

## Editorial

*“Crossing Boundaries in Culture and Communication”, the journal of the Department of Foreign Languages of the Romanian-American University in Bucharest, is a professional publication meant to bring together the preoccupations and contributions of those interested in human communication and cultural phenomena in the global context: foreign language educators, academic researchers, journalists and other specialists, from schools, universities or alternative areas of humanistic approach around this country and abroad.*

*The 13<sup>th</sup> international conference with the same name facilitated the issuing of this journal. The articles published here represent a selection of the Conference presentations; they reflect a variety of perspectives and innovative ideas on topics such as Literary and Cultural Studies, Linguistics, Arts and Media, Foreign Language Teaching and Teaching Methodologies, and their related fields, providing opportunities for professional development and research.*

*The editorial board considers that the personal contributions included in this issue as well as in the next ones come in support of multilingualism and multiculturalism due to their variety of topics and linguistic diversity. This would be, in fact, the challenge we are faced with: to put forth a journal which, in spite of its heterogeneous blend, should serve the goal of gathering under its covers the results of the pursuits and concerns of those interested in the ongoing development of culture and in the interpersonal communication which have been subject to various mutations as an effect of an ever-changing globalized world.*

*This unity in diversity should be achieved by connections established within and among a variety of fields which often blend into each other, proving the interdisciplinarity of modern research: education, teaching, literature, media etc. which also allow complementary approaches in linguistics, rhetoric, sociology etc.*

*The present issue includes four sections: literature and cultural studies, linguistics, arts and media and foreign language teaching and teaching methodologies. All the contributions published here share their authors' ideas in what we hope to become a large cross-boundaries “forum” of communication, debate and mutual cultural interests.*

*As we don't want to reveal too much right from the beginning, and in the hope that we have stirred your curiosity, we are inviting you to discover the universe the authors have shaped and described, the view upon life that they are imagining, which might be considered, in fact, the overall desideratum of our Journal.*

*Thanking all contributors, the editorial board welcomes your presence in this volume and invites the interested ones to unravel the various topics which put forward the concerns and the findings of a challenging professional community.*



◆ **LITERATURE & CULTURAL STUDIES** ◆

## ***The English Patient, A Narrative of Diasporic Identity***

**Georgiana Monica IORGA**

27 Lower Secondary School

### ***Abstract***

---

*This paper is a text-applied comparative approach to some thematic aspects of identity formation in a chosen fictional text belonging to diasporic literature in English, at the intersection of various geographical, ethnic and cultural spaces. Rather than aiming at an exhaustive survey of diasporic fictions in English (almost an impossible task, given the amount of such writing that is being produced in the contemporary global age), I shall aim at focusing on a number of recurrent topics approached throughout the chosen literary work. My main intention will be to point out various ways in which the textuality of written fictional text reflects on issues related to migration, nomadism and diasporic identity from a variety of theoretical perspectives, but situated mainly in a postcolonial, transnational and global light. Place and time are connected to memories and homeland as they represent important values for those who live in diaspora (place: where they were born and they spent their childhood or a part of their lives; time: events, customs and traditions associated to a certain moment in their lives).*

### ***Keywords***

---

*migration, identity, homeland, diaspora, dislocation*

### **1. Introduction**

Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur consider that diaspora may designate the "displaced communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homeland through the movements of migration, immigration, or exile" (Brazile 2003 : 11). In addition to the dislocation from the original and native space, diaspora nominates a relocation in another territories or countries. The authors gave the example, with a religious meaning, namely the one of Jewish diaspora relocated in outside of Palestine. In spite of this precise and brief definition, the same authors suggest that the concept of diaspora and its meanings in globalist discourses are not clearly differenced, thus the confusion between meanings like demarcated parameters of geography, national identity and belonging.

## 2. Main Body

We consider that *The English Patient* is a narrative of diasporic identity because of the various characters with different origin (Hungarian, Canadian and Indian), the location which is none of the geographical places where these characters come from (Italy) and also because of the specific event to which diaspora is associated, The Second World War. In order to offer a theoretical frame to our point of view, we shall resort to Braziel consideration: "The term 'diaspora' has been increasingly used by anthropologists, literary theorists, and cultural critics to describe the mass migrations and displacements of the second half of the twentieth century, particularly in reference to independence movements in formerly colonized areas, waves of refugees fleeing war-torn states, and fluxes of economic migration in the post World-War II era" (Braziel 2003 : 4). We should also mention that this theoretical excerpt could be seen in relation to David Chioni Moore's observation: "Is no doubt true that there is, on this planet, not a single square meter of inhabited land that has not been, at one time or another, colonized and then postcolonial.(...) The result of all this movement, much of which has been arguably criminal, is that many cultural situations, past and present, can be said to bear the postcolonial stamp, often in ways only partly corresponding to current notions" (Chioni 2001 :112).

We shall summarize and at the same time explain the above excerpts in relation to the chosen novel. What Moore suggest is that, virtually every piece of this planet has been conquered, controlled and ruled by a different agent than the nation itself and afterwards the same nation became to have imperialist drives. In our novel we have several instances of such situation. Chiefly, the English sapper whom origin is Indian, therefore at a certain point in history the British isles were conquered by Normans, and later the British Empire was an important power as well as the Austro-Hungarian Empire (taking into account that the real origin of the English patient was Hungarian). As far as Canada concerns, it too is an instance of colonized territory. In spite of the fact that Braziel associates diaspora with the post Second World War, in our novel we have an example of a character from India who decided to settle in the United Kingdom, as a symbol of a reversed colonization, previously to the Second World War.

Diaspora is also defined as an exile or a nostalgic dislocation from homeland while plot, according to Peter Brooks, is a number of messages that are created and developed by the author through temporal succession and these messages have to be received and decoded by the reader using the instrumental logic specific of human understanding.