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**The new Trans-cultural Prism in
Education and Culture.
New Methodologies and Practices of Innovation.**

by

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ABSTRACT

Given the confluential nature of knowledge, education and culture are what makes us human. Taken all together, disciplines and education are what makes us human, that is, reflexive and self-reflexive beings. A trans-cultural approach calls into question a compartmentalization of knowledge into self-sufficient disciplines, facilitating the transformative development of our contemporary educational model. Only an inclusive vision of knowledge - which stresses the interaction among disciplines and the

dialogue among individuals and cultures - can grant us the translational ability to move forward and adapt to the dynamic and dialogic quality of our shared experience.

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Chapter 1

Transnational Identities and Digital Technologies: Areas to rethink and conceptualize.

About 90 years ago, Lev Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist, took a stand against the separation between the individual and the environment. He suggested a conceptual framework for the integration of internal and external, individual and collective, psychological and social. Vygotsky's cultural-historical psychology broke through disciplinary boundaries, introducing a new

holistic approach to the exploration of the human world, allowing the integration of the subjects and the objects of their activities. (1)

More recently, the development of digital technologies, mediated through a variety of material, symbolic and psychological tools, is leading to an increasing convergence of individuals and their environments.

Investigation of the process of production and self-production of both the environment and those who inhabit the environment, creates a significant conceptual challenge that requires a holistic and interdisciplinary framework, where the human being is at the centre of the research agenda. In the digital era, when the human being her/himself is becoming the major subject of innovation, this suggests the necessity of developing new methodologies and practices of innovation.

In the growing ambiguity of the concept of identity, the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor introduced the notion of "social imaginary", that is the ways in which people imagine their social existence, namely the ways in which people imagine themselves and how this imagination is integrated into human innovation. (2)

We wonder whether digital technologies can introduce "more human" models of the individual exploring human imaginaries as a part of mapping what Vygotsky calls "the zone of proximal development", that is the possibility of transformations in the system of human activity, as an integral part of developing new imaginaries and of the innovative process itself.

We are speaking about human imaginaries: a clear obstacle lies in the ambiguity of the concept of identity, particularly "national identity"; the idea of transnational identities can be seen as signs of post nationality and the idea of "transculture" and "critical universality" (M. Epstein, 3) can be combined with the idea of "cosmopolitan patriotism" (M.Nussbaum), which can replace 'political narratives' of the "enemies" with political narratives of "reconciliation". Producing negative narratives justifies the existence of 'enemies', sacrificing this way real life transnational experiences and communication.

Nussbaum's cosmopolitan patriotism has the merit to have started a whole range of debates and discussion on cosmopolitanism, questioning what it is, what its relation to nationalism is, and how to formulate a genuinely global cosmopolitanism.

According to Nussbaum's line of argument: "I believe... that this emphasis on patriotic pride is both morally dangerous and, ultimately, subversive of some of the worthy goals patriotism sets out to serve — for example, the goal of national unity in devotion to worthy moral ideals of justice and equality. These goals may be better served by an ideal that seems more adequate to our situation in the contemporary world, namely the very old ideal of the cosmopolitan, the

person whose primary allegiance is to the community of human beings in the entire world.”(4)

Stoics stress that one does not need to give up local identity, rather one should see our affiliations in terms of concentric circles: family, neighbours, countrymen, humanity. Stoics argue that we have two communities, the local community of our birth, and the community of human argument and aspiration. We should devote attention to close ties, but we should not exclude the dialogue with the exterior, and devote attention and respect to others.

Good civic education is education for world citizenship. A commitment to human rights should be part of the education of citizens. We shall offer three arguments for making education's central focus in world citizenship, rather than democratic/national citizenship:

1. Through cosmopolitan education, we learn more about ourselves. One of the greatest barriers to rational deliberation in politics is the feeling that one's own current preferences and ways are neutral and natural.... Yet by looking at ourselves in the lens of the other, we come to see what in our practices is local and non-necessary, what is more broad and can be shared.
2. Our problems are global, such as environmental pollution. Dividing the world into nations may be part of the problem in international cooperation.
3. We recognize we have moral obligations to the rest of the world that are real, which means we should act according to global justice.

Rorty and Hackney (5) argue on the centrality to democratic deliberation of certain values that bind all citizens together. But why should these values, which instruct us to join hands across boundaries of ethnicity, class, gender and race, lose steam when they get to the borders of the nation? By conceding that a morally arbitrary boundary such as the boundary of the nation has a deep and formative role in our deliberations, we in fact deprive ourselves of any principled way of arguing to citizens that they should in fact join hands across these other barriers.

The defence of national shared values should also transcend borders. Respect should be accorded to humanity and not end at the border. Being a citizen of the world may be a lonely business: cosmopolitanism offers no refuge, as it goes against the comfort of patriotism. In fact, Diogenes cynic “citizen of the world,” defines oneself in more universal terms, as one is born by accident in one nation. We should regard all humans as our fellow citizens and neighbours. Therefore we should not erect barriers between one another but recognise humanity everywhere.

Rabindranath Tagore is cited as an example with his novel *The Home and the World*, in which the hero declares: “I am willing to serve my country; but my worship I reserve for Right which is far greater than my country. To worship my

country as a god is to bring a curse upon it.” Tagore created a cosmopolitan university in India to promote the ideals of the cosmopolitan community of Santiniketan against ethno-centric forces of Hindu nationalism. (6)

2.The Debate Cosmopolitanism vs. Patriotism

Cosmopolitanism as we know it today is the product of nineteenth century nationalism. As such it is a “national-cosmopolitanism.” Authors such as Kymlicka (7) and Tan (8) argue that cosmopolitanism and nationalism are not so foreign because they both stem from liberalism.

This cosmopolitanism is opposed to patriotism and nationalism as the local. In this sense, the debate cosmopolitanism vs. patriotism and/or nationalism is a debate inside the paradigm of the nation-state. There is a need to formulate a debate beyond this paradigm. Nevertheless, does cosmopolitanism need to be the philosophy of values “transcending” “negative” ideas of patriotism and nationalism?

In the introduction of his *The Cosmopolitan Vision* , Ulrich Beck opens with the opposition cosmopolitanism/patriotism, arguing that cosmopolitanism is no more a controversial rational idea. "The “cosmopolitan outlook, with its global sense of boundarylessness, reveals not just the ‘anguish’ but also the possibility of shaping one’s life and social relations under conditions of cultural mixture. It is simultaneously a sceptical, disillusioned, self-critical outlook." (9)

Beck distinguishes five interconnected constitutive principles of the cosmopolitan outlook. 1. The principle of the experience of crisis in a world society, experiencing the “civilisation community of fate”, 2. the principle of recognition of cosmopolitan differences and the resulting cosmopolitan conflict character, 3. the principle of cosmopolitan empathy and of perspective-taking, 4. the principle of the impossibility of living in a world society and 5. the impulsion to rebuild old walls, where local and cosmopolitan cultures and traditions interpenetrate, intermingle.

Cosmopolitanisation - "mondialisation" - is multidimensional, it has irreversibly changed the historical nature of social worlds. Globalization on the contrary is one-dimensional as it indicates economic globalization.

While the first modernity was characterised by realism and a primary scientization with rationalism , second modernity based on the Enlightenment has been replaced by a “reflexive scientization” . Beck is building on his conception of “second modernity” and the “reflexive condition” it entails, as expounded in his *Risk Society*, and developed in the sequel *World Risk Society* and *What is Globalization?* (10) The present condition is reflexive, and as such

everything is constructed including “reality.” As such there are no fixed identities, since they are socially constructed.

Methodological cosmopolitanism is perceived as a better tool for describing this second modernity where globalisation — the movement produced by a world economy and increasing individualism — has replaced the industrial society with a world risk society.

In his books, Beck elaborates on what he understands as cosmopolitanism, and develops the concept of “cosmopolitan realism.” He takes distance from “philosophical cosmopolitanism,” but in the end the project of a cosmopolitan sociology may just be the “wishful thinking” for norms imposing a cosmopolitan project through “science.”

For that, cosmopolitanism is opposed to nationalism, which is the basis for analysing the first modernity through the prism of the nation-state. Cosmopolitanism is also differentiated from globalization, which is a process of uniformization of the world around Western capitalistic values. Cosmopolitanism also has “enemies” in all forms of sectarian particularism, or uniformism, or violent universalism.

Although cosmopolitanism appears as “the good thing” that everyone should embrace, a number of contradictions should be resolved. First and most important, this methodological cosmopolitanism claims to be opposed to nationalism, because different from methodological nationalism. However, it is based on the same hidden mechanisms of thought. Basically it is just replacing the nation-society on the “local” level we now know, with a global level. Everything we know in the nation-state is transferred to a global and transnational level.

Is cosmopolitanism synonymous with global then? Why not call it globalism? As cosmopolitanism refers to something more positive than globalization, this is the reason why the study of globalization could not lead to the introduction of a globalism philosophy, whereas cosmopolitanism as a philosophy seems to lead to the introduction of the study of “cosmopolitanization.”

These two conceptions are not necessarily obvious to cosmopolitanism. The opposition between nationalism and cosmopolitanism, appeared when nationalism became a socially embedded discourse in the second half of the nineteenth century, and cosmopolitanism was thus constructed as the significant “other” to nationalism as negative and opposed to the good values of nationalism. This cosmopolitanism can hence be called a “national-cosmopolitanism,” since it is constructed inside the national paradigm..

Given the ambiguity of the concept of “national identity” and within “national-cosmopolitanism,” we need to explore the theoretical grounds of agonism among individuals and nations, taking into account the ideas of tolerance,

democracy and protection of human rights, which can take us to develop a conceptual model which can promote people's solidarity for peace versus violent nationalism and religious integralism. Against the negative narratives which justify the existence of enemies in human and social interactions, we should favour consensus pluralism discourses, synthesized with the concepts of security community, building trust, bridging social capital, favouring cultural dialogue and establishing cosmopolitan education. Security community theory and bridging social capital ideas can become cornerstones of a concept which favours transnational identities, as signs of post nationality, based on individual and collective human imaginations.

While many discussions are dedicated to post-human and non-human imaginaries, we wonder whether the digital technologies can introduce "more human" models for the individual. For this purpose, the exploration of human imaginaries can address a variety of concepts from social science, education, philosophy, biology and other disciplines. One example of "more human" imaginaries in the digital age was introduced by Yochai Benkler, who suggests ways in which information technology can facilitate mutual aid and argues that "for decades we have been designing systems tailored to harness selfish tendencies, without regard to potential negative effects on the enormous potential for cooperation that pervades society". (11) Other digital imaginaries in the humanities can include new systems which extend trust networks beyond locality and familiar relationships.

New digital institutions, such as "social mediators" can connect networks and contribute to the efficient allocation of recourses. Human imaginaries as a methodology of innovation can also address new technologies of mutual understanding that diminish the barriers between individuals.

New tools of "critical thinking" that allow the sharing of a view of a particular situation from the perspective of 'the other' should make a further contribution to the mitigation of conflicts and the dissolution of boundaries between individuals and peoples. The capacity of sharing a point of view of the other should contribute to the development of a new common language and of new models of social collaboration.

In this perspective, Universities and education in general should become the hubs of such transnational intellectual networks providing grounds for building a global culture of peace.

Chapter Two

1. Regaining Bakhtin's Dialogism

Dialogic relationships . . . are an almost universal phenomenon, permeating all human speech and all relationships and manifestations of human life—in general, everything that has meaning and significance.

—Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 1984 (12)

Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism serves as a regulative principle in the ennoblement of human relationships. Dialogic relationships are constitutive of human personality itself. Bakhtin shows that dialogism, and all linguistic phenomena related to it, is a constitutive characteristic of all languages. As such, dialogism is not some abstract concept, but lies at the very foundation of culture and its creative potential.

Dialogism in its normative role (similar to Kantian “regulative ideas”) can serve as the standard for evaluation and critique of the existing relationships within a socially-culturally diverse world. Dialogism should become the norm broadly recognized by both the scholarly community and the “reasoning public” for ways of thinking and in relationships on all levels—inter-subjective, social, and cultural.

The dilemmas facing contemporary humanities can be understood in terms of the Bakhtinian contrast between the one-dimensional monologic world of stereotypes and authoritarian diktats and the pluralistic dialogic world of creative thinking, recognition of the others as equals, personal moral responsibility and shared co-existence, and an openness toward the cultural-historical creativity of individuals.

One classic and relevant source of innovation is Bakhtin's dialogic philosophy. Bakhtin's groundbreaking work had a revolutionizing impact on the development of humanities in the twentieth century, and its influence continues. Dialogic philosophy, developed by Bakhtin and other philosophers, grounds a view of human beings and society based on the principles of dialogue and

communication on all levels. Bakhtin's philosophy propounds democratic universal participation as the necessary basis for society, highlighting the personalist and dialogical dimensions of the human sciences.

In his *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, written in the early 1920s, Bakhtin (1993) critically analyzed the "philosophy of life" as he strove to find a firm basis for human sciences and their ethical aspects. Understanding can never be achieved only from the point of view of the self: it requires the outside perspective of the other. He held that understanding is dialogic and, ideally, dialogue should respect differences and interaction with others should be conducted in an ethical manner. Thus, the ideas of dialogism and of responsible, i.e., ethical form of humanitarian cognition, should be central to theoretical discussions and praxis in the human sciences. (13)

In Bakhtin's philosophy, dialogism is intimately related to the concept of the "other" and to "I-other" relationships. He grounded a personalist understanding of Being as the co-being of I-other interrelations. Dialogic relationships between I and the other (and ultimately between I and the Absolute Other) constitute the structure of Being understood as an "event."

This fundamental ontological structure determines the forms of existence and the forms of thought, language, and cultural meaning as such. For realization of an event of Being, at least two personal consciousnesses are needed: "co-being of being." I and the other are architectonically two value-centres of life, different yet correlated with each other, and "it is around these centres that all of the concrete moments of Being are distributed and arranged" (1993, 74).

Bakhtin views "I" and "the other" in opposition within the unity of event of Being; yet each retains its uniqueness and equality of value. He describes I-other relationships as simultaneous "mutual outsidership" and connectedness in one co-being: as independent-interdependent or "non-fused yet undivided" (1993, 41).

Unlike the natural sciences ("thought about the world"), the human sciences—sciences of the spirit—study human beings and their spiritual world, the world of culture to which belong the cognizing subjects themselves ("thought in the world") (Bakhtin 1986c, 162). In natural sciences, knowledge is explanation, while in human sciences, knowledge refers to understanding. (14)

The natural sciences constitute a monologic form of knowledge, wherein the cognizing subject contemplates only "a voiceless thing." But humanities study "expressive and speaking Being," the being of the human soul.

This being is self-revealing or freely revealing of itself for us in our act of knowing, but it cannot be grasped in the categories of natural sciences: "soul is freely speaking to us about its immortality, but it is impossible to prove that" (Bakhtin, 1996, 8) (15). In human sciences, the subject as such cannot be

studied as a thing, for as a subject, it cannot “become voiceless, and consequently, cognition of it can only be dialogic”. (1986d, 161)

Bakhtin’s methodology challenges monologic thinking. According to him, the impersonal logical (monologic) meaning in the humanities is not primary, but only a secondary or “technical” aspect of the process of knowing. For him, the principal epistemological categories are the various types of dialogic relationships among persons, which constitute the ultimate goal of knowledge in humanities. For example, in linguistics, the crucial categories are forms and types of speech communication.

This personalist-dialogic understanding of the priorities in epistemology has far-reaching implications not only for the “technology” of humanitarian thinking, but also for its philosophical teleology. In the sphere of human knowledge, relations between epistemological “subject” and “object” are always dialogic. Such relations are characterized as not substantial but a functional unity, in which persons are simultaneously “non-fused” yet “undivided” (i.e., it is impossible to exclude one of the participants of dialogue, because otherwise there will be no dialogue).

Although human practical activity can be explained in part on an objective level, the crucial aspect is understanding human consciousness, motives, goals, and other subjective factors underlying the activity. Bakhtin held that true understanding requires two or more consciousnesses to participate, and that process is dialogic. Thus, research is comprised of questioning and answering, also a kind of dialogue. In human sciences, which study creative works of the human spirit, understanding is the basic method of knowing.

Bakhtin’s methodology goes beyond texts and postmodern deconstruction towards individuals and communication with humans as spiritual beings. To understand is to grasp the living meaning of emotional experience and expression. Creative understanding involves “the dialogic movement” of correlation of a given text with other texts and reinterpretation, in new contexts, as “a dialogue of personalities”. (1986d, 161–162)

This opens the space for creativity. Creative understanding supplements the text and it is “the co-creativity of those who understand”. (1986b, 142) Bakhtin stresses the “living word,” the dialogic relationships between individuals. Similar to individuals, each culture also needs another culture to provide it with an outside perspective to surmount its one-sidedness and for better understanding itself.

One of the key concepts in the theory of dialogism is “outsideness,” which means an ability to see things from an outside perspective and to think beyond schemata. I and the other occupy positions of outsideness to each other, thus reciprocally making possible our greater understanding and growth of both the self and the other, and true dialogue.

Bakhtin as a transculturalist thinker and his concept of outsideness has inspired a theory of “transculture.” Transculture is a step in the ongoing human quest for freedom: it liberates individuals from self-imposed cultural identities and invites them to cultural self-consciousness and creativity. Its concept of critical universality suggests an internal diversity of individuals, their dialogic openness to others and self-identification primarily as members of humanity (Epstein, 2009) (16). Bakhtin’s ideas regarding a philosophical anthropology offer a new view of the phenomenon of humanity, including human self-awareness and one’s capacity to be other to oneself. Man does not always remain the same, but he repeats and reproduces the movement of the human becoming. Man carries in himself history at all times. (17)

2. The Dialogical Potential of Culture

Dialogue is crucial to Bakhtin’s view of philosophy. He saw the turn from the monologic paradigm of the idealistic classical philosophy to the *dialogic* paradigm as the main event in the twentieth century philosophy. He put forward the idea of the universal character of dialogue, and showed “the dialogic nature of consciousness, the dialogic nature of human life itself” . (1984, 293)

Language is intrinsically dialogic and deals with relationships among persons engaged in communication. Dialogic relationships form the very foundation of all human activities—self-consciousness, inter-subjective relationships, cognition, communication, and cultural creativity—from the personal level to the most general level of dialogue among cultures.

The dialogic worldview embraces openness to the other and collaborative relationships. It implies also a view of culture as “an *open* unity” (1986c, 6) and a nondeterministic concept of an open history, which is result of human actions, thus an ethics of co-responsibility. In contrast to the short-sighted perspective of “small time,” he argued for the understanding and evaluation of the future “on the level of great time,” which is not predetermined, and which is open to “unexpectedness, as it were, ‘surprisingness,’ absolute innovation, miracle, and so forth”. (1986d, 167)

Bakhtin laments the dehumanization of culture and politics: in his critique of formalism and structuralism, he foresaw the emerging paradigms of postmodern thinking and illustrated ways to effective communication among human beings. His ideas of dialogism serve as a guide to restore beings and nature.

In the conflicting world, enhancing dialogic relationships in order to fully realize the dialogic potential of culture and its creative possibilities for humanity,

facing social and global problems, the realization of the dialogical potential of culture is a condition and a possibility of the progressive development and perhaps even survival of humanity.

3. The “Dialogue of Cultures” .

The idea of the “dialogue of cultures” is developed in the concepts of interculturality and intercultural philosophy. The intercultural transformation of philosophy introduces a new perspective in our understanding of what philosophy is, of its history and methods, and forms of articulation (Fornet-Betancourt, 2001, 27–43). (18).

A dialogic conception of culture views the entirety of human culture as a united creative universe, in which all its past and present participants are represented by their works, and the past and present thinkers, as well as all local cultures, are engaged in a virtual or actual dialogue between them. The implementation of these principles aims to transform the traditional world into a “dialogic civilization”. (Horujy 2012, 2) (19)

Dialogism is manifested in the practices of the self (*pratiques de soi*) and spiritual practices of an individual in dialogue with a spiritual tradition, and in dialogue among spiritual traditions. These practices are studied by “synergic anthropology,” which is a new paradigm that opens to the human personality space for creativity and full self-realization .(Horujy 2013) (20)

Ethics has been defined as a set of moral principles and values governing appropriate or the "correct or right" choice of conduct. It is also used to refer to rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or the members of a community/profession. In *Fair Culture? Ethical dimension of cultural policy and cultural rights* (2007), Koivunen and Marsio state, "Ethics in cultural policy means a system of moral values...basing decision-making and choices in cultural policy on stated procedural codes and normative principles."(21) **Rights**, in turn, are defined as the legal or moral entitlement to do or to refrain from doing something in order to obtain or to refrain from obtaining an action, thing or recognition in civil society.

In international discourse, cultural rights are seen as part of civil rights relating mainly to:

- freedom of expression;
- right to and responsibility for cultural heritage;

- right to free practice of art and culture and to creative work;
- right to protect the intellectual and material benefits accruing from scientific, literary and artistic production;
- right to participate in cultural life and right to equally accessible and available cultural, library and information and leisure services;
- right to choose one's own culture;
- right to the development and protection of culture;
- respect for culture and its autonomy and for cultural identity.

Humanities and right can play an important role in the enhancement of dialogic consciousness and relationships, which are crucial for the advancement to a dialogic civilization. The Bakhtin's philosophical worldview is an inexhaustible source of inspiration for the innovation of humanities aiming for a more humane and peaceful world. The realization of human dialogic potential ultimately depends on us.

Appendix

CULTURAL RIGHTS AND ETHICS An Integral Part of Human Rights and Democratic Governance.

CULTURAL RIGHTS AND ETHICS An Integral Part of Human Rights and Democratic Governance

Koivunen and Marsio in the *Fair Culture? Ethical dimension of cultural policy and cultural rights* (2007), mean to raise awareness for cultural rights and ethics particularly in the domain of cultural policymaking.

Some of the issues are considered "controversial" and interpretations of rules set forth even in international conventions and other binding legal instruments such as the [Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe](#) (ECHR), may not always lead to identical conclusions. As examples of resulting debates that are of particular interest in the culture sector, one could mention:

- the relationship between *Freedom of Religion* (Article 9 ECHR) and *Freedom of Expression* (Article 10 ECHR) - as experienced in the so-called "Danish Muhammad Caricature Conflict"; or

- advocating "*positive measures*" for e.g. minorities in the light of *common principles of "non-discrimination"*.

The debate about differing views and interpretations, if conducted in an open, informed and, at the same time, respectful manner, may surely contribute to transparency and to the further development of a "culture of human rights" in Europe and beyond.

1. The Compendium addresses Cultural Rights and Ethics

The Compendium collects and presents significant country-based information on issues or initiatives arising from domestic and international human and cultural rights instruments and performance reviews and which have entered into force and form part of the major legal contribution to the development and implementation of cultural policies. While there is at present no separate chapter on ethics and rights in the Compendium, it refers to various aspects of human and cultural rights throughout their respective country profiles. It reproduces the enormous body of law and cultural capital in Europe and the world which has been generated around rights achievements and initiatives over the past six decades. Member States of the Council of Europe are bound, among other regulations, by five basic texts setting out these rights:

- *The European Convention on Human Rights*
- *The European Social Charter*
- *The European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*
- *The European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*
- *The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*

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A Study Case from the Digital World.

Storytelling as a tool for inspiring action and change and influencing thought leaders, funders, and decision makers.

Storytelling is undoubtedly a powerful tool for inspiring action and change and influencing leaders, funders, and decision makers. In the digital era, the shape and delivery of stories has shifted dramatically. Long-form narrative and conventional journalism now share the stage with messages of 140 characters or fewer and images that disappear seconds after they are opened. While there have never been more ways to reach audiences, it has also never been more difficult to really reach them.

Without question, digital technology has accelerated the tempo of the world's activity and the pervasiveness of human connections. Many of us are far more connected to stories and information than we have ever been, yet the noise and ubiquity of this digital world makes it harder to surface and share personal stories of change and impact.

The Rockefeller Foundation recognizes a big opportunity in this intersection of story and technology, and has launched a project to consider the role that digital technology can play in elevating the practice of storytelling as a means to improve the well-being of the poor and vulnerable around the world. Its digital strategy is to engage internal and external audiences, champion organization-wide collaboration and knowledge sharing, delivering data that inform organization decisions, pioneering new ways to hear and share innovative ideas and perspectives on serving the needs of poor or vulnerable people in a time of rapid change.

Drawing the insights and ideas from interviews and roundtable discussions with leaders in entertainment media and news, brand strategy, technology, philanthropy, government, nonprofits, and business, the Foundation conducted a technical platform assessment and landscape analysis to evaluate the current state of digital storytelling, by exploring the power of narrative and networked communication to expand reach and influence and identifying unmet supply and demand needs in the field and opportunities for innovation.

It heard from journalists how digital media is introducing new topics into the public dialogue and giving stories longer life cycles than before, from the entertainment industry about both increased competition and decreased funding for the production of compelling stories about social impact, from brand strategists about creating an organizational strategy and a culture that empowers every staff member to create and value the role of stories in their work, from nonprofits and business about the importance of stories coming from the people impacted by the work. Technologists also provided ideas on the best digital tools to capture and share stories with a broader audience, from government and academia about the significant digital skills gap in social impact organizations and the need for training services and metric-driven examples of storytelling success. Some of the findings may have been expected, others surprising, but all can inform action for those working in the social impact space.

The next step is to workshop the report recommendations with selected cross-sector leaders to produce a game-changing platform, one that exists in multiple places or formats, that easily builds capacity and demand, that is measurable and flexible, that fosters leadership and community, and that ultimately advances humanity.

As serving the needs of poor or vulnerable people is fundamental in a time of rapid change - fighting poverty and impeding ecological catastrophe, we face the necessity of generating technologies capable of reversing otherwise irreversible social and ecological damages-, current digital paradigms and humanities can look towards a prospective synthesis between technology and nature, technology and humanities, by strategically revisiting any argument regarding the relationship between the virtual and the real, capable of producing different and possible more intense and more democratic responses.

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Short CV

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Gabriella Bianco graduated from the University of Trieste in 1972 specializing in Languages and Comparative Literatures. In 1974 she graduated in Philosophy, Education and Psychology from the University of Urbino (Italy), with a thesis on creativity. She completed her post-graduate studies in Philosophy, History and Education at the University of Toronto, with a thesis on Antonio Gramsci and after being awarded a Fulbright Scholarship, she did her doctorate in the United States in Political Philosophy. She studied with Habermas, Gadamer, Paulo Freire, McLuhan, Northrop Frye and Dieter Misgeld.

She also holds a doctoral degree in Linguistics and Semiotics from the University of Urbino (1983), where she studied with Umberto Eco and Paolo Fabbri.

In her University career, she has taught at several Universities, such

as Urbino (Italy), Windsor (Canada), New Paltz (USA), Tasmania (Australia) and Nairobi (Kenya). Since 1980 she has worked in the cultural sector of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as cultural attaché in different countries (Australia, Argentina, Canada). She has been Director of Development and International Relations at the University E. Morin (Mexico). She is a member of the international scientific committee of the philosophical research university group "Corredor de las ideas del Cono Sur", with annual meetings in different Latin American Countries.

She has written plays and works for musical theatre and operas, staged in several parts of the world, some of which have been published under the title "El camino de la palabra" (Buenos Aires, 1995). She is Academic of Italy (2003) and Honorary Member of the European Union of Writers and Artists (2007). In 2010 she was appointed "illustrious visitor" of the historical city of Cusco (Peru). In 2013 she has been appointed "international cultural personality of the year " in Buenos Aires (Argentina).

She has been an international development consultant in education, electoral and human rights expert since 2003 with the UN (UN missions to Kenya, DR Congo, Haiti) and carries out an intense international career both in the social and in the philosophical and artistic fields. As International Peace Ambassador from 2009 to 2012, she had done several missions, to Guatemala (2009) to Chile (2010), to Haiti (2011-2012). She integrates the UNESCO Network of Women Philosophers.

Her wide philosophical, educational and literary work include:

- Educazione e politica in Paulo Freire (Milano, 1975)

- Oh Lucky Country. Alla ricerca della verginitá perduta
(Sydney, 1981) (Roma, 1984)
- La transparencia del ser (Buenos Aires, 1990)
- ¿Dónde está la eterna primavera? Cesare Pavese y Franz Kafka
(Buenos Aires, 1991)
- Nest. Sonidos de la ausencia (Buenos Aires, 1992)
- Diálogo con el futuro: Carlo Michelstaedter (Bs. As., 1993)
- En el camino de la palabra (Buenos Aires, 1995)
- Mal`akhim - Angels -Angeli (Vancouver 1997) (Turín, 1998)
- Enigma al femminile (Castiglioncello, 1998)
- Drum Up the Moon (Vancouver, 1999)
- Casanova, ovvero la magica follia (Roma, 2000)
- Sólo tengo miedo equivocarme en mi muerte (Buenos Aires, 2001)
- Wolfgang & Magdalena (Roma, 2002)
- Wolfgang and Magdalena (Hollywood, 2003)
- Save Venice (Hollywood, 2004)
- Imágenes de la Argentina (Buenos Aires, 2004)
- Incendio (Porto Alegre, 2005)
- Wolfgang y Magdalena, un amor (Buenos Aires, 2006)
- Salvar a Venecia (Buenos Aires, 2007)
- Immagini da una poesia (Roma - Buenos Aires, 2009)

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- MOZART AND MAGDALENA – USA (2011)

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Nach Congo und anderswohin.

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-Infinitas lunas, infinitos soles.

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-MOZART AND MAGDALENA, USA

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- Mozart & Magdalena (screenplay), 2010

-Walter Benjamin, un corazón doliente.

Editorial Martin, Buenos Aires, 2012

-Tiempos de cambio, tiempos de revolución.

Para un humanismo revolucionario,

Editorial Martin, Buenos Aires, 2013

- Mozart et Magdalena. L'amoureuse de Mozart,

Société des écrivains, Paris, 2014

- Mozart e Magdalena. L'amante di Mozart,

Feltrinelli, Milan, 2014 (2nd edition)

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