

MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL PLURALISM IN EUROPE

by

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March 1995

This report has been prepared by the Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE) . The opinions expressed therein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNESCO.

Abstract

This document represents our attempt to "survey cultural policies, practice and innovative management experiments aimed at promoting cultural pluralism at national, regional and local level in Europe, with a view to preserve diversity, to protect minorities and to reduce social exclusion". (UNESCO 1994)¹

We aim to examine the theoretical issues concerning Cultural Pluralism, both as found in copious recent literature on this subject and as debated at recent seminars and conferences organised under the auspices of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and other European organisations. We also make reference to a number of existing practices and networks and suggestions for the creation of new ones, where necessary.

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1. Opening Remarks

Cultural pluralism is a fact of Europe, past and present. Its central and increasing importance for the security and well-being of the continent is diminished, however, by a number of fictions. Principal among these is the fiction that cultural pluralism is of only marginal interest to the larger community, being exclusively concerned with the predicament of certain kinds of minority groups in certain circumstances.

Little could be further from the truth.

Cultural pluralism in the contemporary European context is emphatically not to do *only* with "minorities" and their "problems". It is more productive to view it, instead, as being concerned with the achievement and maintenance of harmonious relations between all sections of society and thus of benefit to all its members.

If the ideal of genuine and equitable cultural pluralism is ever to be achieved, the range of myths attached to the notion of minorities must be recognised from the outset; but things cannot end there. Myths surround the concept of the so-called "majority" as well. These must also be exposed if one is to understand the limitations of such amorphous, and relatively arbitrary, concepts as "majorities" and "minorities".

Majorities can, otherwise, be conceptualised in equally oversimplified ways. They can, for instance, be seen as nothing more than monolithic forces of suppression and even, in more extreme cases, hostility. Or they might be seen, more benignly, as silent and unresponsive entities, spurred into positive action only by their liberal or radical elements.

These kinds of binary oppositions too readily take on ideological form and obscure the more complex reality of a culturally diversified Europe, thus undermining the creative fulfilment of all the individuals within it.

Whilst considerations such as these will inform our general discussion of this topic, our attention is restricted by the terms of reference and time constraints of this survey to exploring how things currently stand with the myriad of so-called minority groups in western, central and eastern Europe.

Of course, this is no mean ambition in itself, given the complexities surrounding Europe's contemporary cultural minorities. We propose to address these complexities by evaluating the findings of our – necessarily limited – research methods. We have had to rely entirely on the medium of the written word, both in the form of certain texts reviewed and of responses solicited via letters sent to cultural commentators and policy makers in all of the 50 countries that make up the new Europe.

The content of these responses has been somewhat uneven. This has been exacerbated by what we perceive to be a shortage of documented examples of "good practice" and "innovative management experiments" in the literature consulted. It is difficult to determine whether this points to the shortcomings of the methodology or whether, in actual fact, these variations accurately reflect the range of ways in which "minorities" are conceptualised in these societies. Quite probably both.

Problems of definition persist, despite the widespread acceptance and repetition of usage which the term "cultural pluralism" increasingly enjoys, especially in numerous official policy documents and academic studies; this, incidentally, seems highly indicative of its growing importance as a Europe-wide concern. Yet the term still wears different hats in different countries. In some, it barely seems to wear a hat at all.

Our study aims to work through current definitions of this term and related concepts and trends – such as: "culture"; "cultural relativism"; "European"; "identity"; "ethnicity"; "nationalism"; "minorities/majorities"; "racism"; etc – and to arrive at some common understandings. Only then can we begin to evaluate the concerns now confronting policy makers, and the corresponding solutions being considered by them. This brings us into an assessment of where things currently stand in the continuing debate about cultural pluralism and related issues. We review some recent conferences and seminars that deal with these matters.

A number of considerations govern our analysis of these discussions. For example: does the promotion and preservation of diversity, per se, automatically deliver positive results? Are there any essential preconditions for its success e.g. a favourable economic and political environment?

Which minorities need "protecting" and why? What kinds of protection do they need? Do all minorities need the same sort of protection, all the time? Does protection sometimes lead to new forms of denial? How does "social exclusion", an emotive enough idea, manifest itself in reality? What are its parameters and its causes in each case and have any permanent solutions emerged?

We explore how local, regional and national concerns define and re-inforce each other and the extent to which networking can eliminate problems – and open up new possibilities – within and between each of these levels.

We try to fathom, in addition, why many high-minded and well-meaning conference resolutions seem to move, with depressing regularity, from utopian vision to eventual oblivion without an intervening stage of effective implementation.

What practical steps are necessary to ensure that the shared ideals expressed in these international and intercultural debates can, instead, decisively influence the political process? Which objectives have successfully evolved from fine words into genuinely useful deeds? What factors ensure this trajectory?

One must also weigh up how long a particular policy can hope to remain successful. What criteria determine the point at which a particular set of policies and the practices they promote have outlived their usefulness? When a policy demonstrates its practical success in addressing one set of challenges, there is a natural tendency for it to be consolidated, usually in some kind of institutional form. What does the policy and the practice of it lose or gain by this process?

Does institutionalisation inevitably lead to stagnation? How can one ensure that policies and practices are sufficiently responsive to innovation in the management of projects promoting cultural pluralism? Equally, how can one guarantee that perfectly good practices are not abandoned simply for the sake of fashion?

How do considerations of this kind compare within and between different minorities and different nations, for instance between minorities in east/central Europe and those in western Europe?

Can any universally applicable principles of good practice be inferred from different models of cultural management, or is success always dependent, ultimately, on context?

2. The Conceptual Framework

"The siege of Sarajevo was directed not only against Bosnian Moslems but also against the very principle of cultural and ethnic mingling, for Sarajevo, more than simply a Moslem city, is an intercultural site.

Sarajevo, like Andalusia before, like all of Europe's borderzones past and present, is a site of cultural mixing. What is taking place is a massacre of mixed identities in the name of ethnic purity.

The significance of Sarajevo is the stampede of new found ethnic nationalisms crushing a site of mixture and melange.... the onslaught on Sarajevo is an onslaught on Europe itself – a truly European massacre, not of the picture postcard little Europe, but of the real Europe of intercultural melange." (Jan Nederveen Pieterse, 1994)²

This is a chilling vision of post-communist, post-imperial, post-modern Europe, a vision of a continent slowly but inexorably starting to tear itself apart. It manifests itself also in the rising tide of extreme right wing attacks on "outsiders" new and old – the immigrants, the Jews, the Gypsies and all the other "others". Yet despite this grim prognosis of Europe's contemporary condition, it is surely that very characteristic of Europe currently under attack in Sarajevo, namely its long and successful record of cultural amalgamation, which alone guarantees its chances of survival.

The question is, what form(s) must that amalgamation now take, in view of the powerful centrifugal forces unleashed by the recent collapse of the Soviet empire, together with the inward-flowing energies that have resulted from the post-war reconstruction of Europe and simultaneous meltdown of colonialism?

The answer to that question is the central preoccupation of this discussion on cultural pluralism in the modern European context.

DEFINITIONS: The Negotiation of Meanings

First of all, however, one has to outline the conceptual terrain. Because of the elasticity of the terms regularly used in the debate about cultural pluralism, and the frequent blurring and misapplication of concepts that ensues, it has become especially important for definitions to be as precise as possible, and for it to be absolutely clear which of the many senses of a particular term is being used in any particular context. As Kwesi Owusu recently remarked (1990): "in the general media, ideas now come packaged like soap powder or pop stars and it is...quite difficult to have any real dialogue".³

Thus 'cultural pluralism', 'cultural diversity' and 'multiculturalism' tend, without a great deal of thought, to be used interchangeably. Each term means something different, however, and each depends on the context(s) in which it is used. The terms 'culture' and 'cultural identity', 'nation' and 'national identity' are similarly bloated with meanings and, when used indiscriminately, provide ready fuel for much contemporary rhetoric.

These terms, along with other kinds of conceptual baggage that often obscure as much as clarify the issues – such as 'European', 'minority/majority', 'racism' and so on – need to be unpacked so that they can be correctly understood and applied.

Culture: Aesthetic and Anthropological senses

Let us begin with 'culture'. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1990) gives 3 meanings: i) *"the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement; a refined understanding of this;* ii) *the customs, civilization and achievements of a particular time or people;* iii) *improvement by mental or physical training"*.⁴ It is the first two of these meanings which have come to be most commonly linked with the term culture nowadays. The third meaning, although comparatively under-recognised, is also important, as we shall see.

Matthew Arnold's classic definition of culture as *"the best that has been said and thought"*⁵, views culture in the first sense, and supports an elitist model based on a hierarchy of value. An example of the second sense is found in early social anthropology: 'culture' is *"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other habits acquired by man as a member of a group"* (Tylor, 1871).⁶

More recent definitions have endorsed this basic pair of meanings. According to Symonides (1993), for example: *"the term culture may be used both in a wide and in a restricted sense... they are: small 'c' – culture, day to day social relations, the sum total of human activities, the totality of knowledge and practice, everything which makes man different from nature, and capital 'C' – culture, linked with creative activities of cultural elites, the highest achievements of human beings, music, literature, art and architecture."*⁷

Given these two quite specific meanings of the word culture, which in shorthand form might read the "aesthetic" and the "anthropological", it is imperative to be clear about which of the two is being used.

The terms 'cultural pluralism', 'cultural diversity' and 'multiculturalism' based on a usage of culture in the aesthetic sense, are virtually synonymous with each other, but do not in fact convey very much. They say little more than that within any given society there exists a range of artistic styles – dance, opera, music, fine art etc – and scientific theories.

The same terms using 'culture' in the anthropological sense of "ways of life", say a great deal more. Despite also tending to be used synonymously, they in fact carry important differences in meaning. We shall try and outline some of these differences as we go along.

Cultural policy makers in Europe have found it relatively unproblematic to accept the first, relatively simple, form of cultural pluralism. The established criteria for "quality" for each of these different artistic styles have remained relatively stable, as has the hierarchical framework of values in which they function (notwithstanding perennial competition over the relative merits, reflected in subsidy patterns, of one art form in relation to another). Needless to say, these values remain essentially Eurocentric, even in modern times.

Policy makers do, however, find it more problematic to accept – let alone apply – cultural pluralism, cultural diversity or multiculturalism based on the second “anthropological” sense of culture. Criteria for “quality” have existed for a long time here too and these also operate in a hierarchical framework of values. This, unfortunately, is also essentially Eurocentric. But the premise here, that is to say the notion that ways of life are superior and inferior to each other, is proving much harder to sustain nowadays.

Cultural Systems and Power

Hierarchical value systems predicated on the claim that inequality between human beings is culturally determined have been undergoing a steady dismantling for some years now. This has helped to begin a process of overturning deeply held beliefs which had made particular brands of cultural hegemony appear immutable for centuries. In certain instances, apartheid in South Africa being the classic modern example, such systems have now been completely discredited.

In Europe, beliefs of this kind still exist and tenaciously resist attempts to loosen their grip on the popular imagination. They are the offspring of a “*universalist vision that has placed classical European culture at the apex of a scale of values used to measure civilization*” (Isar 1993).⁸

Such beliefs have been challenged, nonetheless, for some time now by a number of processes during the second half of this century. Principal among these have been the gradual disintegration of colonialism linked to the successes achieved by previously subjugated peoples in gaining their self-determination. Both have seriously undermined the long held premise of WASP cultural superiority over all other peoples of the world.

A related process has been the growth of social anthropology as a science in its own right, increasingly independent of its Darwinian origins and thus less and less governed by their genetic absolutes. For a long period – and in some quarters even today – these absolutes provided powerful ideological justification for the innate right, sometimes patronisingly perceived as a “duty”, of some to subjugate others.

More recent socio-economic and political processes have contributed to creating an environment in which the established order is persistently being questioned. These include the increased presence in Europe of economic migrants, both from the former colonies and from the new labour reserves of North Africa and the Near East. These peoples have been coming into Europe for thirty years or more as a direct result of the collapse of empire and the implicitly related capitalist imperative to reconstruct post-war Europe.

Second and third generation migrants, born in Europe and increasingly mindful of their rights in the soil, have given these communities a new measure of self-confidence that has been accompanied by more articulate and more vocal demands for equality.

Also significant, although in ways that are not yet as clear or predictable, are the consequences of the colossal upheavals since 1989 in East and Central Europe that have so thoroughly transformed the familiar political landscape.

Cultural Relativism: Universal Values and Individual Rights

Together, these recent historical processes have acted as midwives for the increasingly popular modern notion of 'cultural relativism'.

A gradual weakening of the hierarchical values in the broad "culture-as-a-way-of-life" model has had, and will inevitably continue to have, implications for the narrower "aesthetic" model of European culture. Arguments for a new aesthetics, based upon new criteria for "quality", have begun to evolve out of the wider struggle for emancipation and self-definition that increasingly preoccupies the "new" peoples of Europe.

Lippard (1990) describes the emergence of new aesthetics in the US context in this way: *"Recent cracks in the bastions of high culture now allow a certain seepage, the trickle-up presence of a different kind of authenticity, that is for the moment fundamentally unfamiliar and therefore genuinely disturbing"*⁹. We discuss this more fully later on.

Appreciation of this kind of cultural pluralism ie of the co-existence of cultural models from widely different origins, is already some way advanced in many European societies and is beginning to take place in others.

Central to all these discussions has been the notion of a cultural relativism that implies the equal value of all cultural systems. Such a notion has obvious attractions for other broadly incorporative universal idealist impulses, for instance the Human Rights movement. We discuss this marriage of interests between culture and human rights below.

Cultural relativism attempts to generate the archetypal "level playing field". In its more extreme forms, this liberal school of thought refuses to denigrate the worth of any single human society, thereby hoping to embrace the whole of humanity. But can this level playing field, if it is to have any real meaning, exist without any parameters at all? The nature of the equality of all cultures/cultural systems, implied by the ideal of cultural relativism, appears to need careful qualification.

As Blacking has observed (1985), *"cultural systems cannot be accepted uncritically as inherently good. Whole societies or parts of a society can become dangerously deviant, as were Nazi society and the Khmer Rouge. In this respect there is a serious contradiction in the UNESCO resolutions about culture and their condemnation of Israel and South Africa. If 'the equal dignity of cultures... must be recognized as an inviolable principle' (UNESCO 1982), there are no grounds for condemning South Africa"*. Blacking concludes from this that: *"Cultures must always be under critical review. Cultural relativism is a well-intentioned but essentially false doctrine that can blind us to the fact that societies can become pathological"*.¹⁰

Three important points emerge from Blacking's analysis. The first is that cultural systems are not static, frozen collectivities. They can undergo radical change, as much as a result of internal as of external forces.

The second is that no cultural system is perfect, nor does it really suffice to say that they are simply all as imperfect as each other. This would be an equally Panglossian version of things. Cultural systems seem, instead, to acquire positive and negative attributes, but in quite unpredictable ways. This

unpredictability seems to be distributed fairly evenly across the range of cultural systems available to mankind even if, from time to time, certain attributes do attach to particular characteristics within a given cultural system.

Thirdly, it raises the question of whether cultural systems generate actions – positive or negative – by themselves. Does the individual actor play no responsible role in all of this?

Blacking suggests that, *"Cultures are experiments which human communities have devised...not only to get a material living, but above all to provide a framework for making sense of profound emotions, institutionalizing love and the joy of association and finding new ways of extending the body.....People become deeply attached to cultures and a sense of 'cultural identity', as if cultural systems had intrinsic value as permanent solutions to the problems of living and as if cultures, and not individuals, were the sources of imagination and invention which are necessary to solve the recurring problems of relationships and institutional organization that hinder human development"*. (ibid)

Culture as a pooled resource

Viewed in this way, a cultural system is more like a form of language, a deeply embedded – but essentially dormant – cognitive resource enabling the actor, if and when he chooses, to give shape and meaning to the world around him. Also like language, a given cultural system, thus understood, is but one of many analogous resources produced by mankind and thus, theoretically, available to it as a whole.

This latter point is developed in an observation made by Ricouer (1964) when he responds to the poetic idealism of an earlier age: *"the astonishing thing.. [is that]... humanity is not established in a single cultural style but has congealed in coherent, closed historical shapes: the cultures. The human condition is such that different contexts of civilization are possible."*¹¹ Thus: *"the whole of mankind may be looked upon as one single man who constantly learns and remembers"* Pascal, (ibid) (This seems in itself an unconscious – how could it be otherwise? – borrowing from the Australian Aboriginal concept of Dreamtime).

In the same spirit, Blacking, referring to his fieldwork among the Venda, notes that this people of southern Africa see culture *"not as something fixed and immutable.. [but rather as]...a floating resource which was available for use – or not – as part of the process of developing human capabilities through social interaction, sharing ideas and learning skills. Their indigenous education system, informal and formal, was directed towards...the maintenance of general human values and of an open society... ..Just as people took what they wanted from available Venda institutions and ideas, so they also sought 'Western' education as a means of fulfilment and of escaping from the oppression of apartheid."* (op cit)

These sentiments are echoed by Nederveen Pieterse: *"cultural identity is often evoked in an essentially conservative argument...it is a contradiction in terms [in the sense that] culture, understood as all learned and shared behaviour*

and ideas, refers to a learning process which by definition is open-ended... [and]...cannot be spatially contained..."

Nederveen Pieterse concludes from this that *"...an open Europe [is one] that is open in terms of its self-definition, its sense of self, on the basis of a historical and contemporary awareness of the importance of cultural exchange and melange....A people's Europe is a Europe of people who are European among other things."* (op cit).

Is Europe really as readily available as this to all of its current peoples? Are we all equally and absolutely free to mould our individual European identities from the protean soil of European culture, in any way we wish? Or are there boundaries to this kind of self-definition?

The "European Spirit": cross-fertilised narratives

Let us look, first of all, at what the protean soil actually contains.

According to Smolicz, (1979) *"Modern states have normally been welded together from a number of tribal units... unity has rarely been achieved without some degree of physical force, but an enduring political entity has [seldom] survived by means of co-ercion alone. For unity and stability to last, some other type of cohesive force has also to emerge."*¹²

An analysis of Europe's political history reveals that it has also been – and in an important sense continues to be – welded together in this way, and that its unity has indeed often been achieved by force. Consider, for instance, the manner in which it was unified during the Roman Empire. There has, however, been more than just one set of overarching "cohesive forces" during the last two and a half millennia.

Lourenco (1994), identifies **philosophy, Christianity and law** as coming under the rubric of *"the European spirit"*. From these derive *"the principles of freedom of thought and belief and the rule of law. It is the absence or presence of these principles"* he concludes *"that makes Europe, not the reverse"*.¹³

Yet these are not the only overarching cohesive forces which have given substance to the European polity. There have been others. Some of these – such as democracy – have, like philosophy, also come from ancient Athens, while others were forged more recently in the crucible of the French Revolution, namely the ideals of **liberty, equality and fraternity**.

Tempting though it often is, for various reasons, to propose that the starting point of European history is rooted exclusively in the classical traditions of first Greece and latterly Rome, and that these civilizations themselves enjoyed some kind of pristine cultural purity it is also, however, inaccurate.

Historian JM Roberts (1990), writing about the first ever civilizations known to mankind describes things in this way: *"The first recognizable civilization [was] found in Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq/Iran)...around 3500 BC. The next...in Egypt around 3100 BC. Another marker in the Near East is Minoan civilization in Crete, appearing in about 2000 BC, and from this time we can disregard priorities in this part of the world; it is already a complex of civilizations in interplay with each other."* (1990).¹⁴ (Our emphasis).

Going on to describe the more or less parallel emergence of civilizations in India (2500 BC) and in China (between 2000–1500 BC) as well as, later on, the Meso Americans, Roberts concludes *"once we are past about 1500 BC"* – that is to say, nearly 1000 years before the emergence of classical Greek civilization – *"there are no civilizations to be explained which appear without the stimulus, shock or inheritance provided by others which have appeared earlier."*

The analysis of more recent developments in Europe, as set out in an earlier article by Nederveen Pieterse in 1990, provides a complementary insight into the nature of European culture: *"European development has not known a single centre. There has been a continual shift of centres, and with the centres also the peripheries shifted. The Renaissance, the Enlightenment, industrialisation and colonial expansion unfolded in different parts of Europe and spread in different directions. There was never a centre which embodied European identity".*¹⁵

In the combined light of these two propositions the idea, postulated by Jantjes (1993) that *"national culture [is] a rhizomatic organism...ie one that is not centrally rooted but which has many different points of origin"*,¹⁶ can be seen to apply not just to national cultures but to "European civilization" in general.

The same propositions also bring an important degree of historical endorsement to Jantjes' related argument: *"One can think of a new Europe not in terms of a classical novel, where the realities are stable and fixed, formulated and even predictable, but rather as a collection of heterogenous narratives"* (op cit).

If one accepts this line of reasoning, the multi-cultural nature of Europe, based on the broad sense of culture as a way of life AND on the narrow sense of "aesthetics", is not a new phenomenon. Europe can be appreciated, instead, as having been multicultural since its origins, which were themselves multicultural.

Multiculturalism: frozen inequalities, new stereotypes?

Modern day claims by individual European societies that they are either multi- or mono-cultural, and any public policies or laws made on the basis of such claims must always, therefore, be viewed with circumspection. This applies in particular to the contemporary formulation and application of "multi-culturalist" initiatives.

A society which proudly points to its range of multi-cultural policies may, in fact, be doing little more than disguising its inability or reluctance to confront head on certain politically embarrassing forms of social inequality. These inequalities result either directly or indirectly from a matrix of deeply embedded monocultural state institutions, which remain fundamentally unchallenged by such policies.

Multicultural policies that ignore the unequal distribution of power and privilege are ultimately doomed to generating a range of self-perpetuating and self-renewing stereotypes, if they pre-occupy themselves exclusively with culture, either in the anthropological or in the aesthetic sense. Few multi-

cultural policies in Europe appear to have gone much beyond this kind of "window-dressing": some have not even arrived at this stage yet.

This helps explain why even in western countries with significant non-european populations, "Black" issues are still just "race relations" and culture – "*singing the lament*"¹⁷ as Tjon Pian Gi has described it – but not defence or the economy (Blacking 1985 op cit). We return to this point time and again during this discussion.

Individuals from particular cultural backgrounds consequently find themselves becoming imprisoned in pre-existing expectations of what does or should concern them, expectations that end up as self-fulfilling prophesies.

For this reason it is important to be just as careful when speaking about human beings in terms of minorities and majorities. Such terms can be equally insidious forms of stereotyping, denial and thus disempowerment. The reality, to paraphrase Nederveen Pieterse, is that one is Pakistani or Sami or Catalan or German "*among other things*".

Overlapping Identities and the Primacy of the Individual

The central task of modern cultural policies, as the anthropologist Southall has noted in relation to his own discipline, must therefore be "*to hammer home the importance of interlocking, overlapping, multiple collective identities.*" (1970).¹⁸

These multiple, overlapping cultural affiliations coalesce to form the personal identity of the individual human being, found at the heart of every so-called minority and majority group. Yet only some of each individual's cultural affiliations characterise him as a member of one or other group. As a unique individual, he is as distinctive from the rest of his community in certain ways as he is similar to them in others; he may also resemble members of other communities in some respects much as he differs from them in others.

Depending, therefore, on which particular affiliation is active at the time, he can be said to belong to a minority – or a majority. Majorities and minorities are, likewise, as fluid and as internally differentiated as is each one of their component groups and, in turn, each of their human individuals.

Isar's sentiments in this regard are to be applauded: "*A profound change in attitude is required, based...on a spirit of solidarity [and] respect...[and] inspired by the sense of a moral imperative to... promote the primacy of the human person*". (1993 op cit).

Each person, to paraphrase Ricoeur, represents a unique amalgam of the some of the countless cultural attributes produced by human civilizations.

"Cultural Diversity"

Distinctive cultural attributes – or achievements – ought not therefore to be seen as the exclusive property of any single man or culture but, as belonging to mankind as a whole. The aim of a policy of **cultural diversity**, (based on the anthropological sense of 'culture'), can thus be defined as the protection and promotion of these distinctive cultural attributes, of various forms of

"otherness". For such policies to survive in the longer term, however, they must prize these forms kinds of otherness as resources available to all mankind and not merely as the prerogative – or burden – of any specific group.

This point is highlighted in UNESCO's 1982 Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies: *"All cultures form part of the common heritage of mankind. The neglect or destruction of the culture of any group is a loss to mankind as a whole."* (Articles 4 & 5). The Declaration goes on to call upon the international community *"to ensure that the cultural identity of each people is preserved and protected."* (Article 7).¹⁹

In the case of the cultural identities of marginalised or threatened cultures, this form of preservation or protection often takes the form of 'affirmative action'. Whilst this is an essentially well-meaning approach that aims to guard "otherness" – particularly critical in our globalized mass media age, with its powerful standardizing tendencies – it can have some disturbing side effects in practice. One of these is to imprison individuals within a single set of identifications, thereby excluding them from the possibility of participating in others. This is particularly true when affirmative action takes the form of seeking to reinforce narrowly defined 'cultural identities'.

"Cultural Pluralism"

Good practice in cultural diversity must therefore to seek to avoid overemphasising one set of cultural identifications. This might otherwise be to the exclusion of others that could be just as important in the potential make-up of a particular individual and which would then restrict him from responding creatively to his environment *as a human being*.

In this light, the ultimate goal of cultural pluralism can be seen as the creation and maintenance of an environment in which all these different identifications can co-exist, ideally on an equitable basis, and where every individual human being enjoys unrestricted freedom of choice between them.

Harlem Desir, former leader of SOS Racisme in France, succinctly encapsulates this point: *"Our roots are Montaigne, that we study at school; Mourousi whom we seem we see on television; Toure Kunda, reggae, Renaud and Lavilliers. We don't ask ourselves if we have lost our cultural references. The reason is that we have several, and we have the shared chance of living in a country that is a crossroads and where freedom of opinion and the freedom of conscience are respected. The reality of our reference is a cultural metissage."* (quoted in Isar 1993 op cit)

"Cultural Identities"

This brings us back to the question of the legitimate parameters for self-definition, the limitations of freedom of choice, which applies to human communities as much as it does to individual human beings.

Just how inclusive – or indeed exclusive – can and should our individual and collective narratives be?

One is not, of course, suggesting here that all narratives can simply begin on a blank page from now on. The material history of mankind ensures that in many senses man is not born equal, any more nowadays than he ever was. Individual **cultural** identities, moreover, are always shaped within the context of long-established, regularised patterns, referred to as group identities or, in the words of Ricouer, "*the cultures*".

Each of these cultures represents the fruits of a particular convergence of some of the vast range of cultural attributes generated by the human condition. These convergences have occurred over time and by way of regular interaction with their surrounding environment – including both the natural world and also other peoples and other ideas. Each is thus a **species** in its own right and each exists as a unique and coherent whole. "Otherness" must not therefore be regarded merely as taking the form of atomised cultural fragments, but also of highly structured, living organisms.

Given the seemingly limitless possibilities of self-formation that the environment of a modern and relatively fluid new Europe now appears to offer, to individuals and communities alike, how many "multiple cultural identifications" (Isar 1993 op cit) can realistically be incorporated into each of our individual and collective narratives?

We need to look first of all at how individual actors relate to their surrounding environment and the extent to which this environment limits their choices.

"Identity, in the final analysis..." says Young (1972) "...is subjective. Each individual has a varying number of social roles through which he may relate himself to unfolding events in the course of daily life. Not all of these, by any means, are culturally defined. Occupation, social stratification, sex, family relationship, associational membership – all of these provide alternative social roles." ²⁰

The social nature of each of these roles implies interaction with other members of the wider society, in particular situations. It is axiomatic, suggests Sarbin (1990) *"that in order to survive as a member of society, a person must be able to locate himself accurately in the role structure. The simplest way to accomplish this is by seeking and finding answers to the question 'Who am I?'. Since roles are constructed in reciprocal fashion, the answers can also be achieved through locating the position of the other by implicitly asking the question 'Who are You?'."*

In this sense, an individual's identity is both situational, ie, it depends to an important degree on which social role is judged by the individual to best suit the given context, and relational, in that the role is selected and performed in relation to one or more significant others.

Cultural policies and practices concerning minorities that fail to achieve their desired objectives often do so because they pay scant attention to either the context in which they are to be applied or to the nature of the relations between the actors (including the policymakers themselves).

What is true of individuals also applies in this instance to communities more generally. This helps explain why it is in modern times that, with our framework of interdependent nation states, an individual nation state rarely

enjoys the exclusive prerogative of exercising absolute sovereignty within its own boundaries. The world has become too small for that.

Limits to identity

One can distinguish additional factors that constrain the formation of identity, individual and collective. Young suggests that *"although identity is subjective, multiple and situationally fluid, it is not infinitely elastic. Cultural properties of the individual"* (and by implication of the collective) *"do constrain the possible range of choice of social identities"* (op cit).

Some cultural properties are more indelible than others. These include skin pigmentation, physiognomy and gender which, properly speaking, are genetically inherited rather than culturally determined. They can, nonetheless, acquire cultural values every bit as powerful and potentially constraining as purely cultural characteristics such as language, religion, caste or territorial affiliations.

Although these purely cultural attributes are crucially important they are, as Young has argued, still only some of the identifications available to individuals and communities. For the sake of completeness one must not lose sight of others such as wealth, occupational status, educational background, social class, adulthood, childhood, age, sexuality and so on. The relevance of these cross-cutting cultural identifications needs also to be recognised by cultural policymakers. *"Ethnicity"*, Ignatieff observes (1993), *"is not the only claim on an individual's loyalty"*.²¹

Although genetically inherited characteristics may, with certain exceptions, be impossible for individuals to transcend, it does appear possible for the *cultural* boundaries of ethnicity, that is to say religion, language and territory, to be overcome, theoretically at any rate. In reality, as we all know, these affiliations exercise a powerful hold over individual and community alike. Intense difficulty can be experienced in transferring from one set of cognitive patterns to another, as studies of displaced peoples have shown.

Partly this is because, as Young has remarked, the human psyche is not infinitely elastic. Equally important, however, is that these cultural characteristics, along with racial traits, have almost everywhere been the principle lines along which collective identity is mobilised.

It thus comes as little surprise that they are also the prime vectors of the relatively modern phenomenon of nationalism. *"Nationalism"* suggests Young *"is the ideological formulation of ethnicity"* (op cit). In this sense, nationalism is also the ideological formulation of homogeneity, and thus of closure; the denial of difference. We seem to be back in Sarajevo. How do we get out?

Nationalism

We need to look more closely at what nationalism is and the different forms it takes. *"All forms of nationalism..."* argues Ignatieff (op cit) *"...vest political sovereignty in the people – indeed the word nation is often a synonym for*

people – but not all nationalist movements create democratic regimes, because not all nationalisms include all of the people in their definition of who constitutes a nation”.

Nationalism, he goes on to argue, is based on political, cultural and moral claims which underwrite each other. The political claim, he suggests, is based on the belief that the world is divided into nation states, each of which has the right to self-determination. The cultural ideal, meanwhile, claims that although men and women have many identities, it is the nation which provides them with their primary form of belonging. As a moral ideal, finally, nationalism is an ethic of heroic sacrifice justifying the use of force to defend against enemies.

Yet, as Ignatieff observes and as we have tried to demonstrate above, *“none of these is intuitively obvious or universal. Many of the world's peoples do not think of themselves as nations nor require a state of their own”* (ibid). We return to this latter point when comparing the different aspirations of various so-called minorities in Europe.

Referring to the situation in Europe in the present and not so distant past, Ignatieff identifies two types of nationalism: 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism.

'Civic nationalism' maintains that the nation should be composed of all those – regardless of race, colour, religion, gender etc – who subscribe to a nation's creed. This is a community of equal rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values. It is necessarily democratic because it rests sovereignty in all of the people. This form of nationalism came in to being in Europe from the 18th century onwards.

Minority aspirations: centripetal and centrifugal forms

Ignatieff comments in passing that *“those who were not in the enfranchised political class of white propertied males – workers, women, black slaves, aboriginal peoples – found themselves excluded from citizenship and thus from nation. Over the last two centuries these groups have fought for civic inclusion”*.(ibid)

Let us pause here for a moment. This kind of struggle can be said to characterise, in its form and direction, particular kinds of “minority” groups in Europe today, namely, economic migrants from former colonies and some indigenous peoples as well groups with claims based on strong linguistic or territorial affiliations.

Broadly speaking, movement of this kind, which can be described as centripetal or moving towards the centre, seems to epitomise minority groups currently found in western Europe. Peoples or embryonic nations in former Eastern and Central Europe, by contrast, tend to express their claims more centrifugally, ie moving away from the centre. These are broad generalisations, of course, and exceptions exist in each case.

It is useful, nonetheless, to hear the comments of Biro (1992) on this general point: *“Some minorities have a propensity for independent political awareness – they define themselves as different from the state-forming majority and also have articulated their internal political purpose... they have demonstrated their*

aptitude for forming an independent political will; their efforts at self determination in Central and Eastern Europe are so strong that their encounters with political obstacles has often brought or may bring about the decay of state structures". He adds that "these differ from those communities that may claim recognition of their differences but are careful not to politicise that claim" ²²

"Ethnic" Nationalism and Eastern Europe

Ignatieff places the former kind of claim, politically oriented and essentially separatist, very firmly in the province of modern 'Ethnic nationalism', the origins of which he traces back to 19th century Germany: *'The German Romantics argued that it was not the state which created the people, as the Enlightenment believed, but the nation, its people, which created the state. What gave unity to the nation, what made it a home, a place of passionate attachment, was not the cold contrivance of shared rights, but the people's pre-existing ethnic characteristics: their language, religion, customs and traditions.'*

Ethnic nationalism can, therefore, be seen as having strong unitarian undertones and as being essentially exclusive.

German unification in 1871 demonstrated the success of this form of nationalism and provided a role model for many of the other peoples of 19th century Europe under imperial subjugation – the Poles and Baltic people under the Russian yoke, the Serbs under Turkish rule, the Croats under the Habsburgs. *'The nation as Volk had begun its long and troubling career in European thought'*, Ignatieff remarks.

Nowadays, he continues, this type of nationalism takes the form of an institutionalized ethnic majority domination that pays lip-service to the idea of a society of civic equals. *'This is a particular temptation'*, he notes, *'for those ethnic majorities – like the former Baltic peoples and the Ukrainians – formerly ruled by the imperially backed Russian ethnic minority.'* (1992 op cit. Our emphasis).

These references to minorities and majorities help us, incidentally, to recognise two important things about them. The first is that these terms are not in themselves necessarily coterminous with power, or lack of it. The second is that the fluid nature of social and political organisation in complex societies is such that 'minority' and 'majority' do not necessarily define the permanent status of any given group.

He concludes that the appeal of ethnic nationalism *'is as a rationale for ethnic majority rule, for keeping one's enemies in their place or for overturning some legacy of cultural subordination.'* (1992 op cit).

The need for legal frameworks

Contemporary European ethnic nationalism has to be seen as taking place in the broader context of the third major re-ordering of the nation-state system of Europe this century. The first two took place immediately after each of the World Wars. Both of these earlier re-orderings were governed by

internationally endorsed treaties, formulated at Versailles in 1919 and at Yalta in 1945. Today, no similar treaty exists to regulate conflict or structure the self-determination of the nation states of Eastern and Central Europe.

Biro (1993 op cit) has rightly called for the creation of new and complex legal mechanisms designed to harness the negative and positive energies of minorities in these countries. There seems, however, to be just as urgent a need for an equally complex set of mechanisms to be brought into being to apply to relations between the nation states of Europe as a whole.

Without such measures, the peaceful co-existence of Europe's diverse communities seems under threat, as evidenced by an intensifying search being conducted by many post-cold war Europeans for new enemies against whom to define themselves. Such unitarian impulses scorn the lessons of Europe's recent history by inevitably targeting 'minority' peoples and faiths. In this way they threaten fatally to undermine the basic principles of cultural melange which has given the continent its unique character for many centuries.

In the next section of this survey, we look briefly at recent pan-European gatherings which have debated such concerns. These debates have responded to the contemporary challenge by arguing, amongst other things, for the need to review existing legal instruments, to strengthen and widen the scope of the safeguards they enshrine, to formulate new legal and other measures and, above all, significantly to broaden the consultative base that influences decision-making at the highest levels. This must, they argue, include representatives of all of Europe's peoples.

Before we leave this section, however, let us ponder Ignatieff's disturbing conclusion to his journey through different forms of nationalism in six European countries: *"A struggle is going on wherever I went between those who still believe that a nation should be a home to all, and that race, colour, religion and creed should be no bar to belonging, and those who want their nation to be home only to their own. It's the battle between the civic and the ethnic nation. I know which side I'm on. I also know which side, right now, happens to be winning."* (1993 op cit).

3. Recent International Debate

Over the last 5 years and more, policy makers and experts from a number of different disciplines and backgrounds have come together to exchange views and experiences relating specifically to the concerns outlined in the preceding section. Tantalising as it is to explore in more detail every area that these debates have opened up, time constraints make it impossible for us to do this within the parameters of this survey. Our discussion is therefore limited to a somewhat cursory assessment of the main points emerging during some of the more recent debates which deal with the topic of so-called minority groups in Europe.

This takes us into the next section, where we consider the extent to which recommendations made during these debates provide appropriate guidelines for good practice relating to minority issues in certain specific contexts, which we then discuss in some more detail: **gypsies; migrants/non-european immigrants; indigenous peoples; linguistic minorities; regional autonomy.**

To this we append a brief inventory of some of the most important institutions and networks currently operating in this area.

The meetings we shall discuss in this section and the next focused on the particular concerns expressed in their titles: **1990 "Arts Without Frontiers"** (Glasgow). **1992: "The Co-existence of Communities with Diversified Cultural Identities"** (Stockholm). **1993: "The Right to Participate in Cultural Life"** (Helsinki); **"European Connections"** (Birmingham); **"Cultural Diversity in the Arts"** (Amsterdam); **"Multiculturalism and Democracy"** (Vienna); **"Cultural Pluralism and Arts Management Education"** (Amsterdam). Rather than attempt to summarise each in any great detail – their findings and recommendations together run to hundreds of pages recording weeks of discussion – we shall attempt instead to evaluate the dominant trends as well as highlighting the most significant institutionalized measures around which discussion took place. In this section we look most closely at the Stockholm and Helsinki meetings.

All of these debates focused on the condition of Europe's so-called minorities. All recognized that many of Europe's current ills were – and still are – being visited upon those minorities least able to protect themselves. Some – such as the Helsinki Round Table in particular – preoccupied themselves with the scope and effectiveness of existing legal instruments in providing adequate forms of protection for these groups.

All the debates shared the basic premise that beyond the physical protection of individual human beings, other fundamentals were under threat. All concurred that among these fundamentals a number of rights, freedoms and ideals needed to be protected. All agreed, more or less, on which rights, freedoms and ideals these should be and what their legitimate boundaries were.

The paramount right agreed upon by all was **the right to be different**. But some contributors questioned the pursuit of difference as a good in itself, signalling that in certain respects this could, paradoxically, deprive individuals of other rights. It might create the conditions in which discrimination and violence against minorities was given spurious justification.

All meetings accepted that the right to "otherness" is the essential prerequisite to the equal dignity of all peoples and cultures. Few went beyond this to state that this right is but a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. We shall develop this vital point later on.

For the time being let us consider the substance of some of these debates more closely.

SIGTUNA 1993

The informal brainstorming of experts in the Stockholm suburb of **Sigtuna**, by which name this meeting has come to be known, comprised three working groups considering related topics: *'Xenophobia'*; *'Multiculturalism'* or *'Managing Diversity'*; *'Special Aspects of the Situation in Eastern and Central Europe'*.

The first working group recognised that *Xenophobia* as the hatred of "aliens" has its roots in an unspecific fear of the unknown. In times of overall economic decline, particular groups are prone to developing xenophobic tendencies and others to becoming the victims of such tendencies. This situation is exploited politically and subtly reinforced by sensationalist and hence irresponsible media reporting. (The recent successes of the Vlaams Blok in Belgium and the British National Party in East London confirm this tendency.)

The working group recommended a number of practical measures that point the way to good practice in policy making. *"Research is required on what disturbs the majority with regard to a particular group of immigrants."*²³ This signals a healthy shift in the understanding of xenophobia. Instead of being seen as a 'minority' problem, it is perceived instead as being the problem of certain individuals within the majority, with immigrants – any immigrants will do – happening to the recipients of this problem. *"Actions to counter xenophobia ought to be centred at the roots of evil, at reducing the fear of the unknown, by using all tools and opportunities offered by education, cultural action, media and other information channels."*

Since these actions may not be enough on their own, the working group went to argue that *"these need to be supplemented by personal contacts and individual friendships between members of indigenous populations and immigrants or other minority groups and also informal, street-corner discussions"*.

In some so-called "immigration societies", where third or fourth generation "newcomers" are being born, these kinds of interactions have already become natural, unremarkable, processes, thanks to gradual adjustments over time on the part of indigenous people and immigrants alike. These can mask difficulties that exist on the part of now elderly early generation migrants as well as inter-generational tensions within their families. These obviously need to be addressed as well.

The working group sensibly avoids lumping together dominant groups as an undifferentiated majority, when it observes that *"Special [attention] should be [focussed upon] not only the immigrants but also the resident population, who are most easily influenced by the ideas of xenophobia"*. It goes on to recommend an overview of legislation on xenophobia and the practical

implementation of this legislation in different countries, observing that *"even decision-makers and politicians themselves are not frequently immune to and free of xenophobic thoughts"*.

In view of the sentiments expressed by some contemporary politicians, this seems a particularly charitable view.

Two further recommendations for good practice are made. The first recommends that the Scandinavian model for bilingual education be made better known to decision makers and politicians in all European countries. This could assist the formulation and implementation of policies to elevate the status of mother-tongue learning essential to the development of otherwise dormant or conflictual elements of the immigrant's personality.

The second suggestion is for *"a large one-to-one 'adoption' project, as already practised in typical countries [where] an immigrant's family is mentored by a volunteer of the resident's population. Personal guidance and friendship....will be conducive to better overall relations with immigrants and...to the latter's absorption by the receiving country."*

Whilst in no way wishing to undervalue the important contribution made by personal friendships to harmonious inter-group relations, one has to say that such a project would, frankly, be met with derision in certain "immigration societies". The only basis on which such a project could even begin to be considered as feasible – and equitable – would be if provision were made for the adoption to be seen as being on mutual terms, with indigenous group member learning from immigrant and vice versa. In framing such a model, one needs to begin from the premise of reciprocity based on equal compromise on both sides. In practice, as we all know, compromise is negotiated according to individual and collective circumstances; outcomes are never perfect in reality.

The working group on *Managing Diversity* suggested some possible good practices. These included intercultural education at all levels; influencing the media; developing civic participation with regard to minority rights; emphasising the role of the voluntary sector, NGO's, QUANGO'S, sports and youths organizations; persuading governments and institutions to accept their responsibilities and to harmonize their actions; use of the arts in each of the above; and ensuring full participation in cultural life – a theme greatly expanded at the **Helsinki Round Table** discussed below.

The working group discussing *Aspects of the Situation in East and Central Europe* argued for assistance and guidance from western European countries, and the international community generally, in developing conditions in which democracy might thrive. It added that democratic models need to be rooted in the specific historical and cultural milieux of each country. There needs, in particular, to be a clear recognition of *"the [latent] danger of militant nationalism and chauvinism that could for a long time replace the failed ideologies of the past."*

It was also argued that less glorification of western standards of living was needed in order to help foster more self reliance by these nations and thus reduce the impetus of massive migration of its peoples. Arguments of this kind might, of course, be viewed with suspicion as an attempt by western countries to protect their economic privilege.

Finally the political framework should reward drives to equality. It should establish the institutions of a civil society in order to reduce scapegoating. The thrust of the recommendations of this working group, therefore, was to recommend the transfer of models of good practice for social and political organisation already established in the west. Little attention was paid, again, to the issue of reciprocal dialogue or mutual exchange between East and West.

HELSINKI ROUND TABLE 1993 (organised by CIRCLE and the International Movement on Rights to Humanity)

The Helsinki Round Table (1993) ²⁴ confronted some of the limitations of these western models. The Round Table represented a unique coming together of experts from the cultural and legal fields. It thus involved cultural policy makers, human rights campaigners, artists and lawyers.

Under the general rubric of *'Human Rights and Cultural Policies in a Changing Europe – the Right to Participate in Cultural Life'*, delegates looked at ways of reducing social exclusion from cultural representation, especially for those socially marginalised members of communities denied territorial, linguistic and other cultural rights.

Several strands were drawn into this ambitious interdisciplinary debate.

Cultural Rights: the legal dimension

Consideration of existing legal instruments protecting human rights and freedoms, and the shortcomings of these in respect of cultural rights, was uppermost. Although cultural rights have been granted more or less equal status with other fundamental human freedoms in some international laws over the last 50 years or so, there was widespread concern that progress incorporating such rights into legally enforceable measures had been slow and halting.

Cultural rights were, for instance, identified in **Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948**: *"Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. Everyone has the right to the protection of material and moral interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production."* ²⁵

Reference to these rights is also made in two of the **Council of Europe's** early **Conventions** – on **Human Rights (1950)** and on **Culture (1954)** respectively. These pay little attention to cultural rights and, when they do, their relevance and responsiveness to today's realities was thought to be limited.

It is not until 1976, with the enforcement of the **International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** and the co-incidental **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**, that legal instruments do, according to the commentators at the Round Table, begin to give real teeth to cultural rights in general, ie beyond the enforcement of copyright provisions alone. The former Covenant does, for instance, specifically protect the rights of everyone to *take part in cultural life*, to enjoy the benefit

of scientific progress and its application, as well as to benefit from any scientific, literary or artistic production.

In spite of these more recent provisions and others (including the **European Declaration of Cultural Objectives, 1984**), delegates felt that the scope and implementation of cultural rights remained limited. Much of their discussion on cultural rights was, therefore, preoccupied with strengthening the arguments which will enable lawmakers to perceive cultural rights as indivisible from other basic human rights, in order that the former may enjoy the same degree of legal force. The discussion aimed to arrive at a core group of rights that would provide for equal participation in cultural life for all.

It is worth looking more closely at this discussion for a moment.

Universal Principles, practical boundaries

Two fundamental principles of human rights were identified: the principle of equality and non-discrimination and that of individual freedom and autonomy. The source of many of the present conflicts in Europe, according to Symonides, stemmed from a denial of these principles. This denial takes many forms, noted Hausermann: *"It may result from deliberate action by a state through its laws and policies, for example those which deny national minorities the opportunity to practice and develop their unique culture, or restrict the opportunity of linguistic minorities to use their distinct language, or to educate their children in their own language"*.

*"Other forms of restriction may be unintentional...[but real nonetheless]. We must speak out against the discrimination which... denies an artist opportunities for work because of the colour of his or her skin...by lack of opportunity...or because of her sex...or as suffered by those living in poverty or social isolation... and which also denies the dignity of certain cultures subjecting members of that group to social stigma (for example the Romany in several countries)."*²⁶

Borghi added that *"if cultural rights are individual rights they should give rise to a legal remedy for redress."*²⁷ Re-emphasising the indivisible nature of all human rights, he refutes the conventional legal view that cultural rights, unlike other so called *"first generation"* human rights, are not *"justiciable"* ie capable of being enforced in law.

There are, nonetheless, certain contradictions and conflicts inherent in the implementation of cultural rights, as many delegates remarked. Amongst the most important of these are the clash between the human rights values of mutual respect for different faiths on the one hand, and the freedom of expression on the other, as the Salman Rushdie affair highlighted.

Hausermann additionally cautioned against *"falling into the trap of considering that mutual respect for different cultures cloaks harmful practices with legitimacy, ...[for instance]...the genital mutilation of girl children practised in the name of 'culture and tradition'. [Moreover] whilst we must acknowledge religious tenets of the many faiths which make up our multicultural societies, and respect the rights of parents to bring up their children in accordance [with these beliefs], we must also be sensitive to the*

confusion of the child ridiculed or isolated at school as a result of having to conform to norms considered alien or strange by [his peers]."

Ketokoski observed that *"taking rights seriously seems to be possible only if the soil prepared for cultural development is right to promote true respect of human dignity for all."* She added that *"legal and administrative systems put into place for protecting and promoting human rights are in desperate need of poems and plays, songs and dance,"*²⁸ thus pointing to the potential benefits of symbiosis between "culture" in its aesthetic mode and the social world of codified relationships in which it is experienced. We shall return to this shortly.

Core principles

Before leaving the Round Table's discussion of the legal parameters of cultural life, it is worth summarising the core principles which delegates believed ought to define the right to participate in cultural life. These were:

- i) **freedom to choose one's own culture**, (including the freedom to choose not to belong to any group);
- ii) **respect for one's culture, its integrity and its nature as a dynamic reality** (including rights of indigenous peoples, others with distinct cultures, cultural autonomy, linguistic rights);
- iii) **equality of access** (including financial and physical access);
- iv) **equality of opportunity for participation by all** (both in the creation and enjoyment of majority/minority cultures);
- v) **freedoms indispensable for creative activity** (including freedom of expression and intellectual property rights);
- vi) **participation** (by all, including representatives of disadvantaged groups, in theoretical analysis of policies, decision-making and practical implementation);
- vii) **protection and development of cultures in which to participate.**

Implicit in each of these core principles is the understanding that the exercise of one's own rights should in no way either directly harm others or indirectly restrict them in the exercise of their rights.

Affirmative action

Much discussion took place around the practical implementation of these principles. It was generally acknowledged that affirmative action is problematic for policy makers. Delegates agreed that in certain circumstances, *"positive discrimination"* is necessary. Lavrijsen amongst others argued for this, as a temporary measure at least, and specifically in relation to representation of minorities in cultural decision-making.

We have made reference to the imprisoning side-effects of some forms of positive discrimination above. There are other repercussions which must be guarded against. For example, "positive" discrimination for some implies a lack of such treatment for others and can thus become a source of resentment.

(Consider the language of much racist rhetoric: *"they're always at the top of the council's housing list"* etc).

Also, as Safran (1994) has observed, *"a pattern of affirmative action may harm the self image of members of minority groups who are perfectly capable of making it on the basis of merit"*.²⁹ These observations, and the latter in particular, (since it can be conceived as having reactionary undertones in spite of aiming for the reverse), reminds one always to exercise vigilance in the use of terms and arguments that deal with issues of equality and inequality. As Schierup remarked during the COST workshop on *"Multiculturalism and Democracy in Europe"* (Vienna 1993), *"Neo-racism adopts the language of anti-racism. Tolerant claims of multiculturalist relativism are effectively turned upside down in the service of [neo-fascism]"*.³⁰

Other interesting contributions were made at the Round Table. Ben Othman considered that special policies in France *"were largely regarded as experiments and not an integral part of policy"*.³¹ This was echoed by Tjon Pian Gi who believed that *"although the Dutch Government had introduced a policy on the arts of 'migrant' communities more than 10 years ago, it had not been established on solid foundations. There were no specific strategies or goals"*.³² Similarly, the strategies of the Arts Council of England, along with those of some Regional Arts Boards, have, as far as minorities are concerned, been epitomised over the last 20 years or so by abrupt shifts in policy, in cases where such a policy has existed at all.

The causes of this apparent uncertainty are debatable. It may indeed represent the fruits of genuine and equitable consultation with all constituencies of interest. In some instances, however, it may represent a failure to get to grips with the underlying issues, while in others it may be nothing more than straightforward political expediency (ie waiting to see which way the wind blows and meanwhile meekly surrendering control of policy making to outside forces – Government edict or radical protests by artists).

The Round Table discussion moved through this kind of wider assessment of the issues and looked particularly at the artist's perspective of the problem of thwarted cultural rights. Some of the insights contributed to the debate by Jantjes have already been noted above. The observations of Tapies also deserve closer scrutiny.

Culture as a humanising force?

He pointed out that direct political or ideological commitment of artists does not necessarily guarantee the best results of human rights; on the contrary. *"The experiences of the 20th century prove that very often a greater deepening in thinking about the human condition, our place with regard to nature and above all the drama of anguish and hope in today's societies, is achieved in works of art where the subject or the symbology seems to be absent or completely secondary."*³³

The inference drawn from this contribution by the Round Table rapporteurs (Fisher et al) is interesting in that it picked up a theme running through the debate: *"Such works of art, Mr Tapies seems to suggest, can enable people*

*better to understand the world in a new fashion; and in so doing they are also the best advocate of both freedom of art and the liberties of individual citizens."*³⁴

It is hard not to agree with such inspiring sentiments. They reveal the third, as yet untouched upon, sense of "culture" as improvement, as a humanizing force.

But one must square these sentiments with the painful realities observed by the same authors elsewhere in the report of the Round Table and as graphically described here by Steiner (1971) in relation to the Holocaust: *"We know now... that the formal excellence and numerical extension of education need not correspond with increased social stability and political rationality. The demonstrable virtues of the Gymnasium or the Lycee are no guarantee of how or whether the city will vote at the next plebiscite. We now realise that extremes of collective hysteria and savagery can co-exist with a parallel conservation and indeed further development of the institutions, bureaucracies and professional codes of high culture... that libraries, museums, theatres, universities, research centres...can prosper next to the concentration camps."*³⁵

Pessimistic though this insight may be, it does seem to reinforce two things. First the need for us to redouble our efforts to ensure that culture in the widest sense, not just the arts, relates to the everyday lives of ordinary people, whose equal rights to participation in it we must continue to strive to bring into being.

Second, and following on from this, the need to harness culture – in both the 'aesthetic' and 'ways of life' senses – to human rights imperatives by way of collectively formulated and operated legal instruments. Even though a society governed by laws may not be able to provide absolute, cast-iron guarantees against the emergence of totalitarianism it can, in the normal course of things, at least keep totalitarian impulses in check. It must surely, in addition, stand a better chance of resisting these dangers than one in which law has ceased to exist.

The Right to be Different

In moving away from the comprehensive discussions of the Helsinki Round Table on the nature of cultural rights and their constraints, towards a consideration in this section and the next of some of the points raised in the other recent meetings, it is worth returning to the issue of "otherness". The determined emphasis on cultural rights as human rights that pervaded the language and thinking throughout the Round Table is, we have just argued, essential in helping to concretize legal safeguards for the individual and thus for the wider community.

This emphasis follows the trajectory of previous legal statutes concerned with human rights in general, and with those of minorities in particular. Those also have stressed the need for "othernesses" to be preserved as discrete entities. In this way alone, they proclaim, can equitable interaction between cultures take place.

For instance, the **Draft Declaration** framed by the **European Ministers for Culture in Palermo (1990)** states: *"The people of Europe have a duty to preserve and promote what makes them different one from the other"*. (**Article 7**). It continues: *"Europeans must be aware of and feel involved in their own culture, so that they can have an open regard on other cultures and engage in a positive dialogue and fruitful exchange of ideas, which will be to the advantage of all."* (**Article 9**).³⁶

There seems to be absolutely nothing wrong with these twin propositions. There is, however, a subtle danger lurking within. Virtually all human rights legislation places the former proposition before the latter one: the two are, of course, syllogistically linked. Yet because the former proposition must be established first for the syllogism to work, there is a tendency to view otherness not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. One sees this being stressed time and again during the Round Table debate, and elsewhere.

The danger with seeing "otherness" as an end in itself is elucidated by the separate contributions of Vertovek and Schierup to the **COST "Multiculturalism and Democracy" Workshop** referred to above.

As Vertovek remarks, *"...the political and public discourse on multiculturalism as practised at present and its...misleading focus on culture tends to divide and effectively separate ethnic minorities from, rather than incorporate them into the public domain...culture is delineated as a distinct pattern of collective behaviour affecting a certain group of people with the result that multiculturalism as a concept ends up delineating nothing more [than] a pool of distinct units that hardly allows for interpenetration...it is [therefore].. necessary to design other models"*.³⁷ Article 9 of the Palermo Draft Declaration does give an indication of the direction intercultural dialogue needs to take, but there is clearly still some way to go.

We shall consider some complementary directions in a moment, but let us strike home this point by again quoting Schierup on this issue. Taking Denmark as an example, he argues that: *"A dual-welfare is in the process of becoming legitimized where the 'right to be different' is consistently being interpreted as 'being different' and in turn being 'non-integrated'. Neo-racism [thus] adopts the arguments of anti-racism."* (op cit)

This recalls the ironic comments made by Verma at the **Arts Without Frontiers Conference in Glasgow (1990)**: *"There was a time when we, as non-European migrants to Europe were castigated for being different. Now difference is upon us with a vengeance, and cultural revivalism is the new face of acceptability."*³⁸

Another, complementary difficulty in relation to this emphasis on difference is recognised by the **Council of Europe's Draft List of Cultural Rights (1994)**: *"Extreme individualisation may lead to the rise of tribalism and, ultimately, to the creation of systems of apartheid."*³⁹

Otherness must, therefore, be seen not as an end in itself but as a means to an end; that end is the existence of conditions in which free and open cultural mingling between all the othernesses now present in Europe remain possible and is developed, ideally on an equitable basis. We have moved beyond the "melting pot" model of cultural mingling and now need also to move beyond

the "salad bowl" model, which suggests a mix of different ingredients, each retaining its own distinctive flavour.

We need to think in terms of a new, more organic, model that does indeed allow for the distinctive ingredients to retain their essential characteristics and yet also allows for contact between these and other equally distinctive ingredients to *spawn entirely new ingredients*. Jantjes' image, of a multi-rooted organism mapping out this new territory as it grows, begins to connect with this idea.

This kind of "*collectively enriching dialogue*", to quote Parekh at the same COST workshop, "*cannot be safeguarded by a policy of cultural 'laissez faire' and certainly is not in line with the assimilationist argument*".⁴⁰ He reasons from this that "*the state must play an active role in promoting it*". Put another way, cultural minglings take place already, and will continue to do so in rough and ready ways, with or without the involvement of policy makers. But without the protection and encouragement of institutionalized policies, they find it hard to flourish. In some instances, hostile external forces may even put their survival at risk. In a genuine democracy, they thus become the necessary concerns of the wider community.

The question is then raised of how the state decides "*the range of permissible diversity*", something we touched on earlier. Parekh doubts whether this can be done in any way other than by strict reference to the values enshrined in that society's constitutional and political institutions – its so-called "*operative values*". In some circumstances the ability of a given state to grant equality to all its groups is made impossible, since this would conflict with its operative values. In this case, the state ought to "*create as much free cultural space for these groups as is compatible with its operative values.*" (ibid)

Mapping liminal spaces

A number of artists and writers have been looking at this notion of "free cultural space". Lippard (1990), referring specifically to the realities confronting artists in the US, and Bhabha, speaking at the *Cultural Diversity in the Arts Conference* in Amsterdam (1993) both address this idea of open, undefined spaces.

Lippard in her book *Mixed Blessings* quotes the scholar Kumkum Sangari. Sangari suggests that we are now "*poised in a liminal space and an in-between time, which having broken out of the binary opposition between circular and linear, gives a third space and a different time the chance to emerge.*" Lippard adds "*Artists often act in the interstices between old and new, in the possibility of spaces that are as yet socially unrealizable. There they create images of a hopeful or horrible future that may or may not come to be.*"⁴¹

Bhabha follows much the same line and provides a compelling insight into the nature of the relation between, among other things, 'self' and 'other', drawing on these words of Heidegger: "*A boundary is not that at which something stops, but as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing.*" (from Heidegger *Building, dwelling thinking* 1971)⁴².

In the next section we look at some specific examples of attempts aimed at helping some of Europe's different types of minorities retain the cultural resources – and the cultural rights – to "presence" themselves. We cross over the boundary from this section to the next with Bhabha's vivid description of borderline artists:

'The borderline artist performs a poetics of the open-border between cultures. She displays the 'interstices', the overlappings and interleavings, the hither and thither that is part of the history of those peoples whose identities are crafted from the experience of social displacement.

Slaves, indentured labourers, economic minorities, political refugees, sexual or ethnic minorities must neither be homogenised into an "ontology of the oppressed", nor celebrated as the mutinous "margins" of the metropolitan experience. Their specificity lies in an ethics of cultural survival: their minority positions provide a tracery of the transnational world where links between cultures and communities are made through the struggle against cultural marginalisation, with the will to empowerment, rather than the vainglorious conceits of social centrality and political hegemony.

Borderline artists may have fragmented narratives, archives that are empty, memories that are potent yet powerless; but their real experience of survival gives them a special insight into the constructed, artefactual, strategic and contingent nature of those events that are memorialised, by the powerful, as being the "facts of life" or the reportage of historical record." (ibid)

In the next section we take a closer look at the experiences of survival of some of Europe's many cultural minorities.

4. The Experience of Survival

Minorities new and old

There are many kinds of cultural minorities in Europe. In this section we look at some of them. We examine some of the issues that concern each of them specifically and some others of more general relevance to them all.

We shall consider six different types – **gypsies, non-western immigrants, migrant workers, indigenous peoples, and linguistic and territorial minorities.** (The omission of religious minorities from this section of the survey, incidentally, is entirely arbitrary and dictated by nothing more than time constraints. It is unjustifiable on any other grounds as, more generally, is the exclusion of other socially excluded groups – people with physical disabilities, the unemployed, women, etc).

We endeavour to embrace minorities in East and Central Europe in the scope of this discussion but our efforts are constrained by the comparative shortage of detailed information yielded by our research about the situation in these countries.

As far as minorities in western Europe are concerned there is, by contrast, an overwhelming amount of literature on each type. There is not enough space or time available in the scope of this survey, however, to examine these in any great depth. We shall therefore focus on trying to draw out examples of good practice in policy making and implementation.

Among Europe's least well established minorities are the economic migrants, both from "Europe's Mexico" – the new labour reserves of North Africa and the Near East – and other non-European countries formerly colonised by the European powers during several centuries of imperialism.

Europe's longest established minorities are its indigenous peoples, including the Sami of Scandinavia, whom we shall look at more closely below. Separated by thousands of years of settlement on the European mainland, they nonetheless share with the most recently arrived Europeans the experience of comparable degrees of marginalisation and resistance. They also share deeply held attachments to complex, so called pre-modern, cultural systems.

Similarly, two of the remaining kinds of minorities, groups who identify strongly with a particular non-dominant language or territory, also experience cultural dissonance with the dominant paradigms characterising the nation states in which they live. Whilst linguistic and regional minorities are not necessarily coterminous with each other there are, as we later discuss, some important correspondences between their experiences and concerns. In certain instances they do actually define each other.

None of these observations about these different kinds of minorities aims to gloss over the specificities of each case. They simply propose that grounds do exist for certain elements of good practice in one case to be extrapolated to apply in others.

These extrapolations may or may not work, but the right to fail, particularly in relation to artists involved in such experiments, needs to be protected. More general trends of good practice may also be inferred and the usefulness of these

should not be ignored either. One must of course be sure that such trends do not simply encourage policy makers to homogenise minorities, either between different groups or within them.

This search for common references has driven many of Europe's minorities to come together and share their experiences. Usually they have assembled together in the context of their own specific concerns, to define their own particular narratives and to establish frameworks into which these narratives can be incorporated.

The possibility of these narratives *to begin speaking to each other* must surely be the aim of future policies. Some narratives have, for instance, been more successful in creating structures and initiating frameworks than others. Perhaps the lessons of their success can be learned by those who similarly aspire for equality.

Territorial/regional minorities around Europe, for example, have joined forces to develop the **Assembly of European Regions**, established in 1985. This has since grown into a widely respected lobby group, which together with its sister organisations **ECTARC (The European Centre for Traditional and Regional Cultures)** and **CPMR (Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions)** exercise increasing political influence.

Likewise, many (if not all) linguistic minorities can nowadays look to the **European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages**, formed in 1982, to help articulate their concerns. This bureau, whose area of activity we look at more closely later, works alongside a number of associated support structures for particular minority languages – the **Children's European Publishing Secretariat** and **Euroskalle** are two examples – and has generated some of its own, such as the **Mercator** computerised information and documentation network.

Transnational representative bodies exist in relation to other kinds of minorities as well. The presence of indigenous Sami in Norway, Sweden and Finland, for example, has led to the emergence of the **Nordic Sami Council** which, according to this extract from the national report on **Swedish State Cultural Policy, chapter 8.8**, *"works to achieve recognition for the Sami as one people with many common interests irrespective of national boundaries – as one people in three countries"*.⁴³

Europe's other minorities – non-european immigrants, migrant workers and gypsies – may, for the purpose of distinguishing them from the minorities mentioned above, be described as non-autochthonous minorities.

--[The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines "autochthonous" as meaning "sprung from the earth". The related concept, "autochthones" is defined in this way: "the original or earliest known inhabitants of a country". Gypsies are described, in certain contexts and usually along with Jews, as autochthonous minorities, of the non-territorial kind. This is both euphemistic and misleading; if gypsies are autochthonous Europeans, then so, surely are all second-generation migrants born on European soil.

If they are autochthones, on the other hand does this not mean that they should be considered "original inhabitants" in every single one of the 26 European countries where there is a population of between 5,000 and 2.5 million of them? They certainly do not seem to be accorded any of the privileges enjoyed by other "autochthones". Indeed the very application of the

term, with the exception of genuine aboriginal peoples such as the Sami, seems to imply an insidious form of cultural apartheid. To all practical intents and purposes, they are therefore non-autochthonous and this is in the light in which we currently consider them]--

These **non-autochthonous cultural minorities** have yet to create transnational, let alone pan-European frameworks, of the kind achieved by regional, territorial and indigenous minorities. What obstacles lie in their way and what progress has been achieved to date? What can they learn from those who have been able to make more progress?

Many of the problems discussed in the previous sections have frustrated, and continue to frustrate, the efforts of these minorities to mobilise themselves collectively. In the case of "temporary" migrant workers and settled non-european immigrants, the main obstacle has been, and continues to be, the persistence of certain attitudes, more familiarly known as "racism".

The subliminal message conveyed by these attitudes is that *"Blacks/Asians/Turks etc should know their place here."* Such language recalls not just the exploitative nature of the relationship between capitalist and worker, the terms on which these minorities entered Europe in large numbers after the war. It also recalls the exploitative nature of colonialism across a period of four centuries and the hierarchical economic and political relationship between former colonising countries and former colonized that prevails in modern times. In each case, the migrant's low status or that of his country of origin is emphasised. When taken together, they form a powerful, deeply embedded and self-reinforcing matrix of denigration. (The related subliminal message is *"they should all be sent home"*. Where exactly is *"home"* for today's second-, third- and fourth-generation migrants?)

Despite their centuries-long presence throughout the continent, by contrast, Europe's gypsies are also on the receiving end of attitudes that deny them equal status. They suffer from a form of xenophobia that, in some instances, still refuses to grant them even the right to settle, let alone enjoy political representation of any kind. The subliminal message in this case is not so much that they *"do not know their place"*, as that they *"do not have a place"* at all.

The combined populations of these minority groups – 12 million immigrants and 8 million gypsies – totals some 20 million people across Europe, a large minority indeed. And yet there seem to be few, if any, transnational mechanisms which devote themselves exclusively, (or even mainly) to articulating their individual or collective concerns internationally.

Gypsies

From the very limited information we received in response to our enquiries on the topic of Europe's Gypsies, it does seem that these peoples are, nevertheless, seizing the new opportunities for international dialogue offered by the collapse of communism to begin to speak to the wider international community and to each other. Representatives of gypsy communities from East, Central and Western Europe recently met at the **CSCE/Council of Europe Conference in**

Warsaw, "the first international meeting entirely devoted to Gypsies", according to the Council of Europe's journal *Forum* (December 1994).⁴⁴

It is perhaps not surprising that examples of "bad practice" greatly outweighed examples of good practice during the deliberations of this conference, since it clearly provided a unique, and long-awaited opportunity for delegates to describe in anguished terms the kinds of social exclusion being experienced by modern day gypsies:

"In Bulgaria, out of a population approaching one million, 50% to 90% of adults are unemployed depending on the season while 70% of Roma children get no schooling. In Romania, [with a population around three times as large], house burnings, murders and harassment have all become more frequent since 1989, and police and courts are powerless to help. NGOs active on the spot complain that the authorities are abdicating in the face of public opinion, and sometimes letting people settle conflicts by taking the law into their own hands." (ibid)

The journal report mentions only one organisation that represents these concerns in the international arena. This is the **Gypsy Research Centre** in Paris. Its director, JP Liegeois, observes in his book **'Roma, Gypsies, Travellers'**: *"In periods of economic and/or social crisis, gypsies and travellers always make a handy scapegoat. [They] bring surrounding societies face to face with their phobias and nightmares, their suppressed desires, their possessions to be protected, their essence in danger of perdition... States have always seen gypsies and travellers as a threat of disorder, be it political or psychological"*. (ibid)

Contributors to the Warsaw conference also spoke of the plight of people who can live in a country for years and still find themselves in danger of being declared aliens or simply left stateless when national policies change.

Many of the Roma representatives at the conference declared that they wanted official minority status and the attendant protections this would grant by law. Given the magnitude of the problems described, the examples of good practice which did emerge at the conference, grouped together under the general rubric of *"confidence building measures"* introduced by the Council of Europe and others, seemed to offer only limited forms of security. Among the initiatives mentioned were *"certain projects in Prague, and Kremnica in Slovenia, the aim of which is to give Gypsies better living conditions and help Gypsy and non-Gypsy children to meet, to get to know and accept each other. [Also] shared summer camps have been organised"*. (ibid)

Such initiatives corresponded with delegates' shared belief *"in the vital role played by education in combating intolerance"*. (ibid)

As long as initiatives of this kind are not expected to carry too much of a load too early on, they may be of some, albeit, limited use. They do at least represent a start of some sort and should for this reason be developed and made more widespread.

Recognition of the limitations of other measures is also important. The assault on pejorative linguistic terms, including 'gypsies' and 'tsiganes', is commendable of course. Yet consider how, in the United Kingdom, the welcome re-classification of 'gypsies' as 'travellers' is taking place alongside official plans to reduce camping sites used by them.

Practices that seem most worth pursuing are *"the appointment of a European mediator and consultative status for Roma associations with the main international organisations"*. (ibid). Such steps can help influence international political opinion. Certainly, unless attempts to carry locally experienced issues into a wider arena are developed, lasting forms of equality seem a long way off.

Non-Western Immigrants/Migrant Workers

This is precisely the motivation behind the dialogues that have been going on in one way or other for many years now among migrant/immigrant artists. As the director of Dutch arts group **Cosmic Illusion** observed during an interview: *"Black people have always looked across national boundaries to give meaning and direction to their existence."* (De Palm 1991).⁴⁵

It was also the motivation behind the coming together of a number of non-western cultural practitioners in Britain with some of their European counterparts at the aptly named *"European Connections"* seminar in Birmingham (1993). The Conference was organised under the auspices of the Arts Council of Great Britain's **Cultural Diversity Unit**.

The agenda for this debate was outlined in this way: *"Significant communities... of African, Caribbean, Asian and Migrant peoples find themselves living and working under differing conditions and rights, depending on the country of residence. This presence has a historical continuity and political linkages that make black and migrant communities a central determinant in the future development of European unity. The imperative for [their] struggle is irrefutable as the daily lives of black and migrant peoples in the Community are punctuated with attacks on property and person, resulting in recent times in death."* (Wong 1993).⁴⁶

A keynote address by Isar, some of whose main points have already been mentioned, made a number of recommendations for certain kinds of "good practice" to continue the process of international dialogue:

"We need to promote European-wide recognition of the work of black and migrant artists.. a more concerted push for more multicultural arts and social studies content in school curricula, as well as out-of-school initiatives such as the Norwegian Multicultural Music Centre in Oslo. We should be organizing attention getting pan-european events that highlight non-european artistic idioms, but not exclusively, so as to avoid the traps of the cultural ghetto.

We could promote workshops for European cultural managers and administrators...and think of helping to launch a directory of institutions and groups to promote cultural diversity across Europe. We could develop initiatives like multi-cultural production networks or a consortium of European television production and broadcasting organizations. Migrant groups in Europe also need to work with contemporary artists in the countries of origin so as to maintain a living link with those cultures."

The delegates picked up and developed many of these themes and arrived at some resolutions. They agreed to set up a **Secretariat** which, inter alia, would develop a **Pan-European Arts and Cultural Network** and also plan and execute a '*Durbar*' during the Lisbon 1994 Cultural Capital of Europe festivities.

Visions of this kind have a depressing tendency of fading into oblivion. When this happens, as it did with these ones, it points up the shortcomings of some kinds of conference, particularly those with overambitious agendas. Typical of these is a form of wishful thinking that seems to become more escapist in proportion to the acuteness or scale of the problems identified. They rarely concern themselves with hard issues of practical implementation in the real world. "*Change*", as Lippard has observed and should always be remembered, "*is a process not an event*". (1990 op cit)

Less than a year after the European Connections meeting, instead of heralding in a new age of international dialogue and harmony, the Cultural Diversity Unit was closed down by the Arts Council of Great Britain. This abrupt strategy shift was justified on the grounds that the functions of this Unit would be more effectively carried out by being absorbed into the regular work of its existing art form departments. The sincerity of such a claim was undermined, however, by the fact that other departments – including those dealing with the so-called "marginal" issues of arts and disability, and women, were also cut down or cut back, using the familiar euphemism that these were "*now being absorbed into the mainstream*". (To the best of our knowledge, the Arts Council has announced no plans yet to develop the initiatives recommended by the Seminar. One must acknowledge, nonetheless, the Arts Council's contribution to the debate more generally. Their Ethnic Minorities Action Plan, introduced in the late 80's, did help raise the profile of non-western arts on the policy agenda).

The kinds of suggestions for good practice proposed by Isar and others at the European Connections seminar should not be casually cast aside however, even if some appear less realistic than others.

A need surely exists for representative umbrella organisations to come into existence which can articulate the concerns of each minority group as well as their shared concerns. The scope of each such organisation needs to be commensurate with its objectives and these, in turn, must be precisely defined: local ambitions are different from national ones and these differ again from European ones.

Networking: hopes and misunderstandings

Delegates at the Seminar discussed the creation of a Pan European Network in some detail and made considerable progress in identifying some of its possible goals – and obstacles. Networks that some people dream up and then attempt to impose on others from above or outside rarely get going in practice. In the final analysis, they have to emerge out of the genuinely felt need of two or more people to join forces, the better to address their own individual needs initially and, once this has been satisfied, the needs of their co-operating partners. The assumption that "*networking is the most cost effective way to achieving*

cultural co-operation" (European Connections, 1993), must not be taken at face value.

Consider these comments made by Frans de Ruiter, Principal of the Royal Conservatory, The Hague, formerly Director of the Holland Festival and also ex-President of the Extra European Arts Committee (EEAC). (EEAC is a group of cultural institutions in 6 European countries which, since 1979, has pooled resources to bring artists from non-european countries into Europe). What he said during the **Pan-European Networking Seminar** in Glasgow (1990) is worth quoting at length:

"For co-production and networking there are two vital things you need: the first is the product [the play, the exhibition, a piece of music etc] and, secondly, partners to share it with. The easiest way [to achieve success] in co-productions and networking is to put things between good friends and among institutions in a certain framework.

People working in the arts do not always realise that thinking and talking about co-productions is very often based upon myths and mystification, a lot of misunderstandings and not listening very carefully to each other's point of departure and language.

Misunderstanding number one in this whole area is that organisers and producers will be able to save money. If this is the only reason, please stop immediately. Most of the time, networking and co-producing ends up in a lot of financial dissatisfaction [sometimes even financial disaster], so be careful. Only on the basis of thorough preparation [and risk evaluation] can it possibly bring something to the partners involved.. even in 10% of cases, some financial benefit.

The principal goal of networking ought to be the piece of art itself, the programme, the idea behind it and the deep wish from one, two or five or six partners to spread out the proposal as wide as possible... in favour of the idea behind the project. For the sake of the audience also, this approach must be the main drive behind the network." (Arts Without Frontiers Glasgow 1990).⁴⁷

The concluding remarks to the report on the European Connections seminar acknowledge these limitations of networks and also suggest some ways forward: *"Delegates were advised to build on the momentum of the Seminar and initiate action by first identifying what networks already exist in their disciplines or regions and begin to establish links or where there are none, begin to establish one."* (Wong, 1993).

In the real world in which we live rather than the ideal one we are all trying to build, the initial onus for establishing links with existing networks usually rests on those outside them. Responsibility also lies, however, with those inside the networks to be receptive to the inclusion of new members. Persuading those on the inside to open their doors is the legitimate concern of lobby institutions in western European countries similar to Britain's **Commission for Racial Equality** and **Equal Opportunities Commission**.

The arguments used by such lobbies to lend muscle to those clamouring for inclusion in such apparently closed networks must not, however, form a discourse of blame or guilt. Such arguments simply alienate and will ensure

that the doors are even more firmly shut. The discourse needs instead to comprise compelling arguments *based on mutual self-interest* and which make every effort to avoid either becoming attempts to skew the original terms of reference of the network for the exclusive benefit of the incoming member, or being viewed as such by those on the inside. We shall return to this in the context of suggesting ways in which networks for better established minorities might be opened up to less well established ones.

Examples in Practice

Meanwhile, let us leave this brief discussion of the topic of non-european and migrant minorities with reference to a few concrete examples of "good practice". Among these appears to be the trend in Britain to establish major "Black" cultural centres. Manchester's **Nia Centre** and Birmingham's more recent **Drum** project are instances of this. Both have emerged from partnerships involving local authorities, universities, regional arts boards and the social services – including the Probation Services.

Marriages of interests of this kind are to be welcomed. They aim to root the development of these organisations in the needs of ordinary people, while simultaneously encouraging the creation of spaces in which more transcendent aesthetic expressions can be represented. In this way they hope to provide the platform for a longer future for these initiatives than was enjoyed by the comparably ambitious, but ultimately doomed, **Black Arts Centre** at London's **Roundhouse** in the mid-eighties. (The failure of that venture in 1989 is sadly still used as an excuse to legitimize the shameful lack of a major, multi-purpose, intercultural centre in the capital, one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities. **The Haus Der Kulturen Der Welt** in Berlin, the **Maison Des Cultures du Monde** in Paris and the **Royal Tropical Institute/Soeterijn** in Amsterdam are three such centres that programme a wide range of non-western – and western – arts year round).

The specificities of these initiatives might provide useful working models for less well established minorities, like the Roma peoples. The projects themselves may, in addition, grow stronger from dialogue with such groups as well as with members of territorial and linguistic minorities. There certainly seem to be grounds – and existing structures – for collaborations between regionally-oriented institutions like the **Nia Centre** and the **Drum** to link up with those in other so-called "2nd cities". These exchanges might work best under the aegis of the **Eurocities Culture Commission** initiative (referred to by Stephen Kerry of Bradford Industrial Museum, 1994, attached) or in more ad hoc fashion.

Public funding policies need to be responsive to such developments and possibilities. The trend in Britain is not promising, with the principle of subsidiarity eroding some important overarching structures. The Arts Council is, since 1994, no longer of Britain, but of England, and the Regional Arts Boards seen to have few mechanisms (if any) to fund inter-regional initiatives.

Whilst there has been a corresponding, some say reactionary, return in certain funding circles towards rigid artform definitions, the continued existence of the category "*Combined*" or "*Interdisciplinary*" arts is, nevertheless, hopeful.

It offers the promise of a more fertile soil in which innovative partnerships may thrive, not just between arts disciplines but also among and between different cultural traditions.

The *INIVA* initiative (Institute of New International Visual Arts), referred to by Jantjes at the Helsinki Round Table is another new example of this kind of good practice. Like the other centres mentioned it aims to redress the balance of under-representation experienced by non-western artists in Britain. *INIVA* concerns itself especially, but not solely, with visual arts, an area in which "western" aesthetic values and practices have been felt to be particularly forceful in denigrating and excluding the work of non-western arts practitioners. *INIVA* aims to challenge established frontiers in ways that the other centres mentioned tend not to preoccupy themselves with. For this reason it has drawn criticism from some quarters that it perpetuates "white hegemony" over "black cultures" and does not sufficiently articulate the needs of ordinary Black people. Frictions of this kind are inevitable and cannot simply be shrugged off, even if they do at times provide a form of creative tension which can lead to old, confrontational, boundaries being dissolved.

What is surely important for the continued existence of initiatives such as *INIVA* and others is for them not to lose touch with the needs of their target constituencies, in whatever way these are defined.

An example of the kind of dialogue that seems essential in linking arts practices to the concerns of their audiences was provided by Jean Hurstel, Director of *La Laiterie, Centre Europeen pour la Jeune Creation*, at the *European Cultural Foundation* seminar on *Cultural Pluralism and Arts Management Education* in Amsterdam (1993). Hurstel described a play he had written, based on the dialogue between an old Alsatian woman and a young Turk, beginning in confrontation and hatred and gradually moving to an understanding through a shared sense of something lost. The play was conceived as a response to a racist Le Pen poster. Hurstel had spent a good deal of time talking to two sets of people directly involved, working-class Alsatian and immigrants, in developing the scope and content of his production.

In the process he discovered that there was common ground between these two sides, in the immense nostalgia felt by both sets of people. The play was staged in various flats in the district in which it was set.⁴⁸

A complementary insight on the need for "culturally diverse arts" to address the interests of their constituencies was provided by TV producer Trevor Phillips at the Amsterdam *Cultural Diversity in the Arts Conference* (1993). Phillips identified the realities of the environment in which particular target groups make their cultural choices:

*'The difficulty nowadays is that people have so many more options as to how to spend their leisure time that they are much more selective. You have to persuade them not just to come in but that what you have to offer is more interesting, more valuable and more useful than television or Nintendo. Particularly useful in attracting young audiences are performers known to young audiences from television...young people may come just to see them but once they are there they might find they are interested in other events billed.'*⁴⁹

New initiatives of this kind must not, however, simply be allowed to provide funders with the excuse of shelving long-standing ones. Often this is justified

on the basis that these have "outlived their usefulness". Longevity, somewhat curiously, is frequently seen by some funders as a problem in the context of the cultural practices of minority groups, but as a virtue when applied to dominant cultural institutions.

A different version of this kind of insincerity is well described in this insight provided by Wiesand (1994): *"When only fully 'marketable' or media related artforms and cultural expressions are accepted and only slight varieties of a 'trendy' offer really have a chance in this market, then there is not much room for an interchange of original cultural values and traditions or of non-conformist views in a given society."*⁵⁰

Indigenous Minorities: The Sami Peoples of Scandinavia

This brings us to a consideration of how indigenous (or 'autochthonous' in its true sense) minorities are perceived by the dominant society. Are they seen as no more than a kind of interesting museum artefact, to be preserved so as to satisfy the "trendy" curiosities of the dominant peoples of these countries? Some of the patronising language that occasionally epitomises discussions about the Sami seems to suggest so.

Most of the literature we have been able to review in relation to the Sami focuses on the right of these peoples to be different. The dangers of overemphasising a peoples' cultural identity have been discussed at length above and do not need to be restated here, except to remind of the risks of this for creating new forms of apartheid. Not that these remarks are meant in any way to malign the Sami's long, and often painful, struggle to keep alive a unique form of otherness.

On the contrary, one must pay tribute to the admirable determination and courage with which this struggle appears to have been conducted over many centuries. It acts as a beacon for many currently disenfranchised and threatened peoples, not simply in Europe, but around the world.

Nevertheless there does seem to be a need now for the Sami's struggle to start being seen beyond the familiar dualities in which it tends to be described in the literature. It must start to come to terms with the multiplex narratives emerging in today's inter-cultural Europe.

Some analyses, which have recently been carried out by Sami and non-Sami researchers alike, have started to frame discussions about the Sami in this way. They have begun to probe how this particular form of otherness, in all its variations, relates to different, surrounding othernesses, which are manifested not only in the dominant cultural forms of each of these Nordic countries, but also in those of more recently arrived minorities. There are now significant numbers of immigrants, both from other European states and also from non-European ones, in all of these countries.

Do the Sami perceive themselves to be involved in the kind of "open cultural mingling" referred to earlier? Do other minority groups see them in this way? Do Samis value the prospect of such new exchanges or do many among them fear it instead, on the grounds that it may bring new strains of "contamination" that could destroy their fragile culture?

The material consulted does not provide any direct answers to these questions. But it does provide some clues as to their relevance.

History

Let us briefly look at the history of the Sami struggle, as described in the official texts. The Sami are indigenous inhabitants of three Scandinavian countries – Norway, Sweden and Finland – and also of Russia. Their traditional occupations are nomadic reindeer herding, fishing and farming. Their total population in these countries combined is reckoned today to be around 100,000 (although there is a lack of official census information to verify these numbers).

The complex differences among the various Sami peoples have been masked by the national boundaries imposed by colonising, Norwegians, Swedes, Finns and Russians. Since the late 18th and early 19th centuries, various codicils have allowed for such externally imposed divisions between Sami groups to be transcended. From 1751 to 1809, for example, Norway and Sweden had special bilateral obligations to each other, directly related to the Sami in the two countries.

The so-called "*Lapcodicil*" served as the legislation governing reindeer herding that allowed Sami movements across national boundaries between these two countries in pursuit of this nomadic pastoralist activity. Subsequent transnational treaties of this kind have been signed – and rescinded – in the context of economic and political conflicts involving two or more of the four countries ever since. Today the legal implications of these agreements extend far beyond rights to herd reindeer. Furthermore, all of this has to be seen against a background of centuries of enforced cultural assimilation into the dominant society.

The fruits of struggle

Sami political and cultural identity is still influenced by the different stages reached in each country vis-a-vis self-governance. Norway has had a **Sami Assembly** – the **Sameting** – for over 40 years while comparable frameworks are more recent in Sweden, Finland and Russia. Important gains have been made in each country, especially since the Second World war with regard to political and, latterly, cultural rights. In Norway, for instance, Sami languages – one of the principal determinants of Sami cultural identity (descent and conformity to Sami customs and beliefs are the others) – enjoy privileged status in both the educational and legal fields.

Legal privileges are enshrined in and protected by a complex set of national statutes, including **Article 110 of the Norwegian Constitution (1988)** and the **Sami Assembly Act (1987)**, and international ones, most notably the **UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)** and the **ILO Convention No 169 (1989) on Indigenous and Tribal Populations**.

Moreover, state funding supports a **Sami Language Council**, a **Sami Educational Council**, and a **Sami Trade Council**. At the level of cultural activity, an increasing number of examples of "good practices" can be found. Institutional financial support is also, for example, given to a **Sami theatre** group called **Beaivvais**, based in Kautokeino, which tours throughout the whole Sami area, (and internationally), and uses theatre to explore Sami tradition, culture, contemporary life, and the language issue. There is also support for a **Sami Library**, a **Sami Museum**, **Sami newspapers** and small grants to **Sami artists**. Finland also has a Sami Radio station.

Finally, the **Nordic Sami Council** has, since, 1954 provided mechanisms for private Sami organizations from the three Scandinavian countries to co-operate transnationally. At the **Nordic Sami Conference in Helsinki in 1992**, the **Association of Sami People in Russia** was admitted as a full member of the Nordic Council.

Elina Helander of the **Nordic Sami Institute** concludes from these achievements that: *"In spite of long term oppression of the Sami [people] and partly due to it, Sami culture has survived and reached a stage of positive development. The key elements seem to be: their own economic system, their own territory (Sapmi), their own organisations and institutions, the use of their own language, legal protection of their culture and positive attitudes of the non-Sami authorities."* (**Majority-Minority Relations, World Commission on Culture and Development, 1994**)⁵¹

Potential cleavages

If this really is an accurate summary of the state of affairs, then it does seem to provide a remarkable role model for other threatened cultures, for instance the Inuits and Indians of Canada and for Europe's archetypal "others", the gypsies, and all other marginalised cultural minorities more generally. What this rosy picture falls short of addressing, however, is the way in which this form of revitalised Sami cultural identity works in real life and in modern times, in relation that is, to surrounding "othernesses".

Vigdis Stordahl picks up this theme, beginning from the same position as Helander: *"The Sami people and society have become more self confident and the dimensions of the social problems witnessed in other northern regions are not there."* But, Stordahl continues, *"there are by-products of this process of change which the Sami hasn't fully recognized. [Among these are] new mechanisms of social and cultural differentiations. Gender, generation and socioeconomic status have greater impact nowadays on individuals ... and there is no longer one set of norms that can serve as a guide in their striving for the 'good life'. There are many competing ones."*

The question of life style choices [has] become linked to a debate over what kind of lifestyle elements you can combine with the fact that you are a Sami. Nobody questions a punker or a hardrocker her Norwegian identity, but you be sure that they'll do that with one from a Sami township!"

Stordahl concludes that *"defining and maintaining ethnic identity in a context that has so rapidly changed in 30 years, from one of stigmatizing a*

*whole culture to one where the culture's right to survive are written into the Constitution, is not an easy task to cope with.*⁶²

Learning from each other

Will this task expose cleavages among different Sami peoples, cleavages that have long been suppressed in the name of Sami unity? If so, will their gains be undermined in similar ways to those divisions which, on a much larger scale and due to more abrupt changes, threaten havoc in some East and Central European countries? Such breaches are often exploited to sow disunity amongst oppressed peoples: strategies to divide and rule are familiar enough, not just to former colonized nations in the "developing" world, but also to descendants from these countries now living in Europe.

If other minorities can learn from the Sami struggle for self-determination – and they can – what can Sami peoples learn from how these others have, with greater or lesser success, learned (and are continuing to learn) to deal with 'open cultural mingling'? For instance, non-western migrants – many of whom also cherish a number of 'pre-modern' elements in their traditional ways of life – have had a great deal of experience in coping with inter-generational and inter-gender conflicts. Can these experiences provide lessons for the Sami, for whom conflicts of this kind look set to intensify?

What kinds of mechanisms exist, or might be established, that would enable different minorities to learn from the successes and failures of each other's individual struggles?

Linguistic and Territorial Minorities

Perhaps the best established examples of institutionalised "learning from each other" exist among Europe's linguistic and territorial minorities. This is suggested by the overlapping layers of official recognition granted to recently evolved networks and other mechanisms that enable articulation of their collective concerns. Some of these have already been referred to above and others are listed in more detail below.

Networks and enabling mechanisms of this kind provide excellent working models of ways in which those minorities most vulnerable to xenophobia and racism might initiate regular dialogue among – and between – themselves. Additional linkages must be developed simultaneously in order that such exchanges of knowledge and experience avoid the trap of simply becoming a "dialogue of the oppressed".

One way of doing this would be if these already existing networks and institutions, originally established to represent the interests of linguistic and territorial minorities, were to extend their membership so as to include Europe's new, or otherwise still unconnected, "others".

Before we look at the ways in which this might happen, we need to understand the particular nature of each of these latter kinds of minority in a

little more detail. What boundaries apply in the case of linguistic and territorial minorities?

As we discussed earlier on, individual and collective identities constitute a web of interlocking cultural affiliations, among the most important of which is language. In some instances it is language, rather than religion or any genetically inherited characteristic, that is the key cultural attribute of a people. It is often what defines them as a nation. *"A language contains the collective memory of a community, and is often associated with differences in social relationships, moral values, political outlook and traditions"*. (European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, 1994).⁵³

However, as we have also observed, the nation and the state do not necessarily co-incide. Among the many kinds of linguistic minorities that exist in Europe today, many consider themselves as nations without a state. For some, this condition is not a problem in itself, while for others it provides the spur for greater self-governance in both the cultural and political domains. In many parts of Eastern and Central Europe, this expresses itself centrifugally, with linguistic and territorial minorities seeking complete autonomy from the dominant state and forming states of their own.

Much the same can be said to apply to so called 'territorial' minorities, whose primary form of belonging is to a geographic space. Very often this space is defined in linguistic terms. In some cases linguistic affiliation is strong and underscores territorial belonging. Catalan, Welsh and Breton are among the most often cited examples of this: Sami, as we have just seen, is another. Sometimes language no longer underscores territorial attachments: Scotland provides a modern day example of this.

Regions and Territories: false cognates?

'Territorial' minorities are often defined, by themselves and others, as being 'regional' entities. This can sometimes be confusing, especially in discussions concerning political, cultural or socio-economic 'regional' initiatives. 'Regions' used in this sense do not always consist exclusively or even predominantly of territorial minorities. The West Midlands of England is an officially accepted 'region'; but does it provide the primary form of belonging for a 'territorial' minority in any meaningful sense? If so, is this the same sense that applies to, say, Catalonia? (The latter, by contrast, exhibits a strong correlation between a distinct, numerically large and territorially defined cultural minority – vis-a-vis the Spanish state – and a large geographical area). The potential for this kind of tautology must, therefore, always be kept in mind when using these terms.

The blurring of the concepts 'territory' and 'regions' certainly underlines the importance of the recommendation, made in the **Draft Final Report (1991)** of the **Council of Europe's "Culture and the Regions" Project 10**, for cultivating a *"broad philosophy on regional development [that can provide] for a comprehensive framework where differing regional needs can be accommodated"* (Delgado, 1991).⁵⁴ Any such framework must, of course, concern itself with addressing the needs of all those who consider a particular region to be their home, and not exclusively the needs of those who belong to

any specific territorial or linguistic 'minority' within it, even if such minorities actually constitute a majority within the region.

Regional Autonomy

None of the above is to undervalue, first of all, the powerful emotional and cognitive attachments which these minorities clearly have to their geographic space. Regional identifications can be as strong and deeply embedded as any of the other cultural affiliations mentioned above. Moreover, because of the sheer volume and diversity of peoples represented, regions exert considerable influence at the highest levels of political decision making.

Nor, secondly, is it to distract from the crucial role regions play in delivering an important degree of *"intermediate solidarity"* between individual and state, without which *"people can lose hold on both local conditions and global associations"* (Philips).⁵⁵ Regional advocates justifiably claim that *"local and regional authorities carry a great burden in planning and implementing policies at almost all levels of European co-ordinated activity, while their institutional weight is proportionately small. This grievance has been increasingly [felt] by regions with a variety of institutional structures demanding better expression of territorial realities."* (Delgado op cit).

Nor, finally, is it to underestimate how regions create and sustain conditions in which it becomes more difficult for one group to suppress another by *"sharing out power and [ensuring] a constitutional framework within which small nations and historic regions can receive status without sovereignty"*. (Philips op cit)

Tempting though it is to delve further into this intriguing issue, it falls outside the immediate scope of our survey. We must, reluctantly, abbreviate discussion on this particular point by referring to this penetrating observation made by Young (1976 op cit): *"In the face of accelerating change, human groupings redefine their social identities in ways which appeal to new imperatives of security and status."* (1976 op cit)

Seen in this way, 'regions' have come to provide certain human groupings, territorial and linguistic minorities in particular, with powerful identity vehicles which facilitate the expression of their social, political and cultural aspirations.

Delgado predicts that *"the next decades may see the need for the recognition of territorial units in Europe which are neither states nor regions in the conventional sense but political and administrative areas resulting from the dismemberment of states or from the recognition of regions with strong particularisms"*. (1991 op cit).

Linguistic Particularisms

Included among these particularisms in contemporary Europe are various minority languages and territorial identities. Many minority languages represent particular linguistic species that are unique to the continent in one way or other

and are thus deservedly viewed as sources of irreplaceable cultural wealth for the people of Europe as a whole.

Many have survived thanks to the determined efforts of their speakers to protect the heritages which these languages embody. Some are in serious decline and need imaginative and sustained institutional support. On a general level, this is being provided for via certain overarching institutional agencies and initiatives in response to collective representation. We look at a few of these in a moment.

An example in practice

In some cases, more specific focus is given to individual minority tongues. **The South West Arts Board** in England, for example, cites the case of **Cornish** in its **Cultural Diversity Policy**. SWAB is one of the only English Regional Arts Boards responding to the survey to include an indigenous culture alongside non-indigenous ones in its cultural diversity policies. Even though SWAB serves one of the few regions in England that still *has* a territorial/regional minority culture, it nonetheless demonstrates an example of good practice in policy-making by including an indigenous culture in a category of funding stereotypically identified with the arts of non-european immigrants and their descendants.

The manner of its support is also commendable: *"Although the Cornish language has been in long-term serious decline, there is interest in its future development as a cultural medium. SWAB seeks to work with Cornish organisations to encourage interest in and effective artistic development of Cornwall's Celtic culture ...[including]...our support for the Celtic Film and Television Festival which provides opportunities for Cornish language films to be broadcast to an international audience"* (1994).⁵⁶

By challenging the stereotypical definition of Cultural Diversity, SWAB's policy also challenges the kinds of conventional boundaries that too often homogenise different "othernesses", tending, as we have shown, to imprison them under the same exclusive and static rubric. Furthermore, in its implementation in this instance, the policy simultaneously widens the arena in which the minority culture can be seen, away from local prejudices and into an international context. The value of this in enhancing the external profile – and internal self confidence – of the minority culture must not be underestimated.

Suggestions for "Cross Networking"

Might it be not possible, likewise, for other relatively closed definitions to be opened up? Concern to protect cultures that cluster around 'Lesser used languages' and 'Regional identities' have helped to keep many of these alive and even to flourish. Are there not ways in which the networks, agencies and initiatives they have brought into being could grow stronger through dialogue and overlap with less well organised, but equally potent minority cultures?

One step, for example, might be for the **European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL)** to widen its definition of European minority languages to include the tongues spoken by Europe's non-western peoples. If this could be achieved over a realistic time frame, then these languages might one day enjoy the rights already gained as a result of concerted lobbying on behalf of so-called autochthonous languages.

The same might apply to Jewish and Gypsy tongues. Such a relaxation of boundaries on each side would surely open up possibilities for the exchange of experience and knowledge between different language groups as well heightening the profile of minority languages per se.

Initial measures towards incorporation of this kind might be conducted through the **Study Visits Scheme** operated by the EC in association with EBLUL. This scheme aims to *"provide an awareness of the European reality in the field of lesser used languages by increasing the amount of high-quality, selected and up-to-date information about lesser used language developments throughout the Union. The participants represent all aspects of lesser used languages and act as 'multipliers', as persons who exercise responsibility at local, regional or national level and whose expertise can be used to increase the awareness of others about policy and practice in other Member States"*. (Vade Mecum 1994).⁵⁷ Another might be regular placements of individuals from diverse backgrounds with EBLUL.

In similar fashion, existing regional groupings, such as the **Assembly of European Regions (AER)** and **Interregional Cultural Network (ICON)** might widen their ambit – and thus their influence – and begin to include representation from some of Europe's major cities, not just capitals or even "second" cities. Links between AER and ICON and the Eurocities Culture Commission seem as if they could be straightforward enough; they may be happening to some extent already. Such intercity linkages could provide avenues for representatives of many 'world' populations now living in these cities, and in some instances still experiencing acute forms of social exclusion, to interconnect on a regular basis on initiatives of mutual concern.

EBLUL, AER, and ICON provide examples of how existing networks and institutions might serve some of the needs of individuals belonging to different cultural minorities in Europe. More specialised needs, for instance those of artists and arts practitioners, can be served by particular art form networks around Europe: the Informal European Theatre Meeting (IETM) is one such example. These can provide artists and practitioners from various minority groups with the more specific professional advice and practical support they would find useful. These and other networks mentioned are likely, nonetheless, to be limited in their value in addressing those concerns that are in some way unique to a particular minority.

These are but a couple of suggestions. They argue for more creative re-evaluation of other existing mechanisms, some of which are referred to in the appendices to this survey. This must be the focus of future surveys on cultural pluralism. Once the arguments presented in this discussion have become more refined and better targeted on the threshing floor of forthcoming debates, the search for existing models of good practice, innovative management and effective networking must intensify. Our aim in this survey has been to

continue to develop the basis for a critical approach to such practices. Only when a common vocabulary exists can effective policies and practices begin to emerge.

We conclude this section with these words of Donall O Raglan, Secretary General of the European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages.

"When the history of the last two decades of the twentieth century comes to be written, it will be observed that it was the period during which many major European institutions, and indeed worldwide bodies, adopted positive positions vis-a-vis lesser used languages and the rights of those who use them.

*While most of the documents relating to these developments do not have 'hard' law application, their 'soft' law significance can be considerable. Publicised and used intelligently they can become powerful weapons in the armoury of those who work for the conservation and promotion of our languages and cultures."*⁵⁸

Let these words and the sentiments they express come to apply not just to lesser used languages but also to other so-called minority cultures in modern Europe.

5. Concluding Remarks

We have tried in this survey to provide a better understanding of some of the complex issues concerning cultural pluralism in Europe today.

We have evaluated definitions, examined recent international and intercultural debate and looked in more detail at certain minority groups, concerning ourselves especially with the predicaments and creative possibilities these peoples all face to a greater or lesser degree. We have tried to identify and describe certain shared understandings – and misunderstandings. In this way and others we have sought both to recommend continuation of the more solid theoretical underpinnings of current policy-making and practices and to challenge some of the more suspect ones.

By emphasising the importance of protecting difference, we believe we have faithfully reflected the views of many of those in favour of cultural pluralism. We have argued, however, that the protection of difference is not an end in itself but a means to an end. That end is the "open cultural mingling" of all Europe's cultures, between and among 'minority' and 'majority' groups alike, on an equitable basis.

This is taking place in ad hoc fashion anyway, with or without state support. But if diversity as a resource available to all human beings is to survive and flourish, then institutional policies – and funds – are required to strengthen and disseminate such practices. These policies must always be mindful of the particularisms in each case.

Moreover, they must be firm enough to resist the winds of political and economic fortune, yet flexible enough to respond in creative ways to new developments. They must also aim to avoid the temptation to discard the fruits of hard-fought progress lightly, for the sake of fashion. This undermines the dignity and historical continuity of these struggles.

In addition to the things we have done in this survey, there are also many things we have not done. We have been unable to devote the kind of time and resources needed to provide the more thorough and sustained attention the topic clearly deserves. The relative lack of information we received on good policies and cultural practice have dictated the shape of this report. It is unclear whether this lack of information reflects an absence of public policies in these areas in many countries, or a lack of documentation on good practice, or that good practice exists *despite* public policies.

Future research must concentrate on a number of areas. The siege of Sarajevo as described by Nederveen Peterse at the start of the main document represents a number of things. We have focused on it in the sense that it epitomises an assault on European cultural melange as a whole. Yet equally important is the light these incidents cast on Europe's new "other" – **Islam**. The current demonizing of this world religion, in ways that carry menacing echoes of the earlier demonizing of another one, namely Judaism, must be confronted more fully. Events in Sarajevo 80 years ago precipitated decades of terrible disfigurement of the European ideal throughout the European mainland. Let us strive to ensure that today's events do not similarly portend wider turmoil, this time on a global level.

We have been painfully aware throughout this survey of how cursory our examination of other crucial issues has been. We have paid comparatively little attention to developments in **East and Central Europe** and the particular significances cultural pluralism has for peoples in this vast and currently unstable region. As we write, information in response to our enquiries is still coming in from a number of these revitalised and re-constituted 'new' nations of Europe. From what we have been able briefly to review, their desire to be incorporated into the wider European community of nations on a cultural level, as well as on political and economic one, is unmistakeable.

We also regret not having been able to explore in more detail the particularisms relating to **territorial and linguistic minorities**. There are numerous anomalies which we have been unable to explore in any detail; for instance those, like Slavs in Sweden and Spaniards in Germany etc, who were majority language speakers in their former countries and have become a linguistic minority by virtue of migration. Nor have we investigated the implications of how certain processes of **regionalisation** – such as the case of South Tyrol and Trento – can to an extent deprive rather than provide self governance for some territorial minorities.

We have also paid little attention to Europe's **religious minorities**. This kind of minority has been particularly vulnerable to persecution everywhere in the world, and there are plenty of examples of this in Europe's history as well. Religion has also, paradoxically, been both the scourge and the saviour of many linguistic and regional particularisms. It has been used as a particularly powerful instrument of enforced assimilation and yet pastoral support has sometimes been essential for the preservation of minority cultures in important, but often under-recognised, ways, for example, the writing down of formerly oral, lesser-used languages.

We have, however, set aside a more detailed consideration of these issues in order to concentrate on other things. Future studies must carry this work forward. The scope of such research ought also to consider more fully other forms of social exclusion, like those experienced by the poor, by people with disabilities, by the unemployed, and by women, the "hidden majority".

The fact that we have been unable to include so many of the issues should not be interpreted as, somehow granting those that have been considered a kind of pre-eminence. We have tried to avoid developing a "hierarchy of suffering". Injustice is injustice, and not the exclusive burden of any one group or other. What we have attempted to highlight, instead, is just some of the many forms injustice nowadays takes in societies based on principles opposed to it.

We have attempted in this survey to represent as fully and as accurately as we can some of the intractable realities facing many of Europe's contemporary minorities. This has inevitably created a somewhat grim and sometimes hopeless view of the situation.

And yet these realities must not be allowed to demoralise those among us committed to a vision of Europe based on civic rather than ethnic nationalism and on an open, rather than a closed, sense of otherness. The tenacity of all cultural minorities in protecting their distinct particularisms should inspire us, instead, to participate in the struggle together, with clear purpose and firm intent and, above all, in a spirit of good will.

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6.2 Recent Multilateral Initiatives*

The urgency to respond to exclusion, ethnic cleansing, tribalism and intolerance and work towards "the equal dignity of all human beings" has given an impetus to the work, in recent years, of both UNESCO and the Council of Europe, to initiate discussion and encourage national governments to acknowledge and implement legislation on cultural, ethnic and linguistic minority rights.

Although the action of these institutions can only be considered as "soft law" initiatives or principles, the fundamental achievement of these international organizations has been the launch of an extensive debate beyond the confines of marginalized groups to reach the political agenda of Heads of State.

In defence of human rights and free expression, the Council of Europe issued a declaration pleading for the respect of writer and novelist Salman Rushdie's life. In June 1992, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages. A Framework for the Protection of National Minorities was opened to signature on 1 February 1995.

A resolution to respect and implement gypsies rights and culture was discussed in February 1993 at the forty-fourth Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. The Parliamentary Assembly also made recommendations on religious tolerance (1993), an additional protocol on the rights of national minorities to the European Convention of Human Rights (1993), on sects and new religious movements (1992) and on the contribution of Islamic civilisation to European culture (1991).

The European Round Table organised by CIRCLE and the International Movement on Rights and Humanity in Helsinki, in May 1993, and referred to in the main text, was supported both by the Council of Europe and UNESCO, as well as other cultural organizations, to re-open the discussion of introducing cultural rights and the right into human rights legislation and conventions and to enshrine the principle of participation in cultural life by everyone. This debate and others provided a context for the Vienna Summit of Heads of State and Governments of the Council of Europe member states to adopt a plan of action in October 1993, aimed at combatting intolerance, racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and nationalism in Europe. The Committee of Ministers called for the preparation of a protocol to complement the European Convention on Human Rights in the cultural field that would guarantee individual rights and in particular the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in Europe. A draft of the protocol is expected to be completed by 31 December 1995.

The theme of the eighth international colloquy on the European Convention of Human Rights, taking place in Budapest in September 1995, includes cultural rights.

On 10 December 1994, a two year "European Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance" was launched by the Council of Europe and European youth organizations to "mobilise the public in favour of a tolerant society based on the equal dignity of all its members."

UNESCO has also played a significant role in promoting legal protection for minority rights dating back to the first Universal Declaration of Human Rights

in December 1948. More recently, in 1992, the General Assembly of Unesco prepared a declaration on the "Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities". Further to its proclamation that governments consider and implement appropriate measures to respect the rights of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, the Declaration emphasizes the right of these minority groups to participate in cultural life as well as in decision making. The Declaration also underscores the integral contribution minority groups make to the political, economic, social and cultural development of society,

Under the direction of the United Nations, 1993 was declared the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. World Day celebrations were held in many of the UNESCO Member States with the aim to raise awareness and promote the contribution of indigenous people to the development and plurality of society and to respect their rights and cultural identity.

Issues integral to the work of the World Commission on Culture and Development, which was set up by UNESCO and the United Nations as a World Decade project, are poverty, social exclusion, xenophobia, intolerance, racism, cultural rights and community solidarity, indigenous peoples and languages. The Report will be delivered to the UNESCO General Conference in the Autumn of 1995.

* Background note prepared by Rod Fisher and Danielle Cliche of CIRCLE

6.3 List of Organisations Contacted

ALBANIA

Rudolf Marku Esq, Secretaire general, Commission nationale albanaise pour l'UNESCO, Ministria e Puneve Te Jashtme, Service de l'UNESCO, Tirana.
Eduard Makri Esq, Director of Arts Department, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Bulrvardi 'Lesgorete e Kombit', Tirana.

ANDORRA

The Hon Josep Dalleres Codina, Minister for Education, Culture and Youth, Andorra la Vella.
Marc Vila Amigo Esq, Ministere des Relations Exterieure, Carrer Plat de la Creu, 62-64, Andorra la Vella.

ARMENIA

Mrs Violetta Aghababian, Armenian National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 Baghramian Avenue, 375019 Yerevan.
The Hon Mr Hagopian, Minister of Culture, Independence Square, 375001, Yerevan.

AUSTRIA

Dr Harald Gardos, Secretary General, Austrian National Commission for UNESCO, Mentergasse 11, 1070 Vienna.
Dr Hans Temnitschka, Sektionchef, Sektion fur Kunstgelegenheiten, Federal Ministry for Education and Arts, Minoritenplatz 5, Postfach 65, 1010 Vienna.
Dr Ronald Polioryles, Chairman, Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences, Hamburgerstrasse 14/20, A-1050 Vienna.
Secretary General, International Organisation of Folk Art, Hauptstrasse 38, A-2340 Modling.
Ms Veronika Ratzenbock, Osterreichische Kulturanalysen, Internationales Archiv für Kulturanalysen, Schultergasse 5/15, 1010 Vienna.
Alfred Smudits Esq, Secretary General, Mediacult, Schonburgst 27, 1040 Vienna.

AZERBAIDZAN

Ambassador Ramiz Aboutalybov, Azerbaidzani National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ganjlar Meidany 3, BAKU-370601.

BELARUS

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The Right Hon Yevgenii Konstantinovich Voitovi, Minister of Culture, Dom Pravitelstva. ul Sovietskaya 9, 220010 Minsk.

BELGIUM

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Daniel Courbe Esq, Charge de Mission, Ministère de la Communauté Française, Direction General de la Culture, Rue Louvrez 46B, 4000 Liege.

The Hon Bernd Gentges, Minister for Education and Culture, Ministry for German-speaking Community, Klotzerbahn 32, 4700 Eupen.

Robert Wangermee Esq, Free University of Brussels, c/o RTBF, Boulevard A Reyers 52, 1044 Brussels.

Mr Willy Juwet, General Director, Administration for the Arts, Dept of Soc Welfare, Health & Culture, Ministry of the Flemish Community, Kolonienstraat 31, 1000 Brussels.

Ms Els Baeten, Vlaams Theater Instituut, Saintelettesquare 19, 1210 Brussels.

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CYPRUS

Dr Phedon Phedonos-Vadet, Acting Secretary General, Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nicosia.

Dr Yiannis Katsouris, Director of Cultural Services, Ministry of Education, 20 Byron's Avenue, Nicosia.

CZECH REPUBLIC

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Ms Kate Wafer, Community Arts Officer, 2nd Floor, Permanent House, 72 The Headrow, Leeds LS1 8DL.
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Ms Alexandra Ankras, European Women's Network for Intercultural Action and Exchange, Centaur House, 124-128 City Road, London EC1V 2NJ.
Ms Lyn Barbour, Arts and Cultural Policy Dev. Officer, Chief Executive's Dept, Economic Initiatives Gp, 9th Floor, Town Hall Extension, Manchester M60 2LA.
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FINLAND

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6.4 Cultural Co-operation initiatives since 1987

1987

THE RIVER MELA, South Bank Centre, London
COMMONWEALTH MUSIC VILLAGE, Holland Park, Kensington, London
COMMONWEALTH MUSIC SHOW, City of Edinburgh
OXFORD FESTIVAL OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC, Pitt Rivers Museum

1988

PACIFIC MUSIC VILLAGE, Holland Park, Kensington, London
OXFORD FESTIVAL OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC, Pitt Rivers Museum and Florence Park
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF STREET MUSIC, South Bank Centre, London and City of Glasgow

1989

CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS, St Hugh's College Oxford
WEST AFRICAN MUSIC VILLAGE, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF STREET MUSIC, South Bank Centre, London

1990

SEMINAR ON PAN-EUROPEAN NETWORKING at "Arts Without Frontiers" Conference, Glasgow
PAPUA NEW GUINEA MUSIC VILLAGE, Orleans House and Gunnesbury Park, London; Gateshead Garden Festival; Amsterdam; The Hague and Paris (Maison des Cultures du Monde)
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF STREET MUSIC, Richmond Riverside; Glasgow and Birmingham
THE GLASGOW MELA at the Tramway, Glasgow

1991

MUSIC VILLAGE OF RAJASTHAN, GUJARAT AND MADHYA PRADESH, Berlin; Newcastle; London (Orleans House and Waterman's Park and Arts Centre); City of Birmingham
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF STREET MUSIC, London (Richmond Riverside; Canary Wharf, Millwall Inner Docks, Spice Quay, Notting Hill Carnival) ; Berlin; Amsterdam and Eastern German tour
PILOT STUDY IN THE NETHERLANDS for the British Council/Arts Council re non-western arts in Europe
PAPERS PRESENTED at the College for New Europe, Cracow, Poland and UNESCO Conference on Cultural Dialogue, St Petersburg, USSR

1992

CARIBBEAN MUSIC VILLAGE, London (Orleans House, Twickenham and Lee Valley Park); Berlin, and Glasgow

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF STREET MUSIC, London (Coin Street Community Centre, Cutty Sark Gardens, Greenwich, Richmond Riverside, Thames Quay and Island Gardens); Birmingham, and to tour to Germany, Holland (including Berlin and Amsterdam)

1993

ETHIOPIAN MUSIC VILLAGE, London (Richmond Riverside, Clissold Park Hackney, British Museum and Library, Africa Centre, Watermans Arts Centre, Cafe Jam Brixton, Hackney Empire), Birmingham, Glasgow/Strathclyde, Germany; Berlin (Haus der Kulturen der Welt)

1994

HAFLA! MOROCCAN MUSIC VILLAGE, London (Regents Park, Richmond Riverside, Richmond Pier, October Gallery Holborn, Blackheath Concert Halls, Leighton House Museum Kensington, British Museum and Library, Music Works, Circus Space, Islington Arts Factory, Greenwich Pier, Tower of London Pier, Festival Pier South Bank, Subterranea Night Club Kensington); Bradford Festival (Festival Launch at City Hall, Street Festival, International Music and Dance Day at Wool Exchange, Bradford Mela); Glasgow (Ayr, Lanark, City Halls, Italian Centre, Argyle/Buchanan Streets, World Music Village Concert with Glasgow International Folk Festival, The Barras Gallowgate, Springburn); Birmingham (Aston Hall), Germany (Berlin at Haus Der Kulturen Der Welt, Frankfurt)

1995

STUDY ON CULTURAL PLURALISM IN EUROPE, for UNESCO. Papers to be presented at a conference to take place in Stockholm, Sweden in March 1995 as part of the "World Decade for Cultural Development" programme

PAKISTAN MUSIC VILLAGE, (current project) to take place in Great Britain June/July 1995

6.5 Acknowledgements

I am very grateful indeed to Rod Fisher, Secretary General of CIRCLE, for having invited us to prepare this document on behalf of UNESCO and for his advice and promptings concerning its eventual shape and content. The guidance of Mate Kovacs, Head of Department at the World Decade for Cultural Development, UNESCO, Paris was also invaluable.

I should like to thank Emma D'Costa for her involvement in organising the collection of data for this survey from some 150 supranational, national and regional organisations around Europe and in analysing some of the vast amount of information subsequently received. The essential yet often under-recognized task of chasing up responses and then monitoring them as they came in was taken up by her and by my colleague, Alison Denning. Thanks also to Sharon Shahani for her work on and suggestions concerning the look of the document, a task later taken on by Kerstin Lundman of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO.

Most of all, however, thanks must go to all those organisations who took the trouble to respond to our enquiries. Not all their responses have been individually referred to in this document, but all were carefully reviewed. Taken together, these responses made the crucial, albeit unacknowledged, contribution to the content of the discussion presented. We particularly hope this document proves a useful tool for them, since it is they who carry important responsibilities for implementing many of the recommendations and initiatives to which we have referred.

Prakash Daswani
March 1995