

## SOFT POWER IN THE CONCEPT OF TRANSCULTURATION: IDENTITY AND UNIVERSAL IDENTITY LEGITIMIZATION AND NON-ETHNOCENTRIC IMAGE

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**Abstract.** In an expanded cultural perspective, the process of transculturation from the past to the present is a cumulative and formalized order and sophisticated approach that has an impact on societies. Amidst multidimensional cultural differences, transculturation formulates cultural phenomena between self and other for societies' quest for sharing, and provides temporal responses to people's demands and needs. Soft power plays a prominent role in shaping the transculturation process. In the concept of transculturation, universal soft power instruments bring the distinctive qualities of human beings into question and the established traditions, practices, values and beliefs of society are transformed by the networks and tools surrounding the cultural space. Soft power instruments that constitute universal values challenge traditional social despotism and construct non-ethnocentric images and notions of social and intellectual unity that belong to universal humanity and help legitimize universal identity. In this context, the transculturation process and soft power, which carry out transformation processes, create a sense of being the majority in people, and the universal values that permeate the masses and the universal needs brought about by the environmental conditions create a representation in societies. Moreover, the acceptance of universal values creates a global synthesis in societies and the characteristics of representation are reflected in practical life. This article examines the role of soft power in the concept of transculturation, discusses transculturation processes and soft power instruments with examples from history, and finally analyzes issues related to identity and universal identity legitimization and non-ethnocentric image.

**Keywords:** transculturation, soft power, identity, universal identity, non-ethnocentric, culture, global culture, representation

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## **1. Introduction**

Culture is often an overexposed, expanded and institutionalized concept. The power attributed to culture crosses borders with its characteristics. There is a growing body of work on the positioning of culture, and the idea of repositioning culture means embracing the necessity of historicizing, contextualizing and critiquing a strongly emphasized concept. In the process of this necessity, the intercultural approach opens space for the negotiation of different and complex cultural flows and the idea of repositioning culture emerges. While the idea of repositioning culture used to be based on issues such as gender, class and identity, today universal visions of entitlement, belonging and equality come to the fore (Tittley 2004: 9-10). Today, traditional cultural considerations are in reality inadequate and modern societies are themselves multicultural and encompass many different ways of life and lifestyles. Consequently, traditional culture cannot cope with the internal complexity of modern cultures and interculturality involves a range of lifestyles and cultures that interpenetrate and emerge from each other as a result of the internal differentiation and complexity of modern cultures (Welsch 1999). In this sense, the way individuals communicate with each other across different societies is determined by social, political-economic, cultural, psychological and behavioral factors, and the dimensions of culture provide spaces for cultural exchange or unification. With the formation of these spaces, the process of transculturation builds new identities, institutions, societies and values through intercultural interactions and creates interactive spaces with intersecting trajectories (Davis 2020). Through the process of transculturation, cultures experience losses, discoveries, unifications, choices, resulting in a dynamic integration of tools, traditions, values, norms and objects in the structuring of the cultural system (Rama 2012). In processes of integration, soft power shapes the behavior and perceptions of individuals through resources containing culture and values without coercion. In the process of transculturation, soft power uses various means of culture transmission, from religious movements to international corporations, from malicious organizations to mass media. Today, in this process of realization, soft power, which includes universal values, creates universal identity legitimization that is not limited nationally and creates a globally oriented situation that expresses a non-ethnocentric superior cultural representation. In this context, this article aims to define transculturation and clarify the relationship between transculturation processes and soft power by problematizing the role of soft power in the concept of transculturation. Based on a comprehensive research, this article analyzes the reciprocal relations between transculturation and soft power in a historical perspective with various examples. It also addresses the role of soft power in contemporary transculturation processes in identity legitimization/universal identity legitimization based on universal principles, representation and non-ethnocentric image construction.

## **2. The concept of transculturation and soft power**

Transculturation is a term coined by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz. The term is a revision of the term acculturation, which was introduced into the United States and British anthropology and social sciences by Polish ethnographer Bronislaw J. Malinowski in the 1920s and 1930s. While acculturation describes processes of assimilation into the society in which immigrant populations are assimilated, transculturation describes processes of linguistic, economic, racial, gender-based and cultural change (Arroyo 2016: 133). According to Ortiz, who defines transculturation based on Cuba's history, the real history of Cuba is the history of transculturation. First, there was the transformation of the paleolithic Native Americans into neolithic Native Americans, and the paleolithic Native Americans disappeared as a result of their failure to adapt to the culture brought by the Spaniards. Then, the transculturation of the uninterrupted influx of white immigrants took place. These Spaniards, representatives of a different culture, were transplanted to the new world. At the same time, transculturation took place in different ways when a continuous stream of African American blacks crossed to the other side of the continent (Ortiz 1947). The different forms of transculturation resulted in the mixing of cultures and peoples, and new forms of transculturation emerged. In new forms, transculturation has revitalized a variety of styles (e.g. European, United States style), from the way nature works to humanist values, and cultural creations have occurred over time (Winks 2010).

In a rapidly developing global world, new cultural creations have established cultural forms with unclear boundaries. Cultural forms have revealed cosmopolitan tendencies and pluralistic expectations. From time to time, there have been different processes that have been detached from cultural ties (Dagnino 2012). According to Ortiz, the encounter with the problem of dissonance and readaptation, deculturation and acculturation, and in a word, transculturation, has occurred in many societies that have been disconnected from their own ties in a flow, and cultural phenomena have been created through the process of transition from one culture to another. With transculturation, the human factor has been subjected to changes in environment, culture, class and conscience, and transitions from one culture to another have occurred against people's own will or choice. In transitional phases, people who yearn for freedom and change can also be subjugated through transculturation (Ortiz 1947: 85-88). In the examples of transculturation regarding the use of the longing for freedom and change in transitional phases, people's worlds of consciousness have been affected by ideas and people's acts of comprehension have been reflected in transculturation through societal tendencies and interactions.

It is quite possible to see an example of this situation in the Stoic doctrine of the Romans in a historical perspective. Stoicism made a significant contribution to the development of universal law principles in the world and 'the idea of the sovereignty of reason over human itself' created social interactions. The relationship that the Stoics established among rationality, the individual and freedom caused societies to approach the order in a positive way and legitimized the order (Türk 2012: 192).

Therefore, the ideas of universality, divinity and eternity behind the concept of the Roman Empire also included examples of transculturation in history that could shed light on the present day and revealed how the universal identity formation was used in the longing for freedom and change. In this context, given the idea of the universality of Rome and the unity of the destiny of the world, the acceptance of all free people living in the territory of the Empire as Roman citizens by order of Emperor Caracalla expanded Roman citizenship. Rome's destiny also bound other nations to itself with ties of law and authority. Theoretically, the whole world was seen as a space of the Roman Empire (Türk 2012: 190). In fact, ideas formed a philosophical ground for transculturation. In particular, Roman Stoa, by creating this philosophical ground, built a model that emphasized the universe and the common sense in all people. In this model, the individual's relationship with their own self is reflected in the culture of the self. The culture of the self has realized a phase of communicating with other people, giving order and form to other people's desires and wishes, restraining them, and governing people themselves (Türk 2012: 191-192). Transculturation, as an evolution of difference and uniformity, facilitates the performance of soft power at the international level and opens space for people to discover the good and non-harmless values found in others. Soft power, which shapes visions, evolves emotions and thoughts in the process of transculturation, creating cultural reasons for convergence between people and creating a 'global culture of characteristic control' based on the Roman concept of empire. The 'global culture of characteristic control' constructs geographical spaces, including virtual or territorial lands without borders, encompassing different cultures in the world with universal identity creation and non-ethnocentric cultural image. The 'global culture of characteristic control' creates an excitement and pleasure of eclecticism with unwritten rules. Eclecticism not only adopts a culture where everyone follows the same fashion, tries to speak the same language, and gravitates towards the same values, but also brings cultures together in a common place by creating the opportunity to experience completely different cultures. Thus, the 'global culture of characteristic control' builds an eclectic collection of people on the basis of values and terms without using rules, creating a new combination system that gathers elements of cultural mobility and networking.

In the combination system, soft power shapes others' preferences by attracting people to it rather than coercing them. From a behavioral point of view, soft power makes others follow it through elements of attractiveness. If a country's culture and ideology are attractive and shape international laws in line with its interests and values, actions become legitimate in the eyes of others. If culture embodies universal values and policies also serve the values and interests shared by others (Nye 2005), the process of transculturation proceeds successfully. The presence of rising and collapsing powers within an international system that violates the rules in this process has different effects on the stages of transculturation. Due to the failure to stop the process of constant change within the international system and the influence of great power balances (Kennedy 1991: 632-633), influences vary over time and space. From time to time in this process, peoples remain under the control of the

dominant culture and generally cannot easily control what is transmitted. Peoples can determine to different extent what the dominant culture will bring to their own culture, how they will use the transmitted culture and what meaning they will attribute to the transmitted culture. In this sense, transculturation is a phenomenon of the contact zone (Pratt 2008: 7-8) and is itself a conceptualization that stems from social interactions and the power relations involved in social interactions. Transculturation, which can be used for specific contexts and involves interaction with other cultural elements, is a transfer process that can influence cultural processes and cultural conflicts in a culturally transferable way and can be culturally visible in any society (Hermann 2007). Today, the United States is at the center of this transculturation process, and the terminology of the resources advancing the process is soft power. Power is a key to addressing global cooperation and conflict. Power is having the ability to achieve goals or objectives. In this context, the United States effectively sets the conditions for international cooperation and, through interdependence, generates profound societal impacts elsewhere (Nye and Welch 2013). There are features that underpin deep influence. These are as follows: The uniqueness of the United States, the adoption of universal values, its inclusive culture, its respect for traditions, its ethnic composition, the creation of an environment favorable to diversity within the country, and the creation of much of the global knowledge open to the world in the United States (Nye 2003: 98-99). In this way, with a soft power that includes universality, there is a transcultural mobility that embraces humanity and militarized borders are gradually reduced. Transculturation and universal soft power create openly accessible cultural commonalities outside the world in which people were born, and for people, being a member of this universal culture carries a special meaning. In this way, the soft power of the United States transforms distance into proximity, and transculturation positions the 'global culture of characteristic control' with pre-established typologies created for the good of the people and values designed for the use of all. Step-by-step controls build mutual interest and social partners and objective meanings (such as human rights, rule of law, freedom) create social influence. In spheres of influence, the formulation of transculturation systematizes and institutionalizes cultural exchanges.

Stoic moral philosophy is another example in this case. In the formulation of transculturation, the Stoic moral philosophy's support for the equality of Greek and Barbarian peoples built interest in society and created a sphere of influence that included objective meaning between social partners. The ideal of cosmopolitanism, in which equality between peoples was supported, was compatible with the historical reality of the Hellenistic period, and idealizations paved the way for the spread of legitimizing ideas by bringing along the idea of equality (Türk 2012: 163-164). As seen in the examples, the sources containing transculturation and soft power are intertwined. Therefore, through historical series and social experiences, the world continues to be shaped by cultural exchange processes involving ideas and values, and cultural interactions emphasize previously unrepresented aspects. Transculturation is therefore an invaluable term to describe the complex aspects of historical phenomena and processes invisible to a critical logic of cultural assimilation and eradication.

Furthermore, transculturation is, in a positive sense, a set of guiding principles for a person's transition from one culture to another and the accessible presence of soft power as a guide that offers people options for cultural transition (Mackenthun and Jobs 2013: 10-11).

### **3. Processes, networks and tools in cultural changes and transformations**

A battle between transculturation and the balance of power might arise and some cultures might experience deculturation. With the imbalance of power in cultural exchanges, some cultures make an attempt to resist the dominant culture. However, in the disproportionate power struggle, dominant cultures usually create a perception by transforming local cultures and as a result of well-intentioned perceptions, local cultures find a place for themselves in the tourism industry. For example, the food and jewelry of the local culture can be commodified, while the local culture can also be destroyed by the influence of the mainstream culture, from the soil to other assets. In a sense, transculturation is both a social practice and a praxeological approach that forces us to consider other cultures in interactions with members of other cultures. The praxeological approach has a feature that emphasizes the relations and exchanges between actors in the field of power in cultural encounter. With this approach, which focuses on processes rather than stability, transculturation reveals the transformation potential of actors from different backgrounds (Mackenthun and Jobs 2013: 13-14). There are facts, conditions and reference points for the processes and practices produced and determined in transformations in the praxeological approach. In the praxeological approach, decision-making processes take place through human and non-human interactions. Publications, media and technologies influence choices in daily life, and legitimization of society through cultural processes leads to social effects (Schmidt 2022). In this context, soft power is related to the achievement of peripheral goals. Soft power plays an important role in the field of human rights, in developing open markets, and in democracy's impact on everyday life (Nye 2005: 25), and transculturation processes make actions meaningful within a praxeological approach that allows for the consideration of other cultures.

Among all societies, the historical evolution from one culture to another is always gradual or spontaneous. According to Ortiz, the cultures that have influenced the formation of the Cuban people are numerous and they are diverse in terms of their spatial location and structural composition. This diversity and the enormous mixture of races and cultures overshadow all other historical phenomena in terms of their importance, and the most fundamental factors of social existence are conditioned by different cultures (Ortiz 1947). Values involving soft power in cultural conditioning create preconditioned beliefs and behaviors, especially when they involve universal values. Cultural interactions become norms that guide perspectives, and through cultural conditioning, messages and norms from other cultures are interpreted and transformed into accepted behaviors. With concrete experiences, transculturation processes constitute key positions.

The interpretation of messages and norms creates a world that builds universal identity through values that involve action and interaction. The soft power of the United States, which today represents the center of universal identity legitimization, is perceived by people around the world as exciting, exotic, powerful, modern, innovative, rich and fashionable. This image affects people. Even though people in different parts of the world are aware of the problems in society, equality and ecological issues, the American way of life brings people together. For example, a young Chinese activist attributed his motivation for a pro-legal movement to take legal action to defend legal rights in China to Hollywood movies. The young man noted that many Hollywood movies have weddings, funerals and court cases, and he thought it was normal to sue. The United States has gained a certain admiration through these kinds of movies (Nye 2005: 21). As can be seen, many cultures can come together with many cultures in different settings and key locations. Even people who grow up in the same environment and have the same experiences may perceive and interpret cultures from different points of view. People from some cultures may internalize ideas about the other, and internalized values may lead to a special interest in other cultures.

Special interests facilitate cultural formations and specifically shape cultural moral norms and ethics. Historically, we see an example of this in the influence of Africa on Cuban cultural identity and society. In Cuba, as elsewhere in the Caribbean, the institution of slavery facilitated the formation of what is known as Afro-Hispanic culture from the 1920s to the present day. The Spanish Caribbean has sought to redefine the concepts of 'identity' and 'nation-state' in relation to culture in a discourse that refers to the African presence (Arrizón, 2006). Attributions to redefinition influence organizational cultures related to the representation of culture, and conditioning and definitions are employed by different cultures.

Examples of this can be seen in the policies of countries in which national cultures are directed towards foreign cultures. For example, French missions and diplomats supported religious and secular institutions to spread the French language and literature, and the Agency for French Schools and Foundations Abroad was established in 1910. The British Council opened its first overseas office in Cairo in 1938. As Jules Cambon stated in 1814, ideas and emotions were used as effective tools (İskit 2012: 121) Today, spatial locations and structural components that affect the formation of the society, from the Goethe Institute of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Cultural Centers of Italy, constitute a systematic cultural structure with its unique dimensions and positively affect the processes of adoption of cultural elements through soft and communicative actions encompassing contemporary cultures. These positions on language and culture promote an identity and transfer values. If the transferred values form a unified cultural representation, facts are rendered visible and transculturation, as a carrier of memory, creates a 'we' relationship between societies.

With the resources that constitute soft power and the processes of transculturation, the forms of representation of societies are transformed. A global culture that makes it possible to grasp forms of representation gives people the ability to be in different

cultural styles at the same time. At times, there is opposition to the new cultures that make up a nation. There is resistance to new cultures by people who are not able to be in different cultural styles at the same time. Cultural transitions are rapid in some regions and slow in others. On the other hand, cultural transitions simultaneously have positive or negative effects on races, cultures and structural languages.

In the Mediterranean, there was a basic proficiency in Mediterranean *lingua franca*, based on Italian with words from Arabic, Armenian, Provençal, Greek, Turkish and Spanish. Sailors, captives, pirates, slaves and diplomats were able to master this 'lingua franca of the two coasts'. The death of this intercultural language coincided with the increasing pressure of European colonialism in the Mediterranean. Throughout the nineteenth century, with the rise of nationalism and colonial domination of Europe's southern and eastern coasts, the language became almost obsolete (Driessen 2013: 30). With the rise of sentiment, a culture may die in one place and give birth to a new culture in another. Naturally, in a temporal way, processes of transculturation, accompanied by causal and purposive motives, might create a confusion of perspectives in daily life and broadly transform the appearance of cultures for practical purposes.

An example of this can be seen in Cuba's cultural transitions. The terms Ciboney, Taino, Spaniard, Jew, English, French, Anglo-American, Negro, Yucatec, Chinese and Creole do not refer to the different elements that make up the Cuban nation. Each of these has existed at times in succession and at times simultaneously. There have been clashes between cultures and historically various economic and cultural nomenclatures have developed. The cultural thrust that took Europe more than four millennia to accomplish has been accomplished in Cuba in less than four centuries. Whereas change took place step by step in Europe, it occurred in Cuba in leaps and bounds. First there were the cultures of the Ciboneys and Guanahacabibes, the paleolithic culture and the stone age. Then came the culture of the Taino Indians, which was neolithic. This was the age of stone and carved wood. The Tainos brought agriculture, sedentary life, tribal chiefs, caciques and priests. It was the first transculturation. The Ciboneys became serfs and *naborias* or fled to the hills and jungles. Then came a storm of culture from Europe: wheels, sails, iron, the printing press, books, bankers, churches, kings, writing, etc. A revolutionary upheaval radically changed the Indian peoples of Cuba and their institutions. The bridge between the drowsy stone ages and the wide-awake Renaissance was suddenly crossed, creating two worlds that discovered each other. There was a collision as the two cultures influenced each other. A process of transculturation took place, unsuccessful for the natives, profound for the newcomers. In Cuba, the indigenous human basis of society was transformed and the society accepted the new culture willingly or by force (Ortiz 1947). As can be seen, trade from Europe was one of the ways through which culture was transmitted. Transmissions can take place through personal contacts, visits or exchanges. Every year more than half a million foreigners come to study at American universities and return home. More than half a million foreigners transmit ideas and values to elites in their home countries. The children of most Chinese leaders are educated in the United States, and they can draw a realistic

picture of the United States (Nye 2005: 21-22). Thus, through transculturation processes and images, formulated and aestheticized culture-building takes place. Soft power creates an environment for a centralized vision of the world in culture-building.

Another example of transculturation is the intercultural communication among Hurons, Iroquois and French Jesuits in the seventeenth-century New France. Among the Catholic orders working to missionarize the heathen, it was the Jesuit order that was interested in gathering information about the cultures to be converted. Early modern Jesuits practiced participant observation of ethnography more than most other missionaries. Jesuits adapted to new natural and cultural environments, living alongside the rescued and documenting their experiences. Some indigenous tribes (such as those that made up the powerful Iroquois League) rejected the presence of European priests. Transcultural impulses were also documented in the proposal to domesticate maize in France to alleviate the hunger of the poor (Mackenthun and Jobs 2013: 16). As seen in the transculturation process, churches, foundations or non-governmental organizations can develop their own soft power and strengthen their own actions and policies with impulses (Nye 2005: 27).

In transculturation, networks, intermediaries and characters are integrative phenomena in cultural transitions across borders and are subjects that unite human and non-human elements into a whole. Another example of transculturation in this sense is the highly concentrated influence of the position of translation in historical phenomena. The authority and function of the translator is well understood in The Bible. The word translator is translated from the Hebrew (*melitz*) used in creation to the word *dragoman* in English. The two-stage translation process with *dragomans* played an important role in transculturation and the need for professional translators increased, especially during the Crusades. Prior to the triumph of British and French colonialism, the services of *dragomans* in trade centers, embassies and consulates in Eastern Mediterranean ports were essential for the drafting of written contracts between merchants and shippers and for diplomatic transactions. These intermediaries played a leading role in the emergence of nineteenth-century liberal cosmopolitanism on the Mediterranean coast (Driessen 2013: 30-31). The general entrepreneurial atmosphere of liberal port city cosmopolitanism included a significant presence of ethnic commercial minorities, linguistic and religious pluralism, openness and tolerance, considerable economic growth, common interests across ethnic boundaries, a basic educational system modeled on the French and English systems, and social, cultural and commercial networks that transcended the Mediterranean world. In a way, *dragomans* facilitated communication between people of different linguistic, ethnic and religious backgrounds and contributed to the emergence of the nineteenth-century version of cosmopolitanism (Driessen 2013: 30). Another example concerns the role of Mennonite and Judeo-Christian trade networks in transculturation in eighteenth-century Europe. In order to sustain their trading partnerships, these actors had to establish relationships of trust that enabled them to obtain or exchange reliable information and thus reduce the uncertainties and risks of trade. Trust was either based on a common cultural background (religion) or

new (interreligious) frames of reference and sites of cultural translation. The pubs in London, for example, were a common ground for Jewish and Christian trading partners, allowing them to interact across cultural boundaries. In this phase, trust was constantly redefined and renegotiated through transcultural exchanges (Mackenthun and Jobs 2013: 16). In these exchanges where cultures evolved, syntheses emerged in different areas such as language, music, literature, art and food. Carnival culture in the Caribbean, for example, is a synthesis of various African and Hispanic influences. In another example, the focus was on character. The idealized female gender model of the colonial period was a reflection of transculturation. According to this model, the woman was a synthesis of the Virgin Mary, who served as a subnational instrument and represented the Christian standard. At this point, the fictional character of Maria Clara revealed the tradition of marianismo to which women were subjected (Arrizón, 2006). As can be seen, the dynamics of transculturation prepare the ground for the utilization processes of soft power and are used in different ways depending on the period of time. A different example of the character of Maria Clara can be seen in the American movie *The Patriot* (2000) and its protagonist Benjamin Martin. *The Patriot* was conceived as a reflection of American popular culture, inspiring other societies. In the movie, Benjamin Martin is a character who sheds light on the achievement of freedom. *The Patriot* reflects liberalism and American political culture. According to the movie, Benjamin Martin is a legendary hero and an indicator of the USA's individualistic and democratic culture (Crothers, 2010). Currently, movies deeply embed universal identity legitimization in society, which includes universal values in transculturation and soft power. The values, feelings and actions accepted by people create cultural transformations and with transculturation, people begin to confront their existing core values and beliefs.

Confrontation and transculturation, as both a structured and constructivist process, give individuals more space to maneuver and offer perspectives as a negotiation without clear outcomes. In this context, a good knowledge of cross-cultural lives is important and it is necessary to understand the complex daily practices and communication processes that globalization has brought to the world (Mackenthun and Jobs 2013: 15-16). For example, today no one forces people to eat at McDonald's, but people choose to eat at McDonald's. The USA's multiracial society, the fact that it receives immigrants from all over the world and reflects very different segments of the world provide cultural unification, and reflecting very different segments facilitates the export of cultures. A movie, a song or a play is first tested in the United States, and if it resonates with people, it is transferred. On the other hand, ideas and products both enter and leave the United States freely. For example, in Asia, pizza is perceived as an American food (Nye 2005: 46-47). The United States becomes the center of experience for transculturation processes and universal identity building, and ideas contextualized and defined by values are transferred to other countries through soft power instruments.

Transculturation connects people, ideas, artifacts and meanings across geopolitical and symbolic divisions in many situations and in many places. Those who mediate these processes tend to perpetuate divisions in order not to undermine or lose

their *raison d'être*. That is, mediators both connect the resources of various actors at different levels of sociocultural integration and make a living as mediators by maintaining the gaps between the parties involved (Driessen 2013: 29). For example, for centuries there were Mediterranean cultural brokers in Mediterranean port cities. Cultural translation workshops were located at the crossroads of connections between land, sea, centers of power and cultural dominance. Words and meanings have been exchanged for centuries. Caravan traders and brokers played a role in trans- and supra-Mediterranean trade networks, making long-term commercial and diplomatic relations possible (Driessen 2013: 29). These acquired skills are structured and communicated using lines of different codes and grammars in social anthropological methodologies. Intermediaries both realize the social construction of their own basic personalities and take part in the valuable foreign construction of the other world. The transcultural personality is thus also determined by the cognitive and moral behaviors of the counterbalancing identity. Moreover, functioning as a mediator in transculturation creates a cultural flexibility that allows movement between multicultural psychological and social structures (Friedli 2013: 225). In this context, global brands such as CNN, Hollywood, BigMac, Microsoft are among the mediators of the United States in universal identity formation and the creation of non-ethnocentric images. In the context of global brands, the brands of the United States have a significant advantage over other countries. Coca Cola has more than 200 brands, McDonald's creates menus according to the regions where it is located, and MTV designs different programs for different countries (Nye 2005). The cultural dimensions realized through soft power instruments gradually or abruptly introduce cultural identities into a new process, and the process of transculturation surrounding the body and mind leads to cultural integration.

#### **4. Identity, image and representation**

Over the centuries, cultures have communicated in one way or another and mutual understandings and discourses have fed people's imaginations. Discourses have added value to identities and cultural flows have created geocultural discourses and coding that contains identity. A new representation was envisioned through the framework of identities and values. Especially in these phases, the objects of modernity were used in excess and living spaces created strong and widespread reference points with geocultural discourses that would take them from local to international.

For example, geocultural discourses were used to stimulate the imagination of Cubans. Radio and cinema were effectively used for cultural mediation and necessary reference points. In the early 1960s, Cuba's New Revolutionary Government was eager to bring authors to Cuba. Many American authors traveled frequently to Cuba under the auspices of the FPCC. Hollywood movies were instrumental in romanticizing the Cuban Revolution. In 1960, authors who traveled to Cuba told the world what was happening in Cuba (Hulme 2013: 250-251). Providing narration to the world did not only affect Cuba's self-expression but also created a relational

environment for the analysis of the perspective of the surrounding world and its integration into the world.

Another example of transculturation is related to developments in China. Despite censorship in China, the US values are being transmitted to China through mass media. In 1989, protesting students in Tiananmen Square built a replica of the Statue of Liberty. During the protests, one of the protesters told a foreign journalist that he was humming Bob Dylan tunes in his head and said that for him it was a silent revolution. Hollywood movies attracted a great deal of attention and played an important role in Chinese citizens' desire for rapid change (Nye 2005: 56). The process of transculturation also offers non-ethnocentric value systems and ways of life for people through soft power that includes universal values. Universalist thinking and modern culture create a 'global culture of characteristic control' that feeds people's affective and intellectual imagination, and on the basis of universal values, identity similarity might occur through tendencies regardless of space and time.

In the early 1960s, admiration for Castro among African Americans in the United States was significant. In the southern United States, Cuba's ideology of racial equality still had enormous influence, even if its implementation was inadequate. Based on the US-Cuba relations, transculturation can also occur through informal contacts, and transculturation can lead societies to new identities through inter-partner relations (Hulme 2013). Temporal and spatial configurations can reveal identity as a relational phenomenon. With this relationality, movie titles, popular songs, operas gain a wider audience, and myths surrounding them are formed between the emerging identities and the images on the screen and songs' lyrics. Through processual flows, displacement, orientation and a series of interactive phenomena occur. Mass media therefore opens a potential window and door to the outside world and increases people's participation in transculturation processes (Cabranes-grant 2010). Mass media surrounding people influence thoughts and attitudes with universal values and create mental images that are not ethnocentric. Images transform universal identity legitimization with sensations and impressions obtained from the outside world into a characteristic representation. The "global characteristic culture of control", representing the world of people's minds, programs people through the power of mass media images and transculturation sets the stage for the creation of social realities as points of contact equipped with sophisticated places. In these phases, subjects such as authors, broadcasters, actors and mass media are involved as distributors and experiences transform the process of transculturation into movement.

We can take the projection of Cuba to the outside world as another example. From the very beginning, the revolutionary Cuban government put great effort into attracting prominent African Americans to Cuba. One of those who traveled during this period was the black author LeRoi Jones, a brilliant young man in the late 1950s. Jones lived as part of a predominantly white avant-garde. Jones wrote about what he saw in Cuba and he described Cuba. Another person involved in the transculturation process was Robert F. Williams. With the help of Cuba, Williams developed a weekly radio program that was broadcast across the United States from the early to mid-

1960s. This program, called “Radio Free Dixie”, was an extraordinarily excellent example of transculturation. Jones presented a breezy and sympathetic picture of Revolutionary society in Cuba (Hulme 2013).

An important milestone on the road to transculturation is interculturality. Interculturality moves beyond a separatist and exclusionary understanding of culture to an inclusive and multilayered understanding of culture. Interculturality promotes pragmatic skills and aims for cultures and societies that are capable of making connections. Interculturality which creates opportunities for connections can enhance and expand opportunities for connection through transculturation. With transculturation, even the invisible reserves of life build common life forms (Welsch 1999). In this context, music and dance also create cultural specificities in the acquisition of group diversities in the process of transculturation. The music and dances created through transculturation contribute to identity and subject formation. In addition, music and dance represent rituals (Arrizón, 2006). For example, Antonio’s performative act following a woman’s abduction – the body of a mulata dancing the popular rumba – represents an important ritual in Caribbean popular culture. The rhythm is carnivalesque and closely related to the performance of oral cultures and popular imagination, and there is representation. Another representation is related to poverty, and in Latin America, music is the expression of the dark side of poverty. Especially in Puerto Rico and Cuba, rumba dancing is improvisational and festive. People gather in the streets, some play instruments, some follow the sound of the drum and start dancing (Arrizón, 2006: 97). In this way, while Santería practice has religious roots, rumba dance, which dates back to the arrival of African slaves in the Americas (sixteenth century), has no religious roots. Rumba is full of sensuality and erotic movements. Rumba became popular in the 1920s with the influence of radio. Before this period, rumba was only danced and performed by black people in Cuba. Rumba was a national expression. Therefore, the formation of Afro-Cuban culture was greatly influenced by the acceptance of these rhythms, and the music and dances built strong connections between rhythms and communities (Arrizón 2006: 97). The universal conception of identity creates new subjects and life activities through cultural practices. Elements such as music, dance, characters, values, rights claims, etc. build a universal homogenizing and non-ethnocentric cultural identity beyond the official one. Universal cultural identity makes a society collective around a process in terms of its inclusivity. The universalizability that constitutes the modern conception of identity, regardless of statist constraints, rallies large numbers of people around a specific goal and creates a process that transforms the basic organizational political-economic coordinates of society (Guzmán 2019).

In processes affecting social structures, positive and negative narratives are occasionally used. Especially negative events and situations create universal cultural unity in moral, emotional and spiritual existence. In this context, the narrative of victimization, which is fed by dualist concepts of basic opposition, is overused today and may also be subject to criticism. In the dynamics of cultural encounters, liberal narratives of creative freedom and equal opportunities in a postcolonial or globalized world are also seductively used and have an impact on people. In

general, the space for contrapuntal agency for representatives of all cultures is often limited. In this direction, the realization of the coercive conditions in which transculturation representatives operate with the aim of making the world a better place is an element that will contribute to the world (Mackenthun and Jobs 2013: 20). In this sense, transculturation processes, especially the features of universal values to create a universal identity, affect the experience of global civilization in this period of increasing inequality. But there is also opposition to universal values. In Iran, for example, there are conflicts between Islamist fundamentalists and liberal / Western-minded dissidents. While democratization is taking place in many places, from South Korea to Eastern Europe, some states and organizations such as al-Qaeda are acting as agents of war against universal values. Such malicious state and non-state actors tend to push ethnic and political identities into deep divisions (Nye 2003: 120-121). Transculturation processes and soft power instruments lead to cultural change, social transformation, and the exploration of actions and ideas, creating a universalism that integrates values accompanied by cosmopolitanism. In some transculturation processes, as in the case of Cuba mentioned above, efforts are made for the international adaptation of local cultures at the global level, while in some transculturation examples, a network-means-ends relationship emerges that integrates cultural differences, creates a new cultural identity in a controlled manner, and establishes a new cultural meaning between cultures on the platform of modern life. In such a case, transculturation creates controlled and ultimately natural situations as the key to human developments, social relations and universal thought constructions.

## **5. Conclusion**

According to Ortiz, who has conducted studies on the development of Cuban society and culture, the process of transculturation takes place more or less rapidly, and the transition from one culture to another proceeds in different stages. Transculturation leads to a world that explores and sometimes collides with each other, and cultural productions occur in relations and expectations between societies (Ortiz 1947). Networks and intermediaries play an important role for the transculturation process in cultural productions, and connections influence the processes to be easily understood by the society. For example, transculturation in the historical phases of the Mediterranean was largely due to the work and power of mediators who moved back and forth between cultures and religions before the advance of nationalism. At stake here is Lowen-haupt Tsing's notion of productive friction of connection. The image of friction suggests that heterogeneous and unequal encounters between differences can lead to new cultural and power arrangements and cultural production. In particular, through the image of friction and transculturation, an ethic and practice of coexistence between faiths of various ethnic backgrounds is created and tolerance between cultures is promoted (Driessen 2013: 34-35).

Beyond tolerance, non-universalist approaches have led to connections and

divisions between societies and the construction of multiethnic, multilingual and interreligious diversity. Ideal models of interreligious and intercultural harmony have also been developed. Relationships have not always been negative and have shown positive developments in societies living in diversity and peace (Driessen 2013: 34). In this context, transculturation is the evolution of values in finding one's own and not focusing on foreign polarity. Transculturation is paying attention to what can be common and binding everywhere when encountering foreign elements. Transculturation is the redefinition and reorganization of society as an access point that is useful to the individual in satisfying human needs and the value of life. Transculturation is therefore a system that combines processes of cultural mixing in societies. In this system, although people are still shaped by their ethnicity or the community in which they grew up, the relationship between cultures encompasses partnership, exchange and interaction, not isolation, separation and conflict. In this way, political, social, scientific, educational, artistic and design partnerships enhance universalist aspects (Welsch 1999). In the creation of these partnerships, soft power is a rational and appealing strategy for the legitimization of identity or universal identity, the construction of universal values and non-ethnocentric images, and ultimately the successful realization of the transculturation process.

In processes of rational and appealing strategies for human existence, cultural, structural and personal inadequacies and the need for a ritual of public reconciliation are addressed. Transculturation enables to strengthen deep social healing, future life horizons, the transition from the culture of the other to the culture of life, mutual agreements, stabilizing identity patterns, interpersonal and structural trust networks, and provides a motivating background for societies (Friedli 2013). Through soft power and transculturation processes, the outdated idea of a separatist culture is surpassed by the external networking of cultures, and cultures today are highly interconnected and intertwined, changing the scope of national borders. Lifestyles no longer stop at the borders of national cultures and are found in the same way as other cultures. Indeed, as seen in the examples, the lifestyles of many people today have similar global overtones. Global overtones and worldwide material and spiritual communication systems and economic interdependencies (Welsch 1999) influence transculturation networks in terms of the priority of social bonds. Soft power, which involves social sharing and relies on universal values in the process of forming social bonds, reduces ethnocentrism and intercommunal hostility in a controlled manner and consciously designs forms of humanitarian values through cultural and mental combinations. Soft power instruments that incorporate universality create a 'global culture of characteristic control' over communities with universal happiness and goals, and build universal representations of non-ethnocentric contagious understandings on the individuals that make up the communities. As can be seen from the examples cited in the historical perspective, transculturation takes place in different ways and through different means, affecting collective memories by providing a social profit motive and regulating cultural exchange relations between societies. Ultimately, today's soft power and transculturation processes, which are used for universal identity legitimization and non-ethnocentric image, are not

assimilation, but a phenomenon that offers options and a utilitarian sense of pleasure in knowing one's own nature in the integration towards universality.

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