

INTRODUCTION

DOMAIN-SPECIFIC VERSUS GENERAL APPROACHES TO MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ON CULTURE

Multidisciplinary research is a challenging endeavor. It requires from the researcher a flexible and at the same time strictly rigorous stance while applying methods approved by the academia. New or modified approaches in cultural studies, constituting a common ground of humanities and social sciences, may evoke skepticism or reluctance from the research community if not extensively justified and supported with a rich body of argumentation. Thus, in the context of the multidisciplinary character of cultural studies, doing research becomes a real but inevitable challenge.

In the contemporary, late-modern (or post-modern) world, shaped by the exponential dynamics of societal, political, economic processes driven by increasingly advanced technology (e.g. artificial intelligence, AI and artificial super-intelligence, ASI), the question of an adequate modification approach to studying culture, in relation to the transformations taking place, becomes relevant and highly plausible.

This notion becomes all the more important, as the diversity of issues addressed in cultural studies requires the construction of phenomenon-specific research methods. Bearing in mind that no phenomenon is identical - it may be similar, but not identical - openness to new research methods seems essential. This postulate, expressed in a wide realm of publications (vide Gloss in this volume) remains, however, rather outside of the mainstream academic discourse.

This Special Issue of *Intercultural Relations* has, thus, three main ambitions. First, to enhance a scientific discussion among experienced researchers on the omnipresent problems that are encountered in the fieldwork, especially in the current context of global change caused by unrest and uncertainty (e.g. Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Israeli – Palestine bloody

conflict in the Gaza strip, the Armenia – Azerbaijan military confrontation, the civil wars in Yemen, Ethiopia, and Haiti, just to mention a few); second, to provide a useful reference for young scholars trying to do their research in compliance with the approved academic standards and at the same time seeing these standards' limitations; third, to provide evidence that the stiff methodological paradigm imposed on researchers of social sciences and humanities inhibits the proper description, analysis and understanding of phenomena and processes shaping the first decades of the 21st century.

The Editors