

Migrations, economy, and societies: from cultural transfers to “identity marketing”

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About forty years ago, French universities started to create degrees combining Modern Languages and Business Studies in order to suit the needs of companies, especially industrial ones. These Bachelors and Masters in Applied Modern Languages (“Langues Etrangères Appliquées”) soon became very attractive and, from the 1990s onward, other universities started offering similar degrees, for instance in Romania, in French-speaking Africa and in some Middle East countries such as Lebanon and Egypt. According to the International Association of Applied Modern Languages (AILEA, <https://anlea.org/lailea/universites-membres/>), LEA degrees are today present in eleven different countries from South America to Asia. From a broader perspective, especially in Northern Europe and in North America, more and more degrees are offering students courses combining Modern Languages and Business Studies. Graduates of such degrees are therefore induced to work in very different socio-economic contexts.

Though very different from each other, the geographical areas just mentioned have all been shaped by migration, be it emigration or immigration, and this has led to numerous cultural transfers over time. A new kind of work relations has appeared, especially within multinational companies but also with foreign partners and within different countries. As a consequence, intercultural management and cultural transfers are becoming more and more important in international marketing as well as in entrepreneurship theories and practices. In our era of ongoing globalization, saying that “Culture precedes economy” has never seemed so appropriate and integrating a cultural dimension in international trade relations is essential as mainly underlined by theorists of “glocalisation” and by the many followers of a “think global act local” strategy.

It is interesting to note that various marketing, communication, and advertisement strategies of our time are often based on models inspired by other historical eras, from the antiquity to the nineteenth century. For instance, the 29 million Italians that migrated between 1870 and 1970 and their descent have contributed to the dissemination of an Italian culture worldwide, along with so-called Italian products that have been adapted to the host country over time. This has led to an imagined representation of antiquity in advertisements but also to a sense of identity given to certain products such as pizzas or even an idealization of the Mafia as seen in TV series such as *Gomorra* or *The Sopranos*. Since the 1980s, Italy has gradually become a country of immigration, whose migrants nowadays play an essential part in the Italian economy, especially in the mainstays of the famous *Made in Italy* economic model, i.e. fashion, machine tools, and food-processing industries. *Made in Italy* and all these Italian products are therefore of great significance, not only insofar as they represent the

ancestral land, but also for immigrants who work in those companies and move back after a while to their country, like for instance Romanians that open Italian restaurants once back in the land of Dacians.

The very representative example of Italy is far from being the only one and this issue deserves to be examined from a broader geographical and chronological perspective. We could therefore study cultural transfers resulting from migration and how these transfers have given birth to new products that could be considered ethnic, such as Africa Cola, Elsass Cola and Quick halal. We could therefore look at how these different products have led to a new type of entrepreneurship that could be called “Identity marketing”. It could be interesting to study such issues in other eras, especially by looking at the large empires of the past whose economies can be considered “globalized” on their scale. We expect to receive submissions coming from different fields in order to best grasp those complex issues, as a reflection of the interdisciplinarity of Applied Modern Languages degrees (civilization, marketing and international trade, intercultural communication, translation...) as well as a reflection of different cultural and historical environments. Building on these rich and diverse participations, the objective is to make Modern Languages and Business Studies students more aware of cultural transfers in business relations, in particular when they involved different languages and different cultures.

We expect proposals of around 300 words accompanied with a short biographical notice by 15 January 2019 at the following address: migrations.rielma@gmail.com. Complete articles, not to exceed 25,000 characters, should be sent by 15 June 2019 at the latest (see schedule below). Working languages are French, English, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, we therefore accept proposals in all these languages.

Schedule

15 January 2019: deadline for proposals submissions

Mid-February 2019: announcement of selected proposals

15 June 2019: reception of full articles

31 July 2019: feedback from the peer-reviewers

15 September 2019: final reception of articles

November 2019: publication