

# Exile and the Undestroyable Perpetuity of Stigmatizations – Some Critical (Medical) Anthropological Reflections

*We are so made that we can derive intense enjoyment  
from a contrast and very little from a state of things.*

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939)  
Civilization and Its Discontents (1930)

**S. M. Špoljar-Vržina**

Institute for Anthropological Research, Zagreb, Croatia

## ABSTRACT

*The writing of this paper has been stimulated by the observable widening dichotomy between present pluralist discourses of multiculturalism, which claim the future of mutual understanding and harmony vs. the true prevalence of a dramatically growing discordance in human relations world-wide. Given the experience of working in the long-term exile fieldwork, as well as coming from a geographically interesting and highly media-presented country, ones capacity to rethink and self-detect the modes of treating alterity seems to grow together with the imposed self-reflexivity. It remains to be seen whether the decades in which many have been on the receiving end of approaches that address the Other – the perceptual fields of »race« vs. race and visible vs. non-visible ethnicity's, etc. – will yield an output of constructive scientist voices. The potential dialogue could bring us closer to apprehending the simplistic nature of multicultural discourses, as well as expose better the reasons why they yield such slow results. Namely, we need deeper levels of understanding, and although the psychoanalytic approaches to these issues have been often discarded as reductionist, only they can orientate us, after making us painfully aware that prejudice and tolerance can present themselves side by side, and are not solely dependent on the processes of our becoming more conscious and knowledgeable citizens. The many scientists that equally engage in stereotyping, testify this claim. Thus, this is an insider's meta-narrative that joins the list of present approaches that firstly engage in tracing one's own stigmatization processes rather than solely deconstructing others.*

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## Introduction

As a medical doctor I had the luck of being exposed towards interdisciplinary and anthropological work early on, to which I owe the liberty of insights and the level of analysis presented in this paper. Apart from continuously being inclined towards a position of testifying (and opposing) the present Cartesian dualism, and many times finding myself in the position that *Nancy Scheper Hughes*<sup>1</sup> termed so diligently – as that of the »*barrefoot anthropologists*« – I remain continuously intellectually stimulated by being a part of the Croatian anthropological team, that has from the early seventies onwards, dedicated its work to an interdisciplinary research of biological and socio-cultural microdifferentiation among rural populations in the Eastern Adriatic (Republic Croatia)<sup>2,3</sup>. In a period of more than two decades, using a holistic analytical approach, this team (Institute of Anthropological Research, Zagreb) has been focused around the significance of migrations<sup>(1)</sup>, emphasizing that all the found differences among individuals and their subpopulations can only testify in favor of the richness of humanity rather its segregation, of which the latter is often times a product of superficial and dangerous analysis of numerous directions<sup>3</sup>. Thus, within this team one could learn, early on, about the importance of migrations and the danger that lies in misinterpreting the biological differences, that in the history of humankind has more often than not served as a convenient stigmatization source.

Additionally, in the past decade in Croatia, unfortunate historical and geographical facts created a situation of self-reflexivity, especially in the domain

of scientific consideration. The War and all its consequences were mirrored in many academic domains, of which some were openly condemned as subjective, while being adamantly persistent in explaining that medieval ethnic hatreds have nothing to do with the conflicts being seen in this part of our world. Croatian war ethnographers have shown that the collective identities consolidated only after the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and were influenced primarily by people's urgent need to survive, as a reaction to the experienced interethnic hostilities imposed by the underwent aggression<sup>6</sup>. The dramatic appearance of the first displaced persons within Croatia (1991), and later exodus of the populations from attacked Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992), although today's bleak historical facts for onlookers, created suffering populations of which the majority have permanently changed their course of living from what it might have been, not to ever forget it.

Then, as now, the War that started in Eastern Croatia in the fall of 1991, made one painfully aware of the importance of migrations and families. Having this in mind, the studies conducted by Croatian anthropologists have been primarily aimed at analysing the coping capabilities of individual and refugee families and possibly recommending some ways of protecting their well-being in exile<sup>7–14</sup> especially considering their adaptation processes in relation to the host population, and the socio-cultural characteristics of their living<sup>15–16</sup>.

It is in the course of these long-term investigations that I have become particularly concerned with the consequences of many discourses, that in time one could recognise as being influenced by a

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(1) For an introductory reading of this work see the papers with a comprehensive approach – such as Rudan et al. 1992, 1994, etc<sup>4,5</sup>.

multiculturalist way of grasping the exile problematic. Certainly, multiculturalism is interwoven into today's most every aspect of living<sup>17</sup>, and as such most highly visible in the treatment of certain populations, such as refugees. If a refugee ends up in a country that has an advanced practice and nurture of multiculturalism he/she may be delighted by the deceptive type of care that they are entitled to – from multicultural counselling and multicultural healthcare to the support in expressing artistic and other rights – in a multicultural way. Furthermore, however diverse the use of multiculturalist approaches are, all have a number of features in common. All multicultural approaches share an implicit understanding of »culture« as if »culture« is a kind of package and is often talked of as »a migrants cultural baggage«<sup>17</sup>. In view of this, the often enforced concern – that with a homeland a refugee loses his »cultural identity« – might, in addition to other explanations that stress the uncritical concept usage<sup>18</sup> – be explained as projective expectations of the dominant Western epistemologies concerning how a refugee must feel. Refugees are often portrayed as having nothing, since from the Western perspective the loss of all belongings is equal to a suicidal situation of nothingness. In addition, the emotions of a refugee fall under a category of all other groups with »special needs« and »communication difficulties«<sup>19</sup>. Thus, he/she might also be inclined towards having a disabling ethnicity and/or race related illness like a haemoglobinopathy or diabetes mellitus. The regular question to ask is whether this positions him in a better or worse place of receiving the full benefit of a given health policy? Yet, the seriousness of this question, however, should be sought in the fact that it would be very hard to decide which domain would be most successful in treating the problems of this refugee. Medical? Psychological?

Sociological? Juridical? While all these disciplines would be willing to present their efficiency in treating this refugee through their agile usage of a whole battery of multicultural concepts, including the solution to all – the »special needs« approach – neither of them could pass the test of possessing a critical number of specialists that are conscious of their own stereotypical views. We might contemplate clear-cut concepts of multiculturalism, culturalism or interculturalism, and nurture high hopes of reinforcing only the (unavoidable) positive stereotypes which make us tolerable to each other, yet the necessity to stigmatise will not change. The only change we can influence is that of our own awareness of the human urge to stigmatise the Other, starting with ourselves.

The multiculturalist discourses are, as other discourses, founded on individual action, which makes the populations that are addressed by its widely applied agendas at the mercy of individuals that might claim all the positive power of wizards of the »intercultural lands« we are to reach, yet only be willing to expose their voices without a possibility of creating a field of dialogue. Yet, being a part of a true dialogue with ones examinees/patients is the most demanding process one is to be engaged in, which for many is incompatible with the narration they seek to find.

### **Stereotyping in the (Field) Research**

In the previous analysis of the underwound long-term fieldwork experiences, I emphasized the importance of witnessing the troubles of each individual as opposed to the approach of stereotyping a certain type of suffering according to ethnicity, gender or any other social denominator. This approach also stressed the importance of understanding the delicate na-

ture of the relationship between a practitioner/researcher with those in exile and the need for better procedures/methodologies<sup>12–14</sup>. As much as one might be self-reflexive upon all the mentioned issues, taking a path of self-critique and evaluation, while striving towards a more sensitive and perceptive methodology, is a cyclical process. It is necessary to repeatedly challenge assumptions based on our own stereotypes and continue developing such an awareness throughout conducting any kind of project. Conceiving the idea that a certain stereotype of those in exile exists, might be a sign of learning about the overall division that has dominated the camps and centers of reception where »we« the »helpers« are the ones that give »them« the »needy« all the healing<sup>20</sup>. On the other hand, it is just a beginning in which we learn of many other divisions that we ourselves make in seeking a populational homogeneity. Sometimes this is even a beneficial position we can provide them with, up till the point where protection becomes a brand (unfortunately, a more frequent case).

Being a number within the *total number* of displaced or refugees is one such example. The benefit of the status changes with the amount of rights one receives, daily. Regardless of the fact that numbers may be highly informative for a geographical area, there is a certain inappropriateness that one recognises in such conveying of the exile situation. In the past decade in Croatia the migrations of large proportions became a fact of life and the comparisons based on numbers became inaccurate, especially with the current slow flows of pre-registered exiles returning to their homes<sup>21,22</sup>. The lack in informativeness may be compensated with a gain in sensitiveness. The validity of all the documented life experiences underwent by individuals and their families that, in the end add to the conclusion that in social events of these proportions, one

must definitely recognise the dominance of individual destinies over the power of numbers or any other classificatory factors<sup>23</sup>. Furthermore, to discuss the stigma of exile we can begin with numbers but we are obliged to continue with a self-critique of all the stigmata we help to create. Additionally, this is a point where we can contemplate what it means to turn from *researching »on«* the researched and begin *researching with* the researched<sup>24</sup>.

To analyse the successfulness of the exile research we should definitely concentrate along the line of two major cautionary points highlighted by all that are concerned with the dimension of developing a dialogue with those they seek to learn from. It is important: a) whether in our contacts we have achieved a »...*mental health protection*« approach through being good listeners – not only observers of psychological, physical and social well-being factors<sup>25</sup>; and b) whether we have disempowered our research enough to become a part of the community in exile by assisting the expression of memories of the traumatic past, which is also a powerful empowering tool for reaching a »healthy« future<sup>26</sup>.

However, both of these much-pledged approaches, of a two-way communication with those in exile, do not bring only benefits, but hazards as well. Together with the hazard of being the »*powerful outsiders*«<sup>27,28</sup>, stereotyping done on behalf of the researcher is of no minor offence and enters the great number of counterproductive effects that possibly worsen the mental health of the interviewees<sup>14</sup>. My own grasping of this process and the self-reflexivity that followed, started in a fieldwork on the island of Hvar in 1994. There were numerous examples of these situations, yet some were extremely educational. The following one represents a case in point as to how a researcher can enter a fieldwork without being fully pre-

pared to the levels of stigmatisation he potentially engages in.

### The case of Mrs. Ida\*

Ida (name changed in the purpose of anonymity) was a mother of four grown children of which only her youngest daughter remained with her and her husband, while the other children were at that time in Amsterdam, Graz and Berlin. In many ways she testified she is a »dispersed« mother, a unpredictable wife highly cherishing her creativity, but most of all – when asked how she feels – she would reply that she »...does not feel as a refugee«, and added:

*»...people mistake me for who I am. I dress up and wear the special clothing that I managed to carry with me and walk over the town square all dressed up, on my way to the concert. I am seldom noticed as a refugee. People tend to stereotype us, you know. That is the reason I like to shock them in this way. As if a refugee shouldn't go to a concert or attend a mass specially dressed!«*

Ida was our only interviewee that tackled the issue of »being stereotyped« and in fact was so aware of the special stigma a refugee can carry that she openly played with the outcomes. In fact, I am grateful to her for opening my eyes to my own stereotypization of the imagined dressing code and expected »appropriateness« in exile, while thinking »How can a refugee have such a large and unnecessary hat?« and afterwards, while honestly admitting the level of my opinionated self-questioning, concluding – »Why shouldn't she!«

In the course of future field-works we learned that Ida was in the process of emigrating to Australia with her husband and daughter. In our interview we learned that she took advantage of one international programme that »rescues« mix-

ed marriage couples. In the three years she was in exile she became aware of another level of stigmatisations, which she was ready to take advantage off. Her husband, »...although being a Muslim«, claimed he feels as »...born in Dalmatia«. He was against their emigration, yet Ida succeeded in convincing him that they would have better economical chances if they emigrated to Australia and frequently reminded him that she is clever enough to do all that is necessary to get them there. The logic of her applying the necessary forms was that »...if they need ethnicity problems, I will give them ethnicity problems« (meaning a full description of the »hardships« her husband is having as a Muslim and her strive in »saving« their marriage).

Stepping into the essayistic genre, a very similar experience to the described one was given by a Croatian feminist writer Slavenka Drakulić. In her book »The Balkan Express: Fragments from the Other Side of War«<sup>29</sup> she gives an account of being a host to her friend from Sarajevo and scolding her daughter for supplying her friend »...fancy stuff like a pair of black, patent, high-heeled shoes, the kind you'd wear to a party«. Further on, Drakulić<sup>29</sup> conducts a self-analysis of her attitude and admits that when contemplating about the word »refugee«, she recalls pictures of »...poorly dressed women covered in black scarf's, their faces wrinkled, their ankles swollen, dirt under their nails«. Because her friend did not fit into this picture Drakulić tried to stereotype her, only to become painfully aware that she is witnessing a serious, process of creating a prejudice towards the »lost« people, those that can easily be reduced from real individuals, she says, into the abstract »they« that serves as self-defence mechanism and a way to get rid of guilt. Drakulić concludes »The moment I thought Dražena ought not to wear make-up or high-heeled shoes is the very mo-



ment when I made her the 'other', pushed her into the category of a refugee, because it was easier than to acknowledge that it is harder to help individuals than help institutionalised categories». Drakulić sadly admits that she now understands the way how a sense of »otherness« killed the Jews, since she caught herself in trying to save her calm and continue without remorse, as did the contemporaries living near to the detention camps, not asking any questions about the screams they heard.

The story of of Ida is prominent among those that urge us to rethink the encountered levels of suffering, not in terms of collective identities of ethnicity, gender or any group of belonging, but in relation to the dignity with which one mourns the loss of security. It is not the belonging for the belongings sake one mourns, but the security it gives in sharing ones own with another, »...being good relatives, friends and neighbours, ...being able to share and give. When one can not do that any longer he is stigmatised« (a spontaneously given definition by women from Vukovar). Paradoxically, in the search for a better economical position Ida had to verbally compromise the last thing she did »save« – the dignity of a peaceful ethnicity co-existence in her marriage. Her angry remark about giving the migration agency the information they seek, was in fact a sign that she came up with that decision after a period of deliberate and painful decision-making.

### Stigma and the Discourse of Scientific Thought

In the words of Goffman<sup>30</sup> there is no strict division of the »normal« and the stigmatised »other«. He who is stigmatised in one aspect of life nicely exhibits all the normal prejudices held toward those who are stigmatised in another way. However, it is rarely analysed

whether a certain sensitivity to the issue of stigmatisation helps some people to be more attentive to the processes of stigmatisation, itself. In the case of Drakulić this shows to be true since she herself has been allocated to a stigmatised group by being a dialysis patient for years<sup>31</sup>, and if anything the ordeal within fighting the administrative »villains« of this disease had made her more attune with her own processes of stigma-creation.

But it is certainly not only the literary mind that can reach these levels of sensitivity. There are fellow researchers that do so as well, although against the mainstream of academia issues that might not always be successful in finding scientifically correct explanations to the problems at hand. In fact, quite the contrary the mainstream research results often have a counterproductive effect in giving a wrong kind of ammunition to the possible answers.

A case in point is the frequent international approach towards Croatia and its neighbouring countries, that followed the usual pattern in which the main stigmatisations were done on the level of ethnicity reasoning. It was the existence of the »wild Balkans« and all the other historical »correct« or less correct facts that stereotyped the aggression on Croatia, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina pronouncing them dismissal cases within the course of »primitive« wars that can not be bypassed<sup>32</sup>. In the words of Gilliland<sup>33</sup> people distanced themselves from the experience and it became a »Balkan« problem rather than a human one. In much the same manner, the Rwanda mass killings were classified (and simplified) through a usage of a stratification of colonial administrations that allowed the journalists to ascribe the developments according to the distinction of the separate »tribes« or »ethnic groups« that have an innate urge towards bloodshed<sup>34–36</sup>. What at other times would be anthropo-

logically useful, such as understanding the relations among Hutu, Tutsi and Twa »groups', in the given complex circumstances became an attempt of easing ones mind and diminishing the feeling of powerlessness in a given case<sup>36</sup>.

However, some authors teach us that even in times when it is not counterproductive to research a general paradigm of ethnicity – issues of self-perception or boundary creation and so forth, can be more than vague in meaning. In the words of Ardener<sup>37</sup> there are certain »*hollow categories*« and as an example he gives the Kole of Cameroon that exist of a few members in the interstices of a number of larger »groups«. Thus, there are »ethnic groups« that are not biologically distinct populations, nor do they have a distinctive language, yet they are needed by other »ethnic groups« for classificatory purposes. In a Barthian sense, a identity exists but its members as well as the cultural contents are shifting to the point where we can contemplate a situation in which »...everyone can point to a Kole but no one calls himself a Kole«. This brings us to the issue of whether ethnicity is achieved or ascribed. In the case of Mauritius ethnic groups it is impossible to say how many groups exist, since it depends upon the situation where the »we« category seems to be more elastic at times<sup>38</sup>. It is as though one expects to pin down the essence of an ethnic group that can not be pinned down since it is constituted in relation to the undefinable »others«. Furthermore, according to Eriksen<sup>38</sup> the basic »us«/»them« polarisation's are rarely obtainable in real life since people tend to think in terms of graduated scales (»more alike« – »less alike«) rather than according to binary oppositions. Thus, people must not be viewed as Y or X but a bit of both, as they feel, and in dependence on the power establishment across the boundary. As pointed out by Barth<sup>39</sup> ethnic identity is influenced from both

sides of the boundary and it is achieved as well as ascribed from the outside. Thus, it is not only that we retain our characteristic differences, but as well are recognised for them. Jenkins emphasised that the latter process is much more important since it encompasses and is dependent upon the power play of relations<sup>40</sup>. This claim definitely orientates us towards the necessary further analysis in this fuzzy terrain where boundaries are unsuccessfully claimed.

In accordance to all that was stated about the stigmatisation processes, we must caution that even the most open-minded intercultural approaches are founded on a »position« and further perpetuate a search of achieving one. It is at this point that embracing the knowledge that psychoanalysis can provide us with could be useful, given the fact that, as Ewing<sup>41</sup> states, »*Psychoanalysis technique is essentially the process of observing one's own participation in dialogue with another*«. This is especially important having in view that, as already stated, in much of the current scientific and practising approaches the dialogue with the »subject« is overlooked, yet regardless of that, problems are expected to be solved.

Thus, in researching the paths that lead to stereotyping and stigmatisation in exile we should probably look into deeper psychological feelings that create and maintain states of recognising and segregating the unfavourable visible or non-visible features that »others« have. It is interesting to stress that a number of authors, engaged in the study of ethnic identity, recognise that many of the predominant stereotypes are composed of components that include primitiveness, dirtiness and aggressiveness. Whether it is the »*potent and primitive sexuality*« of the »(Derogatory name)«<sup>42</sup>, a »*looser behaviour*« of a Japanese Burakumin<sup>43</sup> or the »*uncleanness*« of the Norwegian Saa-mi<sup>44</sup> – what all of the stereotyped seem to

have in common is not only the outcasting from the mainstream »groups«, but that they are the subjects of scapegoating and fierce stereotyping that arises from the projections that are based on oral, anal or genital functioning – all pertaining to expose the difference in functioning on the level of the very existence of life – the autonomic nervous system<sup>43</sup>. Thus, Goffman<sup>30</sup> was right to argue that the stigmatisation process is intimately associated with a stereotype, and that both are related to the unconscious expectations and norms which act as unseen arbiters in all social encounters. But, while he did reveal the truth about the depths of unconsciousness from which stereotyping can be done in each individual, he failed to emphasise the high-tension dynamics of the stigmatisation processes that the stigmatised groups are faced with. In line with a cautionary remark made by Allport<sup>45</sup>, one must not hold the illusion that the superficial combat of stereotypes (such as those done in education or media) will eradicate the prejudice they are built upon, and help create. In whichever direction the process goes it is not one of a simple equation. Perhaps it is more than necessary to stress that the presence of stigmas we all have regarding one another can not be easily escaped by a leap into the scientific discourses, either.

In the case of displaced persons, refugees and returnees there are many levels of stereotyping and framing that are currently going on, worldwide. Malkki<sup>18</sup> states that concerning the scientific discourses »the refugee« and »refugee studies« are undergoing a construction-in-progress while they by no means constitute a naturally self-delimiting domain of anthropological knowledge. Malkki sees the danger of this attitude in a limitation that is being done on the part of the researchers that categorise the problems and mainly focus on the case studies of specific refu-

gee studies situations in which (to mention only a few) – a) one equates that being uprooted equals to a lose of one's identity, traditions and culture; b) uncritically uses concepts of »adaptation« and »acculturation« to analyse processes of transformation in identity, culture and cultural tradition, or c) assumes that displacement and refugeeness are states in which psychological disorders or mental illness *a priori* are present (disregarding the past mental predisposition's and differences among individuals)<sup>18</sup>. Although this list is not complete it can confirm a lack of broader theoretical framework in which theoretical ideas from other domains would be less imported and pasted together in such a detrimental way. In addition to this problem I see a lack of creativity in contemplating new methodological approaches that would be more focused on the individual dimension of a refugee problem, rather than the national, ethnical or any other interesting journalistic denominator<sup>12–14</sup>. On the other hand, it is hard to achieve creativity when one is to get funding from sources that have certain propositions we need to fulfill. If we approve of a constantly changing terrain of human relations to be mapped out by anthropologists and others, then we might add that in the case of the highly mobile and sensitive field of human (forced) migrations the shift should be made towards conceiving studies that apprehend the full complexity of psychological, socio-cultural and health issues. These are of primary significance to a decent human condition, yet are often solely linked with the »more traditionally« studied issues, according to Muecke<sup>46</sup>, and roughly distanced from the socio-political context.

### The Apparatus for Stereotyping

As we can see the apparatus for stereotyping lies as much in the scientific as



it does in the everyday communication and we have numerous levels to fight against it on the path towards peace or towards achieving (the journalistically favoured words such as) – »conflict resolution«, »intercultural relationships« or »multicultural societies«. And yet, as we saw the whole process has a greater depth to it and is more complex than analysed, while the methodologies, instruments and definitions with which we try to capture it's essence are un-adequate.

Stereotypes, prejudices and stigmas of any group identity vs. the other, dangerously perpetuate themselves, yet are part of a groups dynamic. The reasons why collective representations and stereotypes are hard to change one should seek in the fact that they are functional and help people orient themselves in social life. As experienced through the history of human kind, the danger lies in the question of who, why, and in what way, dares to change them, as creatively observed by Berting and Villain-Gandossi<sup>47,48</sup>. We are taught to think along the line of the first definition of a stereotype given by Lippman<sup>49</sup> as »...a belief that an individual placed in a social category poses all of the attributes ever associated with the category.« By this definition all of us hold stereotyped views and are stereotyped all the time, since we are living throughout many categories. Unfortunately, we can find many examples from many institutions that even enhance these stereotypizations by teaching us how to screen »cultures« or travel safely among »strangers«.

From a Foreign Service Assignment Notebook of the USA<sup>50</sup>, that deals with the problem of avoiding culture shock, one can learn that the American way of

life entitles the messages: *Action is good; Our environment can be controlled; Progress is straight-lined and upward, not spiral; The material is more real than the spiritual;... (not forgetting) Time is money* etc. At the same time one is learned how to briefly question the value systems of the society in which one arrives, by testing 13 definitions which include the enjoyment of life, competitiveness, work, politeness, etc. One does not need to guess much about the recommendations given to travellers with more serious assignments.

I guess that if asked, most of the practitioners, helpers and scientists that work for the well-being of those in exile would be jealous that, regardless of their experience, they can not come up with models and suggestions for action, as simple as these are. On the contrary, the more one studies the situation of exile the closer he is towards understanding that the essence of a successful understanding lies in embracing a mosaic of different experiences with those he meets, and that the collective memory yields in front of an individual one. Yet, in the past decade I met a minority of those that acknowledged their bias and a majority of those that continued their approach to the problems of Croatia and its neighbouring countries based on the divisions of three ethnic groups, and so missing the point from which the understanding of any kind is possible<sup>(2)</sup>. The divisions have much more to do with how you survived the past five years; whether your family is intact or not; whether you lost some of your loved ones and was bereaved of your entire property; whether you have a chance for work and economic resources. It has much more to do with being lost on the path of everyday life than in the

(2) An illuminating example of such an encounter is given by Povrzanović and described in a paragraph entitled »A Paradigmatic Encounter: Defining Otherness«<sup>6</sup>.

walks of internationally analysed historical and geographical spaces.

## Conclusion

In the concluding remarks we can turn to the refreshingly innovating recapitulation of the anthropological constructs on ethnicity presented by Banks<sup>51</sup>. After a detailed analysis of various approaches and schools (of which some are mentioned in this paper), he subsumes and reaches a point where he successfully establishes a three-point location of 'ethnicity' as it relates to the researchers/observers. He states that ethnicity can be positioned in the heart of the observed, in the head of the observed (being primordial or instrumental by function), or – if one is most intellectually honest and accurate – the position of 'ethnicity' should be in the researchers head. It is, after all *»...a tool devised and utilized by academics to make sense of or explain the actions and feelings of the people studied«*<sup>51</sup>. Banks clearly points out that this viewing of ethnicity is not especially novel, but it is the most developed. A similar self-reflection was expressed by Eriksen<sup>38</sup> who emphasized that *»...the choice of an analytical perspective or 'research hypothesis' is not an innocent act«* and that... *'ethnicity' is a social and cultural product which anthropologists contribute to creating. If one goes out to look for ethnicity, one will 'find' it and thereby contribute to constructing it«*.

Fully in accordance with these useful insights one can try to apply the agenda of reaching intellectual honesty in his own domain of action. In the case of the families in exile, I am only sorry that there were not more of those colleagues that were interested in their families, rather their ethnicity's. Thus, instead of asking *»What is your ethnic background?«*, the observer could have been concentrating on the family of the ob-

served, asking the much more dialogue provoking and useful question *»How is your family?«* The circular flow of conversations in which the position of family is the most important topic would ensure even better explanations of actions and feelings of the studied in exile. Thus the stereotypes would be one of belonging and acceptance rather than stigmatization, rejection and isolation.

In a time when many Eurobureaucrats are devotedly orientated towards asking the questions *»What is a European identity?«* and *»How does a European look like?«*, those of us who experienced and felt the short-sightedness of such questions can certainly claim that the language of *»family problems«* is much more humane and definitely universal. The production of anthropological knowledge is a very delicate process and if one does not understand that, he/she too can engage in the full range of stereotyping, their calling is missed. A calling that some perceive as one that is among those most qualified to answer the challenges of the changing world we live in.

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*S. M. Špoljar-Vržina*

*Institute for Anthropological Research, Ilica 1, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia*

## **IZGNANSTVO I NEUNIŠTIVOST STIGMATIZACIJA – NEKOLIKO KRITIČKIH (MEDICINSKIH) ANTROPOLOŠKIH REFLEKSIJA**

### **S A Ž E T A K**

Pisanje ovog rada je potaknuto opažanjem rastuće dihotomije između pluralističkih rasprava multikulturalizma, koje traže razumijevanje i harmoniju naspram istinske prevalencije dramatično rastuće disonantnosti u ljudskim odnosima, širom svijeta. Kapacitet promišljanja i samo-detektiranja različitih oblika tretiranja »drugosti« se povećava kroz iskustvo stečeno radom na dugotrajnom terenskom istraživanju izgnanstva, kao i dolaskom iz geografski interesantne i medijski nadasve prezentirane zemlje, što zasigurno nameće veću auto-refleksivnost. Buduća će vremena pokazati da li su dekada u kojima su mnogi bili na strani primaoca različitih pristupa »drugog« – perceptivnih polja »rasa« naspram rasa i vidljivih naspram ne-vidljivih etniciteta, etc. – bile produktivne u poticanju konstruktivnih znanstvenih »glasova«. To bi nas naime približilo potencijalnom dijalogu potrebnom da se shvati simplifikacija multikulturalnih diskursa, kao i bolje pokažu razlozi njihovih sporih rezultata. Potrebne su nam dublje razine razumijevanja, te iako je psihoanalitička misao često odbacivana kao redukcionistička, ona nas može orijentirati u koracima koji slijede bolnu stvarnost paralelnog egzistiranja predrasuda i tolerantnosti, neovisnih o procesima našeg pretvaranja u građane sa svješću i znanjem. To potvrđuje i sama činjenica postojanja mnogih znanstvenika koji doprinose stvaranju stereotipa. Ovaj rad je meta-naracija »iznutra«, koja se pridružuje popisu prisutnih pristupa koji se temelje na preispitivanju vlastitih procesa stvaranja stigmi, umjesto isključive dekonstrukcije tuđih.

