CALL FOR PAPERS

THE INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

DISCURSIVE FORMS.
MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Bacău, Romania: 15ᵗʰ – 16ᵗʰ April 2021
Online Plenary Sessions and Panels (Microsoft Teams Platform)

This conference is organized by the **Interstud** and **Cetal** research centres, at the **Faculty of Letters**, **Vasile Alecsandri University of Bacău**, Romania, **in collaboration with:**

University of Lorraine, Research centre for mediations (France)
Faculty of Letters, Languages, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Corsica Pasquale Paoli (France)
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The concept of identity has always been a very difficult one to define. Its ambiguity, vagueness, versatility and pervasiveness do not, however, cancel its indispensability in a world increasingly marked by the need to draw clear boundaries of selves and communities.

Philosophical, logical, psychological or linguistic research, particularly in its modern and postmodern incarnations, has never ceased to underline that identity cannot be conceived in the absence of alterity. It is indeed in the continuous struggle between sameness and otherness that the elements necessary for the constitution of identity can be found. Such struggles periodically produce the so-called "identity crises" (Erikson, 1968) that are necessary steps for the evolution of an individual or of a group of individuals. Crises become important factors in the continuous formation of identities, as they are based on the confrontation between the old and the new, between past and present, between conventionalized structures and emerging paradigms that challenge those structures.

The construction of identities in today's world is profoundly conditioned by specific cultural and technological evolutions. The advent of the digital age has made possible an explosion of forms of self-expression, but this multiplication of possibilities has been accompanied by disturbing and rather chaotic social phenomena. More than at any other time in human history, we need to assume the task of reconfiguring identities that are augmented, multiplied and ceaselessly threatened by the spectrum of dissolution. Contemporary practices and modes of existence predispose identities to a high degree of instability and ephemerality, resulting from the accelerated change of roles, jobs and functions. This leads to a kind of anxiety that can be only provisionally appeased.

The acceleration of processes at all levels in our society (especially in technology, family and education) renders difficult any analytical and predictive endeavours in this respect. Understanding identity as "an individual's or a group's sense of self" (Huntington, 2005) stresses the role of psychological factors involved in the definition of selves. If nations and, more generally, societies can be seen as "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983), that is a result of a number of shared projections and interpretations of events, objects or territories coagulated into meaningful wholes through specific memory techniques. The investigation of the modes of preservation, transmission and alteration of identities is also an investigation of how the subjective blends with the objective, through numerous discursive manifestations, building up various and generally volatile intersubjective identities. We are, after all, but sums of discourses competing for supremacy in cultures evolving in indestructible and omnipresent language contexts, and "the limits of our languages are the limits of our world" (Wittgenstein, 1921).

The relation between individual and collective identities can never be sufficiently underlined, as it is by reference to a system of socially shared and transmitted values that one's image of oneself is formed. In such formations, discursive forms play a crucial role. Identity has become an ever shifting and heterogeneous mosaic that includes multiple identifications with images provided from competing external systems. Thus, "the ascription of identity is the consequence of a choice among the criteria of identity" (Wieseltier, 1996). Choices of identity criteria are conditioned by predominant ideologies, expressed through discourses of power that create hierarchies of values subtending the vision of man adopted by a certain historical age. Our present world, despite its generous offer of various discursive forms, can render the task of identity very difficult. The lack of any clearly outlined body of ethical principles and values, the viral communication of false information posing as 'true', and the speed with which identities are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed – all these factors create a cultural relativism eventually leading to frustration, unrest and disorientation.

One move against those negative phenomena would be to find ways of preservation of achievements, epistemes and values which could constitute solid premises for the building of perennial identities, at both individual and group levels. The interrogation of the modes in which our culture seeks authenticity and truth is essentially intertwined with the types of discourses that could be used to preserve our memory, to justify our choices and to form consistent and dependable identities.

We invite specialists in such fields as linguistics, discursive analysis, literature, communication studies, cultural studies, sociology, arts, philosophy, epistemology, logic, journalism, digital humanities, etc. to contribute papers addressing problems related to the issues presented above. The following topics are suggested, but by no means should they be considered exhaustive:

- Patrimony and patrimonialization
- Minorities, media and new media: problems, realities and perspectives
- New forms and modes of self-expression in literary and non-literary discourse
- Memorial discourse and subjective literature
- Fiction and collective memory
- Identity constructions and forms of communication

A selection of the papers will be published in *Interstudia*, an academic journal indexed in the EBSCO, CEEOL, INDEX COPERNICUS databases.

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Deadlines

First call for papers	**25th October 2020**
Proposal submission	**15th January 2021**
Confirmation of proposal	**15th March 2021**
Conference programme dissemination	**10th April 2021**
Online Plenary Sessions and Panels (Microsoft Teams Platform)	**15th-16th April**
Paper publication	**October 2021**