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# Contents

# Cooperation and Collaboration Impact on Policy Development: HIV/AIDS Policy in Latvia

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This article describes a case study of trends of governance approach implementation in the health policy development and implementation process in Latvia, in the state in transition, or "new democracy". Latvia became an independent democratic state in 1991, regaining its freedom after being part of the Soviet Union for 50 years. As the three Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) had a common history and starting point in the health reform implementation, the data of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) incidence and implemented policy steps were analyzed and compared of all the three states. The research provides insight into the HIV/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) situation in Latvia from the time when the first patient was diagnosed till nowadays, describing the initiatives that were implemented to combat the spread of HIV infection and analyze the impact of different stakeholders in the policy development and implementation process. Although the main reform implementation actors in Latvia were Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or patient organizations by performing cooperation and collaboration with all the actors involved in the policy development and implementation process, more profound investigation reveals that major impact came from "old democracies", international and global organizations as well as from physicians and commercial powers by providing a suitable environment for the reform development.

*Keywords:* governance, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), health policy

## Introduction

The epidemic of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and the spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection are a worldwide problem for more than three decades, and according to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), the common goal for the whole world is to stop the AIDS epidemic by year 2030, by ensuring that everyone living with HIV has access to HIV treatment. The new formula or target that should be reached by 2020 is "90-90-90", meaning that by the end of year 2020: 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral treatment (ART), and 90% of all people receiving ART will have viral suppression (UNAIDS, 2017).

HIV as an infectious disease has an impact on health and wellbeing of the whole society, and is not a national or even regional, but a global problem; so to combat the epidemic, activities have to be carried out globally. One of the indicators of the global significance of the HIV problem is establishment of the UNAIDS organization by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 26 July, 1994 to undertake a

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joint and cosponsored program on HIV on the basis of co-ownership, collaboration, planning and execution, and an equitable sharing of responsibilities with six cosponsoring United Nations organizations. UNAIDS still remains the only cosponsored joint program of the United Nations system and provides all levels of inclusiveness, providing multi-stakeholder approach with member states, cosponsors and civil society, and specifically people living with and affected by HIV[1].

To achieve the Goal 90-90-90 and combat the spread of HIV infection globally, all the member states should take actions and work in collaboration and cooperation with the civil sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on local levels providing good and smart governance.

Latvia is a state in transition or a "new democracy", located in the Baltic Region of Northern Europe. The state regained its freedom from the Soviet Union in year 1991, as did both the neighboring countries Estonia and Lithuania. Other countries that have borders with Latvia are Russia and Belarus. Latvia in year 2019 has 1,919,968 inhabitants and its territory is 64,573 km$^2$. Average life expectancy at birth for males is 70 years; for females is 79.6 years. The gross domestic product (GDP) in year 2018 was 29,523.664 million euros, per capita 15,328 euros, and per employee 32,796 euros. Total expenditure of government in year 2017 was 10,220.064 million euros and 37.806% of GDP, expenditure on health was 947.699 million euros or 3.506% of GDP or 9.273% of total Government expenditure (CSB, 2019a; 2019b; 2019c; 2019d).

Since March 29, 2004, Latvia is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and since May 1, 2004, it is a member state of the European Union. Although the healthcare policy is the national competency of every member state of the European Union, HIV as an infectious disease is an influential factor to public health, and that is a part of the whole European Region policy. As Latvia is a partner and member in several unions and associations, it has obligations to work in cooperation and collaboration and under the collective policy to achieve global targets.

The change that started in year 1991 by separating from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), initiated a global change in the way how health politics was organized: from centralized, planned economy health care system, to a new, comprehensive, and decentralized system. The implementation of new approaches in governing was stimulated by developed "old democracies" in other European countries, but hindered by the historical effects known as "path dependency" and "institutional inertia".

While in the "old democracies" in the middle of the 1990s, the second wave of governance—"Meta Governance" was reached, in the Baltic States, it was only a start of the first wave of governance—"Network Governance".

Shift from the old way of governing to a new approach, according to James A. Rhodes: "Governance signifies a change in the meaning of government, referring to new processes of governing; or changed conditions of the ordered rule; or new methods by which society is governed" (Rhodes, 2012, p. 33). The change implies not only a change in the processes and rules, but according to Levi-Faur, it also "includes a shift from politics to markets, from the community to markets, from politicians to experts, from political, economic, and social hierarchies to decentered markets, partnerships and networks" (Levi-Faur, 2012, p. 7).

Change in the processes and environment requires also

> a paradigm shift from the old regulation by command and control to a regulatory governance model, signifying a collective intellectual and programmatic project for a new legal regime. New governance offers a vision of law and policy

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[1]  UNAIDS (Governance). About governance. Retrieved from https://www.unaids.org/en/whoweare/governance.

that draws on the comparative strengths of both private and public stakeholders and highlights the multiple ways in which the various actors in society contribute to the acts of ordering social fields. (Lobel, 2012, p. 65)

All the previously mentioned changes lead to the question: How these changes impact and change the role of the state in the process of reform or in the political change development and implementation process? The answer, provided by Guy Peters is:

One can also conceptualize good governance as the existence of a state, operating alone or along with its partners that provide a wide range of services to the public. The logic is that the state should use its capacity to tax, spend, and regulate in order to improve the lives of citizens, a version of governance that clearly describes the welfare states of Europe. (Peters, 2012, p. 26)

Clarifying the meaning of governance in a health sector, according to the WHO definition "Governance is a political process that involves balancing and competing influences and demands" that is provided by "wide range of steering and rule-making related functions carried out by the government's decision-makers as they seek to achieve national health policy objectives" (WHO, 2019).

Narrowing the wide subject of health politics to HIV topic, the infectious disease that is not only a problem of the national, but also regional level, and which is influenced by a broad range of aspects, the role of cooperation and collaboration becomes even more significant and should be aimed to correspond to the WHO characteristics: "Beyond the formal health system, governance means collaborating with other sectors, including the private sector and civil society, to promote and maintain population health in a participatory and inclusive manner" and should be managed in that manner in either way—internally or locally as well as externally or globally (WHO, 2019).

### HIV/AIDS Patient in Latvia—25 Years Retrospective

The first patient diagnosed with HIV in Latvia was in year 1987 and the HIV/AIDS Register was established in year 1994. According to data from the Register, on the 1st of July 2018, there were 5,500 patients in Latvia who were infected with HIV, but according to data from HIV specialists, the real figure of people infected with HIV in Latvia is for approximately one third higher (Latvijas Sabiedriskie Mediji [LSM], 2018).

According to the data from the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control of Latvia, in year 2018, newly diagnosed patients with HIV were 326 (221 male and 105 female). The distribution of transmission ways in year 2018 is as follows: The leading cause is heterosexual transmission (109), injection drugs (73), homosexual transmission (19), vertical transmission (5), and almost one-third of cases where the way of transmission was unknown (120). During the period of 1987-2018, patients diagnosed with HIV—7,669 (913 of which are dead) and patients diagnosed with AIDS—2,036 (1,121 of which are dead) (SPKC, 2019a; 2019b).

The spread of infection prevalence is variable over time—starting to rise from year 1997, reaching its peak in year 2001, significantly decreasing in year 2005, and still rising again nowadays. During the whole period, dominating group of the patients is male (see Figure 1).
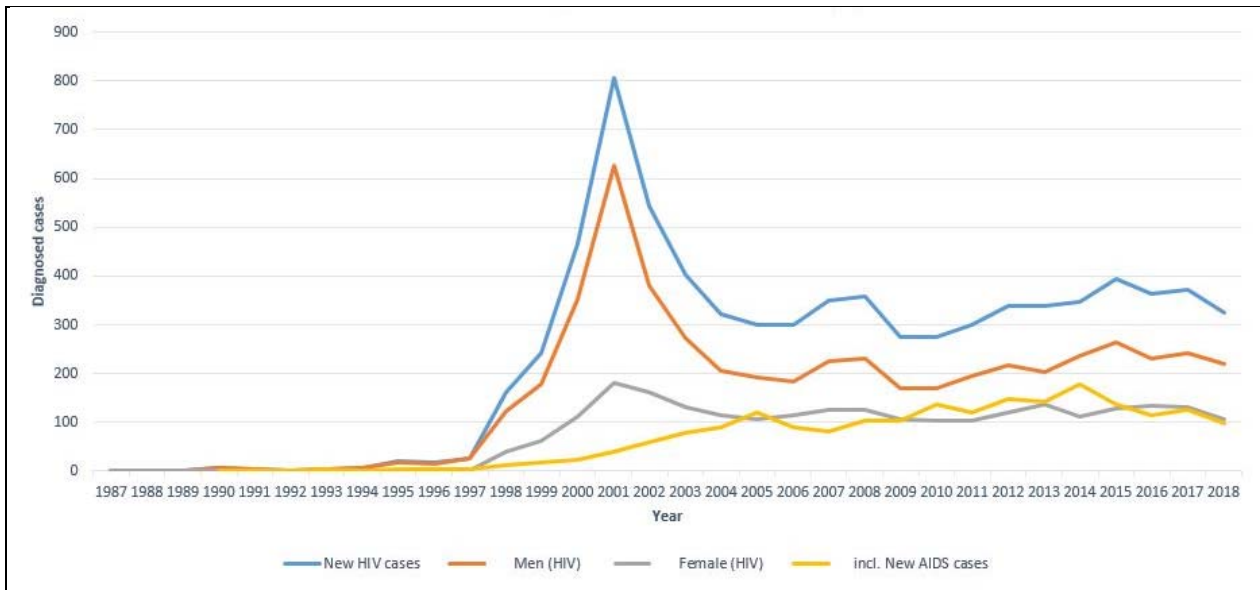
*Figure 1.* HIV/AIDS diagnosed cases in Latvia (Source: SPKC, 2019a; 2019b).

The way of transmission over time has significantly changed from homosexual transmission dominating at the start, to heterosexual transmission dominating at present; however, there is a significant part of patients with an unknown way of infection transition (see Figure 2).
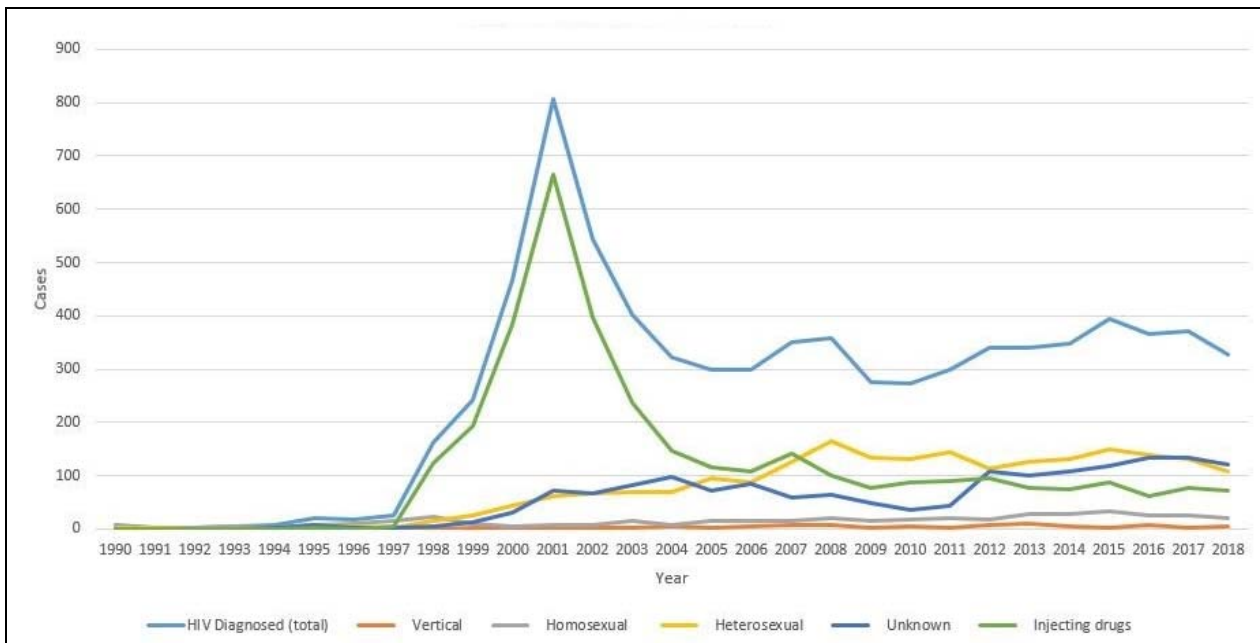


*Figure 2.* Way of HIV transition in diagnosed cases in Latvia (Source: SPKC, 2019a; 2019b).

As can be observed from these data until year 1995, the increase in the number of patients diagnosed with HIV was relatively low, that is, 10 newly diagnosed cases with the leading way of transmission―homosexual and diagnosed mainly in male.

The explosive increase in diagnosed cases was observed in year 2001, when the number of HIV diagnosed cases increased to 807 persons (626 male and 181 female) and the dominating way of transmission was

injecting drugs. In the next period of years 2002-2005, the number of diagnosed cases falls significantly to 299 cases in year 2005, but still the main way of transition is drug injection. Only in year 2007, change in the way of infection transition is observable and dominating way becomes heterosexual.

Comparing the data of HIV incidence with the neighboring countries—Lithuania, Estonia, Belarus, and Russia, there is a noticeable relation during the period of years 1996-2017, when the data show that the epidemic began in neighboring countries: from Russia in the East (rate 40.35 in year 2000 and 59.44 in year 2001) and from Estonia in the North (rate 28.48 in year 2000 and 108.06 in year 2001), but staying relatively low in the South: Lithuania (rate 2.07 in year 2001 and peak of 11.44 in year 2002) with no significant impact on Belarus in the South-East. The epidemic started in the North with a dramatic impact on Estonia, presumably on the border with Russia (there is no public data available on the situation in Russia from year 2002 till year 2010) and then spreading down to Latvia and Lithuania (see Figure 3).
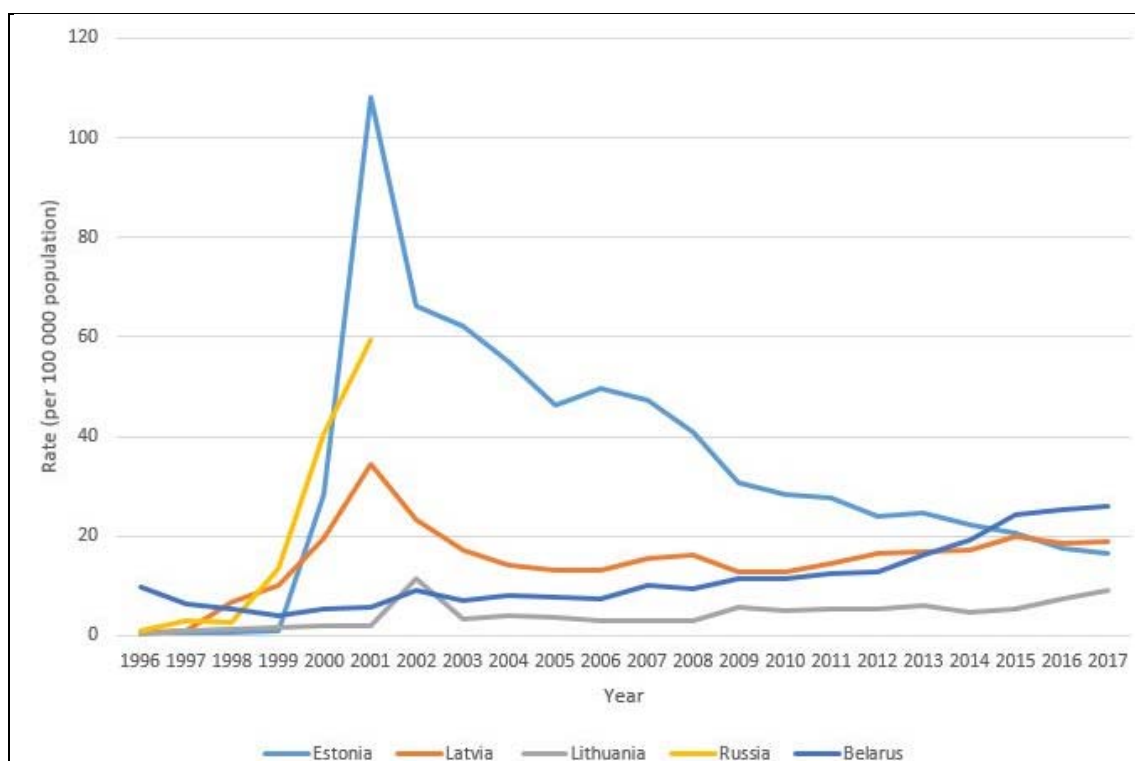


*Figure 3.* HIV incidence (Source: HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Europe, 2001; 2008; 2018).

According to the data from the research in Estonia, the HIV epidemic started in the community of injecting drug users; as shown from cross-sectoral bio-behavioral studies and data from needle and syringe exchange programs conducted in year 2005, majority of HIV cases in Estonia have been diagnosed in the capital city—Tallinn (32 cases per 100,000 in year 2005) and in Ida-Viirum county in the North-Eastern part on the border with Russia (76 cases per 100,000, in year 2005 [NIHD Estonia, 2016]).

The data about HIV incidence in the region as well as research in Estonia confirm that the HIV infection in this region started in Russia and afterwards spread through neighboring countries, thus once more confirming that infectious diseases are not only national, but also a regional problem and to overcome it, the activities have to be performed in cooperation and collaboration.

Comparing data of AIDS incidence with the neighboring countries during the long-time period of years 1996-2017, Latvia was the country with the highest rate of cases almost for the whole period, when HIV was diagnosed at the AIDS phase (see Figure 4).
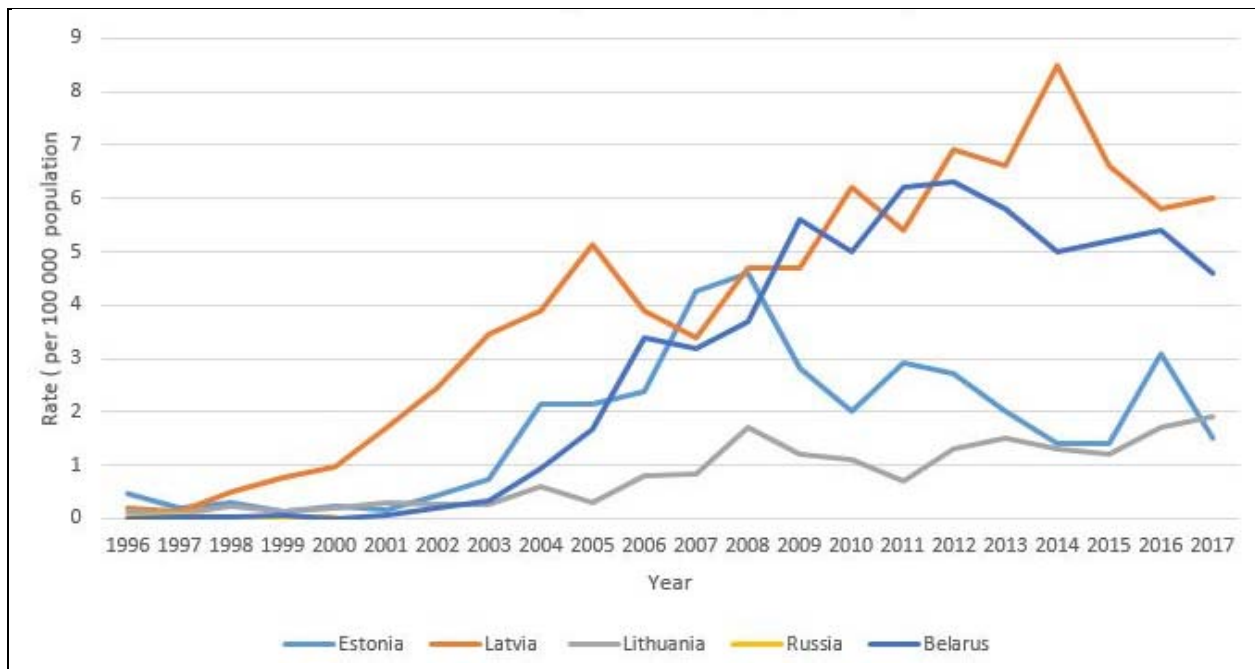


*Figure 4.* AIDS incidence (Source: HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Europe, 2001; 2008; 2018).

Despite the fact that the highest incidence of HIV was in Estonia reaching the rate of 108.06 cases while the highest rate in Latvia was three times lower (34.27), the highest rate of AIDS incidence was in Latvia, and is still the highest among neighboring countries. Those data of AIDS incidence lead to the conclusion that there is a lack of timely HIV diagnosis and treatment possibilities in Latvia.

In comparison with other European countries in year 2017 where the average rate of HIV diagnosed patients was 6.2 per 100,000, in Latvia the rate was three times higher, reaching 18.8 per 100,000 people. In Latvia, there is not only the highest rate of newly diagnosed HIV patients in Europe, but also the average rate of AIDS patients 6.0 per 100,000, while in Europe 0.7 per 100,000 (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control [ECDC], 2018).

Research on HIV/AIDS policy development and implementation process in Latvia indicated that significant actors were Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), especially those who represented patients. The first NGO aimed to support persons with HIV/AIDS was established in year 1993, named Latvian for Support Group for People Living with HIV/AIDS (AGIHAS). Another NGO, established in year 2006, was "Apvienība.HIV"—the association that is working to improve the quality of life of people infected with HIV, in all its aspects involving advocacy as well as other forms of support.

In year 2010, an international NGO "Baltic HIV Association" that united three Baltic States—Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia was established. The NGO involves well-known specialists, former employees of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), national AIDS center, and researchers.

The main activities performed by NGOs were more focused on the provision of expertise in the HIV field by submitting recommendations to the Ministry of Health and other organizations. All three NGOs are still

actively working to protect the rights of the HIV/AIDS patients and to improve the quality of patients' life and access to healthcare.

One of the most significant factors for the HIV/AIDS patient treatment possibilities and to work on restricting the spread of infection in Latvia was due to the restrictions of possibilities to receive state-funded medication—Anti Retroviral Therapy (ART).

At the beginning, the ART was provided only to patients if their immunity level; it is the number of Cluster of Differentiation 4 (CD4) cells was below 200. Although the UNAIDS recommended to abolish any restrictions depending on the immunity level of CD4 cells on receiving ART already in year 2015, due to scarce funding resources, these changes in Latvia were implemented only at the end of year 2018. In comparison to other developed countries, the state provided funding to healthcare needs is lower than 4% of GDP (aiming to reach 4% of GDP in 2020). The scarce resources impose limitations on possibilities to provide more funding to healthcare, especially for granting the funding to marginalized groups.

Since July 1, 2016, the ART was provided to patients in Latvia if their rate of CD4 cells was below level 350. Since January 1, 2018, if CD4 was below 500 and despite scarce resources and other obstacles, the goal was reached and since October 1, 2018, every patient diagnosed with HIV in Latvia can receive state-paid ART. How this was achieved is described in the section about NGO impact on policy development. In comparison with neighboring countries, in Estonia, restriction on CD4 count was abolished in 2016, in Lithuania in February 2018.

A significant factor that was highlighted in discussions with the patient organizations in Latvia is the lack of specialists available in regions. There is only one hospital in Latvia where HIV/AIDS patients can receive consultations and prescriptions for medicine. For patients living in further regions from the capital Riga, especially for those who do not own a car, it is an obstacle to be a sympathetic patient and to follow all the treatment recommendations. That is a "hot topic" in Latvia, not only for HIV patients, but also for C-hepatitis and patients of other diseases. That is related to an insufficient number of specialists available in regions as well as to patients specific population density—in Riga, the capital of Latvia where half of all the population of Latvia is living.

However, the most frightening factor for the HIV patient in Latvia is the high level of stigmatization and lack of knowledge about the disease and ways of its transmission in all parts of the society—also among medical specialists, especially the ones working in primary health care.

According to first available research on society attitude to HIV infected people in the Baltic States, from the survey performed in Lithuania in year 2003 on public opinion about vulnerable groups, there is a significant increase in tolerance towards the people with HIV during the time. In year 1990, 77.6 percent of questioned people admitted having no wish to live in a neighborhood with people infected with HIV, in year 2003, this percentage was only 49.3 or 1.5 times less (Lithuanian AIDs Centre, 2004).

The latest research on HIV Stigma index in the Baltic States was performed in Latvia in year 2018 by interviewing 409 HIV patients about their experience receiving health care services, attitude towards them in their workplaces and from their families, and friends. Research was also carried out on other aspects characterizing patients' quality of life, social status, and self-stigmatization. According to the research results, due to a very high level of stigmatization in the society, 75.8% of patients are hiding their HIV diagnosis from others, 24.1% has decided to obtain from various social events, and 15% are isolating themselves from their families and friends (LETA, 2019).

Because of the HIV situation, most of the HIV patients feel various negative emotions: 50.5% feel ashamed, 47.2% feel guilty for having the HIV, 33.7% feel worthless, and 27.6% feel like being dirty (LETA, 2019). The same research on Stigma index was performed in Estonia, already in year 2010. According to data from research in Estonia: Over 60% reported feeling guilty, 57% blamed themselves, 42% felt ashamed, and over 33% had low esteem (Estonian Network of People Living with HIV [ENPLHIV], 2012). Comparing results of the first Stigma index research in the Baltic States—performed in Estonia with the second research, made eight years later in Latvia, the level of stigma has decreased, but is still very high.

According to research results on social life activities in year 2018, 12.2% of HIV patients in Latvia due to their HIV status decided not to have sex, 6.6% did not ask for medical help, 5.6% were not looking for social help, 5.4% decided not to apply for work, and 38% of HIV patients had experienced discrimination from medical specialists or family. Discrimination has been also observed on behalf of primary care specialists—17.1% of patients have experienced rumors from medical personnel, 8.2% received recommendations to discontinue their sexual life, and 6.7% noticed that information about their HIV status has been revealed to other persons without their permission. According to reproductive health research results, 6.6% of patients received recommendations not to have children and 15.8% females to interrupt their pregnancy, although using ART provide possibilities to give birth to healthy children (LETA, 2019).

In the circumstances, there is enormous stigmatization from the society as well as self-stigmatization, lacking information about treatment possibilities and on options on how to live a quality life and stay an active member of society, while facing obstacles and misunderstandings in communication with healthcare professionals, the patient who have been diagnosed with HIV feels confused, abandoned, scared, and determined.

During the last few years, a lot of initiatives to support and improve the lives of HIV patients were implemented. Apart from the change in the regulation of ART availability, a special national plan for HIV/AIDS and C-Hepatitis diagnostics and treatment has been developed and confirmed by the government at the end of year 2017, special programs of children nutrition have been implemented to support children born from HIV positive mothers, as well as a special program has been created to inform and support HIV patients.

Of course, the situation for a patient diagnosed with HIV has been significantly changed and improved in comparison with the recent past, but there is still a lot of work to do to improve the possibilities for HIV patients in Latvia, to lead a quality life and enjoy one's existence. In addition to current problems, new actual topics are developing—aging and HIV. That is a reality of today, as patients living with AIDS are becoming 70 and older, and have multi-morbidity.

## NGO Impact on Policy Development and Implementation

To get an inside view and explore how changes in the policy were achieved, the research was made on HIV/AIDS policy development and implementation process in Latvia. According to the research, all the previously mentioned results and implemented political initiatives in HIV related topics in Latvia were driven mainly by activities carried out by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), especially patient organizations, with the leading player NGO "AGIHAS". The activities that were carried out by this NGO had a significant impact on the society, the government and the Parliament, providing necessary pressure to the state institutions to make decisions and satisfy the demand of the society.

AGIHAS was established in year 1993 with the aim that still after more than 25 years is the same:

The goal of the organization is to create throughout the region countries, life improvements and recognition of the rights of those affected by HIV/AIDS as well as to inform and educate the society, patients and those around them on the HIV infection, its risks and prevention tools, and finally increase adherence to HIV diagnostics, therapy and disease management. (AGIHAS, 2019)

The most significant competence of the association that unites HIV patients is, as mentioned by the chairman of the board: "AGIHAS knows how it is to live with HIV and how it really feels, unlike—others—who only try to imagine, how it could be to live as HIV positive". As the leaders of the NGO revealed, the success of the organization was not having some special strategy, long-middle and short term goals, neither plans nor projects, the whole 25 years, the organization was performing activities to combat the biggest problems that HIV patients have at that time.

The first wave of activities at the end of the 1990s and the start of the millennium were focused on the people who were drug users and persons in places of imprisonment, as those were the places were situation was really dramatic. According to statistics, at that time, the dominating group infected by the HIV was men and the dominating ways of transmission were injecting drugs. The spread of infection among drug users rose dramatically starting from year 1997 when there were only five cases, reaching the top in year 2001 when infection was gained by intravenous drug usage in 666 cases (SPKC, 2019a; 2019b).

Significant projects carried out by several NGOs (not only those—dedicated to HIV patients, but also others like "Red Cross") with the aim to fight the spread of infection among intravenous drug users and to create special places where drug users could exchange used syringe and get sterile ones for free. As was mentioned in the articles, those places became very popular for drug users and those activities lead to a significant decrease of infection spread.

Another smaller, but also an important activity was a project on elementary things—to give information to most vulnerable and hard to reach people by providing flyers and booklets about the infection transmission ways and giving free condoms—mainly in the places were drug users came to change syringes. Those projects of providing free exchange of used syringes are still active today and supported by many municipalities and now also partially funded by the state, as those projects exposed significant results.

Similar activities were already earlier implemented in Estonia. HIV testing and counseling services to commercial sex workers have been provided since year 1994, needle and syringe exchange programs were initiated in year 1997 (Laisaar, Avi, DeHovitz, & Uuskula, 2011).

In Lithuania, in year 1997, an anonymous counselling room for drug users was established offering needle exchange services that was sponsored by self-government of Klaipeda municipality and was the first of its kind in the Baltics. It took up the activities of needle and syringe exchange, condom distribution, dissemination of educational publications, and consulting on safer drug use and sexual behavior (Lithuanian AIDs Centre, 2004).

Another NGO working mainly on topics about sexual education in adolescent groups in Latvia is "Papardes zieds". It also carried out projects to educate youth about the HIV infection and safe sex as well as about other topics related to reproductive health. Those projects were not directly related to HIV infection, but knowledge about safe sex was also important to youth. Although those projects were successful, and even for some years, there was a special subject "health education" included in the school programs, after several years discussions arose in the society about the virtue and those topics were again excluded from the school programs. But there are still debates in the society on the topic, since after the changes made to raise a more virtue youth, the number of undesirable pregnancy cases in adolescence group increased.

When the first target audience—drug users were covered with the solution how to restrict infection among them, the second target group was identified at the start of the millennium was MSM (men having sex with men). That mostly happened in the places of imprisonment where those activities in most cases were not vulnerable. The projects carried out there were the same, providing flyers and booklets about the ways of infection transmission and by giving free condoms.

When the first activities aimed to educate the society and limit the spread of infection were implemented and ran smoothly with great results, the next steps performed by NGOs were to consolidate community—the persons infected with HIV that was stigmatized groups and felled as pariahs. The NGOs created groups for self-support, in the places where HIV patients could come to talk to each other and feel like a social being. As most of the patients were not having any understanding or compassion and felt isolated by family, friends, and relatives, those became places where they could be themselves without wearing a mask. Even after many years and changes that have happened in the way how society refers to HIV patients, those support groups are still popular and required by the patients, especially after their first reaction—resistance phase and anger are gone, and the phase of acceptance of the state has set in and the patient is looking for information on how to live his life further.

The idea of support groups, especially for patients who are recently diagnosed, was to help those patients to understand what the next steps are to be taken after the express test indicates that patient can be HIV positive. Support group provides persons who lead this new patient through the health care system, educate about how to live with HIV and how properly intake medicine, when and what tests should be made, monitor patients, assist, and support the patient. Those activities should provide increase in number of patients that are actively participating in the treatment process—use ART, regularly made tests and visits HIV specialist. After two years experience, when NGO came to the Ministry of Health of Latvia, and provided all the information—detailed reports on the program, activities and achieved results, the program was approved to be continued and funded by the state; starting from April 2019, this assistance program is a part of the state-run program and will be provided in even more places than before.

The next step taken by NGOs was intended to provide better opportunities for children born from the mothers having HIV. As one of the ways of infection transmission is breastfeeding, the idea was to provide all those newborns with artificial nutrition. The project was developed in cooperation with the leading hospital in the capital of Latvia, Riga Maternity Hospital. In the first year, the nutrition was provided only in this one, the leading hospital; in the second year, having great program results and a lot of positive feedback, the sponsors of the project were ready to provide more funding and provide program also to all other hospitals were HIV positive mothers gave birth to babies which were supplied by nutrition instead of breath milk. After one and a half year, with reports on all of the results of the project—criterions, expenses, and outcomes presented to the Ministry of Health, as it was the period announces as dedicated to "Maternal and child health" and there were funding available from European Funds run under this program—this initiative also become state-provided project since July 2018 and is still running with great results. So, it is another example how the project developed and carried out by an NGO and funded by a non-state budget, with good results and being economically and socially effective and efficient, can become state-funded. Those few examples not only show how NGO initiatives can become state projects, but also demonstrate possibilities, knowledge, and expertise as well as leadership skills that NGOs have, but the state institutions in most cases did not have.

However, the most valuable goal that has been reached as evaluated from both patient organizations and specialists was the development of "Action Plan for the Preventive of HIV, Sexually transmitted infections and

Hepatitis B and C for The 2018-2020 year" that was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Latvia on October 31, 2017.

All those achievements were reached by activities performed by NGOs, which were using all the tools and approaches that are described in Interest Group theory and Lobbying theory. For example, removal of the threshold was reached exerting pressure on decision-makers by organizing a campaign and publicly claiming Latvia to be the last state in the European Union having the limitation on access to ART for HIV patients as well as having a public discussion in the Ministry of Health and inviting UNAIDS ambassador to visit Latvia (the visit was organized by the NGO "AGIHAS") to publicly speak and disgrace Latvia on this topic.

Another initiative carried out by NGO "AGIHAS" in collaboration with other associations for several years is the conferences on international Worlds AIDS Day on December 1. These activities are great reminders of the existence of HIV/AIDS patients and impact of this infectious disease on the society, decision-makers included.

According to action plan development, the great result was achieved working hand-in-hand with all the groups related to this topic: medical professional associations, patient NGOs, pharmacy, hospitals, and of course, the government institutions. According to the information from interviews, the process of action plan development was heavy and took quite a long time and countless hours spent in the search for compromises and best possible solution, acceptable by the majority of involved stakeholders. Although no one was completely satisfied with the result, in spite of scarce resources of funding, insufficient number of available specialists and the overall situation in healthcare sector in Latvia, the developed and approved action plan was a great achievement.

Although when discussing activities and achieved results, the most significant actors are medical specialists, which knowledge, competence, and performing diagnosis and treatment, as well as patient organizations, of course, there are also some other power—players in the shadows or the pharmacy. Especially in the situation in Latvia, there are no special government funds provided to NGOs, and according to research results, the main supporters for NGOs, especially patient NGOs, are the pharmacy. In Latvia, there is a special regulation on activities that can be supported by drug manufacturers and that are prohibited, but the support of drug manufacturers, especially the global world known pharma companies have a significant role in supporting those NGOs.

Another factor worth mentioning that provided possibilities for NGOs to achieve such great results was funding that was available in different cross-border programs as well as European Union Funds. NGOs were actively participating in program contests with their projects and significant part of NGOs projects were established by those foreign funds. There was also funding from local organizations that supported meaningful projects carried out by NGOs, for example, program on newborn nutrition was sponsored by the donations from two local organizations.

## Conclusions

The research revealed that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other interest groups have a significant impact on the society in the development towards a better democracy, by providing protection of the interests of marginal groups, especially in the case when those marginal groups are unwelcomed and stigmatized by the society.

Research results confirm the widespread findings in the governance theory in "new democracies" were an active participatory society is developing, as written by Frank Fischer:

> In many of the newly created participatory space activists have assisted excluded people—such as poor, women, AIDS victims, and the disabled—in developing a collective presence that has permitted them to speak for themselves. Through such efforts, activists and their citizen groups have in many cases succeeded in influencing the policies of mainstream institutions. (Fisher, 2012, p. 467)

Another finding from the research was the lessons learned that good initiative with well-defined and achieved results that are reached by providing pilot projects and run by NGO can become a part of the state-funded and implemented policy afterwards. That can be explained by the knowledge, expertise, practice, and courage to deal with the risks and failures that interest groups or NGOs can afford, but the state lack, or cannot.

According to the new approach of governing—governance, research on HIV/AIDS policy development, and implementation revealed that in Latvia, the "new democracy" state, there is a place for the society and the private sector to have an impact on the policy development and implementation, but unfortunately the good governance practice is not yet observed, since the state is not the leading actor in the policy development. In this case, the leading actor was the patients NGO, having enormous support from the medical service providers—physicians and pharmacies.

Looking superficially at events described in this research report, it can be concluded, that the major and most visible actor in the change implementation were the patients organizations. However, according to theoretical findings by Yael Yishai (2012, p. 535),

> Patients influence is augmented when officials wish to introduce change and use health groups to support them in the face of professional opposition. Occasionally, patients are also drawn into partnerships with physicians to impede bureaucratic initiatives. Even under these circumstances patients do not exert influence on the policy process, but serve as cogs in the machine.

Another aspect that is mentioned in the literature and was observable also in the case study in Latvia was as per Yishai "Health groups often depend on pharmaceutical companies for their organizational resources. The lack of independence and competition for funding also divides the patients' movement, ultimately wreaking its impact and undermining its representation on a national level" (Yishai, 2012, p. 535).

Although according to theory, patient organizations are not recognized as powerful actors, in the case report on HIV/AIDS policy in Latvia, patient organizations were the leaders, who actively initiated and tirelessly maintained cooperation and collaboration with all the stakeholders. According to interviews and public opinion on possibilities of NGOs, to have an impact on institutions as well as the trust in democracy and power to influence some processes is very low and is correlated to previous achievements and long-term recognition of the NGO. As the chairman of the association AGIHAS mentioned, the organization has become an actor who is invited in public decision making and collaboration with institutions only in the last few years, and not like before when for about 20 years they were not welcomed in the policy development process.

A significant aspect that was observed during the research was the impact of other powerful players abroad. The most significant impact on decision-making arena environment was provided by the neighboring countries as well as international and global organizations. The new approach of governance provides that there is a developed civil society that supports and gives opportunities to interest group and NGO development. Therefore, another significant aspect of international institutionalism should be mentioned—the development of the civil society, which started in Latvia in year 2005, and the program provided to develop a powerful civil society was funded by the European Union and other foreign funding programs. So, we can conclude that there

is a significant impact of "old democracies" in "new democracies" in providing the way to new style of society governing—new governance approach.

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# A Model for Communicating Social Problems: Perception, Knowledge, Incorporation, and Change

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The article proposes a model to analyze, interpret, and construct the communication of social problems and everyday life. Four relevant aspects (perception, knowledge, integration, and change) of communication processes will be addressed, highlighting the issues to be addressed in light of the deep media coverage of our social world. In particular, it explores how perception changes profoundly in relation to the social conditions, groups, and communities to which one belongs. Furthermore, particular attention is paid to the difficult process of incorporation which allows concepts and social problems to become "family" through communication processes. Incorporation is a prerequisite for changing ideas and behaviors towards social problems. In conclusion, a strategy will be proposed to communicate social problems deepening dimensions and strongholds to be followed with particular reference to popularity and narratives in communication processes.

*Keywords:* communication, social problems, strategy

Cultural change has always been a central focus of social analysis. Understanding how and what symbols, values, and behavior change is to understand in depth changes and social innovations.

Communication is the catalyst and the core of this change, but often because of its characteristic of seeming naturalness, each individual and community tends to overlook and minimize the visible and invisible potential of communicative actions (Couldry, 2012).

As Couldry and Hepp (2017, pp. 34-35) also say, mediatization is a concept that helps us to critically analyze the interrelation between changes in media and communication on the one hand, and changes in culture and society on the other. The role of communication in history does not move like a relay-race, from one influencing medium to another. Rather, it is a continuous and cumulative enfolding of communication within the social world that has resulted today in ever more complex relations between the media environment, social actors, and therefore the social world.

This potentiality and intrinsic characteristic is even more important for the communication of social problems[1]. In fact, if communication is the main focus of the change in the buying patterns market, along with the strengthening and visibility of the brand, what often comes into play in social communication is the identity change of both the individual and collective.

[1] Communication of social problems is the communication related to everything that in people's social and daily life is vulnerable, marginal, difficult to face, and a bearer of obstacles to overcome.

Furthermore, the object of change issues is often controversial and contradictory—for example, there may be communication campaigns to counter the risk of pathological gambling, yet there are also explicit and implicit messages inviting you to "try your luck" in some state lottery—from both scientific and common sense points of view, and sometimes, from a moral one as well (e.g., a campaign against homophobia which urges people who have very different value-convictions on the subject to change their opinion). Three different aspects—science, common sense, and morality—each involves differentially individual and collective social imaginary (Jedloswki, 2008, p. 134).

This is the first reason why coming up with and planning social communication is not simple: When you touch things that are part of our deepest convictions or which are taken for granted in our daily lives, every fact, interpersonal communication, or media that tends to problematize, you do not have an easy time of it. The "roots" of imagination are deep and firm, and are unlikely to be affected unless specific events capable of subverting ideas, meaning, and linked images occur. Furthermore, the change of the self in the era of deep mediatization is even more accentuated and intertwined with digital platforms (Van Dijck, Poell, & De Waal, 2018) and with datification (Couldry & Hepp, 2017, pp. 122-142; Couldry & Meijas, 2019). From this we must try to understand the change of social imaginary processes in relation to the communication of social problems.

## The Processes of Change in the Communication of Social Problems

The changes that can be connected to the communication of social problems are neither simple nor immediate. But in order to start an argument that is not just fatalistic, we must try to analyze the process that could lead to changes in the experienced reality. At least four different stages have been identified: (a) perception, selection, and relevance; (b) knowledge; (c) incorporation; and (d) possible change of attitudes and behavior (see Figure 1).
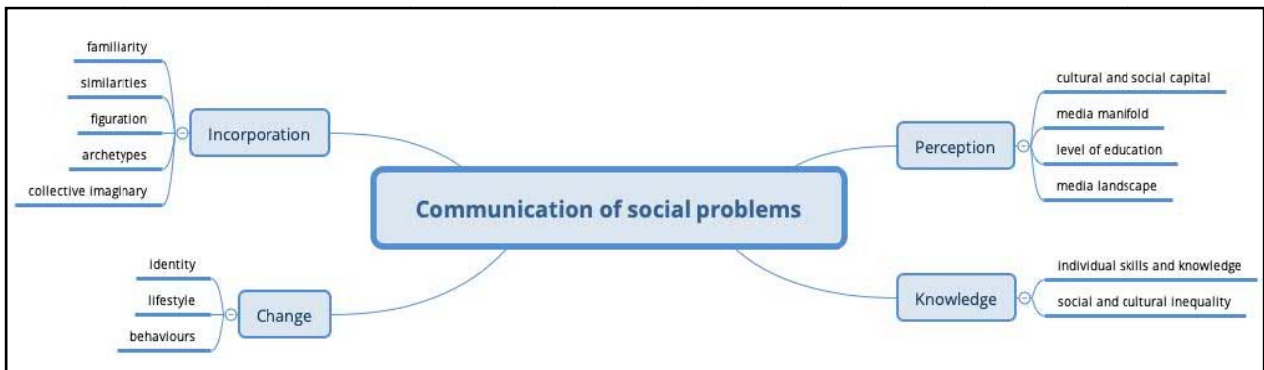


*Figure 1.* Model of communication of social problems.

## The Illusion of Knowledge: Between Perception and Knowledge

The perception of the subject by an individual is an important step. For example, I may be horrified by a car accident, but I do not feel that I can be involved if I do not adopt a different behavior. However, finding that particular communication process which makes me "switch on" my eye is not easy. Seeing is the first step. Beyond theories of persuading that the ability to build messages that are more noticeable than others, the issue at stake here is another: my behavior and my attitudes. In the above example, it is not easy to see what image or video, such as sequences, or which safety issue in the road driving narrative will be most able to make me turn on the selection.

Sloman and Fernbach (2018) have highlighted the problem of the illusion of knowledge, which is the fact that in most situations each of us is convinced that we know the details of what lies ahead and, instead, each knows what others know in depth.

In reality, we should say that each perceives what the others perceive and, perhaps, know. The distinction between perception and knowledge is fundamental for the reflection we would like to make. Perception is something that happens "in real time", while we are experiencing it, directly or mediatically. We can evade perception by turning our gaze in other directions (but in this case we would perceive other aspects that surround us) or, paradoxically, cancel all our senses and "cancel" external reality.

The social and communication problem that interests us is the impossibility of avoiding perception regardless of our desire to perceive or not a situation, an event, a context, or one or more people. This aspect, however, is connected to the fact that although we perceive what surrounds us in reality and/or mediatically, we are not interested in deepening all perceptions unless there is an imminent danger, we need to act after having perceived, or we think it could be useful later. We leave, either in the background or peripherally, what we are not interested in. On what basis is our selection built? There are many aspects that intervene in selective perception (Bentivegna & Boccia Artieri, 2019) which are inherent to our occupation, our daily lifestyle, our aspirations, dreams, and desires; our problems and our opportunities, our relationships, the groups and associations to which we belong, the places and spaces of our lives, and our previous experiences. There are many variables that can influence the choice of perceptions that we consider relevant to us. From this perspective, cultural and social inequalities are extremely relevant for differentiation in perceptions: the lack of mastery of some cultural instruments, the intermittency with which some people deal with certain issues, and the profound inconsistency with their daily lives sharpen or diminish perception or they distort it in order to be able to appropriate it, albeit superficially. To this we must also add the digital inequalities that go beyond the purely technical digital divide, becoming a cultural digital divide that does not allow full accessibility to the completeness of perception (Bentivegna, 2009).

In the context just described, addressing this problem by invoking the need for completeness of information, the need for more detailed knowledge of the issues, is a way to hide the reality that, instead, most people live in: Among the multitude of information and communications, very few become relevant; the rest is forgotten, or at least distorted, modified, or integrated. And above all the knowledge will never be deepened because it is time taken away from other activities or from the knowledge of other priority aspects.

This inability to accept the reality of the perception by those who deal with social problems and social life (such as third sector and social economy organizations) can be partially explained with the complete involvement in the topic/problem they would like to be perceived. If I, as an organization, deal with the reception of refugees and asylum seekers within a structure, I will have a perception and detailed knowledge of the characteristics, problems, and aspirations of the people I am welcoming. If I pretend that this type of perception and knowledge about refugees is also the heritage of the territorial community, I have not understood how processes and communication practices work. These aspects are continually repeated in essentially the same way in multiple organizations that prefer to concentrate on communicating their service to their users rather than working on communicative relationships with the community.

The vicious circle that triggers self-referentiality and claiming against those who do not perceive/understand is particularly strong. To this is often added a further claim with respect to the media system that is incapable of adequately representing the themes and problems of third sector organizations.

To break these dual symmetries, it becomes necessary to "make the horse move" or to shift the attention to the problem of perception by addressing the issue of inequalities on the one hand and on the other, the question of the construction of dialoguing relationships that allow the initiation of a mutual communicative recognition path.

Some might argue that this situation could be possible at the level of small communities, but if we move to a national or international level, the role of the media becomes central in building framing processes and agenda setting with respect to social issues and problems. The reasoning is certainly correct because some social themes and problems are interpretable only if we remain within frames that the media help to create through, for example, the use of metaphors that allow a simplification that interacts profoundly with the individual imaginary and collective (Ervas & Gola, 2016; Lakoff, 2014). Still the mediated construction of reality (Couldry & Hepp, 2017) is not only a concept dear to academics, but a process that has expanded more since the digital revolution and, in particular, with the development of the so-called platform society (Van Dijek et al., 2018). It is through the platforms that our daily lives take shape and develop without interruption through relevant communication processes as much as those face to face. In this continuity between on- and off-line (Boccia Artieri, 2016; Boccia Artieri, Gemini, Pasquali, Carlo, Farci, & Pedroni, 2017), each of us is completely immersed in both a continuous construction and reconstruction of social ties and in representing the "best side" of ourselves as well as being protagonists of communicative practices aimed at adding perception and knowledge for us and for others (Couldry, 2012).

### Quantity or Quality of Communication?

The dilemma is badly posed. Surely the amount of communication on a given theme or social problem increases the individual and collective perception, albeit with the limits we have highlighted. The cross-media and the daily allow perceiving to those who want. But if the communication is qualitatively poor, unprofessional, and/or incapable of arousing the curiosity necessary to deepen it, the result risks being too little productive in order to pass from perception to knowledge of the theme/problem. Generally, within third sector organizations, it is a question that is liquidated only in terms of resources: for quantity and quality, economic and professional resources that are needed but are not easily accessible.

## The Social Imaginary Between Perception and Incorporation

But then what do we perceive as social imaginaries? And how is it possible to change the perception, going beyond the difficulties we have highlighted? These are two questions that are closely related to each other.

Social imaginaries are a set of symbolic and value representations, of direct and mediated experiences, emotionally oriented and stratified over time by objects, spaces, and social flows. They are spaces of reality constructed mediatically, which third sector organizations and, more generally, all of us have to do on a daily basis. When we meet people with disabilities, we build a relationship that refers to the reality experienced directly but also to that built on disability over time with ideas, stereotypes, and representations. It is not a problem of which of the two is more relevant than the other because they co-operate simultaneously to strengthen, modify, and integrate our perceptions and knowledge. Nor is it a deterministic mechanism (cause-effect) that helps to clarify how a social imaginary is constructed, but rather a continuous individual and collective construction/reconstruction that continually accompanies us in our lives.

Let's go back to our initial questions and let's try to clarify some aspects. First, we perceive those parts of the imagination that are contingently most useful to us in the relationships we are experiencing in the present. Staying with the disability example, in the relationship with people with disabilities I will initially use those parts of the social imaginary on disability that help me overcome the fear of diversity (rarely the danger of diversity), a profound archetype that makes us wary of that which we do not know. Secondly, I can perceive, if it is not the first experience, the differences between people with the same disability or with different disabilities. I perceive the nuances that can help me to deepen the relationship towards the knowledge of disability. Thirdly, I can perceive the complex issues of people with disabilities in their completeness and accuracy. Social imaginaries are a resource for the perception that can be activated by each of us with variable geometries and are a resource present in a different way in the collective and, most importantly, individual imaginations.

The change in the perception of social imaginary is in most situations a temporally long process. The stratification of representations and experiences that collectively accumulate has a persistence and a compactness that can be modified only with other layers of representations and different experiences of symbols, values, and meanings. This does not mean that it is easy to replace one framing process with another simply through well-constructed social communication strategies. It is indeed a process that involves slow, gradual, and broad development, alongside the pre-existing ones of different representations and direct and mediated experiences. There is also the possibility that sudden fractures occur in the framing caused by exceptional and popular events that distort the stratifications established up to that point. An example is the image of the dead migrant child lying facedown on the shore of a beach that has at least partially contributed to drawing more attention to the problem. In reality, after a short time and due to the absence of other possible representations, the framing reverts back to the previous one.

So, are perceptions difficult to change? If we want persistent changes over time and lasting effects, we cannot ignore that the processes must involve a large number of people and, above all, that they must take into account the individual and social characteristics of each of those people. The processes by which we interpret and select media content are very complex (Couldry, Livingstone, & Markham, 2010). One on which it is important to dwell is that the role of individuals, and the communities to which they belong, is an established element in the interpretation to be taken into account in social communication. It is a delicate phase that is not attributable only to the visibility of the issue or problem, but also to the ability and symbolic resources that individuals possess. These are not distributed evenly within the population nor do they reproduce the same social and territorial family and economic contexts. Next comes the problem of cultural inequalities at stake (Bentivegna, 2009), a problem which, along with that of social inequalities, has been too often overlooked or relegated to the margins of reflection in recent times. If I do not have sufficient or adequate cultural and symbolic resource perception, the significance and the selection will be strongly affected, and in some cases, severely limit the opportunities that could be seized. For example, it is known that good nutrition prevents serious health problems. However, it is also known that those who have greater economic and cultural deprivation tend to underestimate the problem, and thus poor nutrition adds further problems to existing problems.

## Knowledge

This aspect is closely linked to the second phase of the process of change, knowledge. The transition from the perception of the theme's relevance to knowledge is primarily a growth of awareness of the need to deepen,

individually or collectively, a certain aspect in which I/we are concerned. In this case as well the path is not deterministic but connected to both the characteristics and individual resources that are available across all media and interpersonal relationships. Neither aspect can be taken for granted but, in fact, possess considerable difficulties, even when everything else would tell us otherwise. A striking example is the knowledge that should result from communication processes in risk or crisis situations due to natural disasters. Even during those moments which are critical for physical survival, the initial problematization does not automatically switch to the knowledge of what should be done (Horsley, 2016). Despite seismic risk awareness, few of us remember that there are small things you can do in your own home, such as securing everything on the walls. Those involved in risk communication and prevention tried to come up with and plan complex models that provide a strong activation of local communities and a strong involvement of people who could potentially be interested in such knowledge, with particular reference to the most vulnerable social situations (Volterrani, 2016). For example, the involvement of people with disabilities may not only be "on paper", but stem from a detailed one-to-one relationship that increases the degree of risk knowledge and the consequent ability to implement what is necessary in order to prevent problems.

The implications with respect to knowledge are even more profound if we consider that the production of knowledge today no longer passes only through face-to-face relations, but also through digital platforms and, more generally, datification (Couldry & Hepp, 2017, pp. 122-142). The consequence with regard to the communication of social problems is particularly important because the datification is also accompanied by a profound acceleration of social life (Rosa, 2013) and by a superficiality and speed in the circumstantial interpretation of what surrounds us. Such a profound change cannot be avoided if we want to try to develop a more in-depth reasoning about the possibilities of change. But an even more relevant element is the one we will discuss in the next section.

## Incorporation

Knowledge alone, however, is not sufficient to prompt a possible action. The next step is incorporation. Some scholars of cognitive psychology (Hofstadter & Sander, 2011) have highlighted the way in which humans expand their wealth of concepts and terms in their own world of thought. The tool we use to categorize the outside world is the analogy, i.e., reading the external environment with the categories we already have in our heads and in our daily life experience. The incorporation of new concepts and new experiences is through comparisons and comparisons (note similarities) with what we have in our heads and what we think comes closest to the new issue we are facing. It is evident that absolute novelty will have more difficulty of being incorporated than new minor or simple variations on already known themes and problems. For those not raised in Italy, the bidet is an object and a concept which is not easy to incorporate (or even to comprehend), but it is easier than trying to imagine what it is like to make a crossing without economic resources in the hold of a jam-packed boat always on the verge of sinking. It is perhaps the most important aspect of change through the communication process because it leaves little room for innovation and deep trends. We tend to consolidate what we know well and distrust what we do not know. No wonder this reasoning because the survival of the species is closely linked to the ability to read and assess the dangers posed by the unknown. The archetype of fear of the new and different is rooted in our collective imagination and is an integral part of human history (Durand, 1960). This does not mean that we do not possess the cultural tools to overcome this archetype, but, returning to the reflections on cultural inequalities, it is unthinkable that we all possess the same means. It is

much easier to say, "We've always done well" or "There is nothing much to do; it's fate" than evaluate alternatives and possibilities, and build visions and different horizons (Vergani, 2012) on the subject or the problem to be addressed.

Furthermore, it is fundamental to underline that the social construction of reality today, profoundly influenced by the media, also modifies the processes of incorporation. Couldry and Hepp (2017) use the concept of figurations by Norbert Elias (1978) to describe the forms that interdependence and interactions between individuals take and how meaning and interpretation are produced in a context of deep media and digitalization. The incorporation, therefore, also changes through analogies that are produced individually and collectively within the figurations. In the case of social problems this aspect is particularly relevant because the issues are deeply immersed in the figurations built both in digital media and in everyday social life, with continuous feedback of reciprocity full of contradictions and different interpretations that make the shared incorporation of concepts even more difficult.

## Change

The fourth and final phase is the action of change. This is a delicate phase because the action of change may have effects on both the individual and collective level and can be real or imaginary. Individual change is more complex because it involves a "revolution" in the behavior or attitudes of our daily lives. If, for example, we think of how challenging it is for individual smokers to quit smoking despite a large presence of information and empirical evidence, we can understand that this step, which is often considered to be "simple", has, however, many elements of complexity to be explored. The most common expression is, "I want to stop smoking because it's bad for me, but I can't". Another argument is the change of the collective imagination which, though complex, can be achieved more easily. In fact, this is closely connected with local cultural change or the collective imagination on the subject. Also in the case of smoking, the growing prohibition of spaces available for smokers has been "accepted" as a positive change, even by smokers themselves, without protest.

The process of change can be connected to communication of social problems, and therefore, is complex and articulated. If we add to the difficulties of interpersonal and media communication processes that are now an integral part of the studies on the audience (Murray, Schrøder, Drotner, & Kline, 2003), we understand that the challenge is difficult but very attractive to those who care about improving the quality of life of our communities.

## The Problem of Media Manifold

From the point of view of social problems, reasoning on the change in the communication process means, therefore, trying to operate in order to innovate the public imagination in the direction of an enlargement of the symbolic resources available to individuals and communities of often complex and contradictory issues and problems, such as social ones. Opening the imaginary means making the images, ideas, and values that would otherwise remain marginal in our heads available and accessible to most people.

Couldry describes the concept of media manifold as follows:

> Our suggestion is that this double concept well captures the doubleness of our embedding in today's extremely complex media universe. The broader set of media and information possibilities on which each of us can draw is almost infinite, and certainly organised on very many dimensions. In everyday practice, we choose, from moment to moment,

from a reduced set of possibilities which actualizes, for daily usage, a pragmatic selection from that many-dimensional media universe. What we do with media, moment to moment, actualizes those further choices. There are therefore three levels. Yet, as we try to understand our relations as choosing actors to the wider universe of media, it is the first two levels (and their interrelations) which most concern us. The necessary relations between the first two levels are summed up by characterizing our relations with media in a two-level way, as relations with a "media manifold". (2016, pp. 31-32)

Within the multiple choices, the reduction that we operate does not often contemplate the choice of receiving, reading, and investigating the social problems that often remain on the margins even of the average manifold at our disposal. Many features of contemporary common sense are produced by the media manifold, which feed and reinforce ways of speaking and thinking, lifestyles. This is not to make a generic accusation of superficiality and banality, but rather to highlight the potential role it plays in people's lives. Socialization, first of all, is against those who have lifestyles and especially consumers in the western world. Anticipation of what the future might be, or rather the idea of the individual and collective future. It is an imaginary reserve from which to draw inspiration for the construction of identity (Silverstone, 1994). It is evident that communication of social problems, as we have described it up to now, cannot remain on the periphery of the media manifold, cannot build a symbolic universe apart, but must instead promote a real colonization using homogeneous technical and quality standards and what is likely to contaminate and replace, symbolically and culturally, part of the media manifold. A positive example of the process of change is that of the perception of the care of the environment as a determinant for overall well-being (Peruzzi & Volterrani, 2016, p. 150). Despite the conduct not always being consistent, ecological awareness has reached the heart of the media manifold within the last 30 years. The same reasoning cannot be said of the rampant issue of child poverty in African countries where the awareness has not turned into incorporation, or even, produced the "stolen letter effect"; that is, objects that are right in front of everyone's eyes but go unnoticed.

Precisely for this reason it is even more necessary to share this vision of communication of social problems in a cultural context which is often used to think that the important issues are very different.

All of this is adversely affected if we design communication of social problems with a completely different approach from the other types of communication: participation.

## Participatory Communication of Social Problems: An Essential Prerequisite

Communication of social problems cannot exist without participation. At the same time, it is both a problem of democratic participation (Sorice, 2019) and of links between participation, communication, and territorial communities (Volterrani, 2018). For the first question, it is fundamental that the issues related to social problems are discussed within democratic participatory and communicative processes in order to involve a larger number of people. For the latter, it is often in degraded urban suburbs, but also in other territorial communities where it is necessary to develop communication processes capable of involving all citizens starting from the holders of the problem, the interests of users, and the producers of communication. A triangle is crucial if we want to trigger at least the start of the change processes we mentioned. If you want to increase blood donation among young people, it is not enough to just construct communications campaigns "aimed" at them, but you must also construct occasions where the young people themselves are the protagonists.

Engagement is not just an observation of a different use of the media by the public, but one of the roads that promotes awareness and involvement in the citizens of a community (Dahlgren, 2009; 2013). And it is the first step before moving on to the knowledge, incorporation, and action for change.

Participation needs its own time and its own rules (Curran, 2011) to give space to all those who intend to take action. However, communication of social problems does not mean slowing down but enriching and articulating content and mode of use.

Working on participatory communication of social problems, starting from the construction, and sharing of social representations and social imaginary, is a pretty unique perspective.

The process planning-social imaginary and social-engineering-communication of social representations, in fact, does not stop at the first change of the imaginary and social representations but continues if the contributions of groups of people and the points of view are activated and implemented in a systematic way. The result is a communicative planning that continues and is able to constantly renew itself, thereby increasing the participation and involvement of new groups of people.

The multiplication of participating groups has a positive effect on local communities. It is the participation communication of social problems projects that changes perceptions and actions, and therefore, also semantic maps. For example, if I want to change young people's relationship with alcohol, I have to try to rebuild their perceptions and their imaginary, submit them, and be ready to change them again in order to understand where to direct the communication and, especially, how to build it. You redraw the conceptual boundaries of some issues along with other social or individual identities not by basing them on a simple argument but on a responsible involvement in the community or territory. It is a way of enhancing those roots within the vital world and common sense, of being in the world of everyday life that characterizes at least a part of civil society and the third sector.

## New Communication Strategies on Social Problems

If this is a plausible picture, what could the new communication strategies for organizations (public and non-profit) interested in the change of social imaginary be? See Figure 2.
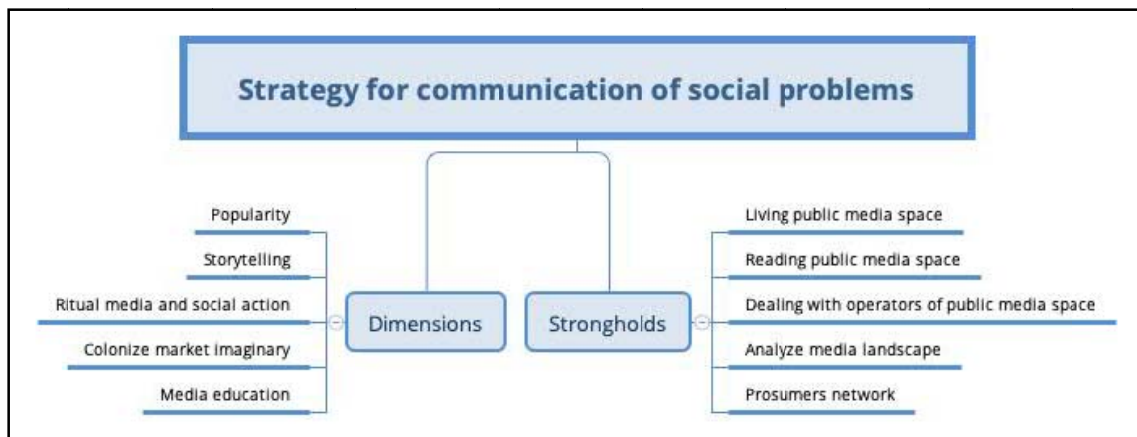


*Figure 2.* Strategy for communication of social problems.

### Strategy's Strongholds

The first stronghold is monitoring the media public space daily—not only journalists, but also television (national and local) and the Internet—in order to be able to appropriate the narrative styles, symbologies, and prevalent proposals from major manufacturers of the imaginary. Mastering the mainstream is essential in order to build a communication of social problems that goes beyond.

The second stronghold is reading the medial public space concerning social themes with detachment in order to highlight not only contradictions and shortcomings, but also symbols and rituals. On occasion, some people talk about the absence of social issues without assessing their presence in narratives and imaginary places, such as television series, which are rarely visited by the organizations (public and non-profit) but often frequented by people and communities (Buonanno, 2008). A key prerequisite for any communication of a project geared towards a social problem is the rebuilding of the media outlets with the topic of our interest.

The third stronghold is dealing with the operators of public space media (journalists, producers, writers, and directors) in order to understand dynamics, languages, styles, and working routines, especially with regard to the production of TV series and serials. It becomes a credible interlocutor when there is a need, for example, to construct new narratives by television writers. There are no permanent confrontation areas, and if there is a change in media narratives, it is related more to a transformation of the authors, writers, and scriptwriters than to an initiative taken by organizations.

The fourth stronghold is analyzing and continuously monitoring the media landscape of our membership organization's subject of interest, and then to go and explore different points of view away from it, to see and learn the ways that others learn the imagery of the subject that interests us. We will be surprised by how the social imaginary also extends to those who are most distant from those other individuals who are fully involved in communication actions on the subject.

The fifth stronghold is the construction of a network of small prosumers (Jenkins, 2006) capable of multiplying the communicative contents of the social problem on which we believe it is necessary to initiate a process of change in the collective imagination with handcrafted professionalism (Sennet, 2008).

**Strategy's Dimensions**

Based on these strongholds, how can we build a sensible strategy in the communication of social problems?

There are five dimensions to consider as cornerstones. We must inspire communication actions to a popularity that can be achieved if we put ourselves in the shoes of others (even when we do not like them) and share their thoughts and their imagination.

(1) Putting yourself in the shoes of others. Put yourself in the "shoes" of the means of understanding the mechanisms, styles, languages, and popular places in the medial public space. Of course, you may think this means, for example, speaking to those who care about their own issue (the issue that directly affects them), e.g., people with disabilities caring about other people with disabilities or the operators who deal with disabilities. They are important information and communication functions, but if I want to implement a process of change, I must listen to those who are furthest away from disability and may not even want to hear about it. You may miss something, even so, in the richness and articulation of contents to acquire breadth (and depth) of communicative action. We must not forget that rooted popular stereotypes are not very rich or articulated in terms of information, but they are widely present in the mainstream and often right on prevention issues. Building popular prevention communication does not mean trivialization and simplification of the messages and content, but that messages and content can be decoded and interpreted by many.

(2) Looking for narratives. Narratives are the second important dimension of our strategy. Human life, history, and biography, is our first story. The narrative approach (Bruno & Lombardinilo, 2016) to prevention communication means not only finding stories in the media, but gaining the ability to discover, collect, and

analyze stories, and then invent, build, and commission new ones, representatives for the community. Stories must not appeal only to us because the stories become narratives if we tell them to others and if others hear them. In addition, we must always keep in mind that there is only the "reality" or the "real" in the stories. The likelihood is that only one is possible and credible from among multiple realities (Schutz, 1972), and a story is deemed credible only if we share it with others. In summary, it is not important to build large, detailed stories, but instead to draw from the "mines" of the stories in social and prevention life, as well as from those that are already present in other corners of the collective imagination.

(3) Rituals. The third dimension is the ritual. Our daily life is full of large and small rituals of which we do not want to go without. For this purpose, ritual also means proposing familiar actions and communication (Couldry, 2012, p. 80). The question we must ask is, "What creates meaning in my land and communicative context?" The question, though, is that very often what creates meaning is "taken for granted" and is silent since it works from a cultural background that determines common sense. The ritual dimension, by contrast, is a dimension that, behind the apparent static repetition of common sense, can intervene in imagination, modifying it. In practice, it means being systematically reproduced and easily identified by the inhabitants of a territory of prevention communication activities without fear of being "repetitive" because one of the goals is just that.

(4) Colonizing the collective imagination (Peruzzi & Volterrani, 2016, p. 220). The fourth dimension is that of colonization to which we referred earlier. The imaginary proposed by the actors who act in the market are not "evil" and, above all, make up the central part of the frame; they are the most widespread and popular, and also the most democratic. The profit actors are appropriate in a time of popular social imaginary, which considers using them to expand or build new market space. As a counterpoint, third sector organizations or public organizations could do the same using widespread and used imaginary as part of the market to promote new social imaginary. This does not mean the flattening of market strategies or transfer of cultural patterns prevailing in the market, but recognizing what are now standard in the archive of images and imaginary and using them by offering an intelligent and creative remix that can support different but contiguous perspectives.

(5) Media education. Finally, the last dimension refers to media education (Buckingham, 2003). Despite the many paths of learning and spread of pedagogical aspirations of many of the social issues of most organizations, the potential of sharing common media education is not perceived, not only in the context of the school and young people, but also as one of the cornerstones of lifelong learning. It is through these medium- to long-term paths that people acquire the skills to understand, analyze, and individually and collectively build media culture, thereby helping to build cultures and innovative collective imagination.

## The Ethical Question

But there is a fundamental difference that should denote the communication of social problems: the ethical question (Couldry, Madianou, & Pinchevsky, 2013).

At least three questions should be asked each time. The first is whether what we are doing will allow us to change the individual and collective well-being of the communities where we act and in which direction. Not always changing perception brings with it an improvement in the quality of life. In some cases, it is likely to be exactly the opposite. The second is whether what we are doing causes or will cause verbal and/or direct and/or indirect material injuries to the persons involved (directly or indirectly). If I want to change the perception of widespread violence in a neighborhood, I have to assess whether the communication activities that I am

proposing put third parties unaware of what is happening in real danger. The third question, perhaps the most difficult, is whether we can do what other organizations are doing for a supposed and imagined supreme good of communities. Arrogating the right to know what is and will be the good of the communities where we act is often one of the mistakes made by third sector organizations that do not work for the social development of the communities, but instead for their own development.

But reasoning about ethics for those who work in and with contemporary media on perceptions means being aware that whenever we communicate, something will happen and that the constant change of tools, spaces, and modes forces us to think about possible contradictory consequences.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, talking about communication of social problems today means addressing the problem of cultural production.

Often many organizations and experts have underestimated this aspect because it has been deemed secondary to social action. An error has been paid for dearly because, as we have seen, the space was occupied mainly by the market culture. The available space is limited, and it is difficult to act if approaches, communication methods, and actions are not changed.

Precisely for this reason it is important to accept the challenge of innovation that lies in the ability to design communication of social problems which has the means to promote and legitimize the growing presence in the available media space through fascinating and diffusible products and credible narratives.

The hope is that they do not remain only ideas, but instead become instruments of daily action in organizations that have social change at heart.

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# Utilization of Altmetrics as a Measure of Trust of Archival Data

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Altmetrics is a new method that is currently used to capture the impact of published scholarly works based on data visibility on the web as a supplement to traditional bibliometric methods. On the other hand, archives contain venerable data that can be extremely helpful to the scholars and public. However, there is no measurement tool that can measure the value and the impact of archival data. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to explore the potentials of embracing altmetrics as a trusted measure of archival data, especially with the lack of studies on altmetrics adoption by archives and cultural heritage organizations.

*Keywords:* archival data, archives, altmetrics, bibliometric methods

## Introduction

It is important to understand the value of unstructured metadata in supporting the users' engagement with records and archives. However, there are limited studies that cover this area. This limitation exists; it is observed that, because of financial constraints in recruiting experts, a lack of skills among archivists as well as the time required to conduct a user-based evaluation (Kelly, 2017; Duff, Dryden, Limkilde, Cherry, & Bogomazova, 2008). In addition, the volume of records keeps expanding exponentially and, therefore, creates a need to have a reliable method to measure the value, visibility, reliability, and the impact of these records (Papakostidis & Giannoudis, 2018). At the same time, communication methods continue to evolve with and about archives in the era of social networking platforms (Kelly, 2017). A new method called altmetrics (alternative metrics) which is currently used to capture the impact of published scholarly works as a supplement to traditional bibliometric methods may be used on archives to find the impact of the online holdings, including the unpublished electronic collections, digital repositories, and government information (Thelwall, Haustein, Larivière, & Sugimoto, 2013; Kelly, 2017; Das, 2015).

## Archival Data

Archival data are defined as information that have been previously aggregated by others and can be utilized in systematic studies (Jones, 2010). There are five major categories of archival data that have been classified in previous literature (Jones, 2010; Singleton & Straits, 2005)—public documents and official records; private documents; mass media; physical, nonverbal materials; and social science data archives. The use of archival data research process involves one or more of these purposes: "general research procedures (e.g., procuring data, data documentation, data sharing), research design (e.g., cross-sectional, short-term longitudinal, long-term longitudinal designs), measures (e.g., types of measures used, missing measures), and samples (e.g., sample size, sample type)" (Jones, 2010, p. 1011).

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## Altmetrics

Altmetrics is a relatively new discipline of analyzing scholarship based on data visibility on the web (including social media, mainstream media mentions, peer reviews, and citations to research in policy documents) (Priem, Taraborelli, Groth, & Neylon, 2010). Altmetrics measure a broad aspect of research visibility and impact in comparison to bibliometric methods, and provide a supplement to the traditional impact factor methodology based on citation filters (Fenner, 2014). For instance:

(1) Citation, h-index, and journal impact take relatively long time to be measured waiting for the cycle of publication to be completed and for studies to be cited by others.

(2) Bibliometric methods overlook new forms of scholarly content, such as scripts, videos, datasets, conference, news, presentation slides, and research blogs.

(3) Altmetrics can capture the impact of research outside of academic publishing, potentially resulting in the discovery of unidentified readers, and identify value further than the traditional scholarly consumption groups.

(4) The current impact factor methodologies embrace a "quantity over quality" argument. However, altmetrics analyze social media conversations about publications and analyze the reason for mentioning or citing a work.

(5) The journal impact factor explores the impact of entire journals; altmetrics instead explore the impact of each individual publication.

Stacy Konkiel and Dave Scherer (2013) indicated three values for using altmetrics to institutional repositories. First, altmetrics can be used by repository administrators in persuading the potential depositors that there is added value in providing open access to their content. In other words, increasing altmetrics scores might have an impact on increasing the deposit rates. Second, collecting figures beyond general usage statistics can inform university administrators the value of the institutional repositories as a platform for hosting open access content. In addition, understanding the impact of repository content on the community can be used to build a case for community engagement. Third, altmetrics can complement traditional usage statistics to support collection development plans, and can be used for resource allocation and marketing purposes.

Altmetrics are categorized in the following ways (Cave, 2012): usage (e.g., HTML views, PDF/XML downloads, and book holdings), captures (e.g., bookmarks, favorites, readers, and groups), mentions (e.g., blog posts, news stories, Wikipedia articles, comments, and reviews), social media (e.g., user activity from Twitter, Google+, and Facebook), and citations (e.g., CrossRef, PubMed Central, Web of Science, Scopus, and Microsoft Academic Search).

## Archives and Altmetrics

The lack of studies on altmetrics adoption by archives and cultural heritage organizations does not say that these institutions are not embracing social media. Indeed, there are many studies conducted on the use of social media by archives and cultural heritage organizations, however, these studies focus on the use of social media to increase the awareness of archives, instead of studying their impact on archival holdings (Kelly, 2017). For example, there is scholarship available to guide repositories in planning and evaluating their social media activities. These guidelines indicate the need for engaging and encouraging conversation about archival holdings by utilizing web technologies. In a study on the use of social media by repositories, Robert Schier

(2011) stated that many repositories adopt social media as a tool to promote their collection instead of establishing a trusted relationship with users. Another study showed that special collection departments in research libraries have succeeded in using social media for promoting purposes. However, they were less successful in developing relationships via social media and engaging with external users (Griffin & Taylor, 2013).

The value of capturing users' feedback on archives, and the difficulty to do so, were highlighted in previous studies. Martha O'Hara Conway and Merrilee Proffitt (2012) mentioned that assessing archival collections is essential for helping institutions become more user-centered. Lisa R. Carter (2012) argued that knowing the collections and how they are used can help with writing grants, informing new accessions, and in evaluating the workflow and instruction. They also stated that collecting user-driven data that measure how scholars interact with the tools available is critical.

A study published in 2008 about archivists' views of user-based evaluation found that archivists valued user feedback, but the evaluations lacked standardized measures (Duff et al., 2008). For example, the study indicated that users based value on the "success of the user's most recent search or visit" (Duff et al., 2008). In another study, user feedback about their use of digital collections was found to be vital for collecting institutions to prosperously demonstrate the significance of their collections (Marsh, Punzalan, Leopold, Butler, & Petrozzi, 2015). However, archives assessment demonstrates a shortage of "reliable measures of institutional impact or nuanced portraits of audience engagement", as reported in a yearlong interdisciplinary research on assessing and indicating the value and impact of digitized ethnographic collections (Marsh et al., 2015). Furthermore, the lack of methods for using data-driven decision-making in institutions impacts the change and definition of metrics which allow for cross-institutional comparison (Chapman & Yakel, 2012).

There are many potential benefits for using altmetrics for archives (Kelly, 2017). Altmetrics can facilitate new methods of tracking collections, where archives can find discussion of their collections in virtual spaces. This may provide archives an opportunity to show the effect and influence of their holding in both academic and non-academic environments. Likewise, since altmetrics capture data beyond scholarly works, altmetrics may help archivists better understand the diversity and representation of how collections are being used. Moreover, archives can enhance other services by adopting altmetrics to influence decisions about digitization, accessions, and processing priorities, as discussion of users' needs in these areas may be occurring online.

## Conclusions

Altmetrics is an area under development, with a big potential to be applied on non-scholarly work, such as the archival data. However, since there are many altmetrics providers in the market, it is necessary to have a unified algorithm to measure the altmetrics score of the archival data.

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# Sing Your City: Local Stories of Global Artifacts[*]

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The article discusses five local stories that, without being connected to each other, tell about the socio-cultural circumstances accompanying creation of works of art that have received significant (but not the highest) recognition on a global scale. The discussion concerns three songs about cities: *Torna a Surriento*, *Moscow Nights*, and *Li Beirut*; a famous Soviet painting *Low Marks Again*; and the design features of Audi cars for the US market over the past decade. The approach to each certain artifact, be it song, painting, or the design of rear turn signals, is developed on the basis of disciplinary affiliation, whereas a discipline is more sociology, anthropology, or history of an appropriate art, than its theory. Another research method places a local context into the test tube of globalization. Experience shows that these two methods are applicable to different arts, places, and periods enriching the scientist with more detailed information about the era studied.

*Keywords:* global artifact, second echelon, songs about cities, dog in a painting, rear turn signals

## Introduction

Life in a global era dictates its own laws. One of those is undoubtedly the increasing level of standardization of life, especially in cities, and even more so in megacities. Houses, apartments, cars, food, and work—all this is almost unified. Nature and weather seem to strongly resist standardization, although the microclimate in residential, industrial, and commercial premises, as well in cars, is practically equalizing this part of the differences in the lives of people at different continents and latitudes. So what remains to be different—culture, art, or music? It would seem that aesthetic criteria in relation to art and music are so national that there is no place for unification. But even here globalization has its own patents: Folk music (folklore) increasingly follows the global pattern of "world music", using the strength of Western technology and the unified platform of the Western tonality, and thus gradually moving away from its original audience. National/ethnic art is being replaced by standard samples of the "world classics", including the era of modernism and postmodernism, as well as pop art (both in the visual arts and in music)[1].

Globally hyped brands are among the standard samples of the world classics: Mozart in music, Rolls-Royce in premium class cars, Leonardo in Renaissance painting, and Duchamp and Pollock in modern art. We do not even ask why everyday accessories made in an ordinary factory are considered works of art if signed by an hyped artist or why a painting by an artist struggling to make ends meet at the end of the 19th century

[1] In recent decades, various aspects of these and related issues became part of interdisciplinary discourse and have been discussed from different viewpoints (Appadurai, 1996; Loomba, 1998; Stokes, 2004; Regev & Seroussi, 2004).

gains many millions in value at the beginning of the 21st, not being much different from the pictures of dozens of other artists of this style.

Of the works of art that deserve global recognition, only a tiny part is promoted or simply accessible to the world community. Others are much less represented on the Internet and studied. However, it is these global artifacts of the "second echelon" that are often of the greatest interest for studying the context of the era and, moreover, can help eliminate inconsistencies relating to the study of artifacts of the top echelon and even sometimes challenge ridiculous assessments of art critics (Brauer, 2013, pp. 92-94; Konečni, 1984, pp. 90-91).

A fine example of the art collection of this very kind is the Seattle Museum of Art (Seattle, WA), which with generous support of the native of this city, William Henry Gates III (commonly known as Bill Gates), through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and of other donors, the first-class works by the artists who did not gain world-famous status make up an exhibition that can compete with a museum collection of big names, along with the rich collection of the folk art of the North-West Pacific which presents not less interest and value.

This article, which discusses five global artifacts that can also be attributed to the above group, is aimed at developing a methodology suitable for working with artifacts in various art forms. The approach to each specific artifact will be based on the tools of disciplinary research, whereas a discipline will be more sociology-based or anthropology-based study of a correspondent art, than the theoretical aspects of its study. The objects in question will be three songs about cities, a painting with a dog, and the design of the rear turn signals on Audi cars for the North American market.

## Rebirth of an Italian Song

Ask inhabitants of New York, Paris, or Moscow how many songs are written about their cities—hardly anyone will answer, even approximately. But every inhabitant of Sorrento (Province of Naples, Italy) will answer this question: One, but which one!

Most sources associate the appearance of the song *Torna a Surriento* (Come back to Sorrento) with the visit of Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Zanardelli to Sorrento in 1902. According to legend, the mayor of the city tried to use the opportunity to secure the opening of the post office in this small town but was refused. Then, a friend of the mayor, Giambattista De Curtis, professional artist and amateur poet, came to the aid: "Do not worry: I will write a song for your guest!".

The text was immediately written, and Giambattista turned to his brother Ernesto De Curtis with a request to find a suitable melody. The music was then composed, and that evening amateur musicians learned the song.

When the Prime Minister went to the station the next day, he was accompanied by this song performed by local musicians:

| | |
|---|---|
| Vide 'o mare quant'è bello, | Hear the music of the waters, |
| spira tantu sentimento, | Vows of tender passion sighing, |
| Comme tu a chi tieni mente, | Like thy heart to which go flying |
| Ca scetato 'o fai sunnà. | All my thoughts in wakeful dream.[2] |

The important guest apparently liked the song, as soon there was its own post office in Sorrento (Volkov, 1967, p. 12). Yet, according to family documents, the melody was composed much earlier, and Giambattista only wrote a new text on the occasion of the arrival of the Prime Minister. After some changes in the text, the

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[2]  English lyrics adapted by Claude Aveling.

song was performed by mezzo-soprano Maria Cappiello at the music festival in Piedigrotta, a suburb of Naples in 1905, after which the popularity of the song increased dramatically. In the same year, the notes of the song were released by Bideri, Naples[3].

*Torna a Surriento*, becoming one of the most famous Neapolitan songs[4], gained popularity in many countries and was translated into many languages. A version of this song, arranged in 1960 by Elvis Presley, can be rather considered a separate song, since changes occurred not only in the song's title—*Surrender*—and its lyrics, but also in a metric basis: The triple meter gave way to the quadruple one, which considerably changed the song:

> When we kiss my heart's on fire
> Burning with a strange desire
> And I know, each time I kiss you
> That your heart's on fire too

Elvis, who belongs to another generation of songwriters, has adapted two Italian songs to suit his style, sense of time, and expectations of his audience. *Surrender*, along with *It's Now or Never* (originally *O sole mio*), remained Neapolitan songs that were "reborn" in the 1960s, becoming American songs by the leading rock and roll singer and songwriter.

Elvis's *Surrender* hit number one in the US and UK in 1961[5] and eventually became one of the best-selling singles of all time.

## A Dog That Does not Care

The picture (see Figure 1) is one of the most famous works of Soviet art: Everyone who grew up in the former Soviet Union had to write an essay on this topic at a certain stage, since it was in the curriculum of the Soviet school. What makes this picture so special, what message (or messages) does it convey to the viewer or, more precisely, to the attentive reader?

The painting, made in the genre of everyday life, in a completely realistic style, contains so many signs, symbols of the epoch, texts, and subtexts that to some extent it can be considered the Encyclopedia of the Soviet life of the 1950s. History of its creating, its place among the other works of the artist and its iconic status in the curriculum of the Soviet school—all this cannot but arouse curiosity among an inquisitive anthropologist of art.

Little is known about the artist. Tatyana Zelyukina, curator of the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow (where the painting is located) collects biographical details bit by bit. Fyodor Reshetnikov, who was born in the family of an icon painter, became an orphan at the age of three. He was raised in the family of an older brother, one of his father's 13 children. At the call of the Komsomol, he went on two polar expeditions as an artist. Brilliantly mastered the genre of caricature…[6]

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[3] According to "'Torna a Surriento' all' inaugurazione della mostra su Giuseppe Zanardelliil 16 ottobre", published on October 9, 2010 at *Circolo Culturale Ghislandi.* http://www.circologhislandi.net/avvisi/torna-a-surriento-allinaugurazione-della-mostra-su-giuseppe-zanardelli-il-16-ottobre.
[4] That is, the songs of the Province of Naples.
[5] See *Official Singles Chart Top 50*, June 1-7, 1961, https://www.officialcharts.com/charts/singles-chart/19610601/7501.
[6] "Fyodor Reshetnikov's Painting 'Low Marks Again'" (in Russian). *Radio Echo of Moscow* (Series: "Collection of the Tretyakov Gallery"), retrieved May 27, 2019 from https://echo.msk.ru/programs/tretiakovka/45754/.

*Figure 1.* Fyodor Reshetnikov, *Low Marks Again*, 1952.

*Low Marks Again* is the second part of the artist's trilogy: The first part is *Arrived on Vacation*; the third part is *Re-examination*. It is noteworthy that in the left corner of the *Low Marks Again*, a reproduction of *Arrived on Vacation* is visible, while in the left corner of the *Re-examination*, there is a reproduction of the *Low Marks Again*.

The plot of the picture has undergone several changes in the process of the artist's work on it. According to the artist, the original idea of the work was completely different: The picture was called "High Marks Again" and reflected the everyday life of the future builders of the new socialist society, where the losers had no place. Developing the content of the future picture, the artist attended schools, and the plot change was influenced by the case when an excellent student, whom he chose as his model, could not complete the task and received a low mark. Now, the artist decided to portray the "loser"—a very bold innovative solution for those times, in some ways even humanistic, moving away from the main line of the Communist party, but not too much, not for a long distance: to make the hero of the work not an excellent student, but a loser[7]. Soon the picture was ready: It showed an unsuccessful student, over whom a formidable but fair teacher hung (see Figure 2).

But suddenly everything changed dramatically again. It was at this very time, when a new canvas had already appeared, the artist's daughter came home from school—the unhappy one had arrived and received a low mark. The artist took advantage of the inspiration that arose on this occasion, and decided to redo the picture: Bad student needs to be shown in his family[8], when the only family member with a kind heart and living soul is a dog who, feeling a human misfortune, hurries to calm him down with her sincere dog caresses.

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[7]  "Наш любимый «двоечник»" (Our favorite "loser"), *Днепр вечерний*, July 28, 2010, p. 8.
[8]  Ibid.

"It was this warmth that aroused interest in this picture", Zelyukina says, "when it represented Soviet art in Brussels in 1958 among many other works"[9].



*Figure 2.* Fyodor Reshetnikov, *Low Marks Again*, early version.

The author's exploration of dozens of paintings throughout history, in which dogs are depicted, shows that no other work in which a dog in a painting expresses a human feeling (or, rather, moral), which is *different* from that of other depicted people, apparently may not be found.

## Russian Song That Conquered the World

An international survey conducted in 1980 by the Moscow Radio revealed three Russian songs that people primarily associate with this category: *Kalinka*, *Katyusha*, and *Moscow Nights*. While the former two ones, being a military march by genre, are known mostly through their performance by the *Red Army Song Ensemble*, the latter song differs substantially, being one of the most soulful songs ever created in Soviet Russia.

The melody of the song was composed in 1955 by Vasily Solovyov-Sedoi. It was first named *Leningrad Nights*. The song was not performed, and even the composer himself did not expect it to be successful. But fate, however, decreed otherwise...

A year later, in 1956, the post-Stalin Soviet state perplexed everyone and everyone with the filming of sport movies. One such movie was a documentary film about athletics. In order not to finally put the spectator to sleep with sports propaganda, the directors decided to move away from the marching musical accompaniment typical of that time and turn their eyes on the lyrical songs. Then, Vasily Solovyov-Sedoi, known for his melodic talent, and the poet Mikhail Matusovsky were commissioned to write a song for the film. Here music from the "spare"

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[9] "Fyodor Reshetnikov's Painting 'Low Marks Again'" (in Russian). *Radio Echo of Moscow* (Series: "Collection of the Tretyakov Gallery"), retrieved May 27, 2019 from https://echo.msk.ru/programs/tretiakovka/45754/.

drawer of the composer's table came in handy. And yet, since the film was about the 1956 Spartakiad of the Peoples of the USSR[10], held in Moscow, the Leningrad nights turned into Moscow nights (Mikhailina, 2006).

The famous Soviet singer Mark Bernes, who was offered to perform the song, refused, not understanding the highly lyrical text that was not typical of that time:

| | |
|---|---|
| Не слышны в саду даже шорохи, | Gardens fast asleep till the morrow, |
| Все здесь замерло до утра. | Not a rustle heard, not a sound… |
| Если б знали вы, как мне дороги | I'm in love with you, Nights by Moscow, |
| Подмосковные вечера. | Magic nights of the setting sun.[11] |

Another singer, found by film directors, did not satisfy the authors in view of the operatic presentation of the song. Finally, the song was performed not by a professional singer, but by an actor of the Moscow Art Theater, Vladimir Troshin. The film went unnoticed. It included only a fragment of the song, which was held as a background for a lively conversation of athletes. In a word, nobody noticed the song.

The situation began to change when the staff of the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting decided to broadcast the full recording of the song on the radio. Hundreds of letters asking to repeat the song, where the "river moves and does not move", began to come to the address of the Committee. This was the beginning of the phenomenal popularity of the song in the Soviet Union, which also brought all-Union fame to its first performer. The first phrase of the song, played on the vibraphone, has been used as a time signal at the popular news radio station *Mayak* since 1964[12].

The international debut of the song *Moscow Nights* took place at the closing ceremony of the 6th World Festival of Youth and Students held in 1957 in Moscow. The event was attended by about 34,000 young people from more than 130 countries[13]. Since then, over the decades, the song has become the hallmark of the Soviet Union in the world.

The person who greatly contributed to the international popularity of the song was American pianist Van Cliburn, a pupil of the famous Russian-born pianist Rosina Lhévinne and first-prize winner at the inaugural International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow (1958). Van Cliburn performed his own and at the same time very Russian-style piano version of *Moscow Nights* at the final concert of the competition and at many other concerts in the USA and around the world (Mikhailina, 2006). Yet, Cliburn's contribution was greater than the promotion of a particular song, since awarding him the first prize at the Tchaikovsky Competition came at the very peak of the Cold War and served as the first sign of the warming of relations between the USSR and the USA. Another evidence of the attention to the Soviet song, introduced by the pianist to the American audience, was the success of its instrumental version performed by the British band *Kenny Ball and His Jazzmen*. The single, released in 1961 under the title *Midnight in Moscow,* held the first place in the American *Easy Listening* chart for three weeks (Whitburn, 2002, p. 28).

The song *Moscow Nights* also became popular in mainland China, where some people consider this song a folk Chinese song. The composer Gao Ping wrote a composition *Two Soviet Love Songs for Vocalizing Pianist* (2003) making the piano arrangement of *Evenings in suburban Moscow* (that is, *Moscow Nights*) and *Katyusha.* "The two Soviet tunes are something I grew up with", states the musician. "They are still extremely popular in

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[10] That is, the (former) Soviet Union or, officially, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
[11] English translation: Vladimir Reznikov.
[12] Retrieved June 6, 2019 from https://music-facts.ru/song/Rarely_Known/Podmoskovnie_vechera/.
[13] According to: "Moscow marks 50 years since youth festival", Editorial, *Russia Today*, July 28, 2007. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from http://www.russiatoday.ru/features/news/11587.

China and often heard in karaoke houses"[14]. As if confirming this, the President of People's Republic of China (PRC), Hu Jintao, a man who was not used to showing emotions in public, sang *Moscow Nights* in 2010 at a public event with such sincerity that he deserved a comment on YouTube[15].

Whatsoever, time puts everything in its place, and the song *Moscow Nights*, giving way to *Kalinka* (written in 1860) and *Katyusha* (written in 1938) in representation of the Russian spirit, remained nonetheless an unsurpassed representative of the Russian soul.

## Rediscovery of the Red Blinker

Owners of Audi on the streets of Boston (MA) or Vancouver (BC) do not really think about how their cars look from the back in the eyes of visitors to these cities from, say, Europe. However, while the European eye is used to seeing an amber turn signal, flashing or, more recently, working as a sequencer, on the same cars, in the North American version, there are red rear turn signals, either separate or in combination with brake lights. Behind the difference in design versions lay certain events and stories—it cannot be otherwise. The following is a brief history of the rules for turn signals in the USA and around the world, as well as the brand that was the first to restore the traditional American design of the rear lights using the latest technology.

Until the 1960s, front turn signals worldwide emitted white light, while rear turn signals emitted red. The automotive industry in the USA implemented amber front-turn signals for most vehicles starting in the 1963 model year, though legally front turn signals might still emit white light until the 1968 model year, whereupon amber became the only allowed color for front turn signals. The rear turn signals in the USA and Canada until this day may be red or amber. In the rest of the world, they have to be amber. International proponents of amber rear turn signals say they are more easily perceptible as such. Indeed, US studies, beginning in the 1990s onwards, demonstrated improvements in the speed and accuracy of drivers' reaction to stop lamps when the turn signals were amber rather than red. Nonetheless, American regulators and other proponents of red rear turn signals have asserted there is no historically proven safety benefit to amber signals, though it has been recognized since the 1960s that amber turn signals are more quickly spotted than red ones (Hitzemeyer, Wilde, & Ellenberger, 1977; Allen, 2009).

Be that as it may, the red rear turn signals are directly associated with the imagery of the American car. This feature did not go unnoticed by the German automotive industry, which since the beginning of the 21st century, has been manufacturing cars for the North American market with red rear turn signals, which is more of a global tribute to local culture. However, in the era of light-emitting diode (LED) technology, when the brake lights emit a very strong light and when the third (central) brake light has become mandatory, the old pattern of the rear turn signal, blinking as one of the brake lights, represents, in the opinion of the author, one of the most informative solutions for rear lights ever. Since 2011, the author has been following the dynamics in this area, visiting the USA regularly and also spending the 2013-2014 academic year in Vancouver, BC. During this period, the design of the rear lights in German cars on North American roads crystallized towards the gradual restoration of the old American practice of combining turn signals and brake lights in one unit. Throughout this period, Audi seems to have been leading the way (see Figure 3).

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[14] Cited in "Two Soviet Love Songs for Vocalizing Pianist (for piano)". *SOUNZ, Center for New Zealand Music*, retrieved June 6, 2019 from https://www.sounz.org.nz/works/19365.
[15] "第一次覺得他是有感情的！" (For the first time, I feel that he has feelings!). Retrieved June 5, 2019 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5GWSkdSIAM.

*Figure 3.* Audi A4 (2018), US stile left rear light.

The founder of the Audi brand, August Horch was one of two German engineers, each of whom is associated with two brands of automakers. The other was Ferdinand Porsche, who designed many cars, including the Mercedes-Benz SSK (1928) and the legendary Volkswagen Beetle (1938), which laid the foundation for the Volkswagen brand.

Born in 1868, August Horch first trained as blacksmith, then studied engineering. By 1896, just 11 years after Karl Benz patented his first car, he ran an engine workshop for Benz in Mannheim. Three years later, Horch, who already had his ideas for building cars, left Benz and opened his own company, August Horch & Co, first in Ehrenfeld and then moved to Zwickau. From the very beginning, Horch understood the importance of motor racing in brand promotion and car sales (see Figure 4).



*Figure 4.* August Horch, driving the Horch car, c. 1908.

Among the reasons why Horch was forced to leave his firm after 10 years, some point to disagreements with the financial management of the company over the investments to racing performances of Horch cars (Ciano 2018). Then, in 1909, Horch founded in Zwickau his second company that also initially beard his name. However, after he was prohibited from using "Horch" as a trade name in his new car business, Kirchberg testifies,

he called a meeting with close business friends, Paul and Franz Fikentscher from Zwickau. At the apartment of Franz Fikentscher, they discussed how to come up with a new name for the company. During this meeting, Franz's son was quietly studying Latin in a corner of the room. Several times he looked like he was on the verge of saying something but would just swallow his words and continue working, until he finally blurted out, "Father...wouldn't it be a good idea to call it *audi* instead of *horch*?" "Horch!" in German means "Hark!" or "hear", which is "Audi" in the singular imperative form of "audire"―"to listen"―in Latin. The idea was enthusiastically accepted by everyone attending the meeting. (Kirchberg, 1996, p. 30)

Horch left his second company in 1920 for a position in the German Ministry of Transportation, while he remained a member of Audi's trustees. In 1932, the two companies founded by Horch merged into Auto Union, which included two more companies. Four linked rings became the logo of the union. Ironically, after the World War II, the production of the infamous "people's car" Trabant (with two-stroke engine) was launched at the Zwickau (then GDR[16]) facilities of the former Audi company. The one who revived the brand and the ideas of its founder was Volkswagen AG, which itself began with the production of a "people's car" (namely, "Volkswagen" in German) created by Ferdinand Porsche.

"Any car that takes you from A to B does not take you far enough", Horch once said[17]. Throughout his life, August Horch "worked doggedly to follow his guiding principle―to build 'only large, powerful and good cars', no matter what"[18]. This is the principle of Audi AG to this day, introducing the latest developments and at the same time carefully restoring the "well forgotten old", such as the old American design of the tail lights.

## A Spanish-Lebanese Ballad

The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) did not leave artists in many countries indifferent. Hemingway's novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and Picasso's *Guernica* are only the most famous works related to the subject. *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra (1939) by Spanish composer Joaquín Rodrigo is another such work that reflects the feelings of the artist who during the war stayed in Paris...

The concerto, as composer himself describes it, conveys "the fragrance of magnolias, the singing of birds, and the gushing of fountains"[19] in the gardens of the Royal Palace of Aranjuez[20]. Rodrigo, who had lost his sight at the age of three, could not see the beauty of this place, but transmitted in sounds all images a blind man would appreciate. Yet, the beauty of the gardens hides the composer's pain about his country in the flames of civil war joined by personal experiences—devastation at the miscarriage of the first pregnancy of Rodrigo's wife Victoria (Rodrigo, 1992, p. 108). The circumstances accompanying the creation of the work were complicated by the difficult financial situation in which the composer's family found itself after the scholarship granted to the composer by the Spanish government for professional specialization in Paris was canceled due to the outbreak of civil war (Zinger, 1999). Fortunately, *Concierto de Aranjuez*, premiered in the homeland of the composer in 1940 and immediately evaluated everywhere, solved the material problems of the composer once and for all, since this work was recognized as one of the best in classical music of the 20th century and performed in both the original version and in countless transcriptions.

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[16]  That is, East Germany or, officially, German Democratic Republic.
[17]  Cited in Ciano 2018.
[18]  Personal details on August Horch at *Audi Media Center*, retrieved June 7, 2019 from https://www.audi-mediacenter.com/en/personal-details-313.
[19]  Many sources cite this description without reference to where it was originally published. The author retrieved it June 9, 2019 from: *Concierto*. "Composers-Joaquín Rodrigo", http://concierto.org/artists/composers/item/806-con-joaquin-rodrigo.
[20]  This palace is the former Spanish royal residence located 50 km south of Madrid in the city of Aranjuez, built at the end of the 16th century and rebuilt two centuries later into its present appearance.

The second movement of the concerto is the dialogue between the guitar and solo woodwinds. It was this movement that attracted much attention from both performers and arrangers. Miles Davis, a famous jazz trumpeter who recorded his own (in collaboration with Gil Evans) version of this movement for his album *Sketches of Spain* (1960), noted: "That melody is so strong that the softer you play it, the stronger it gets, and the stronger you play it, the weaker it gets" (Shaw, 2008, p. 30).

Songs based on the music of the second movement of the concerto appeared in the late 1960s. Thus, Richard Anthony recorded in 1967 a single singing this melody with a French lyric written by Guy Bontempelli, which combines the love for Aranjuez's beauty with the memory of the war:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mon amour, sur l'eau des fontaines, mon amour | My love, on the water of the fountains, my love |
| Où le vent les amène, mon amour | Where the wind takes them, my love |
| Le soirtombé, on voitflotter | The fallen evening, that one sees floating |
| Des pétales de roses | Rose petals |
| … | … |
| Et sur cemurlorsque le soir descend | And on this wall when the evening descends |
| On croiraitvoir des taches de sang | One would think they saw bloodstains |
| Ce ne sont que des roses! | It's nothing but roses! |
| Aranjuez, mon amour | Aranjuez, my love[21] |

One year later, in 1968, the Greek singer Nana Mouskouri recorded a German version of this song under the title *Aranjuez-Melodie* (lyrics by Walter Brandin). In the following years, she performed the song in various languages, including original Bontempelli's French lyrics, which is perhaps the most famous of her performances of this song.

The English version of this song by Demis Roussos (*Follow Me*, 1982) is not related to the symbols of Aranjuez or war. This is a lyrical song of more common feelings, in which the singer calls (the beloved) to follow him across the sea. The Hebrew version of the song (*Rainbow Song*, 1988, lyrics by Yehonatan Geffen), performed by Israeli singer Rita, is written in a similar way. This version, however, takes the listener to the story of a man and a woman, which occurs against the backdrop of rain. Almost all versions of the song are created within the Mediterranean and are somehow connected with the imagery of the water (fountain, sea, or rain) which is part of the original imagery of Rodrigo's composition.

And yet, the version of the song that is closest to the original work is perhaps the song *Li Beirut* (1987, Arabic text by the Lebanese poet Joseph Harb), performed by the iconic Lebanese diva Fairuz. The singer's son, composer Ziad Rahbani, arranged the song, carefully following Rodrigo's score. The song was created in a situation very reminiscent of the one in which the original work was created: The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) was still ongoing, although its end was already on the horizon. The lyrics contain all the components of Rodrigo's original tangle of feelings: pain for a beloved city, personal experiences, and the beauty of nature:

| | |
|---|---|
| To Beirut | لبيروت |
| I send a greeting... from my heart to Beirut, | من قلبي سلامٌ لبيروت |
| I send kisses to the sea and to the houses, | و قُبَلٌ للبحر و البيوت |
| to a rock that looks like and old sailor's face. | لصخرةٍ كأنها وجه بحار قديم |
| Beirut has been wine made from the soul of the people. | هي من روح الشعب خمرٌ |
| It has been bread and jasmines made from their sweat, | هي من عرقِهِ خبزٌ و ياسمين |
| then why does it taste now like fire and smoke?[22] | فكيف صار طَعمها طعم نارٍ و دخان |

[21] English translation, retrieved June 9, 2019 from *Lirics Translate*. https://lyricstranslate.com/en/aranjuez-mon-amour-aranjuez-my-love.html.

[22] English translation, retrieved June 8, 2019 from *Lirics Translate*. https://lyricstranslate.com/en/li-beirut-beirut.html#song translation.

Thus, Fairuz, having invested her pain about her native city, that suffered the war, into the Western melody, created the bridge that connects people from different countries and cultures on the basis of common human feelings, where tragedy unites, rather than separates. Song *Li Beirut* was acknowledged not only in the Arab world, but in also in other countries, in particular, in Israel, where Rodrigo's melody is primarily associated with the Lebanese song and where, due to the multicultural makeup of the society, the interpenetration of Western and Eastern cultures became part of socio-cultural agenda and everyday practices.

## Conclusions

The purpose of the article was to emphasize the importance of studying the socio-cultural context of works of art that have received significant (but not the highest) recognition on a global scale. Attention of the author to this niche of research is conditioned by his research philosophy, proposing that collecting "stories behind artifacts" provides the human and academic curiosity of an investigator with important details about the era and its customs, which at the end contributes to better understanding of the milieu for "top-tier" artworks about which we have otherwise only prejudgment obtained in the school.

The objects of main discussion were five local stories, each of which, it would seem, was not related to the other. Nevertheless, the common is that all these stories are about socio-cultural circumstances that led to the creation of artworks, which the author pre-defined as "the global artifacts of second echelon". The approach to each certain artwork, be it song, painting, or the design of rear turn signals, was developed on the basis of disciplinary affiliation, whereas a discipline was more sociology, anthropology, or history of an appropriate art, than its theory. Another research method placed local context in the test tube of globalization. Experience shows that these two methods are applicable to different arts, locations and periods, but first and foremost to modern and postmodern art.

The author expresses hope that, following the above methodology, the researchers of various sociology-based disciplines will jointly find the answers to the questions, such as: Why has Duchamp's urinal for a hundred years been a symbol of novelty in art? Why the painting by Claude Monet is today sold for the amount that possibly exceeds the gross income of a small country, whose folk art is no less interesting, expressive, and valuable in the eyes of an unbiased art lover?

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# Filling the Gap Between Heaven and Earth:
# One Building Two Sides

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In this paper, the meaning of various symbols and rituals threaded into sacred architecture are explored. Spatial dynamics, forms, and aesthetics are analyzed as a space transforms from a Protestant megachurch to a Catholic Cathedral. Featuring a case study of the Christ Cathedral, formally known as the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, this research reveals how the act of worship is shaped by the architectural design in which it occurs. This study recognizes how stakeholders make sense of social, spatial, and spiritual components in a transitional place of worship; how the Protestant congregation and Catholic Diocese interact and how this transition effects the continuity of the Christian community. In this space, one building reveals two sides (formally Protestant, currently Catholic); the ritual sequencing, emblematic form, and symbolic aesthetics of the built form act as mediator of social practices of spiritual/religious practices of higher powers. Findings reveal ways that a physical place is designed to connect humans to their heavenly realms.

*Keywords:* sacred space, place transformation, environment and behavior

## Introduction

Iconic architects of the past and present embrace the ethos that the environment surrounding the human is not merely the background, but the ever-present and integral presence of all the forces of life with which we are contained. The idea that we are not merely in nature, but of nature creates a powerful means of seeing the interaction of forms and forces in the world around us as the built environment is erected. For example, as an architect designs a building, it is not just a box placed upon a piece of ground, but a form which should emerge from its setting—the building and landscape as one. Built environments are references to something beyond themselves; they reflect the site that carries them, they reflect the culture they serve, and they are created and changed continuously by the way humans use them and the meanings humans attach to them.

As distinct building types emerge, power of the architecture heightens. It has been said, "architecture is the built form of ideas, and church architecture is the built form of theology" (McNamara, 2014, para. 3). Eero Saarinen (1962) explained,

> Now, what is the purpose of architecture? ... I believe it has a much more fundamental role to play for man, almost a religious one. Man is on earth for a very short time and he is not quite sure what his purpose is. Religion gives him his primary purpose. The permanence and beauty and meaningfulness of his surroundings give him confidence and a sense of continuity. So, to the question, what is the purpose of architecture, I would answer: To shelter and enhance man's life on earth and to fulfill his belief in the nobility of his existence. (p. 5)

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Churches, cathedrals, synagogues, mosques, temples, and shrines are "reflections of the spiritual narratives embraced by particular religious groups" (Vosko, 2014, para. 2). "Religion endows these places with symbolic meaning which not only help differentiate them from ordinary spaces" (Najafi & Shariff, 2014, para. 2), but through their geography, design, and aesthetics, they have the capacity to also foster attachment, devotion, and spirituality, and establish disposition, ethos, and worldview in those who enter (S. Mazumdar & Sh. Mazumdar, 2004).

There is an integral trichotomic relationship between man, place, and religion. Religion and communal rituals carried out by man, in a physical setting filled with symbolism can create a sense of place and spiritual experience and foster closeness to that which they seek (Barrie, 2010). Spatial sequencing within sacred architecture can serve to connect humans to a higher power. Forms explicate meaning in sacred architecture to connect humans to the omniscient. Aesthetics within sacred architecture, specifically materiality and art, help cultivate a middle ground between humans, bringing that closer to that which they worship. The life that takes place in built forms constructs and frames meaning. The frame is like a mirror or a picture and the humans' everyday life can be seen in this frame. Dovey (1999) described secular built forms acting as mediators of social practices of power. The power of sacred architecture is multivalent and there is a strong two-way connection between the design of a space and the emotions experienced by people in the space including the "sense of other" or "higher power" (Tuan, 1977).

Featuring a case study of the Christ Cathedral, formally known as the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, this research reveals how the act of worship is shaped by the architectural design in which it occurs. In this space, one building reveals two sides (formally Protestant, currently Catholic); the ritual sequencing, emblematic form, and symbolic aesthetics of the built form act as mediator of social practices of spiritual/religious practices of higher powers.

Communal rituals are a means to broaden our engagements with the built environment (Barrie, 2010). Due to the actions performed within places by humans, they become significant (White, 2003). Wescoat and Ousterhout (2012) explained architecture does not merely host events; rather it magnifies and elevates them through the human interaction and rituals facilitated within. Rituals inserted into places, when conducted and paired with religion, evoke sacredness and a person's identification with the place is solidified (S. Mazumdar & Sh. Mazumdar, 2004). Through a series of deliberate and sequential moves, architecture can set out to dissolve the spiritual boundaries between man and the divine.

Specific forms explicate meaning in sacred architecture as means to connect humans to the omniscient. The shape of the church and architectural forms within both the east and west early Christian church, were built to mediate the worshipper between heaven and earth; thus, central forms of sacred architecture are symbolic to the way those in the space interact with the God they worship.

Symbols provide a sign language depicting that which cannot be represented in visible form (White, 2003). Jung (1968) explained, "Because there are innumerable things beyond the range of human understanding, we constantly use symbolic terms to represent concepts that we can't define or fully comprehend. This is one reason why all religions employ symbolic language or images" (p. 4). Symbols provide references to a more extraordinary realm of possibility that often defies rational explanation (Vosko, 2014). Through identification with a symbolic meaning in the built environment, people attain a sense of belonging to a group of people or a sense of place. It is the layering of the architecture, with the religion's symbolism and rituals, as well as the meaning and sense of place that is established, that serves as a way to link humans to that which they seek, revere, fear, and worship (Jones, 2000).

The aesthetics within sacred architecture, through materiality and art within the built environment, form a middle ground that mediates between humans and that which they worship. Art forms, mosaics, tapestries, as well as materials built into the space, such as stone or glass are symbolic in that through these aesthetic—the walls begin to teach alongside the religious leaders. Other aesthetic techniques are used to portray symbolism in art with sacred architecture that mediates between the devotee and their God. Whether literal or abstract, these outward signs of the inward and spiritual divine are used in the aesthetics of many sacred architectural buildings and are interpreted by humans and used as means to connect to the divine.

## The Legendary Crystal Cathedral

The Crystal Cathedral was part of the Reformed Church in America, located in Garden Grove, California. Well-known for its spectacle, the "possibility thinking theologian" Reverend Dr. Robert H. Schuller believed for the space in the late 70's while working alongside the legendary architects Philip Johnson and John Burgee of Johnson/Burgee architectural firm from New York. Groundbreaking for the building began December 4, 1977 and on September 14, 1980 the building was dedicated. The space served as a television set for the "Hour of Power", a weekly world-wide televised sermon. The accolades for the church were astounding. In 2004, as Time Inc. published a book titled *Great Buildings of the World, The World's Most Influential, Inspiring, and Astonishing Structures*. Within this book, architecture marvels included the Ancient Pyramids, the Taj Mahal, the Parthenon, Paris Opera House, and the Empire State Building. Five notable Christian structures made the list including the Crystal Cathedral in Orange County California which sat among the great Michelangelo's Basilica of St. Peter in Rome, St. Basils Cathedral in Russia, St. Mark's Basilica in Italy, Chartres Cathedral in France.

As guests walked through the Protestant's Crystal Cathedral doors, the three entrances were strategically positioned under sloped balconies hovering just seven-and-a-half feet from the front girder overhead. This served as a compression that prepared the visitor for the expansion to come. Once inside, as the guest stepped closer toward the center of the Cathedral, the balcony's overhead ended and the Cathedral's expansive scale, glass and lattice work rose 12-story. From every angle, views of the surrounding Southern California landscape and sky are seen. Twelve water fountains ran the length of the center aisle on the main floor representing the twelve Apostles, "these fountains danced their praise during the opening and closing of each Sunday service, wedding, or special occasion" (Crystal Cathedral Ministries, 2004, p. 39). The chancel, at the north end of the fountain, was 185 feet long and constructed out of Rosso Alicante marble. The three pulpit sections of marble had been symbolically interpreted as communion chalices, angel wings, a heart, or Christ on the cross with a crucified thief. Others, symbolically realizing that the marble had been forming for millennia deep inside the earth, would see both the design and their inclusion inside the Cathedral as providential (Crystal Cathedral Ministries, 2004, p. 68). Promotionally speaking, the marble became an excellent setting for the weekly Hour of Power television show; in some areas, wood was painted to look like marble to emphasize the grandeur. Behind the chancel were two 90-feet tall doors controlled electronically. These doors created a direct connection with nature as guests felt the Southern California breeze, and even at times witnessed a flock of birds fly through. When the opening note at the start of a service was played on the large organ, the choir harmoniously sung along, a breeze from the large doors flooded the sanctuary and the fountains in the center rose in a breath-taking moment. The aesthetics of the architecture were designed for humans who desired an encounter with something more. Guests and visitors alike explain, in a reoccurring theme over the course of many interviews, how the

aesthetic details of the Crystal Cathedral, centered on nature, heightened their connection they had with a higher power while in the space:

> Informant 1: [walking into the space from compression to expansion through transparent glass] "The Heavens just opened up!"
> Informant 2: [as the doors opened and the breeze was felt] "It was like a breath from the Holy Spirit"
> Informant: 3: "The best view is at the very top of the west balcony, here you gain eternal perspective" [due to the expansive glass view and perspective lines]

As the Crystal Cathedral congregation worshipped, the glass opened those who were inside to the nature outside with the desire for those interacting to establish a connection to the heavens above. The originator behind the Cathedral, Revered Dr. Robert H. Schuller vision for the space was, "Once inside the Crystal Cathedral your life is like a window to let God's light shine in and let the glory reflect into the world" (Robles-Anderson, 2012). His personal passion and inspiration from nature came from his childhood as he grew up on an Iowa farm and developed fond memories of the sky, clouds, streams, trees, and birds (Schuller, 2005). This upbringing paired with his training while designing with architect Richard Neutra on previous projects helped him understand the tranquilizing system that triggered response to a person by nature. This was then relayed and carried into the Crystal Cathedral by Philip Johnson and John Burgee. Using "biorealism", architecture that is shaped by the biology of the creature that will reside in the structure, allowed those inside the space a glimpse into that which they worshiped. Ingham (2005) also discovered that a large quantity of natural light and feeling a connection with nature, either through materials used or actual views, aided feelings of meaning in church sanctuaries. Antonio Gaudi pronounced it best, "If nature is the work of God, and if architectural forms are derived from nature, then the best way to honor God is to design buildings based on His work" (Berlin, 2010).

## Transformation to Christ Cathedral

In 2000, at the age of 80, Reverend Dr. Robert H. Schuller stepped off the platform and his son Robert A. Schuller, took stage. On January 22, 2006, Robert A. assumed the role of senior pastor of the Crystal Cathedral, and for two years, he held that position. Suddenly, in 2010, Sheila Schuller Coleman, daughter of Reverend Robert H. Schuller, was appointed as the lead pastor of the Crystal Cathedral, officially taking the reins from her brother and father. However, in October of 2010, after battling financial difficulties for several years, Crystal Cathedral Ministries declared bankruptcy.

After filing bankruptcy, the church was sold to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange. In February 2012, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange agreed the Crystal Cathedral Ministry had three years to find a new home. Ultimately, the Crystal Cathedral congregation moved a few miles away and changed their congregation name. Shepherd's Grove, the newly appointed name, became the new home for church services, weekly activities, and the internationally televised Hour of Power. Bobby Schuller, Reverend Dr. Robert H. Schuller's grandson, Robert A.'s son and Sheila Schuller Coleman nephew, assumed the new pastoral role for the ministry and the face of continued Hour of Power from the new location.

The Catholic Diocese of Orange remade their newly acquired building the Christ Cathedral. As the transition occurred the stakeholders, while planning for suitable renovations, realized there was a sacredness to the existing site. They understood the power of the preceding ministry, and made distinct connections about the contributions from the past which would impact the future Cathedral. They sought to respect the past, striving

to preserve the architectural beauty and with empathy towards the memories many people held of the past. However, the focus of the Catholic's new Christ Cathedral was to provide the optimum environment for Catholic worship, liturgical worships—not watching something (as in the Crystal Cathedral) but participating in an action - and so taking the various liturgical rights and talking about how one can shape the space around it so that the way the space is designed, and appointed, are arranged to allow the fullest expression of the liturgy.

Leaning on the guiding documents: Sacrosanctum Concilium, Environment and Art in Catholic Worship, and Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture, and Worship, the stakeholders began designing the future of the space. They first established their views in the "modern [Catholic architecture] camp", this opposed by many in the "classical [Catholic architecture] camp". Then, they began to design in more authenticity. They understood the previous ministry as "low liturgy" and wanted to "add liturgy back in". The stakeholders explained,

> One of the things we need to be very careful about is the Catholic liturgy is not there to entertain; and televangelism (from the previous Crystal Cathedral ministry), in many respects, the style of worship, is the entertainment style of worship.

The sacraments—religious rituals like the Mass and confession—were the main means of human contact with the divine.

The new redesigned site would involve sacred space impressions and specific thresholds from the procession from the "profane" car/parking lot into the "scared" Cathedral. They desired to maintain the existing architecture, however, the interior space planning revolved around the altar location. They wanted to enhance the beauty by building in opportunities focused on verticality, natural materials, directionality, as well as iconography and symbolism. The exterior glass panels were covered by quatrefoil panels with lights behind and thought of ethereal, "lighting from the unseen". As they considered technology, they wanted to "sanctify it". They were careful that no Jumbotron (from the previous Crystal Cathedral ministry) would take dominance, but the use of technology would be used to enhance communication (i.e., those with hearing impairments, to connect those with language barriers, etc.). The embellishments the social actors designed into their Cathedral afforded ways participants could bridge across the physical space to the spiritual realm. The saints, like Mary, the mother of Jesus, were holy people held up as examples by the church, called upon in prayer to "intercede" for Catholics with the Father and the Son. As they designed they held a, "posture of reverence to the Lord" and were accountable financially to the Diocese and to the civic community stating, "We're building 'a' church and we're building 'the' church".

## Conclusions

As the Protestant's Crystal Cathedral becomes a Catholic's Christ Cathedral the built form encourages a deeper understanding of place formation, our presence in space, and the roles on human life. The Crystal Cathedral offered a connotative space with vague sequencing, emblematic form, and symbolic aesthetic. The open, abstract environment, focused on nature in order to connect to God. The modern building was revolutionary when built and legendary as a memory.

As the Christ Cathedral emerges, the building has a historical precedent. The reused and nearing historic building is evolutional. The new design leans to a described and defined denotative impression. The insertion of thresholds, examination of rituals, and the addition of symbols, sacramental art via materials and lighting applications defined and designed by social actors, intend to enhance the spiritual environment and become

highly representational. Striving to make the space more "authentically Catholic", the social actors are reinforcing the role of decorative arts in the life of the Catholic Church.

This study recognizes how stakeholders make sense of social, spatial, and spiritual components in a transitional place of worship; how the Protestant congregation and Catholic Diocese interact and how this transition effects the continuity of the Christian community. Through the meaning of various symbols and rituals threaded into sacred architecture, spatial dynamics, forms, and aesthetics reveal ways that a physical place is designed to connect humans to their heavenly realms.

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