

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION

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Abstract. *Acculturation, as a very complex cultural occurrence and one of the most significant dynamic processes in culture, attracts the attention of theoreticians and researchers of various gnoseological vocations. This has over time led to a significant increase in the number of studies, debates and much research devoted to the reflection on and definition of this phenomenon.*

Considering the fact that there are no single determinants and widely accepted theoretical viewpoints, this paper contributes to a broader critical review of the theoretical understanding of the process of acculturation. At the beginning of this paper we would like to emphasize that the significance of cultural contacts and meeting points, and give the etymological determination of the concept of acculturation and indicate the numerous concepts which are compatible with it. The paper will pay special attention to the differences in understanding this process, which stem from various professional backgrounds (anthropological, sociological, cultural, historical, psychological) and various theoretical approaches (functionalism, culturalism, the theory of "cultural circles", cultural conflicts, the theory of globalization), where theoretic controversies are also included in understanding the process of acculturation, which have originated from the differences in the understanding of the basic conditions, causes and consequences of this process.

Key words: *culture, acculturation, dynamic processes in culture.*

INTRODUCTION

Culture, however we define it, undoubtedly represents an authentic reflection of man's specific nature, is the greatest product of the creativity, abilities and habits that man has developed and mastered. In that sense we cannot speak of culture independently of soci-

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ety or outside the context of the discussions which refer to the problem of society, just as, after all, any thoughts regarding social reality cannot avoid the study of cultural occurrences, processes, courses, models, actors or the cultural reality in general. Thematically structured attempts to critically view culture, as a manifestation of the most varied types of man's material and spiritual creativity, institutionalized structure, as a way of shaping the structure of the personality and human life itself, offer the possibility that culture should be determined as man's *differentia specifica*, as a significant factor of social cohesion and overall social development. Thus, every attempt at an all-encompassing summing up of thoughts regarding culture, starting from sophists who coined and with a specific polemic aim shaped this concept¹, up to the modern discussions within which culture is treated as a cause and consequence of global social changes, requires a form of intellectual prudence. It should be adhered to precisely because of the complexity of the phenomenon of culture, and also because of the many various understandings and approaches to a complex and rich cultural reality, and, finally because of the inability to, even under circumstances of very serious scientific efforts, completely encompass all of the possible meanings of this concept.

An important feature of cultural reality is precisely its variability. The dynamic nature of culture indicates the fact that the various cultural elements are very fluid, unstable, and prone to modification and that they can expand in space and time and from one culture to another. Various cultural processes condition changes in cultural reality, which can lead to the disappearance of old, or the appearance of certain new cultural forms and models. Aware of the fact that culture is a significant segment of the formation of the individual and social identity, many theoreticians adhere to the attitude that differences in culture, which at the same time influence other forms of social diversity, significantly influence the formation of modern society. The interrelationships and contacts between cultures, their intertwining and mixing, along with the realization of useful cooperation, and quite often with exposure to conflicting situations, are today becoming more and more current and more significant than ever before for getting to know and creating cultural and general social reality.

So, the selected topic of this paper can be explained primarily through its scientific importance and its indisputably current nature. With the aforementioned caution in approaching the cultural-research endeavor and the not quite new confession that it is a case of a phenomenon which quite seriously requires interdisciplinary scientific attention, this paper will give a theoretical overview of the dynamic aspects of culture. Conceived in such a way, it should contribute to a more complete overview and a more comprehensive presentation of the theoretical understanding of the process of acculturation, as one of the most significant and most variedly defined cultural concepts. Bearing in mind the variety of the attempts, the variety of the interpretations, multiple meanings, and sometimes even the confusion when it comes to naming cultural phenomena, we will start from the attitude that knowledge of these occurrences can never be final, complete or once and for all rounded up.

¹ The Hellenic period in sophism is a time which coincided with the origin of almost all of the humanistic sciences and the use of the concept of culture. The antireductionist sophist view of culture was opposed to the ethos of the Greek nobility, which was characterized by the opinion regarding man's cultural and genetic "coding" derived from the social hierarchy. For more details see: Božović, R. (1998) *Lavirinti kulture*. Beograd: Čigoja štampa.

THE CONCEPTUAL DETERMINATION OF THE PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION AND ITS RESEARCH COMPLEXITY

Even though acculturation is one of the most significant dynamic processes in culture which intensely mark the modern day and age in particular, as part of which it enables, but also itself becomes enabled in the scientific-technological and information revolution, through the processes of globalization and integration, this concept in science has still not properly been theoretically determined.

The lack of a theoretically singular terminological determination and the explanation of the process of acculturation in the literature have led to, among other things, the interest of scientists of various profiles for conducting research in various fields: anthropologists, psychologists and social psychologists, sociologists, culturologists, ethnologists, historians, linguists, art historians and others. Sparking such diverse scientific interest, each of the researchers, in accordance with the specific nature of his theoretical-methodological aspect, approaches the discussion of this phenomenon, which leads to the heterogeneous nature of its scientific explanation. What certainly characterizes sociological interest in the research into acculturation is the fact that this process conditions significant social changes (changes in society as a whole or some of its segments), where the forms and consequences of the process of acculturation are brought into connection with the nature of the existing social relations within certain cultural models and systems. Individuals interested in cultural studies and cultural anthropologists are primarily interested in cultural elements, forms and processes which condition wider social changes. The position taken up by psychologists focuses the study of acculturation from the perspective of the individual himself, his attitudes, interests and experiences and the psychological changes caused by the consequences of acculturation. Historians try, by studying the chronological sequences of significant historical events to point out the acculturation processes and the exchange of cultural elements in a certain temporal perspective. At the same time, we should bear in mind that each case of acculturation is so unique, specific and individual, and at the same time so complex in terms of the time and conditions of the occurrence, causes and consequences of the action, that without any danger of any unfounded conclusions we might say that any kind of partial theoretical generalizations are quite relative and questionable. This, undoubtedly, justifies the need and requirements for multidisciplinary cooperation in the domain of scientifically adequate explanations of this process.

Let us first start from an explanation of a certain conceptual-terminological confusion, conditioned more or less through the temporally parallel use of different concepts used to mark one and the same content/process, as well as the naming of different content/processes using the same term. This is why the justifiability of the use of certain terms studied here has been questioned. The use of the concept "acculturation" originated with American anthropologists, who started a more serious study of this phenomenon. British researches usually used, as they do today, terms such as "*cultural contact*", while certain theoreticians, especially those of Latin-American origin use the term "*transculturation*". In the scientific literature, it is not uncommon that the terms acculturation and cultural contact are considered synonyms which are almost interchangeable, considering that they are etymologically very close (*ad* – towards and *cultura*, or the noun form *culturatio* – perfection, improvement, the enriching of the spirit), and thus indicate a unity or combination of at least two cultures via cultural contact and the changes that ensued from

it. There are, however, authors who have strived to separate these two concepts, and so Vera St. Erlich cites: "The English, unlike the Americans, also use the term cultural contact for the process and the result (...) Acculturation in the narrower sense refers to the result that occurred from cultural contact (Erlich 1968: 65). On the other hand, the term transculturation (*trans* – across, from one side to the other and *culturatio* – perfection, improvement, the enriching of the spirit) etymologically indicate a more active relationship, a transference or diffusion of cultural elements which occur during contact between cultures. Even though acculturation as a term was accepted and used especially in the American and French scientific community, certain theoreticians have suggested that it be replaced precisely by the term transculturation. The British anthropologist of Polish descent "Bronislaw Malinowski speaks of transculturation which, in his opinion, better reflects the interaction and activity of both sides – those who transfer, but also accept social influences in cases of cultural contact " (Koković 2005: 194).

It is certain that there were social and cultural contacts even before scientific disciplines emerged which studied the process of acculturation or before the concept even gained any scientific use. Even though most of the research into acculturation is relatively new, the topic has a long history, and dates back at least to ancient Greece.² Still, the desire of scientists for the study into this process was sparked in the previous century, by concrete social events and the need to solve objective social problems. Ralf Bilc in his essay *Acculturation* points out that in Great Britain, France and Holland, the interest in contact situations has temporally coincided with colonial conquests and the sense of responsibility towards colonized peoples, so that the native peoples could get better acquainted and adjusted to the "model" of the dominant culture. Special care regarding the solution for the built-up social problems in the US during the Great Depression focused the study of the development acculturation in this field (Bilc 1972: 536.). Interest in this phenomenon grew over time, the number of papers written in this field increased significantly, and so today acculturation is a special field studied as part of anthropological studies, as well as a significant social concept for the study of numerous cultural changes in the modern world.

Floyd W. Rudmin, a professor of social psychology at one of the Norwegian universities, was especially interested in the study of the psychological aspects of the process of acculturation, and compiled a kind of Catalogue of Acculturation Constructs, giving an overview and description of 126 different approaches (a taxonomy). His intention was, as the author himself stated, not to give an overview of empirical results, but to give a taxonomic list and short description of the constructs which lie at the basis of the theory of different types of acculturation, without adding any critical or comparative comments. In the following table, which has been taken from the aforementioned catalogue of this scientist and researcher, the number of acculturation studies has been comparatively shown starting from the year 1900 up to 2000, both in the field of psychology, and in the field of other scientific disciplines.

² Art history, classic social and political theory, for instance, offer numerous examples of a unique type of cultural syncretism which occurred during the acculturation processes between the Greeks and Romans. In addition, in their utopian ideas of an ideal social community, as early on as 348 B.C. Plato in his *Laws* included the thought that social and cultural contact (acculturation) should be minimized, but not to the extent of a threat of cultural isolation.

Table 1. The number of studies of acculturation³

Year	The number of studies, including dissertations in the field of psychology	The number of studies/dissertations in all the other scientific disciplines
1900 – 1930	0	0
1931 – 1940	17	5
1941 – 1950	60	25
1951 – 1960	97	49
1961 – 1970	111	69
1971 – 1980	248	153
1981 – 1990	572	700
1991 – 2000	1571	1376

Based on the table we can clearly see that the number of studies on acculturation has increased drastically over the last two decades of the 20th century, especially in psychology, but in all the other disciplines as well. This quantitatively illustrated addition can sociologically be explained, primarily, with the greater possibility of the realization of the very cultural contacts themselves, the intertwining of cultures due to the process of globalization and the integration of societies and cultures in the cited period, and then the conditioned, increased interest of researchers for applicable research in many fields, that is, the practical need to comprehend, understand and solve concrete social problems which stem from the realization of the process of acculturation. The concepts, constructions and theories which are mentioned in the literature in connection to the research into the process of acculturation, have historically followed the process of social development and intellectual evolution, and have thus constantly changed and multiplied over time. In any case, the aforementioned catalogue undoubtedly indicates the different and quite numerous ways in which the specific types of acculturation processes were understood and thought out as part of the different theoretical approaches (Rudmin 2003).

Any differences between theoreticians exist even in terms of the question of the first use of this terms found in the relevant literature. There are quotes which indicate that the concept of acculturation was first used by J. V. Powell in 1880 in his report on the research into local languages in America. On that occasion, Powell gave a narrow theoretical explanation of acculturation, indicating that it primarily referred to psychological changes induced by intercultural imitation (Powell 1880). Supposedly using this concept for the first time in his report, working for the American Ethnographic Bureau, Powell focused attention on the very process of acculturation (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). In addition, according to some other sources, the German scientist Walter Krieckeborg is mentioned as the one who in his lectures first used the term acculturation in the mid 1920's, wanting to mark the certain progress made in the development of the common culture between the tribes of various origins, situated around the Hinghe river (Jelić 1985: 129).

³ Taken from and translated into Serbian from the following source: Rudmin, F. W. (2003) Catalogue of Acculturation Constructs: Descriptions of 126 Taxonomies, 1918-2003. In W. Lonner (Ed.), *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*. Center for Cross-Cultural Research: Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA. Available at: URL: http://orpc.iaccp.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=89:rudmin&catid=26:chapter&Itemid=15.

In any case, in the literature we come across the opinion that one of the first serious psychological considerations of acculturation was offered in 1918 by William Isaac Thomas and Florian Znaniecki in their study on Polish immigrants in America, using for the first time the biographical method in research and a very versatile view of social occurrences (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1984). Nevertheless, a more significant systematic study of acculturation begins in 1936, when three members of the American Anthropological society, Robert Redfield, Melville Herskovits and Ralf Linton, published a Memorandum on the Research into Acculturation. The aforementioned authors at that point indicated that acculturation includes those occurrences which are manifested when groups of individuals from different cultural backgrounds begin permanent direct contact, including the changes which originate from the original cultural models of one or both groups (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936: 149). The offered definition of acculturation does not completely fulfill all of the criteria of a versatile, clear and detailed definition of this phenomenon, and thus, considering that it is theoretically questionable, it was often exposed to criticism. Even though the authors themselves later self-critically approached its reconstruction, the definition of these authors undoubtedly represents the first serious scientific attempt and significant sociological contribution to the explanation of the acculturation process. In the aforementioned paper, these authors set apart the historic approach as the most suitable one in the study of acculturation, that is, they suggest deduction on the basis of historical analyses and reconstructions. The three authors also offered five different criteria for the classification of the acculturation processes. At the same time, they pointed out that care should be taken that these processes take place during contact between global populations and some narrow social groups, between friendly and hostile societies, between relatively homogenous and heterogeneous civilizations, between populations which are almost equal in their social status and those who are not, as well as depending on the location, that is, territory on which the cultural contact is taking place (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936).

Nevertheless, the unique terminological confusion and the current omissions in the naming of the essence of the process itself and its accompanying consequences, by summing up the numerous determinations of this process in the relevant literature, we can conclude that acculturation means contact, meeting, merging, but also the changing of two or more cultures in their interrelationship and intermingling. The causes of this process can be numerous and diverse – migrations, colonial conquests, market expansion, wars, long-term habitation in the same geographic space, media-mediated mass communication in the modern world and so on. No matter what the professional interest or theoretical-methodological approach, the process always started from a definition of acculturation, and semantically speaking it is impossible to equate this process with cultural change, considering that it is only one form of that change. So much so that during and following acculturation, as one of its consequences, an entire sequence of other social processes emerge along with cultural changes: assimilation, adaptation, integration, cultural selection, transformation, resistance, then isolation, separation, marginalization, discrimination and the like. Of course, it is important that every cultural debate be founded on completely clear ideas on the semantic background of the cited concepts and processes. This could help us avoid the possible, not only in everyday speech, but also in official polemics, the frequent interchangeability of otherwise completely differing terms, both in terms of content and concepts.

DIFFERENT THEORETICAL CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE PROCESS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ACCULTURATION

Contact between two cultures includes a meeting, interaction and mixing of diverse ethnic and other groups which are the carriers of different languages, customs and moral norms, systems of values, knowledge and the like. Considering the possible and mostly existing different levels of their cultural, economic, political, scientific or technological development, the process of acculturation enables a sort of synthesis of cultural elements, a mixture, change, acceptance, competition or rejection of foreign cultural elements and influences. All this indicates the fact that the consequences of acculturation are not formally or essentially certain, uniform, that they cannot be anticipated or completely planned, considering that they depend on a group of various factors. This conclusion implies the existence of various criteria for the theoretical contemplation of results, that is, the consequences of the process of acculturation, as well as the performance of complex classifications, and thus it is within them that we can differentiate various acculturation types.

Speaking of the consequences of the process of acculturation, the Croatian sociologist and culturologist Eduard Kale assumes as necessary the victory or supremacy of one culture. He states: "A consequence of such a contact will as a rule be the victory of one culture in a space where the representatives came into contact with each other. This means that what will prevail are the values, organizational forms, statuses, language and many rules of one culture, but that it will at the same time be enriched by numerous elements of the suppressed culture" (Kale 1990: 9). Which of the cultures will reign supreme depends on, according to Kale, which of the cultures is technologically more developed and numerous, but also on whether those who rule through oppression will prohibit the adoption of other cultural elements and patterns.

Being involved in the analysis of the possible results of cultural contact within the psychology of intercultural relationships, John Berry (2001) offers several theoretical possibilities, separating four main types of acculturation strategies:

- Assimilation – the representatives of one culture do not want to protect their own cultural heritage, trying instead to maintain intense contact between members of other cultures, accepting their cultural elements and features (Berry obviously had only voluntary assimilation in mind, even though numerous historical examples speak in favor of the forcibly designed, and sometimes even forcibly realized assimilations – Hitler's overt aspirations for the Germanization of the entire world; are present even today, although in a more latent form – different forms of neocolonialism).
- Integration – the representatives of one culture give great credence to the preservation of one's own culture, trying at the same time to communicate and maintain intense contact with the members of other cultures along with the mutual exchange of cultural elements (under the significant assumption that the other culture is open, that there is no prejudice and that there is respect for the cultural differences of other ethnic groups);
- Separation – the representatives of one culture give great importance to the preservation of their own culture and tradition, and thus avoid intense contact with the participants of another/other cultures;

- Marginalization – the representatives of one culture do not want to protect their cultural heritage or do not have any real possibilities of doing so, and at the same time do not have contact with the members of another/other cultures (which is often caused by social isolation or discrimination).

Speaking of the relation between acculturation and assimilation, Berry mentions that we can speak of assimilation as a process which can be achieved only when the process of acculturation is so complete (full) that the members of two groups become completely culturally unrecognizable. If acculturation, globally speaking, is a process during which individuals and social groups acquire cultural practices which belong to the tradition of some other group/culture, assimilation, according to Berry, this marks a change in the membership (identity) realized by the individual, accepting another cultural community which he recognizes as his own (Berry 2001). Psychological approaches to acculturation often point out that forcible assimilation, as a possible result of acculturation, can bring about negative consequences and changes among members of the defeated culture, especially when the differences between the cultures are quite extensive. What we are dealing with then is so-called *cultural shock* (Kale) or *acculturation stress* (Berry) due to being unable to get a grip with the new cultural norms and patterns, which causes a variety of forms of deviant behavior and social pathology.

Milton Bennett, the director of the America Institute for the Research of Intercultural Development, after twenty years of empirical research has offered his own model for the development of intercultural sensitivity, describing the stadiums through which individuals and societies face the difficulties involved in meeting other cultures (Bennett, 1993). What stems from this model is that the result of the process of acculturation to a significant extent depends on the abilities of determining and accepting cultural differences. The model is based on increased sophistication, starting from the denial of existing differences, that is, ultimate *ethnocentrism*, all the way to the stadium of the determination and acceptance of cultural differences, which Bennett named *ethnorelativism*.

The stadiums of *ethnocentrism* that Bennett cites include:

- A denial of differences (two inter-stadiums– isolation and separation)
- A defense from differences (three inter-stadiums – superiority, disparagement, twists to the contrary)
- Minimizing differences (two forms – physical universalism and transcendental universalism)
- The stadiums of *ethnorelativism* include:
 - the acceptance of differences (two forms of manifestation – behavioral relativism and value relativism)
 - adapting to differences (two inter-stadiums – empathy and pluralism)
 - integration of differences (two forms of manifestation – a contextual evaluation and constructive marginality) (Bennett 1993: 29).

This model can be accepted precisely as an emphasis of the possible consequences of the process of acculturation, as well as various strategies which can be applied and the results which can occur during contact between cultural differences.

Sociological contemplation of the process of acculturation of Roger Bastide especially emphasizes the fact that during acculturation, there is contact between societies and cul-

tures on more planes at the same time (economic, political, religious, educational and so on) and that sometimes during this process certain interruptions and discontinuity occur as part of the meeting and modification of cultural elements. Bastide emphasizes and explains the concepts of "counter-acculturation" or "cultural resistance" which refer to cultural resistance, denial, ignoring and rejection which occur as a reaction to the attempts of violent imposition of other cultural values. It is also possible, in the complex forms of acculturation, to simultaneously accept one, and reject some other cultural characteristics, where the material elements of culture are often more easily and quickly accepted than the spiritual ones (Bastide 1981). Something similar was pointed out by M. Herskovic who did not consider acculturation as the simple compiling of various elements. He also emphasized that certain parts of the cultures in contact do not necessarily have to achieve full contact, and thus that certain elements of foreign cultures can be accepted, without any important changes taking place in the domain of the original culture.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION WITHIN VARIOUS THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Taking into consideration the limited extent of this paper, and the great number of various theories which demand a very wide field of cultural dynamism, we will only briefly touch upon some of the theoretical approaches which are important in the analysis of the acculturation process.

Diffusion theory is based on the critical denial of evolutionism, and emphasizes the influence of the environment and an entire sequence of other factors within the dynamic cultural processes. It tends to determine the causes and means of cultural changes, emphasizing also the accompanying expansion of the elements of culture, their origin and the forms of diffusion in the case of contact between two or more cultures. One of its more significant representatives, cultural anthropologist Ralf Linton, points out several factors which influence the recipient of new cultural values. Considering that the values of other cultures are adopted on the basis of two qualities – usefulness and compatibility (whether something is good and how it fits into the framework of the existing culture), Linton cites the role of the prestige of the donor and recipient, as well as the factor of whimsy, which actually implies the contemplation of acculturation as an ongoing process, significantly marked by the diffusion of cultural elements (Linton 1969). Even though this theory made a significant contribution to the study of the processes and consequences of acculturation, it was criticized for the dominant individual-psychological approach, a significantly one-sided interpretation which is based on the analogy of culture by means of the mechanical transference and insufficiently developed comparative-historical view of culture.

Functionalism, as one of the leading theories in modern civic sociology, identifies the main factors of social dynamics precisely in the processes of acculturation. Functionalists have started from the assumption that needs give rise to culture, and that all cultural elements and contents occur as a consequence or function of a certain human need in society and that they will exist only while they satisfy all of the needs that led to their occurrence. At the same time they neglect a very important fact – once a cultural concept is formed, then it can continue to exist and develop according to its own internal, immanent laws, and often independently of the needs and external factors which conditioned it. A func-

tional analysis of the cultural issue often stems from the opinion that all the structural elements harmoniously act within the functionalistically conceived social and cultural whole, and realize their positive functions, and that the changes and conflicts often occur precisely due to the process of acculturation, that is, the conflicts between various systems of values (Mitrović 1997:150).

One of the founders of the British school of functionalism, Bronislaw Malinowski, was involved in the study of native peoples, especially in his attempt to study the changes among the natives which occurred as the result of contact with Europe. In his work *Dynamics of Cultural Change*, Malinowski outlines his understanding of the problem of acculturation, although he does not use that term specifically. Speaking of cultural change, this author considers that it could be caused by factors and forces which spontaneously occur within a society or that cultural change can take place through contact with various cultures. In the first case, Malinowski points out that cultural change occurs as an independent discovery, and in the second it represents a process which in anthropology is often known as diffusion, (Malinowski 1945). This leads us to conclude that Malinowski was interested in precisely what in American terminology could without hesitation be referred to as acculturation. The idea that cultural change occurs only as the result of contact with Europe, considering that prior to this contact there were no cultural changes among the native peoples, is a clear indication that the aspect of European influence has dominated the work of Malinowski. In that respect, however, the author was not isolated.

Most of the British discussions and definitions of cultural contact deal only with the effects of European cultures on native cultures. In the case of many American and almost all Latin-American studies of acculturation during the first half of the twentieth century, the effect of the European on non-European peoples and cultures is investigated. It is a fact that consideration of the acculturation issue should in no way be limited to only those situations in which cultures such as the European one are involved. But nevertheless, Ralf Bilc points out that the exceptions in this case are quite difficult to find, especially during the initial period of the development of acculturation studies.⁴

Culturalism, as an important theoretical approach in modern science, was founded on the work of Leslie White, who was often criticized and controversial as a cultural determinist, and who began with the idea that culture must be studied separately from the psychological reactions of human bodies and outside the context of social interaction, considering that it is an entity *sui generis*. Thanks to its symbolic character, culture is quickly and easily transferred, and it has been flowing for centuries from one generation to the next, and laterally as well, from one nation to another. In that sense, acculturation is seen as an occurrence of an expansion of cultural elements, where the number, that is, the amount of cultural elements is especially considered important, elements which are maintained or retained in each culture which they come into contact with. Within the cul-

⁴ Further support for this claim can be found in the fact that Elsie Clews Parsons in her 1936 study on the Spanish-Indian contact in Mexico said that she was dealing with "acculturation, what the culture of these Indians took from the Spanish culture". For her, then, acculturation represents only cases of syncretism (the merging, intertwining and mixing) and clear examples of borrowing from the Spaniards. Even though she acknowledges that the product of the Spanish-Indian contact is a completely new culture, this author does not include the forms of culture that have no identifiable European component and characteristic in acculturation. Found in: Bile, R. (1972) Akulturacija, in: *Antropologija danas* (Proceedings), Beograd: Vuk Karadžić, pg. 536.

turalist approach, acculturation is seen and interpreted as a continuous, cumulative and progressive process and the opinion that as a consequence of the contact between two or more cultures, so-called hybrid or conjoined cultures are formed, is not infrequent. The culturalist view of the process of acculturation is often due to the exclusiveness and unique form of reductionism exposed to critical evaluation, considering that in the culturalist extreme the process of acculturation is primarily reduced to the autonomous spreading of cultural elements, independently of the wider social context and the individual/personality itself.

The theory of "cultural circles" belongs to those segments of the theoretical discussion which deal with the dynamic aspects of culture and which have, to a certain extent, formed their own take on the process of acculturation. Wilhelm Schmidt and Leo Frobenius, on the basis of diffusionist ideas, have created a theory of cultural circles. Based on this theoretical approach, the spreading of culture takes place in concentric circles, where cultural circles (cycles or complexes) which were exposed to the source culture take on a greater number, and those which were further take on a smaller number of cultural elements. During the process of broadening of cultural circles, their overlap with previous cultural elements, or mixing or overtaking of cultural elements from some of the circles is possible – for example the culture of the bow and arrow has overlapped, dominated the culture of the spear⁵ (Todorović 1981: 114).

Considering that also within the aforementioned theories we can often slip into the identification of the processes of acculturation and diffusion, numerous American anthropologists have studied the role of force, considering that it can be an adequate criterion for their successful division. In such evaluations, force has been treated quite broadly, including not only open, immediate force but also all those types of pressure, coercion or duress due to various withdrawals, the imposition of new patterns and values. From these discussions, the suggestion that acculturation can be limited to only those situations in which there is a complete loss of freedom of choice or the possibility of accepting or rejecting new cultural elements was born. It was, nevertheless, only one of the numerous unsuccessful attempts at a critical reevaluation and mitigation of existing theoretical controversies in understanding and determining the acculturation process.

The theory of cultural conflicts in modern sociological and cultural literature holds a relatively extreme position in the interpretation of the acculturation process. In the opinion of the representatives of this theory, cultural contact causes primarily conflict between different societies and cultures, on which numerous cultural antagonisms are based and strengthened. In accordance with such a theoretical position, it is considered that in the acculturation process, due to the conflict between cultures, the imposition and the acquisition of new cultural values, so-called *marginal personalities* emerge, which are a consequence of two or more cultures. From this individual-psychological standpoint, marginal man is understood as the main consequence of this process of acculturation. It is "the man

⁵ Fritz Graebner and Wilhelm Schmidt when speaking of prehistoric man who lived in small groups, thought that being isolated and without means of transport, these populations developed a certain number of various cultures (cultural circles). Once transport was introduced, the influence of these societies began to emanate mostly in any areas of contact, not through the spreading of certain cultural elements. When two of these systems would collide, when they would come into contact, they would, in the opinion of these authors, either mix, or one would destroy the other. Based on: Malinovski, B. (1970) *Naučna teorija kulture*. Beograd: Vuk Karadžić. s. 185.

whom fate has doomed to live in two societies and two, not completely different, but antagonistic cultures. Thus, one individual, whose mother is Jewish and whose father belongs to another nationality, is fatefully doomed to be brought up under the influence of two traditions. In these cases his spirit is a melting pot in which two different, we might say two separate cultures melt and completely or partially merge" (Park 1969: 896). It is clear that this type of theoretical position is quite reductionist, considering that as a consequence of the process of acculturation, it only takes into consideration the possibility of cultural conflict, while all the more creative potentials and possibilities for cooperation and mutual enrichment of cultures are completely neglected.

Explaining the current states and changes in the world in which culture occupies an important place, the new *theory on the conflict of civilizations* also has a menacing sound to it. Its founder Samuel Huntington points out the increasingly important influence of culture in the global world society, which conditions the conflict between civilizations and cultures. He thinks that cultures will become the primary mark of nations, even more so than ideologies, and that the main conflicts will occur between the main cultural groups in the world: the western, the Islamic, the Confucian, Japanese and Hindu (Huntington 1996). Agreement with Huntington's attitude that the cultural differences will gain significance and represent the main features of modern society, was expressed also by Francis Fukuyama in his work *The Clash of Civilizations*. The author, at the same time, thought that these differences will not necessarily be a source of conflict, but will instead enable and guide creative changes in the world (Fukuyama 1997).

The theory of globalization, also, confirms the importance of culture and the dynamic processes of acculturation in the modern world, especially through the analysis of the cohabitation in multicultural, multilingual and multinational communities which contribute to the overall complexity of the social and cultural atmosphere. The modern concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism, without negating the possibility of confrontation and conflict, include in the very heart of the discussion the right to diversity and the right to the preservation of one's own cultural identity. The process of globalization actually marks the beginning of a new acculturation, as the global cultural process and the complete contact of cultures, an objectively necessary step which causes essential changes in culture and society (Božilović 2007: 13).

CONCLUSION

In the concluding remarks of this paper we will once again point out one sociologically significant fact – each cultural contact at the same time, or primarily, has its own social connotation. Even though Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Culture and Society*, for the needs of theoretical analysis, takes recourse from the division into social and cultural contact, this author has clearly indicated that the aforementioned dichotomy is not the consequence of substantial reasons, and thus that it should be accepted as a special consideration of the common aspects of the same occurrence (Bauman 1984: 122). The numerous and diverse theoretical consideration of this issue lead us to the correct conclusion that acculturation is an equally important social, cultural and psychological process, for whose realization, as an important crucial assumption, we need not only a spatial but also a temporal dimension. Thus, whatever the consequences of the process of acculturation, it

is a case of wholesome contact of social communities or groups over one relatively long period of time. So much so since cultural elements do not mix like the ingredients in culinary recipes, in which we could immediately take a certain number of these or those elements and in their unity easily and quickly obtain a completely new, desired cultural model. However, cultural contact and the diffusion between cultural elements take place through interaction and within the frameworks of certain and specific socio-historical circumstances, mainly for the long-term, often gradually, sometimes preplanned, but almost always with unpredictable personal, social and cultural consequences.

A significant fact which emphasizes the numerous and varied research possibilities of acculturation, starting from microsocial contact to the mixing of global societies, as well as a certain terminological confusion in the naming of this process and its consequences, additionally emphasized the need for a precise definition of the theoretical and empirical limit and extent of the acculturation problem. The research and determination of the essence and specificity of certain examples of acculturation is very complex and demands the necessary acceptance of an entire spectrum of various general and special developmental circumstances of cultures in contact – the characteristics of concrete historic conditions, certain structures of society, the development of production processes, dominant social values, ideologies, religious practices, political orders, mental characteristics of individuals, and thus in accordance with what is of essential importance – the origin of the means of carrying out and the consequence of the process of acculturation. By separating only some of these factors as being of special importance in the analysis of the acculturation processes or through their combination, in the relevant literature a complex classification of acculturation types and theories has been formed, which from various perspectives approaches the analysis and explanation of this process.

Everything mentioned so far leads us to the conclusion that theoretical controversy in the understanding of the significant dynamic aspect of culture, the acculturation process, implies the necessity of the reevaluation of the theoretical viewpoints, the creation of an agreement in terms of the terminological, conceptual apparatus and the precise methodological constructs in the interdisciplinary attempt to achieve complete scientific illumination of the process of acculturation.

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KRITIČKI PREGLED ZNAČAJNIH TEORIJSKIH SHVATANJA PROCESA AKULTURACIJE

Jelena Petković

Akulturacija, kao vrlo složena kulturna pojava i jedan od najznačajnijih dinamičkih procesa u kulturi, privlači pažnju teoretičara i istraživača različitih gnoseoloških vokacija. To je vremenom uslovalo nagli porast broja studija, stručnih rasprava i istraživanja koja se bave promišljanjem i definisanjem ovog fenomena.

Budući da ne postoje jednoznačna određenja i usaglašena teorijska gledišta, ovaj rad pruža doprinos obuhvatnijem kritičkom prikazu teorijskih shvatanja procesa akulturacije. Na početku rada naglašava se značaj kulturnih kontakata i dodira, daje se etimološko određenje pojma akulturacija i ukazuje na brojne, njemu kompatibilne pojmove. U radu se naročito naglašavaju razlike u shvatanju ovog procesa, proizašle iz različitih profesionalnih orijentacija (antropološke, sociološke, kulturološke, istorijske, psihološke), različitih teorijskih pristupa (funkcionalizam, kulturalizam, teorija "kulturnih krugova", kulturnih konflikata, teorija globalizacije), pri čemu se razmatraju i teorijske kontroverze u shvatanju procesa akulturacije proizašle iz razlika u viđenju osnovnih uslova, uzroka i posledica ovog procesa.

Ključne reči: kultura, akulturaciona, dinamički procesi u kulturi.