return to facts and figures and basic math following three decades of willful obscurantism-logic and good faith versus blind faith and magic.

A century after Teddy Roosevelt made the case for national health-care, America finally took one of the last steps toward what many call a “just society” and it took a Supreme Court vote to make it happen. Basically, the judicial branch did its constitutional job and voided a pay-as-you-go system no longer tolerable in a modern democracy. And they did so in spite of political allegiance, in the interest of the common good. Republican-appointed justices form a majority and could
Of balance and ...
— continued

easily have ruled against the new law. The fact that they didn’t saved the country’s first black president from defeat last fall.

As far as same-sex unions, it’s a contract: everything from pension transfers to the inalienable right to hold your partner’s hand at the moment of death. That same Court will inevitably rule the partnership known as marriage must be amended to take into effect modern socio-economic realities. This makes perfect sense, a démocratie véritable decision necessary to Capitalism as a self-perpetuating ecosystem.

Right, then Left, then Farther Right, then Left again. So it goes in most of the developed world and a scientist would call the insane mood-swings at odds with the odds of species-survival. But here an interesting phenomenon occurs as concerns pendulums.

Democracy is the “force which will not be denied”—it is the human heart. Capitalism is a triumph of the brain and, properly applied, advances the material and cultural wealth of humanity-at-large. The two aren’t intrinsically at odds but those in power inevitably tilt the scale in their own favor.

A leopard kills a giraffe, hyenas wait, as do the vultures overhead. Each eats as much as possible before leaving whatever’s left for the next in line. Homo sapiens is different, we eat more than our fill, more than our share. Unregulated capitalism increasingly replaces outright butchery but, from the Roman Empire to Wall Street, we eat our own.

Which is counter-intuitive. Each and every species adheres to the Darwinian definition of biblical intuition: go forth and multiply. Democracy is “all in the same boat” and capitalism, if in line with biological logic, is the motor that powers that boat. Which is why the pendulum will always be skewed toward the progressives. Those against things like slavery, genocide, greenhouse gasses...

I don’t know what a real scientist might say but social scientists call it being on the right side of history. Because “ever forward” is what defines the long, dangerous process that is human evolution. Thomas Jefferson would see a system of checks and balances like the American Constitution he helped write—in this case the innate sanity of “the many” versus the suicidal gluttony of too many to be called “the few”.

A bit of bioecology can be a very good thing for a journalist. Or anybody.
Dimensions or Personality Types

by Csaba Toth

We all agree that culture is learnt often subconsciously, we are not always aware of it. Culture greatly determines values and beliefs, as well as our personality. That is why we can measure certain characteristics which are common within a group. When talk about cross-cultural awareness, we immediately think about different dimensions of culture, the basis of intercultural studies. However these dimensions are based on thousand years of experience within a national context, not necessarily that of a cross-cultural one.

Several researchers have tried to explain the differences. Interestingly enough, many of these models have one characteristic in common: they divide the personalities into four categories.

The first model dates back to Greek and Roman times and it was Hippocrates who used this four-factor model, although the concept was mentioned by Aristotle as well. They believed that the differences in behaviour were caused by variations in the relative quantities of our bodily fluids. They referred to the four temperaments as Choleric (yellow bile), Sanguine (blood), Phlegmatic (phlegm) and Melancholic (black bile). It is worth noting that some ancient Hebrew writings mentioned the same categories.

In our times the most famous of such modern scholars was Carl Jung. His book, Psychological Types (1923) was the first scientific approach of this theory. His categories were the Sensor, Feeler, Thinker and Intuitor, which serve as a basis for the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

In the same vein, William Moulton Marston published his book Emotions of Normal People (1928), categorizing behaviour into four types. He assumed that effective people would behave in a according to the demands and expectations of the environment. His work forms the theoretical basis for the DISC Model of Behaviour, which is as follows:

- **Dominance:** People with a “D” behavioural tendency seek to shape their environment by overcoming opposition to accomplish results.
- **Influence:** People with an “I” behavioural tendency seek to shape their environment by influencing or persuading others.
- **Steadiness:** People with an “S” behavioural tendency seek to cooperate with others to carry out their tasks.
- **Conscientiousness:** People with a “C” behavioural tendency seek to work within existing circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy.

Richard D Lewis has realised and developed another approach...
Dimensions...  
— continued

According to the Lewis model of Cultural types, Vietnamese are reactive oriented.

called the Lewis-model which is based on three distinctive categories displayed on a triangle:

- **Linear active** – task-oriented and very organized planners who are data-oriented
- **Multi-active** – people-oriented and talkative interactors who are dialogue-oriented
- **Reactive** – introverted and respectful listeners who are listening-oriented

His model is a result of decades of research, tests and experience while travelling and doing business all over the world.

The interesting fact is that Richard D Lewis’ three categories are strikingly similar to the DISC four main personality types. Yet, he was not aware of the DISC profiling.

The goal of my research was to determine whether there was a correlation between the Lewis-model and DiSC profiling. Even if the Lewis-model is the most practical from a business point of view, the topic itself is often difficult to grasp for HR professionals and CEOs. They seem to understand the concept of culture and different backgrounds, but they do not immediately see how it relates to training or consultancy.

The solution I have managed to find was the reconciliation of the two models, which had some surprising results. The test, called CulturePro Personality Profiling (CPP), is based on the 15 questions applied from the Lewis-model and a sophisticated offline mathematical formula. The result can be displayed on the triangle (see next page) revealing the individual’s cultural preference and background, as well as his/her personality type which makes the whole process instantly understandable to managers as it builds on their existing knowledge (DiSC). The mysterious topic of cross-culture becomes clearer and familiar, establishing a strong foundation and rapport for further conversations and business.
Dimensions...  
— continued

People with an ‘I’ behavioural tendency, such as Brazilians, seek to shape their environment by influencing or persuading others, related strongly to the multi-active category.

According to the CulturePro Personality Profiling the multi-active category relates to the ‘I’ in DiSC, the reactive to the ‘S’ while the linear-active to the ‘D’ (countries closer to the multi-active side) and ‘C’ (countries closer to the reactive one). Having done the CPP or CultureActive test the individual is going to appear in the triangle within one category (see the triangle on the right). Based on that result, the individual’s cultural positioning and personality type is revealed.

It important? If an employer intends to hire a person or send one of the managers abroad, it is vital to understand the personality of a person who can take on different behaviours, but he/she cannot change their core cultural orientation. This means such people have the ability to behave differently in a professional environment, but not necessarily feel the same inside or be able to manage abroad in the long-run. The aim is to hire the right type of person and personality, not the right behaviour.

The concept has been tested with over 200 examples from 32 countries. First with people whose previous CultureActive and DiSC results were known, therefore they could be compared to the new results which perfectly matched. The second phase consisted of testing people without any previous tests and talk them through the results.

CulturePro Personality Profiling is not competing with a full DiSC analyses and Richard Lewis’ CultureActive profiling. Rather it provides a unique tool to interculturalists to carry out offline testing before doing CultureActive. This model is another addition or approach to the Lewis-model and it can open many doors to interculturalists as it provides another practical tool in dealing with cultures.

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Book Review
French and Americans: The Other Shore
(also in French: Français et Américains: L’autre rive)

by Pascal Baudry
U.S. $ 25, 256 pages
Published by Les Frenchies, Inc.

Shakespeare once wrote, “Comparisons are odious.” Any attempt to compare two peoples and their cultures risks spit and spite. Hence Pascal Baudry begins his book by addressing challenges to the legitimacy and utility of comparing French and US Americans.

The author first looks at how the discovery of difference or the unknown causes surprise. Startled by another culture, we first try to explain it from the perspective of our own. But, if we become truly immersed in a new environment, it seeps into our system, we start seeing it as it is, a byproduct of which is beginning to see one’s own culture afresh as an outsider. We try communicating across cultures, but it is more like negotiating meanings and priorities. Repeated instances of such negotiation bring cultures willy-nilly to evolve in new ways, echoing the classic adage, “You can’t step into the same river twice,” for both you and the river have changed.

So, we read on, and explore, in search of scraps of insight into each other and ourselves that we can understand and use both at home and abroad. Reading Baudry, you’re likely to confirm some of your biases and suspicions, find some of them challenged, and occasionally stamp your foot and say, “No!” when your experience seems to contradict his. This is the normal and natural set of reactions that even open minds must deal with. We choose for or against, or at least decide to put contradictions in abeyance while looking for more evidence or admitting more complexity.

With preliminary cautions addressed, Baudry launches into a discussion of some of the more obvious differences between French and US American cultural constructions, the ones people tend to see and experience first and may even have been warned about. Chapter 2 addresses “Explicitness,” the fact that in the USA “words equal things” and assertions are binary, whereas, among the French, context and nuance are everything. On one shore simplicity is truth, while on the other complexity describes reality. Along with this difference comes a propensity to label each other respectively as either naïve or dishonest.

While French children are seen as overly protected and behaviorally inhibited by controlling mothers, US children are pictured as being thrown into the water as soon as possible to learn to swim for themselves—though one might add—that parents’ concern for the safety of their children in the USA has reached all-time heights at a time when French children are being given more liberties. It may be that this is one of the areas where cultural crossover may be taking place.

At any rate this core model is used to give insights into the nature and expression of collectivity and individualism, being and doing, attitudes of scarcity vs. abundance, status vs. performance, etc., in each culture. It provides a way of looking at proximity and distance, at how decisions are made and accountability is determined for them and their execution. French children and consequently adults are discouraged from wandering too far afield from maternal protection, whether exercised by mother herself or institutions made to perpetuate security. US children, so quickly weaned into
a very competitive world, bear enormous responsibility for “making themselves.” Hence, the need to fend for themselves as they face ever-mounting responsibilities for their personal success—for becoming winners. As a result, they grow into adults imagining conflict situations as win-win, smiling, being positive and learning the habit of “covering your ass” with evidence that you can defend yourself with, if mistakes or failure occur. The French tend to diminish risk by avoiding it; while in the US the perils of risk are managed by imaging positive outcomes and encouraging the belief that, should failure occur, there will be another chance.

Baudry illustrates maternal dominance and paternal absence as visible features of French personality and behavior construction. While the real father is absent or a minor character in the child’s formation, Father is a towering figure in the accepted mythology where the king has been executed but is powerfully though vestigially regenerated in the resistance and rebellion shown toward omnipresent hierarchy, legislation and bureaucratic structures. Le roi est mort, vive le roi!

The US father has long been an absent figure as well, though in a different way. The absence of father is frequently compensated for by US boy children developing a machismo that is drawn from Hollywood heroes and videogames, which would be less likely the case if they enjoyed more of a fallible but nurturing father in the home. US women may ape this machismo as a resource for succeeding in male-dominated work cultures. When discussing feminism and progress, US women frequently accuse French women of having caved in to the male system, while French women accuse their US counterparts as having bartered away their femininity to masquerade as men. Not surprisingly French chic is longingly, though often secretly coveted by US women, while many French women envy certain liberties enjoyed by their US friends.

“Healing the father wound” has been an important theme of the men’s movement in the USA. When men are encouraged and enabled to reconnect with their fathers, to forgive their fathers for being absent, and apologize to them for having colluded as boys with their mothers against their fathers, men can be liberated from vicious competition with each other. The male primeval voice that asks, “Can I whip his ass?” when one man first meets another, no longer dominates the ensuing conversation. US men are returning slowly but increasingly to a warmer family role.

The book concludes with five “practical” appendices that reflect often-mulled questions. The last one serves as a sort of practical summary of the possibilities of Franco-American collaboration. Having struggled through the comparisons of difference and seen how locked into our respective perspectives we can be, we look at what can do to do more together. It is a sermonette with tips about learning to use what we tend to dismiss or criticize in each other’s ways of thinking and acting, and finding some salvation in being culturally conscious in what we can and want to do together.

Amen! Ainsi soit-il!

Reviewed by George Simons
Curiously thou, none of the critical reviews have touched on the historical and cultural aspect of this film. It’s not only a masterful study of the Kaiser Wilhelm II epoch, but in some indirect way provides clues to Germany’s ways and norms of today. Granted, Germany of 2013 doesn’t at all resemble the old authoritarian order of 1914. Since the debacle of World War II, traditional values of order, duty and discipline have been examined, questioned, debated and their extreme aspects have been abandoned. Yet, the German soul and its core values date from century-old roots; they are still there, cherished in the heart, whether it be in Berlin, Düsseldorf or Stuttgart. The adage “cultures don’t change” is reaffirmed clearly in this film.

However, the film struck me in a much more profound way. Upon watching the scenes, it reminded me of my own experiences as an 11-year old American boy in the Alsatian village of my grandparents. Although officially part of France, the village fifty years ago was still very much German with its Alsatian dialect and semi-authoritarian and patriarchal-like structures. At first, I didn’t understand this new and strange culture. But it was only upon returning to Los Angeles after 15 months in this Alsacian village, it was a reality that became part of me.

And this is why I found Das weisse Band so revealing and rewarding — it provoked a rediscovery of a world that had long left me, but still is affecting my outlook and perception of life.

Reviewed by Patrick Schmidt
Key Note Speakers

H.E. Katalyn Bogay, President of the General Council, UNESCO
Prof Carolyn Cooper, University of the West Indies, Jamaica
Dr Frank Salter, University of Sydney Australia
Prof Robert Schreiter, Catholic Theological Union, USA
Dr Janiel Gautier, Laval University, Québec, Canada
Dr Phuong Mai Nguyen, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

The congress programme is divided into four tracks to give visibility to cutting-edge issues and ensure in-depth analysis of community and identity, interconnectivity, constructing culture and working virtually.

In addition to standard presentations, the exciting film festival and workshops, there will be live streaming of TED-style presentations. With an eye on strengthening this and future generation of interculturalists, there will be the usual pre-congress workshops and the newly added “How to” sessions to stimulate the development of knowledge and skills in the use of modern technology and the application of intercultural learning.

The congress will provide several opportunities for engaging the local Estonia culture and will end with the usual Gala-Dinner and launch of an Awards programme for excellence in the intercultural field. It promises to be superb and should not be missed!

Register at: http://www.sietareu.org/tallinn_register_form/index.php
Travel tips and accomodations: http://sietareu.org/congress2013/plan-your-trip

www.sietareu.org
office@sietar-europa.org
All over Europe
8 consecutive Monday evenings, starting Sept. 23, 2013
Virtual Facilitation Skills training programme
Learn how to design and facilitate interactive online training sessions with this ICF and BCC accredited programme. SIETAR members enjoy a discount! Find out more on www.virtualteamtraining.net/virtual-facilitation-skills/

Sienna, Italy
7-9 October, 2013
Intercultural Competence: Key to the New Multicultural Societies of the Globalized World
This conference engages educators and experts in examining intercultural competence development and civic engagement. For those in intercultural education, language instruction, intercultural communication and training, cross-cultural psychology. More information at http://www.ticfie.com/interculturalhorizons/

Events, workshops, congresses

Winterthur, Switzerland
4-6 June, 7-8 June, 2013
Interactive Training Strategies
This 3-day workshop practices what it preaches by helping the trainer design and conduct 24 different types of effective games and activities. Design Clinic and Advanced Interactive Strategies
This 2-day workshop is for those who have already completed the above course, providing advice and feedback on activities that you are currently designing. For more information, contact info@diversityandinclusion.net

Edinburgh, Scotland
21 June, 2013
Intercultural Business Communication: Bridging the Workplace and the Classroom Workplace
Globalisation requires employers and employees to become ‘culturally aware’. This conference aims to bring together researchers in sharing findings, methodologies, insights to enhance awareness. For more information contact Kristen Marshall at ICWC@napier.ac.uk

Bath, U.K.
24-28 June, 2013
Developing Intercultural Training Skills.
This 5-day course is for experienced trainers in language and management training, who want to further develop their skills in course design and delivery or integrate cross-cultural topics into their current courses. The facilitators are Adrian Pilbeam and Phil O/Connor. More information at www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm

Karlsruhe, Germany
5-16 August, 2013
Summer Academy
This 10-day course is organized by the Karshochschule International University and InterCultur, approaching topics in the field of intercultural management, communication and training. It’s provides the intercultural perspective in developing applied solutions for problems in business and society. More information at www.karlishochschule.de

Tallinn, Estonia
18-21 September, 2013
‘Global Reach, Local Touch’ is the theme of the upcoming SIETAR Europa congress. It will be a ‘glocal’ event, using the latest technology with live presentations from partner organisations across the globe, via Twitter, Facebook, etc. There will be plenary sessions, conferences as well as TED-style presentations and workshops. More information at: http://www.sietareuropacongress.org

Online Everyday
The SIETAR Europa group discussing “Competence in Intercultural Professions” on LinkedIn has now over 3900 members. Plus it offers videos, articles, books, tools for the intercultural profession. For more information, contact George Simmons at diversophy@gmail.com