

# CULTURE REPORT

EUNIC Yearbook 2011

## EUROPE'S FOREIGN CULTURAL RELATIONS



**CULTURE REPORT**  
EUNIC YEARBOOK 2011

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Cultural relations are the glue that holds alliances together. The geopolitics of the 21st century mean we need to see a revival of cultural diplomacy. China and India are already expanding their external cultural policies. Despite Europe's huge cultural diversity, the EU has still not developed an adequate cultural strategy for its foreign policy. The establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) provides an opportunity to tighten up and co-ordinate the EU's existing cultural foreign policy. In this edition of the Culture Report, 30 authors from 20 different countries examine what this all means.

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## Crisis and new awakenings

If history is truly written in key moments, then we are surely going through one of those moments right now. Europe is in the grip of a debt crisis so deep that Jacques Delors, former President of the European Commission and one of the architects of the European Monetary Union, is not alone in thinking the work of an entire generation is in serious danger. “Europe now faces a historic decision: do we want more or less Europe?” asked Delors in his acceptance speech for the 2011 Theodor Wanner Prize, awarded by the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations. Do we want to fall back on old forms of nationalism, or do we want to use the crisis as an opportunity to take a step nearer to the kind of political unity that has so far eluded us? During his speech honouring Delors for his award, former German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher compared the current situation with the historic changes of 1989/90. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, Europe found itself faced with a similar challenge. At that time politicians acted decisively and took advantage of the historic opportunity that had been presented. This is the kind of decisiveness that we need now.

At a time when an internal crisis is raging within Europe, the first EUNIC Yearbook is being published with an in-depth look at – of all things – Europe’s external cultural relations. But there are good reasons for this. At a time when fundamental decisions on Europe’s future need to be taken, it is important that politics doesn’t just focus on short-term needs, but also takes into account enduring beliefs and cultural values. And sometimes an outsider’s view can help to make people more aware of their own values and the importance of culture for society and the community as a whole.

While Europe is deeply preoccupied with its own crisis, we are seeing equally momentous events unfolding south of the Mediterranean. At a time when many Arab people are on the verge of seizing a historic opportunity to live under democracy and the rule of law for the first time, they are looking to Europe not only for support, but also to act as a role-model. What kind of expectations do the main players in the Arab spring have of the old continent? How is Europe actually viewed around the world? These are the kind of issues addressed by the authors in the first part of this Yearbook. “The only constants in the European tradition were the constant stimuli and challenges coming from outside”, writes the poet Yang Lian, and he reminds us of the importance of dialogue with China, a country that has changed more in the last thirty years than in the previous three thousand. In her call for greater transatlantic cultural exchange, the political scientist Mai’a Cross warns Europeans against apathy when it comes to foreign affairs. “Europeans are all talk and no action” tends to be the somewhat unflattering view in the USA, a country that is looking more and more towards China, with the result that Europe increasingly runs the risk of being sidelined.

The establishment of the European External Ac-



Deputy General Secretary and Head of the Media Department at the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations

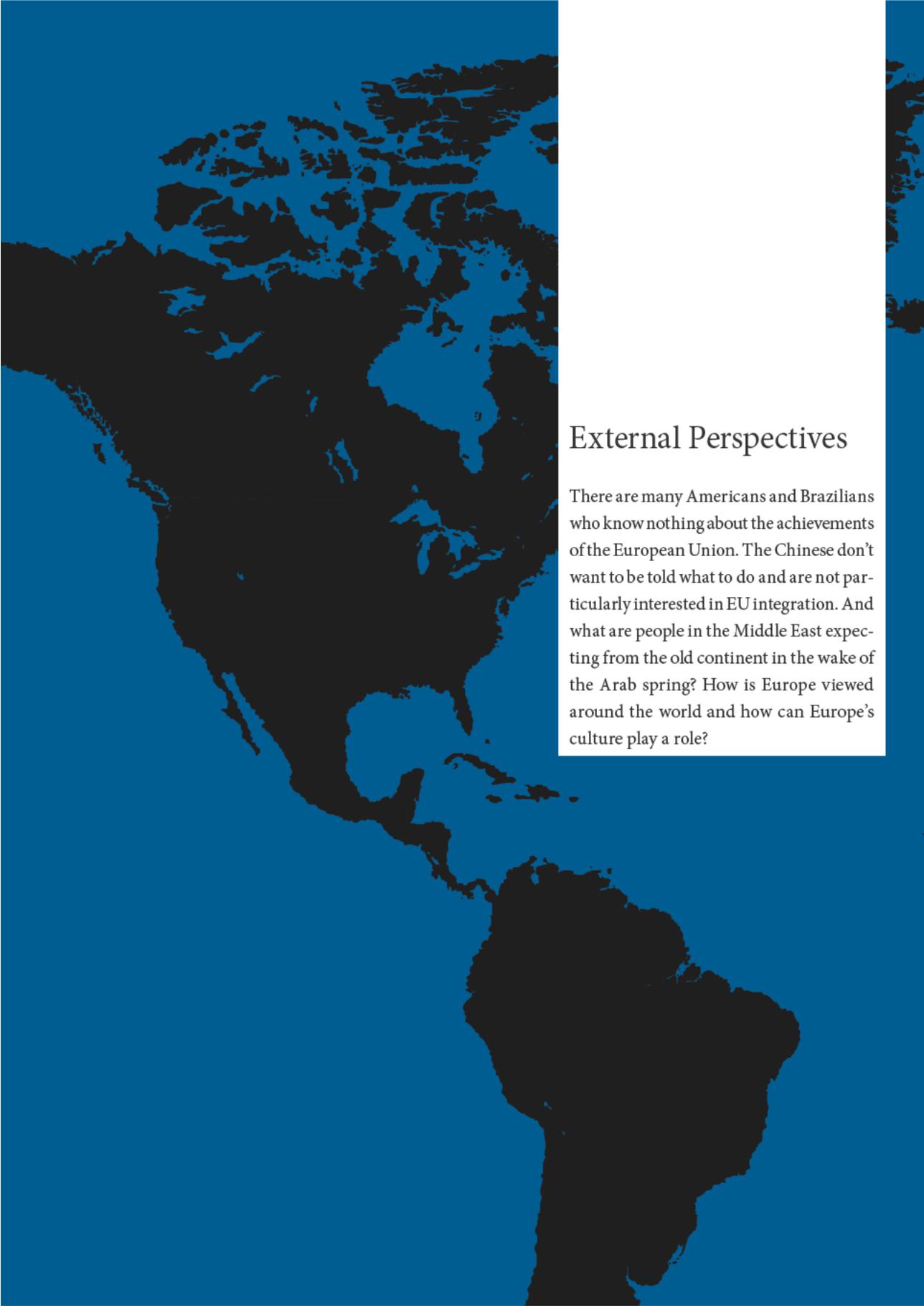
tion Service has therefore come at exactly the right time to analyse just what Europe really has to offer in face of these global challenges. “Europe’s position in the world is not only defined in terms of national security or economics”, claims Robert Palmer from the Council of Europe in Strasburg. The geopolitical situation in the 21st century demands that cultural diplomacy be revitalised, using a multilateral approach. Just what role culture can play in European external affairs is the subject of the second chapter.

The third and final chapter of the EUNIC Yearbook 2011 is dedicated to the EUNIC network itself, founded in 2006. In his contribution, Horia-Roman Patapievici, doctor, essayist, head of the Romanian Cultural Institute and President of EUNIC for 2010-2011, recalls the founding ideal behind EUNIC, the European network of national institutes for culture. It was as simple as it was convincing. It was based on the belief that good things can happen if people decide to work together. If the national institutes for culture could work together they would become more than just the sum of their parts, like the individual instruments in a concerto grosso. In this respect, the founding of EUNIC in 2006 can be seen as a new beginning for international cultural relations. What has been achieved so far? How can the network develop from a somewhat random partnership into a more strategic one? And finally, what can EUNIC, with its 2,000 branches around the world, contribute towards building a common external cultural policy? These are the questions addressed by the authors in this chapter, amongst them Delphine Borione from the French Foreign Ministry, who will be the next President of EUNIC. They also risk a look ahead to the future, but without falling into the trap of mistaking culture

for some kind of panacea. “Culture is the bearer of great humanitarianism, while at the same time bearing the stigma of colonial oppression”, is how Berthold Franke of the Goethe Institute sums up the ambivalent role of culture in foreign relations.

The EUNIC Yearbook is the successor to the “Culture Report Progress Europe“, which was first published in 2007 by the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations and the Robert Bosch Foundation. The help of European partner institutions has made it possible for the Report not only to continue to offer an overview of the state of cultural relations in Europe, but also to be published in several languages. I am delighted that the fourth edition of the Culture Report is now being published within the framework of EUNIC. This can be seen as a sign of progress by all involved, as the Culture Report is now likely to have even greater impact than before. The EUNIC network is also gaining an ideal platform from which to address fundamental issues and allow a two-way expression of thoughts and ideas. I would like to thank all those involved for their support, especially the authors, but also the translators and editors, whose work is mostly done behind the scenes. I would also like to thank the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the British Council and Culture Ireland. This publication would not have been possible without their generous financial assistance.

*Sebastian Körber*



## External Perspectives

There are many Americans and Brazilians who know nothing about the achievements of the European Union. The Chinese don't want to be told what to do and are not particularly interested in EU integration. And what are people in the Middle East expecting from the old continent in the wake of the Arab spring? How is Europe viewed around the world and how can Europe's culture play a role?



**A brave new world – globalisation as Europe’s touchstone** The latest developments in the Middle East just seem to provide further proof that the world is turning towards the European model. Europe remains the centre of the universe and history continues to unfold around the axis of its value system. The future still lies in the hands of the old continent. This is a comforting picture, but writer Yang Lian reminds us that the Chinese have held this same view of history for the last two thousand years. **By Yang Lian**



**T**he earth is spinning like crazy - and sometimes it flies off in totally unexpected directions. Who would have thought that communist China, a country in which millions of people starved to death under Mao, would end up acting as creditor and “favourite uncle” to the capitalist world, and that Western countries flailing around in the maelstrom of the financial crisis would be eagerly waiting for China to come to their rescue and help out with their national debt? The same is true of the Arab states. Not so long ago Europe more or less openly viewed them as the enemy with whom they were going head-to-head in a battle of cultures. But now Tunisia, Egypt and Libya have changed their colours almost overnight and suddenly the antiquated

dictators on the other side of the Mediterranean have disappeared into thin air. Global politics and the economic landscape are changing as quickly as the scenes in a play. Could it be that the Chinese or the Arabs, who have experienced these changes at first hand, now find themselves waking up with a start during the night and wondering “Where am I?”

On the other hand, the Europeans who are caught up in all this turbulent history are probably asking themselves “What’s happening to the world? Where is all this rapid change taking us?” Or, in other words, how will Europe react when the world looks totally different? Does European culture need to be repositioned? What does our culture amount to today and what are our values?

It seems to me that these are very pressing questions, particularly in light of two experiences that might at first glance appear to be contradictory. The first of these was the 2009 Frankfurt Book Fair. China was invited to attend as guest of honour, which on the face of it seemed like a good opportunity to use the diversity of perspectives and forums on offer to give the world an insight into this ancient country, take a peek behind the red curtain of the

Communist Party and find out what has been going on in China over recent years. It would have been interesting to see how China has managed to break away from the traditional thinking of other communist countries during the Cold War and has steered a dictatorship to economic success. If all powers are equally greedy and corrupt, why haven't other places had their own economic miracle like China?

What seems like a contradiction in terms is in fact the result of a range of complex cultural factors which deserve to be looked at more closely. The organisers of the Book Fair should have thought about this and then drawn up a more appropriate programme. But unfortunately they wanted to "ask the tiger for its skin" as they say in China (thinking they could get Party bureaucrats and dissidents to sit down at the same table), but they just ended up "dancing with the wolf" (and cancelling the invitations to the dissidents because the Party changed its mind). The outcome was inevitable: the whole Fair became a battlefield littered with nothing more meaningful than ideological slogans. "China" just came across as a second-hand shop where all the recycled clichés of the East-West conflict have never gone out of fashion. But what is China really like today? What food for thought can it offer the rest of the world? Unfortunately these questions were destined to sink without trace.

### *A damp squib*

We had hoped to get out the big guns but instead we just set off a damp squib. Real life China was totally ignored in the midst of all the kerfuffle about the pre-

conceived notion of "China".

The second experience arose from the 2010 International Literature Festival in Munich. The title of the discussion – which I took part in – was as striking as it was misleading: Present-Day Masterpieces. The very title poses a major dilemma for the modern world: in a world of so many diverse cultural traditions, who sets the criteria for measuring what is a contemporary masterpiece?

The debate revolved around how to construct a ranking system for measuring excellence, and German, European and international ranking systems were set up. My hope was that the cream of European thinkers would turn their attention to what I believed was the real challenge posed by this topic, but I was to be disappointed. Even knowledgeable speakers such as Umberto Eco failed to really address the dubious nature of the assessment criteria. Our discussion forum did little more than underline the tendency amongst European intellectuals towards schematising when dealing with foreign cultures. China was simply equated with communist ideology and the Arab world with ethnic and religious conflict (at that point nobody could have anticipated the drastic changes which have since taken place).

This tendency towards over-simplification even continued during deliberations on Europe. Incredibly, when considering European masterpieces the discussion kept returning to whether or not they were commercially successful. This is a very dubious criterion. After all, how many masterpieces of literature, art

## External perspectives

or philosophy have ever been instant best-sellers? If a masterpiece is to be measured in terms of its commercial success then should we be downgrading the works of Kafka and Joyce?

In my talk, I tried to argue in favour of making the artistic and intellectual maturity of a work the only criterion for assessing what makes a masterpiece. Irrespective of how many different cultural systems are involved in the assessment, a masterpiece has to demonstrate that it is quite unique in every respect. My arguments were based on classical Chinese poetry. It is often suggested that the dazzling tradition of these poems is based solely on the fact that they are “classics” of Chinese culture. But this is nonsense, for surely their beauty arises from the profundity of their art and their thinking.

As examples, I looked towards the poet Qu Yuan, who lived and wrote 2,300 years ago in the state of Chu, and the great poet of the Tang Dynasty, Du Fu, who lived 1,200 years ago. I explained how the experience of exile which I share with both these poets has acted as an inspiration for the content and form of artistic works throughout the ages, and how the aesthetic realm of poetry can engender great profundity of thought. As exiles, we really belong nowhere in the world, and the degree of reflection provided by poetry allows us to consciously become “active others” and highlights our sense of distance - not only from other cultures but also from our “own” culture, which is ours in name only. By calling upon all available cultural resources, we may finally find an answer to the troubles that

are presently weighing so heavily on so many people.

### *Every minute plays out between two cultures*

As a poet who lives in Europe, but who still uses the Chinese language, every minute of my life plays out between these two very different cultures. My reflections on Chinese as a literary language and my explorations of Chinese poetry have taken me on a journey through its ideas and technical forms. The connection between my work and China’s reality and its meaning for the modern transformation of the Chinese tradition could be said to have been a “nightmare inspiration” and has led to a fundamental conflict with Europe. By this I mean that I cannot get a handle on a culture which does not look to find its way forward from the inside out. We have to explore our own depths before we can start to chart the depths of others. And this should, of course, be the way that Europeans try to understand other cultures.

The two negative experiences which I mentioned earlier have left me with the impression that European culture still has some catching up to do in this respect before it can begin to react to a globalised world with that great sense of caution that is typical of its tradition of thought. Europe has still not seriously attempted to overturn its own ways of thinking in order to gain new perspectives and widen its horizons. First of all, Europeans have to assimilate the realities and cultures

from “elsewhere” into their own ways of thinking, which in turn will give them a greater understanding of their own difficulties. My use of quotation marks is deliberate here, because in reality there is no “elsewhere” in today’s world. Apparently “distant places” are in fact to be found within ourselves. In terms of mind and matter, every human being is a hybrid.

“China” is very close to us - as close as the trainers on your feet, which were probably made by the modern slave labour of the 21st century. The miraculous transformation effected by global conglomerates means that they can turn in almost unimaginable profits thanks to the gap between the wages of Chinese peasants and European prices. Global capitalism binds us together like Siamese twins.

Today’s bizarre world is reflected in the way Western politicians visit China and feel obliged to utter a few platitudes about human rights and democracy, not so much because they really think it will bring about any change in China, but because they are obliged to pander to the media and their voters at home. Once this hot air has been got out of the way, they can get down to business. These embarrassing contortions just provoke a wry smile from the Chinese government. As long as the orders continue to add up, European countries are happy to swallow the bitter pill of the Chinese state’s oppression of dissidents. This kind of inconsistent behaviour on the part of the Europeans

“European intellectuals have a tendency towards schematising when dealing with foreign cultures.”

serves to throw them into just as poor a light as the Party, which is merely sticking to its principles.

Whichever way you look at it, an ability to understand and react appropriately to other countries relies on a capacity for self-analysis. First of all, this means looking at oneself in a self-critical way. Does Europe have any concept of the awkward position it is in? I’m sorry, but if you lack consciousness there is a danger that you will be led by the unconscious. The “brave new world” is perhaps just as outmoded as the one described by Aldous Huxley. People are finding themselves the slaves of industrial processes and apathetically living lives governed by inhumanity.

### *Insular thinking*

Lack of understanding of other cultures of course stems from lack of knowledge, but the reason for this knowledge gap may quite simply be due to excessively insular thinking. There is no sense of needing to open up and understand something “different”. After all, all the trouble stems from out there, whether it’s China, Iran, Afghanistan or Iraq. Compared to these trouble spots, Europe seems to be as comfortable as it has always been, or at least it seems to be peaceful and intact, which is enough to satisfy the prevailing feeling of cultural superiority. And history itself seems to support this feeling, which has dominated Europe since the Renaissance.

The idea of the universal validity of European thought has its roots in the En-

lightenment, and the same is true of the political system of democracy and its effects on legislation and freedom of speech. The poverty of the socialist states during the time of East-West conflict served to bolster the West's feeling of superiority, and of course the end of the Cold War was hailed as a victory for Western civilisation. The tragedy of the 9/11 attacks was turned into a comedy by the annihilation of Saddam Hussein and Bin Laden.

And all the recent changes in the Middle East just seem to provide further proof that the world is turning towards the European model. Europe remains the centre of the universe, history continues to unfold around the axis of its value system and hence the future still lies in the hands of the old continent. This is a comforting picture, but I would like to remind you that the Chinese have held this same view of history for the last two thousand years.

The biggest difference between Chinese history and Mediterranean history is the fact that Chinese culture has had to face far fewer challenges. Unlike the situation in the "First World", before the opium wars Chinese culture was allowed to blossom largely undisturbed and without outside influences (apart from a few attempts at conquest made by nomadic peoples, which always ended up with them being assimilated into Chinese culture). This resulted in a "Middle Kingdom" which became increasingly complacent and conservative. The Chinese cultural system became a rusty spring which had lost its ability to bounce back in the face of new challenges from the outside world. Then the Europeans came along with their own culture (and military might) and pushed down on the

spring until the Chinese suddenly found themselves catapulted out of their position of self-confidence into a condition of extreme self-doubt. They allowed their emotions to run away with them, shouted nihilistic slogans demanding total westernisation, forged their own kind of revolution and fell head-over-heels into the darkest dictatorship of their history.

### *Stimuli and challenges*

Meanwhile, in European history, or more precisely Mediterranean history, cultures were constantly converging and separating: from ancient Egypt to the Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, from Napoleon to the Russian tsars and foreign conquerors such as Attila or Genghis Khan. Each clash forced Europe to redefine and reconsolidate its own position. The only constants in the European tradition was provided by the constant stimuli and challenges coming from outside. But then the Renaissance came along, bringing with it individual thinkers who asked the question "What is Europe?" Europe's diverging cultures sought and found a common denominator; Europe was a success. But my question is: will this success story continue to unfold?

More and more cultures are inviting Europe to dance with them on the stage of the 'brave new world'. Based on their own cultural experiences, these distant cultures all expect Europe to be ready and willing to read from the same book and establish opportunities for meaningful

“More and more cultures are inviting Europe to dance with them on the stage of the ‘brave new world’”

dialogue.

We can certainly say that China, for example, has changed more over the last thirty years than in the previous three thousand. A culture where the same language had been spoken for more than three thousand years and where the same thought patterns and systems of ideas had reigned supreme has now in a short space of time battled its way through what should have been centuries of change and emerged looking brand new. In my poem “In Symmetry with Death”, which is at heart a poem about history, I wrote “Being reborn in the form of death is really being born for the first time”.

It is difficult for outsiders to imagine this process. Change has a far greater impact on ideology than on external reality. Politics is just a wave blown by the wind across the deep ocean of culture. Even the term “Communist Party” is a cultural monstrosity, a mask borrowed from the West so that the emperors could hide the true face of their absolute rule. I once coined the phrase “nightmare inspiration” to describe modern China from the Cultural Revolution to the present day. The kind of pain which tears the flesh and pierces the heart allows our questioning and searching to become a symbol for life itself. Disasters do not simply wash over us without leaving a trace. They open up layer upon layer of reflection on reality, history, culture, language, mindsets and the subconscious until we come upon

strange forms which bring these layers together, like a Chinese character which cannot be conjugated. And this takes us back to the synchronicity which is so peculiar to Chinese thought. It is something much more despairing than “the pain of the times”; it is nothing less than “timeless pain”.

It is this kind of profundity that makes contemporary Chinese literature so amazing. This has nothing to do with the exoticism of the Far East but with the depths of human existence, with experiencing the greatest possible “impossibility”. Writing – that is the will to live which proclaims: “Start with the impossible”.

After a gap of thirty years I once again visited the famous thatched hut of Tang Dynasty poet Du Fu in Chengdu and quietly read to myself the well-known lines which he penned in exile “In ten thousand miles often a guest of melancholy”. This has made me realise that my own works are not part of the Chinese tradition but instead are an attempt to revive it. Du Fu’s exile, Dante’s exile, and my own, comparatively modest, exile are all part of the same syntax: using a poem to convey extreme human suffering through extreme creative beauty.

The people of modern-day China need to learn from the relics of their past culture. If they are to breathe fresh life into Chinese culture they have to learn to push the boundaries, as this is where the opportunities and fountains of rebirth will be found. And it is to be hoped that the high price that China has paid will be worth it in the end.

In the ‘brave new world’ it is no longer

enough for cultures to simply stretch as far as their historical and geographical conditions permit. Today it is necessary to have an active capacity for understanding another culture. I believe the driving force behind this understanding should not be curiosity, but the knowledge of one's own needs in times of crisis.

If it is true that China has still not emerged from the bloody shadows of Mao Zedong and the ineptitude of its nouveau riche has inevitably led to the country acting like a clown on the international stage, then it would be an absolute tragedy if Europe were to be pressurised by money to give up its own ways of thinking and get embroiled in this egotistical and cynical competition. As long as all the talk of human rights and democracy is nothing more than political correctness and is totally divorced from concrete actions, then we are facing a very sad reality. These empty phrases hide a yawning chasm which represents perhaps the biggest crisis of human civilisation.

Of course history has always also been a history of lies, but I have the impression that the liars have become even more cynical in their desire for profits and a fast buck. They not only feel no remorse about lying, they actually think it's quite normal. Their logic is simple – if I don't make a profit then someone else will. If we take the example of foreign firms who have invested in China, it is clear that they are profiting from the fact that China has cheap labour with no social security benefits, no union representation and no right to strike. It would be something of an exaggeration to talk about double standards here, because in truth there is only one standard – ruthless competition. In this respect, China has become a sym-

bol of the crisis in international thinking which is much more serious than the economic crisis. Nowadays, everyone feels they are simply at its mercy. We stand and watch the decline without being able to do anything about it. It is not hard to recognise the extent of the problem, and one thing we can be sure of is that it is neither superficial nor temporary.

It breeds anger and hate, as has been shown all too clearly in the shootings carried out by Andres Brevik on the Norwegian island of Ytteroy and in the Molotov cocktails thrown by black children in the Tottenham area of London. If lies and profits mean that everything else is mere window-dressing (including most of what is considered to be art), then what is the point of our existence? And is there any point to literature?

### *A clown on the international stage*

Europe has allowed itself be driven into a dead end by its own theory of the linearity of history. Some people may be familiar with a few lines from the poem written by Tang-dynasty poet Wang Wei: "To be at the place where the waters stop and wait for the rainclouds to form". They are an example of a kind of synchronicity which will never disappear – seeing the movement of the earth at the end of the world. Time cannot change anything. It is a steady drip of water which seeps inside us and forms the sediment of our thoughts. Every human being is always starting out afresh and finding his way forward, hand-in-hand with the cosmos.

But we should not forget that there is more than one Europe. Eastern and Central Europe were once nothing more than “black holes”. Before the end of the Cold War suddenly catapulted them back into the public’s consciousness, they had long been removed from the centres of politics and business, drinking without memory or speech from the bitter cup of history. Perhaps it is this special situation that has provided Eastern Europe’s intellectuals with their sharp insight and level-headed powers of reasoning.

In early January 2011 I visited Warsaw and met up with colleagues from the Polish Writers’ Association to discuss their various experiences under communism. As part of these discussions, there was also an exchange of views on history and traditions, such as the role of national consciousness or the Church during the Cold War and their influence on the present day. We agreed that the idea that the Cold War ended on a particular date is totally absurd, as I had already argued in my essay “Was uns der Kalte Krieg heute noch sagt“ ( “What the Cold War still has to teach us today”). Its significance goes way beyond just being a label for a historical era.

It stands for a situation which changes human character, so the fall of the communist parties does not automatically mean an end to this situation. Today’s global cynicism is also character-changing and we, as intellectuals, should not overlook the ideological consequences of this.

“Drinking without memory or speech from the bitter cup of history.”

I believe that, as writers, we would have been unable to have this kind of profound cross-cultural dialogue without our experiences of present-day crises.

In a much wider context, I had a similar experience in 2002 when I led a series of discussions with the Arab poet Adonis. The result was quite fascinating. We were amazed to discover that the fate of creative people and thinkers was basically one and the same within both the Arab and Chinese cultures, despite the geographical distance between the two. On the inside, these countries are going through a complex process of cultural transformation, while on the outside their politics is becoming increasingly schematic. Whether in China’s ideological battles or the Palestinian conflict, moral concepts are being constantly reduced to mere slogans. My reflections on China are mingled with the hope that a creative vigour will once again come to the fore, rather than the old combative, destructive mindset. Adonis criticised the dogmatism of Islam because he is hoping for a revival of Arab culture. Above all, our literature is personal literature. Our poetic self is willing to ask the questions, in strong contrast to the emotional and agitated noises of the masses. It was quite wonderful for me to have the opportunity to talk directly to an Arab poet. Adonis was of the opinion that our two worlds did not need to be mediated by a third party (such as the West). Thanks to independence of thought, beautiful art will always find its allies, regardless of where they come from, and provide the perfect way to create a broad-based dialogue.

ELLE

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German  
Import



San Gennaro



San



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Famous  
D'Angelo  
Sausage & Peppers



BECK'S BEER



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Gen Gennaro

Gen Gennaro



Always a little extra

Little Italy

Gen Gennaro

Little



While the rapidly changing “brave new world” of the 21st century seems to be falling apart outwardly, it is somehow coming together again inwardly. Faced with the uncertainties of an ever-changing world, each culture is thinking first and foremost about how to redefine its own position. Indeed, it is right and proper that they should be aware of their own limitations when taking part in meaningful intercultural dialogue and should become an “active other” amongst the countless others. For me, active simply means being sensitive and aware.

I have learned from personal experience that I have not inherited anything from old China in a historically linear way. I can only create my idea of a living Chinese cultural tradition by developing my own thinking from a synthesis of different times and places and reinventing them in a creative way. This invisible “Chinese other” is certainly the biggest challenge that I face. In this respect, Europe should also be aware that the times of one culture having a claim to universality are long gone. The vocabulary of Europe and America which dominates the world is now little more than a spectre consisting of empty phrases that are often misused.

### *Little more than a spectre*

Today the problems of the world are also Europe’s problems; global reality is the very flesh and blood of its thinking. One could even say that the world has penetrated Europe and quietly gone about replacing Europe’s identity with its own. This hybridisation is going to continue, whether we like it or not. The difference

“Ideas are only of benefit to the whole of humanity if they are removed from the self-adulation of their own culture.”

is that only an “active other” can generate fruitful dialogue, while remaining passive will achieve nothing. The brave new world is a super-sized reality and evokes a new tradition made up of all-encompassing and independent thought.

Literature would call it the “revolt of individual aesthetics”. It has to be individual because there are no groups. On a political level there are no longer rigid social models as was the case during the Cold War. And on a cultural level there is no longer one, universal culture. Here some people might talk of an unprecedented impoverishment of thought, but I personally believe that it is actually very rich! No-one needs to give up their own benchmarks for making judgements and decisions; they just have to test them against their knowledge and understanding of other cultures and then either revise or expand them. Our ideas are our convergence. They represent the lowest common denominator of various traditions, levels of culture and methods of expression.

It is not important what kind of art, politics or philosophy forms the object of our reflections or whether it is a question of accepting a particular religion. Ideas are only of benefit to the whole of humanity if they are removed from the self-adulation of their own culture and

dare to go out and put their validity to the test. When I talk about individualism in thought I probably sound very “European”, but this could just as easily refer to one of the wonderful characteristics of the golden age of Chinese philosophy: of Laozi, Confucius and Qu Yuan, who all lived long before the unification of China. Their ideas fascinate me just as much as the many great thinkers from a wide range of disciplines who emerged in Europe in the period before the First World War, a time of great intellectual creativity. Together, they make up our intellectual wealth. I much prefer to think of history as not being tied to time and place but as being a concentric circle, rather than a linear development. The creativity which is inherent in international dialogues can only be brought about by mutual stimulation of the creative potential that every culture possesses.

The brave new world has to break out of the old patterns of dialogue and open itself up to questions and inspiration from all sides. I would like to take as an example another event which I was involved in a few years ago. It was a meeting on the subject of “dialect literature” in the tiny country of Slovenia and it inspired me – a Chinese poet from a country of 1.3 billion people – to revise my totalitarian linguistic tendencies stemming from two thousand years of Chinese literature. The two-way translation project of an English-speaking poet and a Chinese poet resulted in a wonderful dialogue which touched the very core of both cultures. The best thing was how an African poet writing in English with his tradition of oral storytelling was so easily able to enter into a musical dialogue with the tonality of the classical Chinese tradition.

Difficulty is a synonym for ability. I have often referred to poetry as the “only native language”; poetic thought provides a formula for transcending languages which goes beyond translation. It is the perfect way to bring people’s “active” element to the fore by delving deep into a problem in order to gain new insights in a kind of aesthetic transcendence. Every completed line of a poem is an “impossibility” yet at the same time a “beginning”. The more impossible it is, the more powerful the beginning.

Will this “brave new world” finally bestow upon us Goethe’s *Weltliteratur*? I take *Weltliteratur* to mean individual literature which has withstood all the tests thrown at it by the world. It is no longer an illusion, but indeed has long been a reality.

**Yang Lian** is a Chinese poet who lives in London. The son of diplomats, he was born in Switzerland in 1995 and grew up in Beijing. In 1979 he joined a group of poets who published the “*Jintian*” magazine. It was here that he developed a modern, experimental style of writing. At the time of the Tiananmen Square massacre he was in New Zealand and took part in the protests against the actions of the Chinese government. Shortly afterwards, his works were blacklisted in China and his Chinese citizenship was revoked.

**All talk and no action** Unfortunately, Euro-pessimism is on the rise in the United States. Large numbers of Americans think that the political, economic, and cultural foundations of Europe are crumbling, and there is widespread talk, even amongst “experts”, of how the adoption of the common currency was a mistake. Why we have so little faith in Europe? Can an external cultural policy help? By Mai’a K. Davis Cross



A seemingly endless string of news reports, opinion pieces, and books in the USA predicts the downfall of Europe. This reinforces the Euro-pessimism of many Americans and has now become something of an article of faith amongst many on the American political right. The combined impact of this persistent negative media coverage has coloured mainstream conventional wisdom, influencing the way Europe is discussed in almost every context. Consequently, difficulties are highlighted and successes ignored. Even the best informed and most pro-European of Americans often refer to events on the other side of the Atlantic in a surprisingly pessimistic and sceptical way. Many Americans do not have any real hope that Europeans can be

effective partners in tackling 21st century challenges. They see a Europe of declining defence budgets, a lack of willingness to use military force, and a perceived inability to speak with one voice in the face of international crises.

In particular, they note Europe’s inability to act with solidarity during the 2003 Iraq war, and the failure of the Constitutional Treaty (most are unaware of the subsequent, successful Lisbon Treaty). They focus on the continent’s occasional divisions, such as in dealing with sometime adversaries like Russia or China, or on the tensions during the recent Eurozone crisis (especially stressing the elements in Germany that were resistant to bailing out Greece). Overall, they see an EU of vastly different identities, languages, cultures, foreign policies, and economies, and are sceptical that a common thread holds all of this together in any kind of meaningful way.

Of course, American perceptions of Europe are not monolithic. For those on the left, who generally align with President Obama’s party, Europe may someday rise up to fulfil its potential, but for now even these observers see it as an uninspiring partner. After the 2010 US-EU

summit, much anticipated on the European side, Obama actually told the press that the meeting was “boring” because the two sides basically agreed on everything. Why wasn’t this summit instead used as an opportunity to outline new possibilities in the transatlantic partnership in light of the Lisbon Treaty?

There is a perception that European decision makers just talk, and do not act. Just recently, Obama has remarked that the 21st century will be shaped by the US and China. He rarely mentions Europe in any of his speeches and travels there infrequently. Indeed, American media gives far more credence to the rise of China, despite the fact that it lags far behind Europe on nearly every measure of power – with the only exception of population size. For American conservatives, Europe is essentially a non-entity in the international system, and a place where citizens languish on long vacations, take early retirement, and are burdened by a bloated welfare state. They believe that Europeans can only maintain this lifestyle because the US pays for their security.

A good proportion of conservatives even believe that the ongoing growth of Muslim populations in Europe means that Europe will soon be culturally unrecognisable: they think it will be “taken over.” And to put all of these perspectives into context, a recent survey shows that, whatever their opinions about the continent, its countries, and its peoples,

“Americans believe that Europeans can only maintain this lifestyle because the US pays for their security.”

the majority of Americans have actually never even heard of the EU.

Many Americans are unaware of Europe’s achievements. They tend not to know that the process of EU integration and enlargement has been the most successful experiment in international cooperation, democratisation, and peace that has existed in modern times. They are generally unaware that the EU’s economy, population, and combined troop numbers are all larger than those of the United States. They are unaware of the fact that the financial crisis has caused less damage in Europe than in the USA, of Europe’s high level of innovation (Europe is second only to the US and Japan), and of the strength of the Euro as a major global currency (second only to the US dollar). Most are unaware that the Lisbon Treaty has introduced a much stronger foreign policy structure.

Most Americans would be shocked to learn that combined EU defence spending is larger than the next six powers put together – Russia, China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Japan – and that the EU has engaged in 24 civilian and military peace-keeping and relief operations across three continents in just eight years.

### *Soft Power Image*

Americans are somewhat more aware of Europe’s status as a soft power. The EU’s support for multilateralism as well as the example it sets in this regard give it a great deal of international legitimacy. Its strong tradition of support for human

rights, the rule of law, development, environmental protection, and international cooperation is attractive to many foreign audiences, including at least liberals in America.

Some regions of the world are still much more interested in Europe: Asia, Africa, and Latin America consciously model themselves on the EU. And of course the EU's biggest soft power impact has been in its own neighbourhood, through enlargement to include the Central and Eastern European countries, as well as ongoing efforts to form partnership, cooperation, and association agreements with those not (yet) part of the EU.

Europe is not a "perfect power". It is still a work-in-progress in terms of integration. Many of the EU's member states are only recent democracies, including older member states like Spain, Greece, and Portugal. Nonetheless, as Princeton Professor Andrew Moravcsik argues, by all major measures of power, Europe qualifies as the second superpower, after the US. The challenge is how to maximise its image vis-à-vis the United States and to begin to overcome serious misperceptions and a lack of understanding.

How should Europe present itself in this age of smart power and public diplomacy? I suggest three images that Europe could strive to promote to foreign audiences, especially the US. Firstly, following on from the EU motto, Europe's image should be "united in diversity". Europe is undoubtedly diverse, but its unity under the EU is under-appreciated and far too often is not a part of public diplomacy efforts. For several decades now, European leaders have acknowledged that Europe is stronger when it works together, and they have made real progress in follow-

"External messages tend to be national in origin, and rarely convey the fact that each member state is embedded in the EU."

ing through with this idea by means of literally thousands of policy initiatives. But this reality is not promoted enough to outsiders.

External messages tend to be national in origin, and rarely convey the fact that each member state is embedded in the EU. This image of "united in diversity" should also include a stronger message that Europe's diversity often emanates from its sub-national societies – the regions, localities, and cities within member states. And these cultures, identities, and traditions are not just those of the past, but are forward-looking.

Europeans tend to be too critical of themselves and cynical about the integration project, and this contributes to misperceptions among foreign publics.

The second image Europe needs to project is that it doesn't just talk, but it acts. The EU should promote the areas where its values and actions coincide, and where it has an autonomous impact: such as humanitarianism, environmentalism, democratisation, crisis management, and development.

More people in the world should be readily aware of the fact that the EU is the biggest donor of development aid by some measure, and has a robust and growing Common Security and Defence Policy. For every achievement in these areas, a

strong public diplomacy message is required. Otherwise, such influence goes unnoticed. In this multipolar world, it is important for Europe to make known its values so that it can contribute to the strengthening of an international system that values cooperation, transparency, multinational institutions, stability, and the rule of law.

Thirdly, Europe's image should be one of a smart power. It effectively combines both hard and soft power through its comprehensive approach to crisis management, access to its single market, and processes of enlargement, among other things.

Military power matters less than it once did, and Europe has a wide range of means to exercise power and influence. These stem from a host of diplomatic, economic, normative, military, and civilian policy instruments. As a result, Europe is far better positioned to play a leading role in the 21st century than any other actor in the international system.

But American sociologist and advisor to governments and European bodies, Jeremy Rifkin, argues that Europe's leaders do not yet recognize this. Through promoting a smart power image externally, Europe's role and responsibility in the world will become ever more apparent. This, of course, promises substantive dividends in respect of the global challenges of the present era, but also an elevated internal sense of purpose.

What role can the European External Action Service (EEAS) play to bring perceptions more closely in line with reality? What role can cultural networks like EUNIC play? I would suggest that the EEAS and EUNIC can have a significant impact in enhancing mutual understanding, each

through a different approach. There are at least two major strategies of public diplomacy: hierarchical and network-based. A hierarchical approach conveys messages that are centrally generated and typically informational in nature. A network-based approach is one that involves mutuality, or two-way communications and is based on the formation of transnational networks that promote all of the actors involved. Although it has become more popular in recent years to adopt networked approaches to public diplomacy, both strategies are necessary for Europe. In particular, the EEAS can engage in a top-down or a hierarchical approach to promoting Europe, and EUNIC can capitalise on a more network-oriented approach.

Hierarchical messages are necessary to rectify the existing knowledge deficit. A significant percentage of foreign publics do not understand the European project of enlargement and integration, and many are not even aware that it exists.

### *Supranational diplomat*

Yet there is so much about Europe that is attractive to foreign publics as a result of the EU – its multilateralism, democratic values, emphasis on international cooperation, and devotion to peaceful conflict resolution, to name a few.

The EEAS is particularly well-suited to “explain Europe” to foreign publics through its 136 European embassies around the world. Informational programmes can target civil society organisations, as well as academic, policy-ma-

king, and business communities.

But, at the same time, the EEAS has to listen. The new, twenty-first century, supranational diplomats need to emphasize such skills as cross-cultural interpretation, two-way education, and outward orientation. The ideal European diplomatic service will have the ability to empathize, to share interpretations of the world through history, language, or culture, and to recognise their diplomatic counterparts as equals. Thus, although there must be a hierarchical component to messaging aimed at communication, information dissemination, and enhancing understanding, there should still be a two-way dialogue that goes well beyond traditional diplomacy.

At the same time, EUNIC can engage in a network-based public diplomacy with the aim of promoting Europe's diverse cultures, languages, identities, and traditions. Cultural diplomacy through a networked approach does not have to convey a particular message, as it is based on engaging with others in the network through person-to-person contact in order to promote mutual understanding. Common goals can evolve organically as needed. Europe's cultural institutes are ideally positioned to complement more hierarchical approaches to public diplomacy.

Since Europe is one of the world's top destinations for visitors, cultural diplomacy can actually happen at home, even while it is directed at foreigners. When visitors come to Europe, they should perceive a society rich with culture that is shared and appreciated across nations. Historian and Director of the University of Southern California's Centre for Public Diplomacy, Nick Cull, has recently argued in an arti-

cle published in the Huffington Post that cultural diplomacy works best when it is independent and maintains a certain distance from governments. He argues that cultural strategies can include:

1. A "prestige gift" that showcases the best artistic talent and products of a society
2. "Cultural information" that highlights under-recognized elements of a society's culture,
3. "Dialogue and collaboration" that involves international artists in the co-creation of art, such as through participatory international music festivals, and
4. "Capacity building" that builds cultural skills, like language, in a particular target audience.

Cultural diplomacy may seem to be far removed from the high politics of alliances, international law, rising powers, and new security challenges, but it is a central part of all international relationships. It provides the glue that holds alliances together, the credibility that supports international law, the values that convince rising powers to be more transparent, and the trust that enables societies to cooperate in solving the most "pressing issues in today's world". Identity, policies, and image all stem from a society's culture. And this is particularly true in democracies where public opinion matters and cultures are enduringly diverse.

This two-pronged approach involving both hierarchical and network-based public diplomacy is necessary going

“Cultural diplomacy is the glue that holds alliances together, so that they can cooperate in solving the most pressing issues in today’s world.”

forward, so that a fruitful balance between unity and diversity can be achieved. Europe’s strength and attractiveness come from its diversity and values but, for it to have real influence on the international system, it must also project a credible, coherent image.

The choice of the United States as a target audience may not be in line with current European priorities, but it should be. As I have already described, there are wide-ranging and serious misperceptions that need to be corrected.

There is no doubt that it is in the interests of the countries on both sides of the Atlantic if Americans have a better understanding of Europeans, and vice versa. The transatlantic relationship is the most important and enduring alliance in the international system today. And in this multipolar world, with rising and often unpredictable powers, Europe and the US must now work together to have a global impact and promote their shared values. “Strategic interest” and “power” should not be regarded as negative terms. When put in context, they lead to stronger ties among friends and to making the world more transparent, democratic, peaceful, and stable.

It may seem to be more in line with European values for the EU to engage in public diplomacy in its own neighbourhood, and with developing countries. These pri-

orities must certainly not be neglected.

However, a renewed level of cultural exchange with the United States is an important and indispensable part of closing the gap between perception and reality within the world’s most important strategic and economic alliance. Americans can only support Europe as they should if they can learn to understand Europeans better. After all, as former Commission President Romano Prodi recently said, “Promoting Europe is promoting also the American interests.” But for its part, Europe can take the lead in promoting itself, and mutuality is then likely to follow. Indeed, Europeans must realise that they are not only capable of leading the 21st century, but they have a responsibility to do so.

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Art at the heart of mainstream entertainment “I don’t believe in America’s cultural decline” says French sociologist and media expert **Frédéric Martel**. In his latest book, he investigates global mass culture, concluding that the culture which binds Europe together is in fact American culture, and that Europe is clearly losing ground in the global competition for information and ideas. In order to do something about this, the Old World needs to become more mainstream. French philosopher **Régis Debray** caught up with him.



**Régis Debray:** *Mr Martel, you believe that nowadays everyone lives in two different cultures: their own national culture and American culture with its global, universal mandate. How does this American cultural dominance actually work? Or, to put it another way, what is it about American culture that accords the United States a “universal” cultural mandate?*

**Frédéric Martel:** Culture in the United States is a complex issue which has not been given enough attention in Europe. I don’t believe in America’s cultural decline. The USA has a unique and extremely original cultural ecosystem which works simultaneously on different levels. American cultural imperialism is not only based on popular

and mainstream culture, which dominates because of its sheer volume (Disney, *The Lion King*, *Avatar* and Lady Gaga), but also includes avant-garde dance, the visual arts, the counterculture of experimental theatre, ethnic culture and digital culture. Broadly speaking, there is actually no dichotomy between art in France and entertainment in the USA, between culture ministries here and the market in America: the two countries are much more similar than previously thought. They just use different methods – here culture is centralised and subsidised, while in America it is decentralised and tax-exempt. Then there is also the non-profit sector – the universities and ethnic communities which are at the heart of the American cultural system. They make innovation possible and they love to experiment and take risks. If you don’t recognise the role played by the universities in American culture it is impossible to begin to understand Hollywood or Broadway; and unless you look at the ethnic communities and the USA’s cultural diversity you will never understand the American music industry or the internet.

At the end of the day, the commercialisation of the creative industries, the laws of the market and the homogenising powers of the mainstream are balanced out by the revitalising effect of the non-profit sector, the universities and the country's cultural diversity.

**Régis Debray:** *So the whole world can be seen as a microcosm in this domestic diversity that is such an intrinsic part of the USA?*

**Frédéric Martel:** Absolutely. We Europeans rightly defend cultural diversity at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and UNESCO, while the Americans destroy this diversity whenever they try to do away with film quotas in Mexico or Korea or stand up for their Anglo-Saxon music industry. But if you are going to advocate diversity at an international level you also have to do the same at home, otherwise you're going to come under fire. Domestically, France has a tendency to ignore its own minorities, to work against regional dialects and local cultures and often fails to value its diversity. We can see a real paradox here: on the international stage, France likes to plead for diversity, presenting itself as its ideological champion, but at home it plays by a different set of rules. Without wanting to make it a political issue, I would go as far as to say that defending the "national identity" is clearly the opposite of cultural diversity.

"Defending the 'national identity' is clearly the opposite of cultural diversity".

The United States does exactly the opposite. It fights against diversity on an international level but at home sets great store by its ethnic and racial differences. It has a very pragmatic approach, for the simple reason that its territory is home to 45 million Hispanics (15 percent of the population), 37 million African Americans and 13 million Asians. The USA is not just a country or a continent; it is the world in miniature. Which writers have turned out to be the most interesting on Broadway, America's commercial mainstream theatre, in recent years? The African American August Wilson, the Chinese American David Hwang, the Latin American Nilo Cruz and the gay American Jew Tony Kushner. And there are more than 800 African American theatres in the United States, while here in France we don't even take our one "Arab" theatre seriously. So it is sheer hypocrisy for France to stand up for cultural diversity at an international level – while the USA is trying to fight it – but to then do nothing to promote it at a domestic level – while the Americans both recognise and celebrate it.

**Régis Debray:** *We have been talking about the dominance of the United States, so now let's turn to France's weakness. Your book has forced us to look at the little-valued "entertainment" category in a more positive way and has shifted the boundaries between art and entertainment. It is typical of French culture that we try to make art*

*into a protected category that has its own special place in culture. We live with an elevated and hallowed vision of art, and we stand on its lofty heights looking down our noses at its supposed opposite. In the USA there is none of this kind of condescension, and leftist intellectuals have themselves changed course, spurred on by writers such as the film critic Pauline Kael who lauds “entertainment”.*

**Frédéric Martel:** I wanted to get away from this very French quarrel between art and entertainment, so this is why I consciously chose to use the word “mainstream”. Here, the boundary between art and entertainment is less rigid; there is often a mixture of genres and sometimes crossovers are very desirable. Culture can’t just be used by the elite as a kind of art-house tool, like a crusade, or a punishment, or a means of defending one’s own social status against the masses. Culture can also just be great entertainment which can be enjoyed, as young people say, “without it doing your head in”. Cultural habits show that the French really are capable of enjoying both *Avatar* and an experimental novel, watching *Finding Nemo* while still being interested in what the French film critic Serge Daney has to say. But this means getting away from a cultural doctrine that amounts to little more than the type of cultural control which culture critics are still keen to exercise.

**Régis Debray:** *One of the enduring differences is that mainstream entertainment is based on trusting its audiences, as its cultural products are de-*

*signed using surveys, focus groups and marketing tools. Basically, you could say they are created back-to-front.*

**Frédéric Martel:** If entertainment were simply marketing it would quickly fail. The important word in “creative industries” is “creative”. I don’t believe that *Avatar* just came out of focus groups or that it was tailored to suit audience expectations. Marketing alone didn’t create *Star Wars*, *The Matrix* or *Spiderman*, or even *Batman The Dark Knight*. If the creative industries were only about marketing they would produce Coca-Cola or tinned peas, but American TV series, video games, blockbusters and mangas are really very creative.

So art can exist at the heart of mainstream entertainment. Just like a work of art, entertainment can ultimately be universal and timeless. This turns our whole Eurocentric concept of culture on its head.

**Régis Debray:** *What you’re saying relates more to the visual arts and music rather than to literature, which relies on an author’s personal creativity.*

**Frédéric Martel:** In my book, *Mainstream*, I look at popular culture, the industry, the quantitative aspect of a culture which can be reproduced and copied on the internet. I can’t apply the same arguments to the area of live theatre, dance or unique avant-garde artworks, which per se are the opposite of mainstream. But as I said, I still be-

“If the creative industries were only about marketing they would produce Coca-Cola or tinned peas.”

lieve that the boundaries are less rigid now and that the barriers can be much more easily broken down, particularly in these days of globalisation and the digital revolution.

**Régis Debray:** *To what extent does digital technology aid and abet the accelerations and shifts which are taking place around the globe? By dematerialising and hybridising graphics, sounds and text, the internet is a major contributor to this phenomenon and also promotes “disintermediation” - the removal of certain steps in the value chain - which has the effect of marginalising the importance of the originator or author. Fewer genres, fewer formats - for some people this is very worrying, while others are quite happy about it. You have shown that the internet - on the contrary - has not broken down the barriers between the various main-streams which have their own spheres of circulation and exchange. You specifically talk about the revenge of geography and fierce resistance to cultural homogeneity. So what role does the internet actually play?*

**Frédéric Martel:** In France, you often hear it said that the internet, in combination with globalisation, will result in culture becoming fatally homogenised, while others are afraid that there will just be endless fragmentation, heralding the end of a common

culture, with everything descending into community-oriented or factionalised niche cultures. I have carried out surveys on this and discovered that globalisation and the digital revolution produce both of these effects, and so they tend to cancel each other out. Indeed, both phenomena can be observed simultaneously. And globalisation has not resulted in the disappearance of national or local cultures, which in fact are thriving. The internet makes it possible for people to watch a Lady Gaga video in Iran while still supporting their own regional culture.

Domestic music still makes up more than half of all music sales around the world and television still retains its national or local focus, despite the presence of international broadcasters such as CNN or Al-Jazeera, which in fact only exert a very limited influence. More than 50 percent of box-office takings at cinemas in France and the Czech Republic are for domestic films, while in India and Japan the figure is over 80 percent. The publishing industry still has a very domestic focus, just like the news or the advertising market. Despite the success of American TV series, most shows have very local content: the telenovelas in Latin America, the Ramadan shows in the Arab world and the Korean and Japanese “dramas” dominate their domestic markets. It’s just not true when people say that culture is becoming more and more global.

But what *is* true is that we have fewer and fewer cultural products - things which in the past were still exported on ships - and more and more services, data streams and data formats. And even though national and local cultures are thriving, they are still faced with a globalised, very American culture which has crowded out other non-national cultures. This is what I call the “mainstream”. This is where Europe’s main problem lies: although everywhere has a stable national culture and a globalised mainstream culture, there is no longer a European culture. We are simultaneously becoming more local and more globalised - but as a result less and less European.

**Régis Debray:** *In Europe we have national cultures plus American culture, but we don’t have the European culture which is supposed to build a bridge between the two.*

**Frédéric Martel:** Exactly. But I’m still very European, perhaps because I’m always optimistic. As the son of a farmer from south-west France I am only too aware of the resentment that has been stirred up by Europe in our villages, districts and cultures. That said, I also mistrust nationalistic, unnecessary scaremongering about identity. The truth is that these local cultures are very much alive today in the midst of globalisation. It is not a question of pitting local against global. Global culture is enriching and local

culture makes you strong: we need both.

Once again, I want to stress that I enjoy the plays of Bernard-Marie Koltès as much as Alaa al-Aswany’s novel *The Yacoubian Building* or Vikas Swarup’s *Q & A*. This latter novel was turned into the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, providing the quintessential example of localism, in that Vikas Swarup is Indian, the film was shot in Mumbai and the cast was predominantly made up of Indian actors, while at the same time it was directed by Englishman Danny Boyle, financed by Pathé UK, the UK arm of the French company Pathé, and distributed by Europeans and Americans. But above all it is a film which is based on a world famous quiz show: *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* I have seen this film on screens all over the world - in favelas in Rio, smart cafés in Shanghai or gay bars in Jakarta. It’s both a global box-office hit and a seemingly authentic domestic product.

**Régis Debray:** *The idea of “home” is an imaginary entity. How is Europe meant to become a single entity if this imaginary element is lacking? Parado-*

“Young people have European values - freedom of thought, freedom of the press, deep-seated opposition to the death penalty, protecting a certain degree of social security, tolerance towards homosexuals, etc. - and that’s not bad.”

*xically, it was more pronounced in the 1930s.*

**Frédéric Martel** I don't really know the answer to that. Has there ever really been a feeling of having a European culture? Clearly, there is a classical European culture based on the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome, on Christianity, on a particular concept of art, on the Enlightenment and human rights. But do young people today have a sense of a European culture? I think they have European values – freedom of thought, freedom of the press, deep-seated opposition to the death penalty, a desire to maintain a certain degree of social security, tolerance towards homosexuals, etc. – and that's not bad.

I think I'm more optimistic than you when it comes to Europe.

**Régis Debray:** *The lack of the idea of "home" means that Europe has no diplomatic service, no army, no unified voice. You have ascertained this, but we now have to look for the reasons behind it.*

**Frédéric Martel:** It all comes down to history. In the United States people have a real feeling of togetherness. Whether you're Latino, black or gay, at the end of the day you're also American. American society is no longer characterised by being a melting pot, rather it is distinguished by its cultural diversity. This idea was invented in North America, and in 1978 the Supreme Court's Bakke Decision turned

cultural diversity into America's new breeding ground. Jimmy Carter's 1980 laws on culture and education turned this diversity into the norm. In Miami you see how Cubans, African Americans, gays and Mexicans split up into their own communities but are all united by one symbol: the American flag. Europe is still a young concept. The Americans needed 100 years to achieve this kind of integration. Just wait and see – one day we'll all be gathered around the European flag.

**Régis Debray:** *The USA's great strength lies in the fact that it is an old-style nation, with its flag and its religion, but also a thoroughly postmodern nation which might have been dreamed up by Foucault or Derrida.*

**Frédéric Martel:** Absolutely. But I've no intention of joining the cultural pessimists by painting a bleak picture. We need to roll up our sleeves and press on. However, at European level there is a need for new regulation, for example in the cultural industries and in the use of new technologies. I'm also a firm believer in the Erasmus programme, which has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of young Europeans. You know, I'm the person that I am today because in March 1990, immediately after the Romanian revolution, I was sent to Bucharest for 16 months to help with development work as part of my military service. I founded and headed up the literature office of our embassy in Romania. That is when I really started to understand what it means to be a European. A form of civilian national service could help to restore this feeling of to-

getherness, and we could come up with thousands of other projects.

Recently I went to Iran to do some research. When I got on the plane to leave – an Airbus belonging to a European airline – I was greeted by unveiled stewardesses offering me *The Economist* and an espresso. It might sound trivial, but after two weeks on my own in Iran, that moment made me feel like a real European.

**Régis Debray:** *We haven't yet talked about China as an alternative model. This is a country which doesn't fit into the landscape you have described, because China is not particularly good when it comes to wielding 'soft power'.*

**Frédéric Martel:** The second main line of argument in *Mainstream* is that Americans are no longer on their own when it comes to media campaigns and globalised entertainment. It's true that they still produce 50 percent of all international content, far ahead of the 27 percent produced by Europe. But nowadays emerging nations such as India, China, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico and, in its own way, Russia, are entering the market with huge media conglomerates and globalised cultural content.

Groups such as Reliance and Sahara in India, Rotana and MBC in Saudi Arabia, Al-Jazeera in Qatar, Televisa in Mexico, TVGlobo in Brazil and Naspers in South Africa are regional, and sometimes also global, giants. Of

course these groups focus primarily on their own domestic markets, where they particularly have to cater to the demands of young people because of their particular country's demographics, and apparently in places like China, India and Brazil a new multiplex cinema opens its doors every day of the week. But they are also homing in on regional markets.

A good example is provided by the two Al Jazeera channels, one in Arabic and one in English, which play such an important role in news broadcasting, as we saw recently during the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. But the company has also recently bought up around ten sports channels and with them the rights to matches from all the top leagues in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. In future, French immigrants from these countries will be watching all the games from their home countries on these channels. So by mixing news and entertainment, Al Jazeera is going to have a much wider influence. This can really be called 'soft power'.

To turn to your question about China's soft power, the Chinese are determined to increase their influence by whatever means available. They

“Emerging nations such as India, China, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico and, in its own way, Russia, are entering the market with huge media conglomerates and globalised cultural content.”

have introduced archaic film and music quotas and unlimited censorship which is almost Victorian in its attitudes towards sex, takes a very family-orientated approach to values and promotes an old-fashioned communist view of the world. Not to mention its great hostility towards American culture, which it sees as a dangerous competitor: *Avatar* was only allowed to play in Chinese cinemas for one month, then it was banned so as not to compete with a local blockbuster. But this system of policing culture is not working. Although Hollywood is only allowed to show ten films per year, it still accounts for 50 percent of China's box-office takings, showing that quotas and censorship are irrelevant. And this doesn't even take into account the black market.

The opposite is perfectly demonstrated in Japan and India. These two countries have no censorship, no quotas, and American films can be shown without restriction. But they only make up 10 to 15 percent of local box-office takings. The explanation is simple: India and Japan produce films which are strongly linked to their national identity, so people are keen to watch home-produced films. China, on the other hand, is failing in its attempts to wield soft power because it is not in a position to produce sufficiently interesting films to capture or conquer its home market. The Chinese have not understood the American model of a

mainstream which reinvents itself and thrives on artistic creative freedom, the freedom of women and homosexuals, counter-culture, the right of minorities to have a voice, innovation and an appetite for risk.

As things stand, the Chinese seem to be incapable of doing any of these things. The Taiwanese filmmaker Ang Lee made *Brokeback Mountain* in the United States, then returned to China to shoot *Lust, Caution*. But then he left again because of the harassment and censorship which he was subjected to by the authorities. The return of the country's prodigy became something of a cultural Tiananmen Square, and Chinese cinema once again became stultified. As a result it has produced no more global box office hits to date. And as for *Kung Fu Panda* – based on the twin symbols of the China's mascot and its national sport – this was made by the Hollywood studio Dreamworks!

**Régis Debray:** *So far we have only touched on the question of the internet and its effects. There is no doubt that, because of the internet, many traditional stages in the production and distribution chain are now being skipped.*

**Frédéric Martel:** We're in the middle of a revolution, perhaps even at a turning point for civilisation. Just like the beginning of any revolution, we still don't know what the future is going to look like and are wrapped up in worrying about what we have lost. We are hunkering down in the ruins of a lost world and can't imagine the future. This is both terrifying but at the same time incredibly exciting.

Many of the people I have inter-

viewed in thirty different countries think that YouTube, Wikipedia, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, iPod, iTunes, the iPhone and their countless successors are inventing new forms of culture and media which will fundamentally change the essence of culture, art, information and entertainment and one day may even blend together. It's hard to say whether we are at the beginning of a process or just at a crossroads.

Whatever happens, the internet has brought about developments and critical processes which will endure: peer-to-peer applications, Web 2.0 and user-generated content such as Wikipedia, the new sociality engendered by the social networks, content aggregation, the culture of mobility, hypertext, disintermediation and the death of traditional critics, hybridising, Google's contextual targeting. We will have to learn how to live with these huge changes, changes which I believe are positive. Two years ago no-one had even heard of Twitter, yet today I spend more than an hour a day on it; five years ago no-one knew Facebook or YouTube, yet today they are central to our everyday lives; ten years ago I didn't know Google, yet today I use it dozens of times every day. The speed of change is of course somewhat alarming, but I find it fascinating. And we are just at the start of this turning point for civilisation.

Interview by Régis Debray.

**Régis Debray**, born in Paris in 1940, is a philosopher, writer and journalist. In the 1980s he was a foreign policy advisor to French President François Mitterand. Under Jacques Chirac he was a member of the commission that investigated the use of religious symbols in educational establishments and that lobbied for a ban on wearing the veil in schools. In the 1990s Debray coined the new term "mediology" and he has been developing this concept ever since. It focuses on the processes of transmission, including pre-electronic methods. Since 2011, Régis Debray has been a member of the Academie Goncourt.

**Frédéric Martel**, born in Southern France in 1967, is a sociologist, author and journalist. From 2001 to 2005 he was cultural attaché to the French Embassy in Washington D.C. Every Sunday he presents "Masse critique", a programme about the creative industries and media, on France Culture. He runs the website nonfiction.fr which is dedicated to literary criticism and ideas. He has written several books and his work has been published in a range of international newspapers. 2011 saw the publication of his book *Mainstream, On Mass Culture* (Flammarion, 2010).

4) **Cultural** — A) A E. é o continente cultural por excelência. Da cultura que não é simples repetição de usos e costumes mas criação e transformação de ideias, de estilos e de formas; da cultura que não é apenas conservação de um alto património adquirido — como, p. ex., a cultura chinesa ou indiana — mas, igualmente, vontade intensa de invenção e inovação.

**Seizing the day** The pictures of the Arab spring and the demonstrations in Tahrir Square in Cairo and on the streets of Tunis have all served to present us with a new image of the Arab people. They have stood up for their basic rights, without cloaking them in religion or aggression – and in this way they have succeeded in removing their old despots from power. Now the awakening of civil society in the Arab world is presenting new opportunities for dialogue with Europe. But how should we conduct this dialogue? **By André Azoulay**



Six months after so many countries were ignited by the spark of the Arab spring, we are all living in a different world. It is a world that is moving towards a new Arab Renaissance, a world in which people living in the countries bordering the southern edge of the Mediterranean are standing up for their basic rights and calling for freedom, pluralism, social justice and participation. Since January 2011, the words democracy, dignity and freedom have been written in Arabic and now constitute the manifesto of young Arabs who believe they can build their own destiny and make their countries a better place for them and for the generations to come.

We have all been caught up in the excitement and are hoping that the Arab uprisings, which have brought about signifi-

cant political changes in some countries and constitutional reforms in others, will lead to sustainable democratic changes. We know there are many different factors which will have an impact on the success of these transitions, including economic, social and political reforms and investment in education. The level and type of cooperation which can be developed between the countries on both sides of the Mediterranean will also be critical to this process of reform.

Now, more than ever before, it is clear that people of all the Mediterranean countries share similar goals and that the aim of a real partnership between these countries can become a reality.

### *Shared basic values*

The report published by the Anna Lindh Foundation in 2010 on EuroMed Intercultural Trends has already shown how there is a convergence of values and aspirations among people in the region. The study asked 13,000 people in 13 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region about their values and how they perceived other

countries. One of the most interesting results of this study was the fact that all the participants afforded similar importance to values such as dignity, freedom and justice, regardless of whether they were Muslims, Christians or Jews.

But values such as family solidarity, hospitality and the desire for the younger generation to benefit from new opportunities were considered equally important by people on both sides of the Mediterranean.

Looking towards the future, they expressed their support for a common future for the Euro-Mediterranean countries and the hope that reciprocity and benefiting from shared opportunities could bring concrete improvements to their lives. This might involve better opportunities for young people, social justice, an appreciation of and respect for other cultures, a desire for innovation, and entrepreneurial thinking as the basis for future development.

The study also came to the conclusion that the people of this region now have a new attitude to life, characterized by their common experiences of interaction and mutual influence. This could become a model for other regions of the world.

The trend towards a greater convergence of basic values in the societies of the northern and southern Mediterranean should be viewed as being the result of cultural rapprochement in the areas of education, family policies and a generally more open mindset. The improved level of education among young people and the drop in the birth rate on the southern side of the Mediterranean is also worthy of note. The people of these countries now have new needs and goals – particularly young people. They are no longer prepared to tolerate autocratic, repressive regimes. They

want to work, communicate, travel and start a family. And just like young people all over Europe, they want to be self-reliant.

The results of the study have now been borne out by the millions of people who are all demanding these rights and chanting slogans which show their desire for peace and respect. Never before have we seen such a wave of mutual inspiration and support amongst the youth of North Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

This dialogue is first and foremost being carried out via the social media, which are playing a hugely important role in helping young people from the Arab world to communicate and interact with their peers in Europe. This was also the result of a survey carried out by the Anna Lindh Foundation, which clearly demonstrated the central importance of social media in the daily lives of young people and in helping them learn about other people.

In this way, social media have played the role of an intermediary that encourages the active participation of young people in society and helps them to take ownership of their future rather than being led by distant political bodies.

The tight civil society provided by the Anna Lindh Foundation in the forty-three countries of the Union for the Mediterranean has also been a powerful tool to measure the pulse of the situation in the region and assess the needs of the people living on the southern shores of the Mediterranean.

Following the recent historical events, in particular those in Tunisia and in Egypt, the Anna Lindh Foundation launched the

campaign “Believe in Dialogue. Act for Citizenship”. This campaign lays the foundations for a process that will open up a new stage for the Foundation in terms of its work on citizenship, democracy, participation and intercultural dialogue. It came about from the conviction that dialogue is now more necessary than ever within societies that are opening up to pluralism and democracy.

To this end, the Anna Lindh Foundation is focusing on creating opportunities for stakeholders to meet at local level, so that they can work towards better local governance and community development. One of these initiatives was “Dardasha Iskandrani”, a three-day platform for young activists from Alexandria who came together to exchange ideas and information on their current activities aimed at increasing social participation and political awareness among people in their neighborhood. The aim of the initiative was to improve coordination of their efforts in this respect and hence maximize their impact.

At regional level, in June 2011 the Anna Lindh Foundation organized the “Tunis Forum Exchange”, where over 200 civil society representatives from Arab and European countries gathered to discuss how best to promote active and democratic citizenship in the region. The Forum was an opportunity to explore various approaches for social participation which were tailored to the Arab region and participants could benefit from the experiences of people who had already lived through periods of social upheaval in Europe.

A few days after the Forum, the positive outcome of the Moroccan constitutional referendum provided a concrete example of a country striving for democracy and change. The Moroccan constitutional re-

form process sends a strong signal to the international community by the way it draws on the deep and rich diversity of the Moroccan nation and its people as a result of the country’s Berber, Jewish and Arab Muslim civilizations and cultures.

### *A signal to the international community*

From this perspective, the process is very encouraging, both in relation to the pluralistic and participatory approach taken when drafting the changes to the constitution, as well as to the high turnout at the polling stations, including a significant percentage of young voters. The political leadership also displayed a sense of openness and understanding towards people’s demands which is also an optimistic sign for the future.

In light of these developments and its mission of promoting intercultural dialogue and social participation, the Anna Lindh Foundation is concentrating its efforts on supporting the role of citizens in the wake of the events of January 2011. People are now conscious of their power to change society. They have learnt how to be active participants and improve the political situation of their countries. Day and night, they have grappled with the political and social systems of this world in order to make their contribution to shaping a democratic system. They now have a new sense of pride stemming from the realisation that they have torn down the walls of fear and refused to be governed by an

authoritarian regime with its culture of obedience and submission. The Foundation will continue working to strengthen civil society at a national level while furthering international debate on how to promote social inclusion, pluralism, and dialogue between citizens and governments.

Another important point which was highlighted in the Anna Lindh Foundation's report is the significance of the role played by religion. North African and Middle Eastern societies are dominated by religion and 62% of young people asked in the survey believed that religious conviction was playing an increasingly central role. This should be placed against the way in which many Europeans are now moving away from traditional forms of religion. The central place that religion occupies in people's lives must be taken into consideration when setting up projects to promote dialogue. However, it is also important to remember that individual religious belief does not necessarily equate to a conservative view of society or social mobility. The Arab spring is a very clear illustration of this.

In this context it seems to be a real challenge to prevent religion being used as a convenient alibi to dodge the issue of finding the necessary political answers to political questions. At the same time, steps

“Citizens now have a new sense of pride stemming from the realisation that they have torn down the walls of fear and refused to be governed by an authoritarian regime with its culture of obedience and submission.”

must be taken to halt the manipulation of religion by radical groups in both Europe and the other southern Mediterranean countries. It is a question of communicating to people that religious differences do not necessarily have to affect the openness with which we deal with each other. They also do not necessarily have to have a negative impact on the way opportunities are created for believers and non-believers to come together to discuss how new and lasting changes can be brought about.

There is no doubt that the peaceful Arab freedom movements have initiated a process of transformation in how the West, and Europe in particular, perceives Arab Muslim people. These perceptions had certainly deteriorated after the attacks of September 11th because of the automatic associations made with Islamist terrorist organisations.

The demonstrations in Tahrir Square and on the streets of Tunis have conveyed a different image of Arab men and women who have stood up for their basic rights without cloaking them in religion or aggression. This new image ushers in new opportunities for dialogue and must continue to be encouraged by providing more chances for people from the different countries of the Euromed region to come together. The use of social media must come of age and be used responsibly as a powerful tool for exchange, while still bearing in mind it can also simply spread clichés and stereotypes. Educational programmes need to be set up to give young people a thorough understanding of the real social, religious, cultural and political trends within the so-





## External perspectives

cities of the Euro-Mediterranean region. At the same time, we are in a position to work with media professionals to show them how they can communicate information, and in this way take into account the complexity of Mediterranean societies which are in a state of constant flux. There is a real need for shared knowledge and explanations for the current historic events that are bringing together the Mediterranean peoples, and it is necessary to break down the stereotyped preconceptions that have grown up over the years. And finally, we should recognise that the Arab uprisings have generated a new sense of identity among the people of these countries. If this is nursed and developed, this 21st-century paradigm could strengthen coordination with these countries and support the processes of change which are leading to pluralism. It could also have an impact on relations with their European neighbours. In the coming years we will all be watching how these revitalized Euro-Mediterranean relations evolve, an evolution which will benefit from the new wave of participation and engagement within society which could not have been imagined at the time the Barcelona Process was launched.

**André Azoulay**, born in 1941 in Essaouira, Morocco, is Director of the Anna Lindh foundation and is an advisor to the King of Morocco, Mohammed VI. The Foundation was set up in 2005 with the aim of promoting intercultural dialogue in the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, i.e. between the countries of the European Union and the other non-EU Mediterranean countries. The Foundation is a network which brings together over 1,000 members in 39 member organizations worldwide, giving them the opportunity to exchange experiences and conduct joint projects.

**The cultural revolution** Culture played a quite astonishing role in the Egyptian revolution. In the space of just a few short days, songs, poems, short films, pictures and Facebook campaigns appeared, all with the same message of “unity” amongst Egyptians. The current phase of political transition is a time for participation and social change, and Europe’s cultural institutes in Egypt should be taking the same line.

By Reem Kassem



In Egypt it has always seemed that the only thing capable of bringing people together is football. Whenever the national team is in action, everyone feels the same way. Young people gather in coffee shops, others get together at home, and others just set up screens outside so that people can watch the game on the street.

Change only happens when people cry out for it and when there is a collective need for this change. The Egyptian people were looking for other ways of gathering together, for new tools with which to express themselves and to engage in meaningful dialogue. This is where the cultural sector came into its own, by providing cultural and artistic activities for the general public, and many of Egypt’s cultural centres have produced excellent work.

Art and culture hold communities together. They can even be king-makers. When the Greek King Ptolemy the First wanted to proclaim himself King of Egypt after the death of Alexander the Great, he was not sure whether the ancient Egyptians would accept him. So in order to persuade them, he organized a cultural exchange programme between Greek philosophers and writers and Egyptian priests. He thought if the Egyptian priests (representing the highest level in Egyptian society) could exchange with Greek philosophers and reach a point when both could adapt to and accept each other, then the Egyptian public would accept him as king.

Over recent years there have not been enough cultural centres in Egypt and the activities they offer have failed to meet the needs of Egyptian society. Inevitably, cultural activities are very much centred on Cairo, while Alexandria is largely neglected and the other governorates totally ignored. On top of this, traditional forms of cultural activities held in concert halls or conference centres are failing to attract new audiences – it’s always the same old faces.

When cultural centres started using Facebook in 2007, there was a noticeable

growth of interest in cultural life, but this gradually died off. This increased interest was a result of cultural centres approaching their audiences using new communication channels. People responded and for a while they went out to see what was going on, but the cultural activities weren't what they were looking for, so they soon lost interest. On the other hand, initiatives and art projects inspired by community topics were well-supported and spread rapidly.

### *The fight to get permits*

In 2009, artists and cultural operators noticed the growing community desire for public events and street art. Cultural managers started their fight with the government to get permits. There are two layers in the Egyptian cultural sector; the Ministry of Culture and the underground scene. The Ministry of Culture is represented by the major arts centres, opera houses, national cultural centres and the Ministry's official dance and music groups. The underground scene, which grew rapidly from 2009 to 2011, is represented by young emerging and young professional artists in all disciplines who are not financed by the Ministry of Culture and are therefore not controlled by the government. They perform mainly in private or in foreign cultural centres and to some extent are a counterpart to the NGOs and non-governmental initiatives in Egypt.

Because underground artists were successful in providing what official artists could not, either through their perfor-

mances in non-governmental cultural centres or through the social media, they have gained a large number of fans who believe in alternative arts. For example, the band "Massar Egbari", (meaning "compulsory road"), plays songs about social problems such as unemployment, traffic chaos and bad living conditions.

This band and others with the same mission engage with the public, not just in an artist-audience relationship, but in a kind of connection where the audience can use the band to discharge its negative energy and recharge with hope. The audience feels comfortable communicating its problems through the band's songs and music. This is how the cultural sector started influencing the country's youth; mainly through the underground scene. It has therefore become an urgent priority to meet the need for more and more cultural events, theatres, venues and projects to meet the growing needs of the people.

So who should meet this need and by what means? This was a question that could not be answered until the revolution came along. This question has now been partially answered. The people themselves were prepared to go out into public spaces and squares to communicate and express their opinions. They were ready to do this because underground artists had, without realising it, already begun to smooth the

"To date, the role of European cultural institutes has mainly entailed presenting cultural activities to the public, rather than engaging them in these activities."

way. The process ended with what has become known as the “Cultural Revolution”. When the protests started on 25th January, a new window on Egypt was opened, giving artists a sign that they should take the lead. In less than five days, songs were composed, poetry was written, theatre productions were initiated, photography exhibitions were prepared, and short films were made. Stages were built in Tahrir Square for artists to give revolutionary artistic performances. As a result, the underground scene officially became the ideal representation of contemporary culture and, in a way, served to shape the new cultural policies.

There are some European cultural institutions such as the Anna Lindh Foundation (head office in Alexandria), the Egyptian Delegation of the European Commission (Cairo) and the foreign national cultural institutes (Goethe Institute, British Council, Institut Français, Cervantes etc.) that are closely involved in local cultural life in Egypt. But to date, their role has mainly entailed presenting cultural activities to the public, rather than engaging them in these activities. The last thing we need at the moment is to treat the public as mere spectators. The current phase of political transition is a time for participation and social change, and the European cultural institutions should be taking the same line.

The Arab uprisings have once again highlighted the importance of public spaces in Arab society. Places of assembly have always served as cradles for the great civilisations. In the ancient world, particularly in the Greco-Roman period, such

a place was referred to as an “Agora”. The Agora in ancient Greek city-states was a place where people could meet and express themselves. This was the origin of the idea of “urban open spaces” in modern urban planning.

Gatherings in urban open spaces serve to strengthen a community’s sense of belonging and create ties between its members. The former government was well aware of the effect that such gatherings could have, which is why for a long time it prevented assemblies of any kind. In 2011, it planned the bombing of the Coptic Saints Church in Alexandria. The government was constantly playing the religion card in order to divert people’s attention and create division. However, despite all the divisions in Egyptian society, everyone came together in their opposition to violence and aggression. What the government did not anticipate was that this brutal action would in fact unite the community and serve to light the fires of revolution. The cultural sector also played a decisive role, with songs, poems, short films, paintings and Facebook campaigns appearing within days; all with the same message: “Unity”.

**Reem Kassem**, 26, manages the cultural programme at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which was opened in Alexandria in 2002, close to the city’s historic library. The new library complex also houses a cultural centre with museums, galleries, academic research institutes and a conference centre. In February 2011, one month after the violent confrontations between police and protesters, Reem Kassem organised an open-air festival with dance, music and workshops for children

**A gateway to two worlds** European Capitals of Culture are more than just showcases for Europe. They have to show how they are contributing to Europe's artistic and cultural life. For the last 2,600 years, the Marseille-Provence region has been involved in economic, political and social exchanges. In its role as European Capital of Culture for 2013, it will be extending a hand across the Mediterranean towards North Africa. How are things going to play out in light of the volatile situation in these countries? **By Julie Chénot**



**A**t the beginning of this year, the situation changed radically in the Arab world. A new reality has emerged as a result of an extraordinary people's movement that has revolutionised Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. This is something that would never have been predicted a year ago. Shockwaves from this movement have affected the region and the rest of the globe. These revolutions are already influencing artistic practices and intellectual processes in the entire Arab world, and opening up new perspectives for relations between Europe and the Mediterranean. Above all, it is changing

the way Europe perceives the Arab world.

Throughout its entire history, Marseille has been shaped by its port and the attendant circulation of people and goods. Marseille is home both to people who were born here and also to people who have settled in the region: Italians, Armenians, Algerians, Comorians, to name but a few. So the city acts as a gateway to two worlds: Europe and North Africa. It's hard to think of any other city that is more ideally suited to bringing together Europe and the southern Mediterranean countries.

The Mediterranean was the birthplace of Europe, so in its role as European City of Culture, Marseille is focusing on creating a hub for dialogue and creativity that is open to cultures from the whole Mediterranean region. There is a pressing need to create a space where artists from all disciplines and European and Mediterranean audiences can meet and exchange ideas.

According to European legislation, the decision to name a city as European Capital of Culture is not based solely on what it has to offer, but more particularly on the special plans that it has for the year in que-

stion. The twelve-month programme has to meet two main criteria. Firstly, there must be a European dimension: the cities should present the role they have played in European culture, their links with Europe, and their European identity. They must also demonstrate their current involvement in European artistic and cultural life, along with their own specific features. Secondly, the cities have to present a programme that anticipates large-scale public involvement at both local and European levels.

Since the 2008 decision to select the Marseille-Provence as the European Capital of Culture for 2013, a programme has been developed in partnership with local, national and international cultural organisations. Marseille already had links to the art scenes on the south and east coasts of the Mediterranean, but in the last few years, cooperation with these countries has increased still further.

The Mediterranean focus of the Marseille-Provence 2013 programme is encouraging local organizations to concentrate on cross-Mediterranean projects and cooperation in the run-up to 2013. The need to hold meetings in order to discuss the planning and execution of such projects has led to increased mobility among artists and cultural operators from both the Marseille-Provence region and the southern Mediterranean countries.

“There is a pressing need to create a space where artists from all disciplines and European and Mediterranean audiences can meet and exchange ideas.”

Marseille-Provence 2013 and the local authorities are encouraging mobility by supporting the development of projects and providing specific tools. This includes a special mobility fund organised by the Roberto Cimetta Fund.

### *Increased mobility among artists*

Various themes have shaped Marseille-Provence 2013's international programme. The project is multi-disciplinary, covering different artistic fields such as visual arts, dance, theatre, music, circus, film and less-common disciplines such as art in public spaces and cuisine. References to heritage and traditions will be present in the programme's exhibitions, which provide a historical view of the Mediterranean and cross-Mediterranean relations. The main focus of Marseille-Provence 2013 is contemporary creation, in particular the contemporary art scenes on the southern and eastern coasts of the Mediterranean and in the Arab world.

Euro-Mediterranean Ateliers is one of the key projects that has been set up to support contemporary creation by inviting local, national and, above all, international artists to take part in artist residency programmes in the Marseille-Provence region.

Partnerships and co-productions with foreign cultural organisations have been established to design and implement joint projects. An important focus is to provide artists with commissions or to give them 'carte blanche'. This includes artwork for

contemporary art exhibitions such as *Ici, Ailleurs* (Here, Elsewhere), music by composers such as Zad Moutaka (Lebanon) and theatrical pieces by directors like Fadhel Jaibi (Tunisia).

Projects are also being developed that will involve the whole Mediterranean region. This includes work by photographers such as Joseph Koudelka and André Mérian, visual arts projects such as *Cadavre Exquis* (Exquisite Corpse), and French author François Beaune's literary project *True Tales of the Mediterranean*. One of the key objectives is to provide the widest possible audience for artistic works.

These Euro-Mediterranean ateliers are central to Marseille-Provence 2013's European Capital of Culture project. They are designed to support contemporary artistic creation in the Euro-Mediterranean area, build a creative hub involving businesses, public institutions and associations, and incorporate all artistic disciplines.

### *Euro-Mediterranean ateliers*

The ateliers are tailor-made artist's residencies with a view to encouraging production and dialogue in all creative fields. Around 60 ateliers will be set up in businesses and public bodies between 2010 and 2013. The initiative is designed to become permanent, thus making a lasting contribution to contemporary artistic creation.

As part of this project, Wael Shawky, an Egyptian artist, is currently in Auba-

gne for a six-month residency to develop his new project, the second episode of *Cabaret Crusades*, a film featuring ceramic puppets inspired by Amin Maalouf's book *The Crusades through Arab eyes*. To make these puppets, he will take part in a four-month residency at a clay training centre where he will work with professionals in the clay figurine industry and *Santon* (clay nativity figures) makers. The film will then be shot with SATIS, a university department specializing in sound and image. The final product will be presented at the *Kunsthospital* in Brussels in 2012, then at *Documenta* in Kassel and finally shown as part of *Marseille-Provence 2013*.

These changes came at a time when the main aspects of the Marseille-Provence 2013 programme had already been decided (the programme outline was presented at a press conference on 28 February 2011). However, the content had not yet been finalized. The Arab spring allowed us to reflect on these revolutions and question the relevance of our programme. We have spent and are still spending a lot of time talking to Arab artists and cultural operators about the changing situation and about what is relevant for *Marseille-Provence 2013*.

By focusing on contemporary creation, Marseille-Provence 2013 has developed a programme in direct partnership with contemporary artists and cultural operators in the Arab world. We have not dealt directly with official bodies. This is

“There are enormous possibilities for renewed engagement with Arab artists.”

because the Arab world's contemporary art scenes are largely made up of independent venues and artists. Most of these art scenes have been, and are still, involved in the uprisings. These changes will be reflected in the artwork and projects they are preparing for 2013. In addition, although we plan to announce the pre-programme on 12 January 2012, we also plan to maintain some flexibility in order to be able to incorporate new projects and themes. Conference programmes and discussions will be another opportunity to reflect on the latest changes.

These questions were raised with participants at the Informal Meeting held in October 2011. This was a meeting for independent art and culture venues from the Arab world, organised in partnership with the Young Arab Theatre Fund. At this meeting, some participants were critical of the fact that European engagement with the Arab spring topic has a tendency to be a flash-in-the-pan. In other words, cultural organizations tend to plan one-off events with Arab operators, rather than working on long-term partnerships.

In the meantime, many Arab organisations feel that it is too soon to draw generalised conclusions from this period because of the ever-changing and unpredictable nature of the Arab spring movements. While there are enormous possibilities for renewed engagement with Arab artists, they fear the focus will simply shift from one set of clichés and expectations to another.

Marseille-Provence 2013 will begin in little more than a year. This is a very short

period when it comes to organising such a large event. However, it is a very long period when we consider all that might change in the next twelve months. Consequently, it is essential for Marseille-Provence 2013 to be present in the Arab world by exchanging with artists, intellectuals, and organisations, by listening to their needs and providing flexible solutions for contemporary artistic creation.

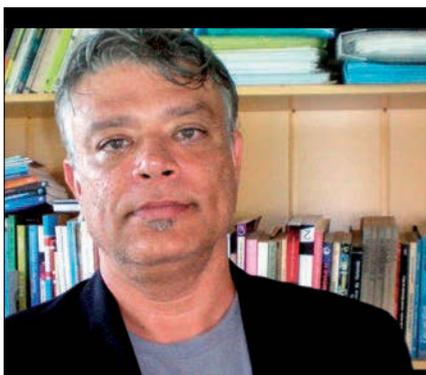
**Julie Chénot** is International Projects Manager for the European City of Culture Marseille-Provence 2013. From 1995 to 2002 she worked as a cultural manager in Beijing and was appointed Director of the Chinese culture agency "Yi Ren". In 2002 she worked for the UNESCO office in Phnom Penh, before moving to the "John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts/Vilar Institute for Arts Management" in Washington D.C. During her time there she was involved in organising the "US Festival of China".

★ 啤酒节





Welcome to the real world Crises were mostly things that happened somewhere else, like Latin America or Asia. But now Europe has also found itself being shaken by the financial crisis, a crisis that has now become political. People are taking to the streets, just like in the Middle East, the USA and elsewhere in the world. These protests are being supported by new forms of media and communication. Has the old continent suddenly arrived in the real world? By André Lemos



The world is apparently in crisis, thanks to global warming, social inequality, lack of political legitimacy, widespread dissatisfaction with financial geopolitics and so on. But then again I have never known a life without periods of crisis. I was born and raised in Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro, and spent the first half of the 1990s in Paris. During 2007 and 2008 I was in Edmonton and Montreal in Canada, and currently I am once again living in Brazil, in Salvador da Bahia. Wherever I live, I always have the impression that we are living through some sort of crisis. Sometimes this feeling is stronger, lasts longer or is more global. But there is always some sort of crisis going on! And since 2008 we find ourselves in the middle of a North American and European crisis.

So if this is the case, we have to ask: just what sort of crisis is this? It is predominantly an economic crisis but it must also be seen as a crisis of politics, of the environment and of our communication models. Today young people are going out onto the streets of North Africa, the Middle East, the USA and Europe to protest against the situation with the clear message: “enough is enough”, and these protests are being supported by new media and communication formats. However, this new digital culture is not only a means of building social networks for the purposes of political agitation. It is also clearly an expression of a new form of being and thinking and shows us new ways of embracing the modern world. So it is no surprise that representatives from over 100 countries are getting together in Nairobi right now, in autumn 2011, to discuss the subject of internet governance. The main topic is: “The internet as a catalyst for change.”

### *Controlled by conglomerates*

The current crisis is a crisis of communication models. And this kind of crisis

inevitably brings about political changes, because the switch from a stable, unifying culture, controlled by media conglomerates, to a more informal culture that threatens the authority of intellectual property and authorship, the centralisation and control of broadcasting, knowledge monopolies and hierarchies but not particularly creative ways of working is seldom without consequences.. Young people want to get out of the crisis, not by adapting to existing systems of mass information production, but by starting something new. Manuel Castells quotes a placard being carried by the “Indignants” in Spain: “We don’t have a crisis. I just don’t want you any more”.

### *Europe is at stake*

In Europe the crisis began with the financial problems in Ireland and Greece and the likelihood of similar problems being experienced by Portugal, Spain and Italy. What is at stake is the very survival of the European idea of a community based on a common constitution and a common currency. As with previous crises, this crisis once again raises the ugly spectre of nationalism, populism and xenophobia. In Kosovo, out on the very edge of Europe, people are once again living under the threat of war, even if it is very much a local problem.

It is therefore vital for us to understand what is special about this crisis. One possibility is to consider whether fighting corruption, sticking to one’s intentions and using tax revenues responsibly depend solely on economic necessity and political commitment. There seems to be something more intangible and complex behind all this. This crisis is also a crisis of the

transformation of global communication models.

The development of new ways of communicating, producing, distributing and consuming information not only makes it possible for people to enjoy greater information autonomy (access to global information in real time), but also gives them a certain emancipation when it comes to having a voice (free distribution of information in various formats) and larger social networks (publishing, sharing, political networking). The consequence of this is that prevailing mass media and industrial strategies that have been in place since the 18th century now have to be re-thought. Today the crisis is more than ever a crisis of communication, a crisis of culture.

While the crisis is, of course, an internal problem of global capitalism, the nature of the crisis is not economic per se, but is more about politics and communication. There has been a breakdown in the relationship between people and their governments. There is a global crisis of political representation. Political power, with new parties constantly appearing on the “political media-oriented market”, according to Berkeley professor and media theorist Manuel Castells, has entered into a sort of pact with the culture of centralisation, which Harvard professor Lawrence Lessig describes as a kind of “read only” popular culture, and with a culture industry that grew up between the 18th and 20th centuries. It is the culture of television (mass market TV), whose era as the hallmark of modern society is perhaps coming to an end with the advent of a more autonomous,

decentralised and participative communication model (post-mass market TV).

Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman recently suggested that the way out of a crisis (this one and previous ones) lies in “culture”; in the consolidation of the European bloc and not in its dismantling. The French thinkers Jacques Derrida and Régis Debray suggested something similar on French television a few years ago. Today, this consolidation is threatened by the possible withdrawal of some countries from the eurozone. Debray saw Europe at that time as something boundless, undefined, unopposed and lacking in passion. If it was up to Derrida, we would have to develop new forms of sovereignty that have heterogeneity built into them. Zygmunt Bauman believes that the old continent still distinguishes itself from developing countries like China through its creativity, its humanism and its sophistication. When Bauman claims that “Europe’s future is dependent on its culture” he’s thinking of creativity, cooperation and participation, but unusually he makes no reference to the digital culture. But surely new values, new forms of sovereignty and new types of “governmentalities”, as the French social theorist Michel Foucault called them, will be communicated via this culture. Or maybe not.

### *The imprisonment of culture*

If diversity, humanistic thinking and democratic and egalitarian ideals really do underpin Europe, then digital culture will be able to bring about this transformation. In fact it is already happening. For some time now modern ways of working have demonstrated a reduction in inequality,

a growth in diversity and diversity of opinion, as well as the creation of new types of territoriality and new copyright and sovereignty systems. The different forms of repression exercised against current social unrest and the difficulties in listening to what young people have to say are the direct consequences of the lack of adaptability of existing institutions caused by the fear of changes to information communication channels, as well as the fear of a loss of privileges and authority, which until now were a direct product of mass media culture, of ownership and of control. We are starting to see this lack of adaptability all over the world.

Everywhere, both inside and outside of Europe, political protests are being organised that cannot be simply attributed to religious, economic or territorial issues. People are rising up against religious fundamentalism and against leaders who oppose creative thinking with seeming indifference, against the imprisonment of culture through laws that are enthusiastically supported by conglomerates and the mass media, and against the maintenance of privileges for financial institutions, and so on. At the same time they are calling for more social inclusion and better opportunities, for ecological sustainability and recognition for different types of cooperation. Young people today (Iraqis, Egyptians, Tunisians, Filipinos, Spaniards, Britons, Israelis, Brazilians, Americans) have the impression that the state is reactionary and run by bureaucrats for whom this culture is either just some kind of side-issue or actually a hindrance to freedom, creativity

“People are rising up against religious fundamentalism and against leaders who oppose creative thinking with seeming indifference.”

and the necessary creation of new models. The clash is clearly one of communication and the digital culture has become its hallmark.

We are very familiar with mass culture: a centralised flow of information, editorial control from central broadcasters, homogenised content for the masses, users considered as little more than recipients of news, and large media companies reaping the benefits from state concessions and political networks. There is no doubt that free mass media have been of fundamental importance in building an audience and developing public opinion in the modern age. But Frankfurt School theorists quickly saw through their streamlined, market-oriented nature which reduced everything to the same level. Scheduling and classification were and remain important political tools for managing and controlling the masses. However, this model as the only mode of public communication is now becoming obsolete.

The new digital culture, the “post-mass media culture”, is growing because of telematic networks that allow anybody to produce and disseminate information and which render central broadcasters superfluous. Distribution is not limited to a particular geographical region but can be accessed by virtually the whole planet. Because of the myriad communication tools available, communication streams have

become more informal and require neither approval from state control or licensing authorities nor huge amounts of resources to use them, (SMS, blogs, free software, Flickr, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Wikis and so on). It is the underlying fundamental principles of this digital culture, including the creation of new broadcasting opportunities and the convergence and reconfiguration of institutions and the culture industry, that provide this new culture with its political and social influence. If we have freedom of opinion and expression, supported by various media formats (broadcasting), and the possibility of joining with others to take action (networking) then we have the prerequisites for effective change (reconfiguration). A crisis is what results when people are in a position to use creative means to produce, participate and change.

The beginning of the 21st century has been marked by revolutions that are typical of the new digital culture. The Arab spring, the 15th of May in Spain, rioting on the streets of many British cities, social upheaval in Israel, the occupation of Wall Street – they all have the use of social media in common and serve to highlight the incompatibility of mass media models with contemporary needs.

Young people are demanding an end to authoritarian regimes in the name of freedom and a better life, but without using anti-imperialist slogans or religious banners. By using mobile phones, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and blogs they have been able to overthrow dictators who have been in power for years, as has happened in Tu-

nia and Egypt. In Israel many people are protesting about social justice and living conditions without getting involved in pro-war or religious dialogues. In Britain the police are confronting social inequality with a show of force, in Spain people are demanding a new form of democracy, while in New York the financial logic of Wall Street is being called into question.

We are also starting to see new forms of investigative journalism being used, with a blend of hacking and teamwork. The first examples of “citizen journalism” were seen as early as autumn 1990. Today we have the hacker group Anonymous and the Wikileaks website. They use hacking, network teamwork (wikis) and information leaking to create information and have established themselves as the latest facet of global cyber activism. Their goal is to reveal governmental and business secrets and, in so doing, they promise to put information that is of global importance under the microscope of history and to usher in a new era of information transparency.

It is not a question of saying that these new technologies are now bringing about necessary changes or will do so in the future (the optimistic view), or that they are not bringing them about and will not in the future (the pessimistic view). These technologies are merely agents of change, and then only in combination with other human and or non-human agents. In this respect there is no revolutionary core to the new media. The kind of unity of purpose that makes a social movement possible requires a lot of time and effort. What we have witnessed in Egypt, Tunisia, Spain, Iraq and in the Philippines cannot necessarily be reproduced in a similar way in other places. There are no guarantees. The dice have to be rolled every time. Everything

depends on the feasibility of networking and building viable networks. The challenge facing Europe and the rest of the world is how to guarantee the libertarian opportunities presented by post-mass media culture, so that politically significant alliances can be formed.

In this respect, there is some justification for a feeling of fear or pessimism, but there are also grounds for hope. The digital culture makes it possible to open up black boxes, like Pandora’s, and to make the evils of the world become more visible. But hope is still hanging by a thread and lies in the new forms of communication that link the world in new ways. It is not the networking of McLuhan’s global villages, or of television or newspapers. It is the networking of plurality, of diversity and worldwide social interaction. If this is the case, and continues to be so, then there are and will be opportunities to come through this crisis and create something better.

There will always be crises, but maybe new types of crises with different causes. Nothing is certain, and the building of new alliances requires a huge amount of effort. Perhaps it is time to redefine our concept of crises. The new forms of expression available within the digital culture illustrate that young people no longer want to find a solution to this crisis. It is no longer about

“This is the challenge that faces Europe and the rest of the world: how to guarantee the libertarian opportunities presented by the post-mass media culture, so that politically significant alliances can be formed.”

reversing out of a dead end in order to get the train back on the right track. Now there are no more trains and no more tracks.

### *Multiple sovereignties*

It is a question of finding more complex solutions to multiple sovereignties and territorialities. If nowadays we can publish information without needing a permit (freedom from central broadcasters, in contrast to the classic communications model), and if through this publication we can network with others, and indeed virtually the whole planet (the difference between the principle of networking and mass media broadcasting), then we can create new forms of social and political life (transformation of social, professional, legal, sexual practices etc.). This is not some kind of utopia; it is already happening.

We need to create a framework for free and democratic change that will free us from the usual channels of communication. We need to let the European humanistic ideal have free rein. The challenge lies in ensuring that future generations have a free and global digital culture. We should support some form of digital “responsibility principle”, to borrow a phrase from the German philosopher Hans Jonas. The Berkeley professor and media theorist Manuel Castells suggests that we should be striving for a free (in both senses of the word) internet, a creative economy and a sustainable lifestyle. We also need to reinvent democracy based on values that are implicit in the digital culture, such as participation, cooperation, creativity and transparency.

Perhaps the way out for Europe really does lie in culture, as Zygmunt Bauman suggests, but in a culture that allows the

free development of the potential of the digital age, instead of restricting, repressing, and controlling it in order to protect anachronistic associations or bankrupt institutions. Old Europe must either use the potential of the new digital age to save the best of what can be described as “traditional” concepts (humanism, freedom, participation, social justice, etc.) or succumb to the sclerosis of its institutions, in which case the crisis will become more global than ever before.

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**A union of double standards** When looked at from the Bosphorus, Europe's image is getting weaker. The continent is losing its influence, culturally, economically and politically. Nevertheless, it is now crucial for Europe to take on a global leadership role in order to face up to the challenges of today.  
By Mahir Namur



**I**n Turkey, we grew up with European culture: we read European literature and learned about European art history in schools. Even just 20 years ago, Europe was still a fairy-tale world for tourists. Everyone in Turkey wanted to see Rome, where Shakespeare's Julius Caesar was stabbed; visit Vienna where Mozart composed his greatest symphonies; and see the Paris of Victor Hugo. But today people know every corner of the world via the internet, and the advent of cut-price airlines means that almost everyone can now travel to far-flung destinations. The opening-up of the com-

munist blocs and increasing mobility have thrown up thousands of new tourist destinations. For Turkish tourists, Europe is no longer the only attractive holiday destination.

Europe's image has also changed in economic terms. Twenty years ago European countries were much wealthier than other parts of the world and they welcomed hundreds of thousands of "guest workers" from developing countries. But rising unemployment means that Europe now has problems coping with its existing immigrant populations. In the Turkey of twenty years ago, "European" was synonymous with "high quality". Europe was the centre of the fashion and design world and people would travel to Milan, Paris or London to shop. Lots of other countries produced cars, but they were not as good as Mercedes or Volvo, and not as unique as Jaguar or Ferrari. This image of Europe being producers of "unique" products has also changed, because nowadays these brands are not even manufactured in Europe.

Europe is also now less of a political heavyweight. Twenty years ago, Europe represented the "civilised world".

It represented universal values such as human rights and social justice, and it took in refugees who needed a roof over their heads and food in their stomachs. Of course, it is not always possible to put these universal values into practice, and Europe has also had its share of policy makers who have thought only about short-term benefits. But after two world wars, Europe has learnt from its past and now defends universal, common values. However, its image has been damaged by its unfortunate role in Yugoslavia, the Gulf and Iraq wars, its lack of involvement in the Israel-Palestine problem and its oscillating attitudes towards Turkey's EU membership. Turkey now views Europe in a negative light, as a union of double standards. The continent seems to have given up its unwavering support for universal values and is now long on words but short on action.

### *The internet revolution*

What was really so different years ago – the mood or the actual situation, Europe or its image? The internet revolution has changed the world. Communication and mobility are now so much faster. In the past, governments had absolute control over communications by controlling the media and manipulating the dissemination of information. Now the internet has brought together every corner of the

“Turkey now views Europe in a negative light, as a union of double standards. Europe is long on words but short on action.”

globe and everyone can collect and create information on every possible topic and then publish it to the world. Now governments have to share their control of communications with individuals and civil society.

The era of image-making and propaganda has ended. It is no longer effective to build ideal images of countries, states and regions, because these ideal images may collapse at any time. Nowadays even the deepest state secrets are being put on public display and civil society is not as naïve as before. On the internet you can always find a counter-argument for every argument and every piece of propaganda immediately produces its exact counterpart. This makes it much more difficult to build collective opinions.

### *A world without secrets*

We cannot ignore these facts when talking about Europe's external cultural policy. It is essential to review and find a new approach for external cultural policy; it is not enough to just use it as a way of polishing up Europe's image. Cultural strategies must be realistic and concentrate on those aspects which are really useful. The reality is that the world is facing serious challenges and Europe cannot isolate itself from them.

All problems are inter-connected – even those which seem to be local are often of a global nature. These problems will not be solved unless we treat the real causes. The economic and finan-

cial crisis, social and cultural tensions, the worldwide threat of climate change and the danger of losing cultural diversity are all problems which are linked to the reckless consumption of the world's resources. The majority are consumed by just a small proportion of the global population without sharing them with the rest of the world. And yet it is the whole world which has to bear the consequences of this reckless consumption. This means that the real problems stem from over-consumption and social injustice.

This unfair distribution of resources is being increasingly brought into focus by the media. Poor people watch television and see how the rich live, so then they feel they want some of the same and move to these rich countries in search of a better quality of life. This has led to Europe's asylum problems, social polarization and cultural tensions. As long as the causes go untreated, the problems will just get worse. This is why there is no point in building walls and fences to keep out illegal immigrants. And this is why it is also often equally pointless to get two parties in a conflict to sit down together and try to work out their differences.

Europe has to take on a leading role in the battle to solve the world's problems. Even though its image is getting weaker, Europe is still the world's most powerful region. European society is enlightened and educated, so it has to take on this responsibility. Who else could do this but Europe? The previous champion of

“Instead of just serving to enhance a country's image, culture should strengthen communication and cooperation between individuals, sectors and societies in order to create new visions, reach consensus and push for action.”

universal values now has to take the lead in finding solutions to global problems. Europe has a lot to offer; the European people have always been prepared to stand up for social justice within their own borders. Now it is time to do the same on the global stage.

It is crucial that politics, business and civil society should work closely together. Political decisions are not enough, because power no longer lies solely in the hands of the state. The bottom-up approach of citizen participation should complement, and to a large extent replace, the top-down approach. This needs joint action, and this is where culture can play a new and significant role.

As local, national and international cultural relations are all inter-connected, it is unrealistic to try to separate them at these levels. Modern methods of communication mean that every decision has an effect at national and global level. This makes it even more important to develop a common vision for Europe, so that every decision that is made, whether local, national or international, is influenced by this vision. Decisions made in parallel will then be in harmony and flow into the same river. If they are not in harmony they will block their own path

and the river will dry out. This is the why the values adopted by a city or country also have to apply to the rest of the world.

### *A new role for culture*

Therefore, the new role of culture in politics consists of helping to guide the answers to world issues. Instead of just serving to enhance a country's image, culture should strengthen communication and cooperation between individuals, sectors and societies in order to create new visions, reach consensus and push for action. Europe should have a common external cultural policy. Not a cultural policy which projects a uniform image of Europe, but one which highlights a common vision and diversity of action within the framework of this vision. EU policy and foreign policy should coincide. Europe should develop a common vision in view of the global challenges it faces, in harmony with its external cultural policy.

But what vision should Europe pursue? At the *A Soul for Europe* forum held in Istanbul in October 2010 on the theme of "Global Challenges, Cultural Visions", leading experts in the fields of culture, business and politics came together to seek answers to this question. (See report at: [www.europist.net/asfe](http://www.europist.net/asfe)).

One of the forum's messages was that European cultural policy must take a concrete approach to global challenges. This will rely on a close cooperation between culture, business and politics. It is

the job of civil society to take on responsibility for the future of Europe in order to create better lives for people, not just in Europe but also in other parts of the world. This should be based on citizen participation. All Europeans should ask themselves: How can I improve life in my city, my country, Europe, the world? And how can I contribute?

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Moving the chairs in the global boardroom America has its Superman, Asia its Kung Fu. Both embody cultural viewpoints. Could Europe create similar film icons? These would of course need to be multilingual and display some form of sexual and martial superiority over the Americans, Chinese or even Indians.  
By Rajeev Balasubramanyam



In the late 18th and 19th centuries, novels and newspapers played a key role in assisting people's consciousness to move away from transnational religious and dynastic affiliations in favour of nascent national identification. Literature and media still have their place in society today. But today, cinema has a wider, more trans-national appeal. We could see the proliferation of trans-national cinemas as expressions of national power in the international world: as a desire by nations to acquire greater power inside the global boardroom.

Within this global boardroom, the

United States, represented by Hollywood, has a pre-eminent role. This dominance is reflected not only in the near-global proliferation of Hollywood films, but by the narrative content of the movies themselves. These mainly consist of plots where the American – yet global – hero saves the world by perfectly putting into practice 'American values'.

Probably the clearest purveyor of American export values is *Superman*, the angel-like extra-terrestrial who stands between man and God and represents the 'American Way', or, by implication, God's way. Others examples include *Flash Gordon*, *Watchmen*, *Armageddon*, *Independence Day*, *Mars Attacks*, *Twelve Monkeys*, and *Mission Impossible II*. All these films present global scenarios – threats to humanity from within or outside – that are thwarted by American heroes.

After the United States, we have other key, though lesser, boardroom players. The most important of these, arguably, are the rapidly growing, newly liberalised, or liberalising, economies of China and India, both with huge populations and with cinema industries of great nati-

onal, transnational and diasporic reach. The Sinophone cinema of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, through kung fu and wuxia films, has created a marketable, essentialised representation of the Chinese nation.

In the case of kung fu films, their nationalistic function in both domestic and export-orientated terms is clearly apparent; in fact, we could argue that kung fu is inherently nationalist. In these films we frequently encounter symbolic board-room tussles with Americans, ranging from the subtle, as in the case of *Enter the Dragon*, in which Americans fight both alongside and against Bruce Lee, to the more direct, as in *Way of the Dragon*, in which Bruce Lee fights and kills the American Chuck Norris in the grounds of the Roman Coliseum.

Alongside such narratives, we have American counter-attempts at colonising the kung fu genre. An important precursor to this trend was the television series *Kung Fu*, in which Bruce Lee was originally supposed to star, but was replaced by David Carradine. By the 1980s we saw films like *Karate Kid*, *Bloodsport*, and *Lethal Weapon*, starring white American kung fu fighters. In more recent times, we could point to films with a 'pan-Asian aesthetic', like *The Matrix*, *Kill Bill*, *Reservoir Dogs*, and *Broken Arrow*.

“Probably the clearest purveyor of American export values is Superman, the angel-like extra-terrestrial who stands between man and God and represents the ‘American Way.’”

By 2000, beginning with Ang Lee’s *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Chinese and Taiwanese wuxia films took over the trans-national mantle. These ‘export strength’ wuxia films tended to be essentialist national fictions, targeted, like Hollywood films, at both Chinese diasporic and non-Chinese audiences.

The most evidently nationalist of all is *Hero*, which celebrates the individuals who brought about the birth of a unified China. However, all export-strength wuxia films share the quality of presenting universal values cloaked in an arguably exaggerated Chinese aesthetic. As James Schamus, the American co-writer and associate producer of *Crouching Tiger* put it: “At the end of the day, Ang and I do indeed want everyone in the world to be, in a non-trivial sense of the word, Chinese.”

### *Indian backpackers in Europe*

While Hindi cinema has always had a transnational appeal, particularly in Eastern Europe, where Hollywood films used to be banned, and in the Middle East, where traditional Hindi films were preferable to more sexually explicit Hollywood ones, in recent years we have seen more narratives framed in terms of an East-West encounter. Such films include *Kaafila*, *Namaste London*, and Karan Johar’s *Dilwale Duhania le Jayenge*, in which a group of middle-class Indians go backpacking through Europe, and *Kabhi Kushi Kabhi Gham*, in which a small

boy causes a nationalist 'revolution' in his English boarding school, with the entire school singing the Indian national anthem.

Disney and Warner Brothers have already begun to finance their own Bollywood productions, and Disney has already co-produced a movie with Yash Raj Productions, *Roadside Romeo*. As in Sinophone cinema, we have also seen the production of Hollywood films with a '(South) Asian aesthetic'. These include *Moulin Rouge*, *The Love Guru*, *Shantaram*, in which Amitabh Bachchan will play a supporting role beside Johnny Depp, and *Bride and Prejudice*.

Sandwiched, then, between India and China in the east, and the United States in the west, we have the countries of Europe, economically united under the European Union, the European super, or supra, state. If Hindi cinema has created a national focal point for such a diverse country, could a pan-European cinema do the same for the linguistically and culturally diverse countries of Europe? If Sinophone wuxia and kung fu movies could ideationally 'unite' different countries via an imagined, heroic Chinese history, could European cinema invent an equivalent? If Hollywood can create a global-nationalist hero like Superman, couldn't Europe create a similar icon?

### *A supra-national identity*

Such supra-nationalist icons will, of course, need to be created from scratch

"All nationalisms are divisive; by necessity, they exclude more than they include, and by definition they falsify and distort both past and present."

in order to invent distinctly European values in contrast to values commonly associated with the cultures of individual European nation states. These national cultures, of course, are already well-entrenched and have been subject to advanced processes of nation-building since the eighteenth century. European fictions must supersede, or rise above these national fictions, embodying either new values, or aggregating those that cannot be accused of national bias.

Simultaneously, this supra-national identity must also distinguish itself from the American values propagated by Hollywood's heroes and heroines with whom they will nonetheless have more in common in terms of 'race' and culture than with their Asian counterparts.

Can we imagine then a pan-nationalist European icon along the lines of a Amitabh Bachchan or Bruce Lee? He or she would have to be, of course, multilingual, and would probably need to demonstrate some sort of sexual or martial superiority over the Americans, Chinese and Indians. Perhaps he or she will patrol Europe's borders, driving illegal immigrants back to Turkey or Morocco or, like the chef in *Ratatouille*, decimate plans to transform gourmet French restaurants into burrito and chop suey joints. Or perhaps, like Bruce Willis in

*Die Hard 4.0*, he or she will eliminate Chinese female terrorists with the words, 'Asian bitch', though it is hard to say what language s/he would communicate these sentiments in. Or maybe a sports film could be a viable vehicle for pan-European nation-building, perhaps, in the style of *Escape to Victory* or *Chak De! India*. A European football team could take on an America or pan-Asian team.

Alternatively, our hero might be an ancient European figure, hailing back to the days before distinct European states. A rash of modern Roman (or Greek) films could emerge, positing a homogenous, essentialised European origin and history. Of course, such films already exist, *Gladiator* and *Troy* being examples, but these are Hollywood movies, filmed in American English. Instead, we would need a Latin or ancient Greek cinema, a Lattywood, or Grollywood, (or Eurowood, if the moniker is to be geographical rather than linguistic).

But we must always be wary of such proto-historical nationalism, particularly in the European context, where empire and glory have always been accompanied by notions of white supremacy. More to the point, all nationalisms are divisive; by necessity, they exclude more than they include, and by definition they falsify and distort both "past and present". European supra-nationalist cinema would almost certainly create new, or deepen existing, divides at exactly the moment in history when the human species is becoming aware of itself as a species as opposed to a group of 'races', and as in-

habiting a planet as opposed to being a collection of nations.

The idea of a pan-European cinema is, of course, conceivable, if not achievable. And if this is the case, then logically a global or world cinema should be too. But in terms of economic and political feasibility, it is of course hard to imagine how a global cinema could come into being.

And yet it is the job of filmmakers to create dreams, and it seems more progressive, more meaningful, to dream of a united planet than a united Europe. A genuine world cinema, Wollywood, we could call it, could nurture the already nascent realisation that we humans exist simultaneously in a shared environment alongside all other earthlings, and that our well-being is intertwined with everyone else's. If a genuine planetary consciousness is possible, then cinema might just be the vehicle to deliver it.

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Europe's forgotten fringes Ukrainian essayist Yurko Prochasko has described the countries and regions on Europe's eastern fringes, which are not members of the European Union, as "living deconstructivists". They are a constant reminder of how Europe is not really Europe and of how history provides proof that they should belong to Europe. To treat them as some kind of special zone in order to keep them at a distance would be tantamount to unforgiveable shortsightedness.. By Jurko Prochasko



There are some places in Europe, whole swathes, strips and regions, a good half dozen countries, which are just that bit different. They make it much harder to get a clear picture of what Europe once was and what it actually is today, because they make the whole thing much more ambiguous. But, with luck and real perseverance, they can provide people with more insight, because they make the concept of Europe not only more complicated they actually bring the whole concept itself into question. For many people they distress and distort, for others they shift, dilute and blur. They are a distraction from what is actually going on in Europe and are spoiling the game. They are a risk to Europe. But as far as I am concerned, they enrich and expand

and are always a challenge. But they are not a risk to Europe, they simply make it more exciting.

But it would by no means be easy to simply integrate these regions into today's Europe, into what passes these days for the "European scene". Things would have to be changed, there would have to be special exceptions and special admissions, special cases and special conditions. But confessions go hand in hand with reservations, successions with concessions. They would lead to differentiation and make people aware of the somewhat uncomfortable fact that an end to unambiguity may be on the horizon. They would bring ambiguity, because they are themselves the embodiment of ambiguity.

Dealing with them can be tough and tedious; trying to understand them is always an effort, often unrewarding and certainly not conducive to feeling happy. And yet all these efforts are worthwhile because these regions have a great deal more to do with Europe in a variety of ways than is perhaps comfortable for other parts of the continent, which wrongly imagine they are less ambiguous and more unequivocal. Confrontation with these other European regions that are or

have become somewhat different may indeed often be very complicated, but in the end they may at least offer a certain amount of insight.

I sometimes feel that the most important job for these regions, regions like my own, is to actually complicate the concept and idea of a Europe that is constantly striving for simplicity and apparent clarity. Their main function is to illustrate and highlight the fact that Europe is something made, not something given, something evolving, not something complete, an ongoing production process, not a finished product. It is of course an idea and an ideal, but not a substance or an essence. It is a constant desire that is very difficult, if not impossible, to satisfy but never an unconditional possession. Europe is, and never will be, a foregone conclusion. And above all Europe is not something definitive, neither in terms of being complete nor of being permanent.

These regions are living deconstructivists (on the assumption that people are aware of them or know something of their existence). They are a constant reminder that Europe is not truly Europe. The Europe of today, that is. And, if you are willing to go further back in history, of the fact that Europe has never been a constant, but has always been subject to doubt and the constant desperate search for self-affirmation, tests and temptations, designs and distortions, corrections and changes.

“To integrate these regions there would have to be special exceptions and special admissions, special cases and special conditions.”

Its spiritual and, in many places, legitimate judicial centre and its values, around which this partial cosmos tries to orbit, are all too often exposed as little more than a vacuum, and that it is impossible to talk of and assert “eternal values”. And it is a reminder that without all this hard work and effort Europe doesn’t actually make any sense as a valid and common entity.

### *Reminders and warnings for ‘best Europe’*

Those European countries and regions that have a poorer record when it comes to democracy and human rights, environment and agitation, the morals of its citizens and those of its civil servants, the justice and rightness of the arguments and excuses as to why things are the way they are, as well as countless other issues, all serve as both a reminder and a warning to ‘best Europe’. And they therefore have a lot of relevance to Europe and tend to cast doubt on the crass differentiations between genuinely different European regions. These parts of Europe serve to remind those European countries that are currently in a better situation not only of their past, but also of the fact that there is the potential, and in some places the likelihood, that things in Europe might not actually be so permanent.

These regions remind Europe of the existence of the rest of the world because there is nowhere else where such serious, globally important changes happen as quickly, as consequentially and as

prominently as here. It may well be that those European countries that are not in such a good state are simply already going through things that other countries may themselves have to go through one day. Good things and bad. To treat them as some kind of special zone in order to keep them at a distance would be tantamount to unforgivable short-sightedness. It is far more satisfying to share good things and to work together to resolve obviously bad things than it is to simply classify things into good and bad, which on this earth can never be so clearly defined anyway. It may also be the case that these areas are given so little attention because other countries see in them both unpleasant ghosts of their own history and the kind of potential future scenario that they would simply rather not think about.

Today some European countries – and my country, the Ukraine, is certainly one of them – are struggling to justify membership of Europe to both to themselves and to others in any other way than in terms of a common history. Everything else, the reality of their situations today, just seems to conspire against their ever being able to prove their Europeaness. Everything today, be it their politics, culture or development strategies, their overall priorities, the values they espouse, their general lifestyles, aesthetics and architecture, their environment and technology and their sexual mores just seems to be designed to prove the opposite insofar as they all seem to accept there is a contradiction in what being “European” really means or what “Europe” actually is.

On the other hand, those who are currently generally considered to be “European” seem to have gone down a totally different route and have little or no con-

cern for the situation of these excluded, forgotten and undesirable areas of Europe. The idea of Europe today is much more aligned with the identity of the European Union. The terms EU and Europe have become not just metonyms, but synonyms for each other. If somebody wants to define Europe in a different way they generally have to put “Europe” in apostrophes. However, redefining Europe is something that non-EU European countries need to constantly endeavour to do, for the sake of others, but above all for their own sakes.

### *Neither wanted nor welcome*

The effort needed to do this is not the same everywhere. It is particularly hard for those non-EU European countries, which, in contrast to, say, Switzerland or Norway, are excluded from Europe not because they want to be or because they have chosen to be, but because they are neither wanted nor welcome in Europe. Not being wanted or welcome is not a particularly nice feeling. Wanting to belong, but not being allowed to, is just as bad. It can have a serious effect on a country’s self confidence. This is true of other parts of the world too, but it is particularly true in Europe.

The conviction that they are part of Europe is nowhere weaker than here in these countries. Nowhere is this conviction disappearing faster than here. Nowhere are European feelings of inferiority as pronounced as they are here. And nowhere are they as widespread as here. European self-doubt has reached despe-

rate proportions and European self-loathing is so strong that people are convinced that they have brought all this upon themselves and deserve to be punished by not being allowed to join Europe.

This is why people are clinging on to history out of the belief that it is somehow a history that is significant and meaningful to Europe as a whole, which of course it is to a great extent. But it is the passion with which people use this history for self-affirmation or with which they cherish and nurture it that may appear somewhat strange amongst those whom it is assumed do not belong and who could share a common history and culture with those who do belong. History is our favourite excuse and our main – and apparently only – argument. The obvious is often staring us in the face, but unfortunately it is of little use because we generally don't recognise it.

You will rarely find as many weird collectors and guardians of historical traditions that point to a one-time common European past than we have here. You will rarely hear stories that are as inextricably bound up with a perceived past and a hoped-for and coveted future. Facts that

would be considered a joke in other places are celebrated here with an unparalleled, almost existential seriousness. People may well find this strange or a something of a joke or dismiss the whole thing as obscure or old-fashioned. But this kind of thing gives me hope. Firstly because it shows that there is a genuine desire to belong, to use all available means to prove that they really do have a legitimate claim to being European. And secondly because it is far better and much more productive to take this kind of approach than trying to use a second and much more dubious way of proving their European provenance: the fact that they are white.

This obsession with history is a form of regression. Too little of it can lead to rigidity, stagnation and schematism. But if there is too much history you risk drowning in it, disappearing from sight and losing your place in the here and now. Psychological regression is the same, it is like water where you can swim and enjoy the sensation of buoyancy, but where you can also drown or lose yourself in its dark depths forever. You can become an amphibian.

There should only be as much history as a given community needs at a given time. But then again, who decides how much is enough? Perhaps there is some kind of social intuition that decides these things. A healthy person should be able to decide when and to what extent he will indulge in regression and should know how to regulate it or even sometimes how to provoke it and so confirm its value. A healthy person will use regression to rejuvenate himself, to gain inspiration and

“It is particularly hard for those non-EU European countries, which, in contrast to, say, Switzerland or Norway, are excluded from Europe not because they want to be or because they have chosen to be, but because they are neither wanted nor welcome in Europe”

to change. The bottom line is that a healthy person will enjoy regression and reap the benefits.

The same is true for societies and their histories. History can be a fertile breeding ground for change and turning to history can be inspiring. It is not possible to change existing structures that society no longer wants to keep for one reason or another without first delving into the past, without exploring the concepts of sociology, without turning to historical debate. Every brave and productive change is the result of looking to history, of invoking the past in retrospective or historical debate. Courage lies not in breaking with history but in affirming it. This is what the word “reform” really means. Every break with history, every intentional break, requires a reasonably good or even excessively good knowledge of history. This is because you can only really break with something if you believe you know it so well that you no longer want anything to do with it.

In our part of Europe, awareness of history is also important for another reason. Sometimes it is the only factor that confirms that we actually belong to Europe at all. If this factor were to become weaker or disappear altogether then it is not only likely that we would face long and difficult crises, but it is almost inevitable. This is far more likely to happen if historical factors cease to be the key determinants of whether we belong to Europe or not and current circumstances become the deciding factors instead.

Then a whole area of common history would start to exist to which we no longer belong and which we could not share in. It would be common to others, but not to us, a commonality that we are not

a part of. This does not mean that there would be some kind of ‘end to history.’ It would actually mean something much worse. History, as opposed to time, would cease to be equally spread across all parts of Europe. Historical time would be split from physical time. Physical time would continue, but historical time would slow down in some regions and even come to a complete halt or head off in a different direction. Historical time would be divided into different regions, different zones of history. This would only be the case in areas where people live together in communities, not in nature reserves, primeval forests, wastes or steppes. This would not be a Europe of different speeds, but one of different times.

### *Historical reserves*

True reserves are to be found in history, not in nature. There are time capsules, little islands of time, in which historical time does not simply start to slow down, but slowly develops a character of its own, a special, isolated logic. A logic of isolation. How much history can people tolerate? How many differences of history can they tolerate? Sometimes time stops being about creativity and becomes the start of a period of total decay by accepting the muse of disintegration. Decay then becomes the most important and only expression of historicity.

History does not mean “the past”, or at least not only that. This is only one dimension of history. More than anything else history is about a yearning for the

historical, the desire for it to continue, the ability and willingness to tell stories. History is about the meaning and context of memory, a comprehensible continuity and a tradition as well as the ability to carry on the story and to accept its legacy, rather than running away from it. For this legacy to be accepted readily it has to be understandable and have some contemporary relevance. It must make sense today.

Only then can regressions into the historical past be truly therapeutic. If history is seen as something foreign, frightening and incomprehensible then regressions can become pathogenic. The risk of retraumatisation is particularly high, the risk that the only parts of history that will be relived are those parts that are the most pathogenic and destructive. When this happens history is no longer something that you can learn from but becomes something that is condemned to be repeated forever. The more traumatic this history, the higher the risk of retraumatisation. One of life's ironies is that, while we seem unable to avoid looking back in history, we still don't know how to use this process in a therapeutic way. Without history we lose the last vestiges of belonging to Europe. With history such belonging would be hard to bear.

What are "we" as far as Europe is concerned? Why do we, or don't we, want each other? "We" are the "Europeans". We are part of a grand and great vision that is concerned with the future and the present just as much as with the past. This

vision is so powerful and we need it so much that we are prepared to discover a common past and to put it above all differences and disputes. Because this is how we want it, because we want Europe, with us in it. We are prepared to allow those who we want and desire to share a common history with us and even to assume it. We are prepared to follow our desires because we have a goal that we all desire. This is why we need to love and want each other. It is our love for each other that will guarantee that we reach our goal. So Europe basically boils down to our mutual desires. We love our vision and our tasks and we love each other for being the ones who embody this vision and who will carry out these tasks.

It will be very interesting to see just how far our lust for Europe will stretch and at what point it will stop and why. Then we will learn that "we" all have different and somewhat differing ideas and preferences. Not only in terms of our common goals, but also in terms of each other. And we will have to learn to tolerate these differences, on the assumption that we really do desire each other and are prepared to pay a concrete price for what we value.

There is the desire to be closer, but also the love of remaining apart. The temptation of being as one, but also attempts to love oneself. These contradictions are often in play, a kind of ambivalence between symbiosis and autonomy.

Europe is not so united, or even close enough to being so, that it can afford to do without a common cultural policy. A common cultural policy first has to be just that, and there can never real-

“There is the desire to be closer,  
but also the love of remaining  
apart”

ly be enough of such a policy. We have a rare opportunity here to make the words “common” and “European” a reality for once. In contrast to the wider areas of economic, financial, defence and educational policies, cultural policy is now something that could be applied not just to EU Europe, which is increasingly seen as being Europe per se both rhetorically and emotionally, but to Europe as an area of common cultural history.

A common European cultural policy is not the same as a common European culture. And nor is it the sum of individual national or regional European cultures. That is something else. Also it is not a substitute for an individual European culture (and never can be), nor should it completely replace individual cultural policies. But it should also not be seen as a simple expansion of these policies either, but should become a new reality. A reality in which, and out of which, much is possible. Much of this was not only not really possible before, but simply was not there as a reality.

### *A test bed for the present*

A common European cultural policy should help to create a sense of awareness and feeling for European commonality in that it will show where these commonalities exist, historically, currently and as a challenge for the future. This culture could actually be the starting point for a truly common European era – a European cultural epoch.

The real emotionality of something truly common starts when prejudices are put to one side, even positive ones, with the conviction that even the most attrac-

“A common European cultural policy is not about unification, but about integration.”

tive clichés are no substitute for reality, but simply stand in the way of more exciting, more surprising and more sophisticated experiences.

We call anything different that we are afraid of or that we think is threatening ‘weird’, yet anything different that is curious or fascinating, we call ‘exotic’. In walking this fine line we need to overcome this sense of exoticism as something weird, without losing our sense of the exotic. We need to convert the negative exotic into something positive, to transmute it, to let it evolve. A common European cultural policy is not about unification, but about integration. Integration in the sense of the ability (or even the desire) to allow or accept something different, and to allow it to become a part of you. So it is about constant self-expansion.

This concept of a cultural policy has a key role to play in integrating parts of Europe and creating a sense of expansion in those areas where it is needed, and in maintaining a sense of European commonality in those places where other measures have so far failed. It also has an important role in creating transitional opportunities in order to preserve European self-perception during difficult times. In this respect it is a sign of understanding, of wanting to understand, an ever-present avowal of solidarity. Exoticism can be both obvious and subtle. A common

European cultural policy should question the supposedly familiar and help to revitalise what has inadvertently become dull and faded. Local cultures should not be ignored but revealed and protected in order to create a new layer of culture.

At the moment there is not necessarily a common European culture, or at least not obviously. If there is one, then it is minimal, insubstantial and not the result of some kind of consensus.

But there could be a common European cultural policy. This could come about if we genuinely want a common Europe. This is because it isn't so much a product of history or some kind of organic extract; it is the result of deliberate efforts aimed at achieving more unity in Europe and from Europe. And that means basically having more Europe, something which comes down to desire, to wanting each other and being interested in each other.

But first it has to arise. In order for this to happen, a common European cultural policy needs to fulfil a number of requirements. It mustn't try to pass itself off as "high culture". It mustn't become a form of "cultural apparatus". It mustn't allow itself to be led by some "dominant culture". Its key function would be to raise the profile of things that already exist; to reveal those things that deserve to be revealed; to clarify things that are (or have become) unclear. It mustn't negate, but reanimate those things that have become negated. It mustn't make excuses or try to justify; gloss over or trivialise. It should simply create the sense that Europe is based on two key principles: unbounded diversity that should be respected and amazing prospects for cooperation and commonality both now and in future.

If mustn't be based on what has already

been collectively experienced or what lies in our collective past. A common cultural policy needs to be oriented towards creating cultural visions or a common future. History should be the one foundation of this policy. To constantly remind ourselves of how close we are despite all our differences (history can give us enough examples of this) will be a fascinating new experience.

The second big challenge will be to identify all the tensions, conflicts, varying interpretations and versions of what has happened and is happening, as well as all of our different interests, without falling into the temptation of simply resorting to superficial harmonising, placatory and well-meaning gestures.

Only then will Europe be capable of becoming a test bed for the present.

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**Peeking through the open window** When young Arab activists manned the barricades during the Arab spring with the help of social networks like Twitter and Facebook, they were demanding the same rights and freedoms as their European counterparts. Now it is time for Europe to turn its attention to its immigrant population and find ways to help them become more integrated into society. **By Hela Khamarou**



**C**ulture can be a facilitator, a means of projecting a new, positive image of Europe. But the question must be asked: what is this image exactly? When looking at Europe as a whole it is clear that there is a lack of a common culture that unites all Europeans. Europe is an artificial construct that is first and foremost economically-driven. Europe is not America. There is no such thing as the United States of Europe, no matter how much we like the sound of it. We are simply not there yet. But in that case, where are we? How does this very complex continent perceive itself?

We tend to believe that “culture” is a tool that brings people together, smooths out differences, and builds bridges to encourage dialogue and unity. In this sense,

we believe culture to be a positive phenomenon. But it can also work to underscore differences and act as a kind of centrifugal force. Xenophobia is nourished, at least in part, by fear and cultural differences. Ignorance often goes hand-in-glove with an incomplete or erroneous sense of one’s cultural self. One needn’t go very far back in time to find that worst-case scenarios are rather more common than the name suggests. Our shared culture is steeped in a shared history that just shows us what not to do. At best it can serve as a signpost for the future.

History is what glues Europeans together, for better or worse. From Greek philosophy, Roman savoir-faire, Christianity, Renaissance, colonial expansion, industrialization and wars – more than we care to remember, we are identified, admired, and feared by others on the basis of our past. Over the centuries, European culture developed into a patchwork of overlapping influences that were at times complementary but also at times conflicting.

European thought is based on different religious and secular philosophical currents. Traditions such as the Enlightenment, Naturalism, Romanticism and, more importantly, democracy have all helped to shape how Europe perceives itself today. While disagreeing about many issues, all 27-member states of the Eu-

European Union today agree on the notion of democracy as a central pillar of their shared political life, including freedom of speech, freedom of movement and freedom of representation.

### *An alternative to the New World*

Culture can be defined as the relations that people have with one another, which includes both contrasts and similarities. In this respect, Europe portrays itself as being different, more authentic, and grounded in a long history, unlike its cousin across the Atlantic. The “Old Continent” is presented as an alternative to the “New World”.

Yet talk of a common culture as such represents a dilemma. It is a myth – how much of it is real, and how much of it is merely the product of how we like to perceive ourselves? And if this idea of Europe is merely an aspiration, what can be done to translate its moral and cultural values into reality?

In this respect we have more questions than clear answers. And what should we use as a benchmark for defining an entity such as the European Union as an alternative to the political practices of others? Is it better to compare Europe’s democratic achievements with those of its contemporary peers or with those of earlier, less accomplished versions of itself? A case in point might be the neighbouring Arab world, where European nations have not always been willing to help when it co-

mes to implementing their own democratic ideals.

The unprecedented revolutions in Arab countries have left many European policy makers scrambling for an apt response. When young Arab activists manned the barricades with the help of social networks like Twitter and Facebook, they were demanding the same rights and freedoms as their European counterparts. A recent article by Bernard Lewis in the Jerusalem Post cited growing sexual frustration as a key factor in these upheavals. In this respect, the deciding factor might well have been the ideas, cultural values, and perhaps the material accomplishments of Western culture. More and more people were taking a peek through the open window afforded by satellite TV, the internet and cheap telecommunications, and at the same time it served to reinforce Europe’s sense of self.

Attitudes towards the United States also contribute towards finding a sense of identity. Europe tends to compare itself favourably to the USA, a view reinforced by American behaviour. Visiting Europe is seen as a sophisticated thing to do and has become almost a rite of passage for many (well-heeled) American students. The US produces blockbuster movies, to be watched while ingesting copious amounts of popcorn; Europe produces ‘films’, to be discussed over a glass of wine. Americans eat McDonalds, whereas, in 2011, French gastronomy was included in UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage programme. But globalisation has cast a shadow over this European uniqueness. Economic imperatives trump cultural identity, which seems increasingly at risk of becoming more uniform and standardised across the world.

“Our shared culture is steeped in a shared history that just shows us what not to do.”

Despite remaining a cultural attraction, in economic terms Europe is considered less appealing than the USA or emerging countries such as India, China and Brazil. The 'old' ways of doing things involving intricate social legislation, worker protection, and indeed, Europe's pre-occupation with safeguarding its distinctive cultural heritage, tends to be viewed negatively in the world's boardrooms. The recent financial and economic crises have highlighted these issues. The cover of the August edition of Time magazine proclaimed: "The Decline and Fall of Europe". The continent does seem to be at a pivotal moment in its history. With the monetary union under pressure, young Eurosceptics protesting in Spain, Greece, and Portugal, and the rise of populist politicians who are either sceptical or downright hostile towards Europe, is it time for us to say goodbye to the old order?

### *A European Eldorado*

One of the biggest challenges facing Europe today is how to integrate its many immigrant cultures. New population groups with different cultures, customs and traditions have arrived in Europe, hoping to find an Eldorado. But reality tells a different story. The waves of migrants have engendered a sense of fear among native inhabitants, who are not willing to see their own cultural foundations altered by people with different religions and customs. Here culture is not serving to connect but to divide. Politicians have tried for decades to deal with this issue, but with no great success. Europe is not Canada, where the policy was to assimilate migrants into the culture of

their adopted land. Immigrants were asked to shed their past and embrace a new culture. This was the underlying idea of the policy of "assimilation".

It should be remembered that, in practice, European policies have not served to extend across national borders in social terms, despite the insistence that multiple cultures and bi-national citizens would enrich our continent. When it comes to accepting ethnic pluralism, there is a huge gap between word and deed. Countries such as France fear they will lose their own culture because of the arrival of migrants with totally different beliefs and customs. I am of course referring to Islam, which is seen as the biggest threat to Europe as an entity. Even though Muslims follow a different religion with different traditions and customs, I do not believe they present a risk to European identity.

The notion of identity in itself is not set in stone. I also believe we should not speak of "an identity" but of "identities". We have multiple identities. Cultural crossovers should not be seen as a danger to a nation's stability but rather as a way to strengthen it. It is a phenomenon that is based on the notion of constructivism as a theory of international relations. Of course, some types of "baggage" can be more bulky and troublesome than others. But identities adapt and continue to grow. Any "baggage" brought along from the "other world" does not have to conflict with what is already in place. Immigrant populations are not hatching subversive plans; instead the reality is much simpler and less dramatic – they are just seeking a better life.

Of course it takes time for immigrants to adapt to the culture of their adopted country. Imagine you are fleeing a war

zone as a refugee and trying to find a peaceful land that will provide a better future for your children, while having to cope with a foreign language, strange customs and different ways of dressing. All this takes a huge amount of time. I remember members of my family telling me how shocked they were when they first went into a supermarket in France after arriving from Iraq, and saw the vast range of products on offer. It was something they were totally unused to, and they needed time to adapt. It's like a child going into the Harrods toy department at Christmas for the very first time and staring wide-eyed, caught between temptation and the fear of being punished for touching a toy. The child is just flabbergasted. This may be a trivial example, but it shows the importance of details when sketching out the bigger picture.

### *A real lose-lose situation*

But it is more difficult to adapt to a new culture, (and here I don't mean in any way to suggest that migrants should abandon their native culture), if the country they are settling in rejects them out of fear. Then it becomes a real lose-lose situation. Our refusal to accept other cultures just makes the situation more difficult than it already is.

“Immigrant populations are not hatching subversive plans; instead the reality is much simpler and less dramatic – they are just seeking a better life.”

In 2010 France held a countrywide debate on what constituted “French culture”, spurred on by fear that their culture could be shattered by one specific community: the Muslims living in France. I should stress that those Muslims who were targeted by people of a particular political leaning (the right and far right) were in fact French citizens. This made it all the more shocking when it was claimed that they did not adequately conform to French culture.

As a result, immigrants tend to experience discrimination and rejection in their “Promised Land” and become alienated both from their own and their host culture. This alienation can then develop into a very real threat. Other cultures – which were originally considered as something positive – start to break down into ever smaller units and this has a direct effect on the social cohesion which is the foundation of whole societies.

Our world seems more and more interconnected and interdependent in all domains of human activity, but international relations and inter-cultural dialogue do not seem to have been strengthened to the same extent, or at least inadequately. Ever since the terror attacks of 11 September 2001 and the ensuing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, misunderstandings and mistrust have increased on both sides. America's war on Islamic terrorism has infected public discourse in Europe. Populists have risen to the challenges of cultural diversity by sowing division and reinforcing stereotypes. Instead of dialogue they have espoused confrontation. And their message is being heard all over the world.

We are facing a multitude of challenges, but Europe is still seen as a place

## External perspectives

where it is possible to have a good life. Every year it attracts tens of thousands of migrants. Instead of imposing assimilation on the new arrivals, we should favour the notion of integration without obliterating the immigrants' own culture. It should be viewed as enrichment when Europe's identity – whatever that may be – is enhanced by a greater variety of cultural expression and cultural identities, not as an obstacle to social cohesion.

Our current challenge is to tackle obstacles through the promotion of mutual understanding. It has always been the case that ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity constitutes the very identity of Europe. This does not obviate the need to build on common values and, if necessary, investigate and redefine what constitutes these values. Education plays a key role and should be used to build bridges between cultures.

Europe's values and ideals are exactly that: values and ideals. We still have a long road ahead when it comes to putting them into practice. By presenting these ideals to ourselves and to the outside world we should not delude ourselves into thinking we have already achieved them. However, this should also not prevent Europe from continuing to promote these values and ideals. Europe is now just one world power among many and it should lead by example, not by imposing restrictive measures.

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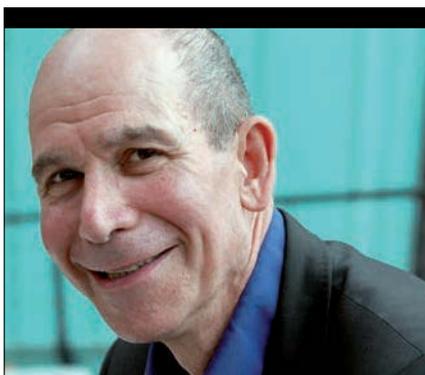
complejo mosaico humano y lingüístico ha correspondido históricamente una pluralidad de creencias religiosas (catolicismo, islamismo y protestantismo, éste en sus denominaciones luterana, anglicana y calvinista, principalmente) y una multiplicidad de formas de organización política.



## Europe in the world – the world in Europe

Europe needs to send out the message that it can do more than just talk a good game. Europe has answers to some of the major challenges of our time: climate change, economic crisis, democracy and development. The situation playing out among its neighbours in North Africa and the Middle East requires a historic reaction from the old continent. Culture opens doors and builds bridges with people all over the world. Cultural diplomacy is more than just a soft power instrument for approaching other countries and regions, but is a cornerstone for building trust. How can Europe make the most of what it has to offer? What are the advantages of having a common policy for European external cultural relations?

Now is the Time Europe's place in the world is not solely decided by the military or the economy. The geopolitical situation in the 21st century requires a renewal of cultural diplomacy with a multilateral approach. With the development of a strategy for a European cultural diplomacy, the focus should not be on communication messages or symbolic actions, but on building trust and reciprocity. By Robert Palmer



We are witnessing dynamic change in the management and implementation of foreign policy. A vital component in this shift has been a renewed interest in public diplomacy as being more than an interaction between appointed officials. There is increasing emphasis on the public dimension of diplomacy. When speaking about the role of culture in this shift, there is a risk that culture is considered as more of a tool than a component of foreign policy.

Culture represents and connects people in ways that certain state measures—

chiefly military, economic and political—cannot. And there are powerful arguments for the inclusion of cultural action in the external action of the European Union.

Because the EU has the legal obligation to “assert its identity on the international scene,” (Treaty on the EU, Title 1, article B) it has been developing external action. Debates on the international role of Europe from the very beginning have included the role of norms and values, and the cultural dimension of foreign policy, initially described as “civilian power” was first used in the EU presidencies or in the treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam or Nice. More recently, the term “soft power”, coined by the American political scientist Joseph Nye, has become established.

### *“Normative power Europe”*

Political scientist Ian Manner's notion of “normative power Europe” also gained temporary significance as a reaction to the requests which have been ongoing since the 1980s for the EU to have a rein-

forced military and security role. Instead of exercising military power in the world, Manners believes Europe should rethink traditional concepts and new routes for foreign engagement.

The recent establishment of a European External Action Service (EEAS) now offers an operational framework that can go beyond symbolic institutional measures by enhancing its cultural capabilities. There are many reasons why European governments should collaborate in realising not only economic and political objectives, but also cultural ones.

This can happen through a heightened understanding of the function of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations in stimulating greater mutual respect, trust and understanding. It can help dispel hatred and intolerance within Europe and between Europe and third countries. These positive effects are also highlighted in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, which was published by the Council of Europe in 2010, and in the rationale behind the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue in 2008.

Cultural components must become an intrinsic part of European external action. Although there appears to be a theoretical and rhetorical acceptance of this notion, little attention has been paid to its practical realisation.

There is a variety of arguments in fa-

avour of developing a clear framework for cultural action within the EEAS. They combine the notion of the EU as an economic project (trade and monetary policy), a political project (common foreign and security policy) and a social project (the Charter of Fundamental Rights), as well as a cultural project. An understanding of a common European political space could be extended to include an open concept of a common European cultural space. A political space is bound by regulations, migration policies and legitimacy linked to territory. A cultural space is decentralized and unbounded, with multiple dimensions that help bind people together.

### *Culture as part of development*

A further argument centres around the importance of cultural processes in reinforcing positive economic and social transformation through their influence on identity, the coordination of collective action and symbolic exchange. Culture is a constitutive element of development, and certain traditional development models have not succeeded because they have not addressed underlying questions of education and culture, which are essential elements of reconstruction. Now is an opportunity to reconsider the foundations of development assistance within external action policy. There appears to be growing acceptance that multilateral cultural cooperation makes an important contribution to EU external

“There are many reasons why European governments should collaborate in not only realising economic and political objectives, but also cultural ones.”

action, in particular, actions in relation to third countries. Additional cultural instruments should be created by the EU to address ignorance and prejudice and build mutual trust between EU member states and non-EU countries.

The role of culture in the security sector should certainly not be ignored. Strategies for conflict prevention and the management of post-conflict issues and peace-building have strong cultural components. The rationale for such work and the appropriate tools and resources have been either overlooked or remain substantially under-developed. Political conflicts are the result of the convergence of many factors. However, the cultural dimension of conflicts is often instrumentalised and heightens political differences. Actions that promote the appreciation of diversity, recognition of equality and encourage dialogue as an alternative to violence are all valid external action measures.

### *New tools for foreign policy*

The geopolitics of the 21st century are calling for a reinvented and multilateral cultural diplomacy. Achieving this will require the development of new tools for relationship building and the creation of new linkages, in particular with civil society, networks and NGOs. This goes far beyond the understanding of cultural diplomacy as simply a means of promoting national or pan-European interests, or focusing primarily on influ-

encing governmental and statutory legal bodies. Future European diplomatic action would be well-served by prioritising cultural diplomacy as a central strategy designed to demonstrate that Europe is a power that promotes the principles of international law, human rights, global development and European unity. In the formulation of a strategy for European cultural diplomacy, the focus should not be on the delivery of messages and symbolic actions, but on the building of trust and the principles of mutuality through very specific programmes and activities.

Actions need to be measured against their impact on achieving specific ends. The European diplomatic service should no longer be focused on bilateral agreements and projects linked to national goals and priorities. A European cultural diplomatic strategy should be an integral element of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy; work on such an approach will necessitate new frameworks and pilot projects to test ideas, new models and structures in action.

Proposed developments of EU cultural cooperation policy are sometimes hindered by an extreme interpretation of the subsidiarity principle by member states. They believe that anything cultural is a national prerogative. This represents a gross misunderstanding and short-sighted vision of the notion of culture, because culture is not purely a na-

“New frameworks and pilot projects need to be developed to test ideas, new models and structures in action.”

tional or local phenomenon. Tied to a overly-narrow interpretation of subsidiarity, policies and actions concerning culture in the EU often in the past have been restricted to “harmless areas” such as co-operation and exchange. These boundaries have already been transgressed in relation to many EU programmes, and a much wider scope for cultural action should be advocated as part of the EEAS.

If the EEAS begins to focus on cultural diplomacy as a major strategic thrust, it will need to ensure coherence and links across all EU institutions and administrative units in order to eliminate turf-fighting and bureaucratic competition within, or adding to the existing layers of administration when introducing any new institutional mechanisms related to cultural action.

Conceptual coherence and clarity about principles are required in order to combat inter-pillar and inter-professional fragmentation that may render EU external relations ineffective. Such coherence should help increase the public impact of the EU missions in countries and underpin a common set of norms and values. A simple merger between relevant desks from different services or improved ‘coordination’ will not achieve such coherence. It needs to be underpinned by the development of a shared understanding and a common vision, as well as a recognition of the importance of different but complementary skills and

experience that needs to be brought into play. This will take time to achieve.

### *No common diplomatic culture*

At present there is no common EU diplomatic culture. This will be a major challenge as the EEAS moves through a process of blending different foreign policy traditions of member states and the very different administrative cultures of the European Council and the Commission. The EEAS will need specialism in cultural diplomacy, which does not exist at this stage. This expertise is clearly different from that connected with the harder elements of peace-keeping and civilian protection, for example.

However, the primary task will be to bring together the various EU entities working on culture and those who are not reflecting but who should reflect on the cultural implications and actions that may be highly relevant to achieving their objectives. These bodies must be linked to growing European networks of civil society organisations that have experience of cultural action.

This strategic task must also involve other international organisations operating in the cultural and foreign policy domains, most notably the Council of Europe, OSCE, OECD and the UN. The EEAS should resist any lazy propo-

sal to simply create a ‘cultural desk’ in each mission staffed by relatively inexperienced people without the understanding of the necessity for connectivity and without the appropriate training, experience and capacity.

The operational dilemma will be how to incorporate cultural responsibilities into the EEAS from an organisational point of view, bearing in mind the transversal role of culture and its contribution to several of the EEAS objectives.

Culture should not be the objective itself. A bureaucracy that historically has a preoccupation with specific programmes, with performance management and control systems, with audits and hierarchical authorities with different responsibilities often does not manage cross-cutting issues effectively. If culture is simply embedded in a service that views culture primarily as a limited tool for promoting EU foreign policy interests, this is likely to marginalize a range of other equally or more important roles for culture and cultural action.

### *A collection of national initiatives*

This hold true for the formation of multiple identities in Europe, for example; or for the managing of social cohesion; or as a means of creating relationships across many different levels of gover-

nance; or as a tool for peacekeeping.

If the cultural action of the EU is merely a combination of various individual actions by individual member states that are packaged up and branded with the EU label, they will only have marginal impact. Genuinely effective European actions are not of this construction, and the promotion of European cultural products or Europe’s image in the world will have limited force if they are not defined in terms that can distinguish themselves from a mere collection of national initiatives.

Unfortunately, many of the existing European cultural initiatives are of this variety – a simple combination of individual contributions from many countries. Even the aim of promoting a powerful ‘cultural image’ of Europe to capture a larger tourism market, or to foster increased trade in European cultural goods and services should no longer be conceived in this manner. Consolidating perceptions about an entire continent and the use of cultural action as a component of the more ‘serious’ elements of foreign policy related to issues of security deser-

“The EEAS should not create a service or agency to deliver and implement operational programmes, but should instead build a strong coalition of local and national actors and operators.”

ve the greatest strategic attention.

A further consideration for the EEAS will be to make clear distinctions between the “policy instruments” of EU external action in relation to culture and the “implementers” of policy. The EU’s role should be confined to strategy, priority setting and finance. The EEAS should not create a service or agency to deliver and implement operational programmes, but should instead build a strong coalition of local and national actors and operators. This should comprise not only the main institutions and organisational structures in the cultural sector, but a much wider platform of interests that reflect diverse interests and skills, including representation of minorities and the marginalised.

The backbone of such a coalition should not be a traditional representation of arts or cultural providers, but a much more extensive configuration of actors that represent different components of a “rights-based” approach to cultural relations. Economic interests (for example, related to cultural industries) should not be the dominant force behind such a construction, but rather institutions, organisations and individuals that embody the broader cultural ecosystem of Europe.

### *Convincing non-believers*

The biggest challenge of all remains the persuasion of ‘non-believers’ who have not recognised the important role

of culture in external action. It is not the cultural sector itself that needs convincing, nor a minority of policy-makers in the Council, Commission and Parliament, nor those who are active in such work on the ground in many thousands of communities across the European continent.

Rather, the challenge lies in convincing countless others, many of whom are political leaders, policy advisers and decision-makers, and who remain cynical or unconvinced about the need to focus on cultural instruments to achieve foreign policy objectives. The key arguments have been put forward many times in numerous conferences and seminars and in various reports and publications. However, there still appears to be an absence of compelling ‘evidence’ of effective practice.

The EEAS should now itself invest in an extended and informed debate. It should embark on solid evidence-based research, related to significant mapping and analysis of existing instruments and an evaluation of their effectiveness in responding to needs, linked in particular to the complex strategies for security, conflict-prevention, and the management of European integration.

Clear guidelines and appropriate tools that take into account the various different approaches also need to be developed. Work related to external cultural action must be professional, targeted and placed within the broader agendas of both the EU and the EEAS.

Any future action must go beyond

supporting more cultural cooperation projects or the straightforward sharing of models of good practice. Such an ambition certainly should not be related to the expectant aspiration of a number of interest groups to create some form of common European cultural strategy. This is neither desirable nor achievable in any meaningful way if one examines the processes of European decision-making and the nature of consensual compromises that result. Cultural policy and strategy should not be subjected to this form of reductive, contained and institutionalised practice.

The overriding motive for action might be the growing realisation that Europe is a declining global force economically, militarily and in relation to other multipolar influences. Adding a cultural pillar that is strongly rooted in common European values, as expressed in the Conventions of the Council of Europe and the Preamble of the Lisbon Treaty, and realised in part through the EEAS, should now become a priority. Now is the time to act.

**Robert Palmer** is the Director of Democratic Governance, Culture and Diversity of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, and has been for many years a cultural expert and consultant working across many disciplines, including international cultural relations and processes linked to culture and development at local, regional, national and international levels.

**EUROPA**, część świata na półkuli pn.; stanowi z Azją kontynent zw. Eurazją; 10,5 mln km<sup>2</sup>, 699 mln miesz. (1986); rozciągłość południkowa 4,3 tys. km, równoleżnikowa 5 tys. km. Najbardziej rozczłonkowana część świata (półwyspy ok. 25% pow., wyspy stanowią 7,3%), średnia wys. ok. 300 m; najwyższy punkt — Mont Blanc 4807 m; najniższy — 28 m p.p.m. (nad M. Kaspijskim); ponad 70% powierzchni poniżej 300 m; 6% — powyżej 1000 m; rozległe niziny (Wschodnio-europejska, Północna, Niemiecka, Holenderska); 3 strefy wyżyn i średniej wysokości gór: najstarsza pn. (góry Kaledońskie, Skandynawskie), wach. (Ural), starszych gór — Wyżyn (Mesała i Iberyjska, Masyw Centralny, Harz, Masyw Czecha, G. Świętokrzyskie); 3 strefa na pd. strefa młodych gór (Pireneje, Alpy, Karpaty, Apeniny, Dynarskie, Stara Płanina); rozciągła (Ural), tektonicznie zapadlakami (niziny: Padańska, Srodkowodunajska); najdłuższe rz.: Wolga, Dunaj, Dniepr, Łaba, Ren; największe jeziora: M. Kaspijskie (na granicy z Azją), Ładoga, Onega, Wenet; klimat umiarkowany (na zach. mor., na wach. — kontynentalny), tylko na skrajnej pn. okołobiegunowy subpolarny, a w części pd. — podzwrotnikowy (typ śródziemnomorski); równoleżnikowy układ stref roślinnych: tundra, tajga, lasy liściaste; mieszane, stepy; — zszata roślinna — silnie zmieniona przez człowieka. Ew. subzamieszkuje ok. 14% ludności Ziemi; średnia gęstość zaludnienia 65 miesz. na km<sup>2</sup> (bez eur. części 23RR); — 102); najgęściej zaludniona E. Zach. (Holandia, Belgia, Niemcy, W. Brytania), najłagodniej obszarzy u pn. od 60°N (1-3 miesz. na km<sup>2</sup>) i pd.-wach. E. gęstość ludności ludzka — ok. 70% (bez eur. części 23RR); — 102); najgęściej zaludniona E. Zach. (Holandia, Belgia, Niemcy, W. Brytania), najłagodniej obszarzy u pn. od 60°N (1-3 miesz. na km<sup>2</sup>) i pd.-wach. E. gęstość ludności ludzka — ok. 70%.

1989-2009 : en Chine, la répression continue



Le 4 juin 1989, l'armée tuait place Tiananmen.  
20 ans plus tard, il est toujours interdit d'en parler.

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**Common spaces** Although the EU is undeniably the greatest example of voluntary international cooperation among states in modern times, it is still not fully on many people's radar. With Smart Power – a combination of value-based diplomacy, generous development and assistance, and existing defence capacity - the three Ds – it has now added an effective instrument to its international relations toolkit.

By Gerhard Sabathil



**W**e are currently living through challenging and exciting times, with uprisings breaking out not only in our southern Mediterranean neighbourhood but also in the Western world. But it still remains for us to try and interpret these events and their potential consequences. In North Africa, the masses have swept away authoritarian regimes in the space of just a few weeks, and despite the military might and police forces of Libya and Syria, protesters continue to fight against the brutality of the state. Tahrir Square in Cairo

has since become a symbol of peaceful protest for freedom. In Spain, Madrid's emblematic Puerta del Sol has become a similarly symbolic square for disenfranchised youth. Here, protesters calling themselves the "Indignants" set up a month-long mini-village from where they railed not just against political corruption and Spain's system of proportional representation but against the establishment in general. Similarly, in Portugal and Greece demonstrators have been out on the streets protesting against the austerity measures imposed – as they see it – by IMF and EU bailouts. Even in Germany, the protests of the so-called "Wutbürger" – or "angry citizens" – against the massive reconstruction of the Stuttgart train station have stirred up emotions all around the country.

Although the context is very different, these European grassroots movements resemble the Arab uprisings in terms of the way they have been organised. In both cases, social networks and smart phones have played a key role in organizing spontaneous demonstrations, passing millions of messages in fractions

of seconds to like-minded friends and strangers. As a result, it was possible for news to spread in an instant and gatherings could take place before the police were able to deploy their forces. The social networks provide the means for individual opinions to very rapidly become mass truths, in particular when they seem to be supported by video uploads. The “Like” button increases this impact, even in the minds of those who generally prefer playing web games over active political participation. All you have to do is press the “Like” button and an opinion can spread and become the “most liked” within an instant.

So what does all this have to tell us? It means that through the web, and in particular through social network communities, users have changed from being just recipients of news and information to being “active” participants who are easy to mobilise at a virtual, and to some extent, a physical level. In chat rooms and the social web - still only used by a minority of computer owners but steadily growing in popularity – opinions are being shaped, used, and sometimes misused. The anonymity provided by the use of nicknames in cyber space means that people feel they can express their opinions freely – sometimes too freely – without any fear of repression. And even in repressive regimes, it has now become extremely difficult to track down indi-

vidual opponents.

We are now dealing with a new form of political and social participation and a different kind of “virtual” mobility. It is unconventional; it challenges the traditional modes of participation and it is about more than just grassroots movements which in the past have come and gone. Mark Zuckerberg has provided Ortega y Gasset’s “Revolt of the Masses” with a contemporary tool.

### *The wisdom of the many*

The events of the past months clearly indicate that the information age is turning into a “cyber revolution” that is having a particular impact on those who are computer-literate – the “Facebook generation” - with far-reaching political, economic, social, and even constitutional consequences for societies and governments alike. Will “swarm intelligence” develop a digital *volunté général* similar to that described in 1772 by Jean Jacques Rousseau in “Du contract social ou principes du droit politique”? In 2004, James Surowiecki expressed this phenomenon in positive terms in his book entitled “The Wisdom of Crowds” explaining why the many are smarter than the few and how collective wisdom shapes business, economies, societies and nations.

One thing is clear: “communication is the fundamental basis of human existence and a fundamental tool in the

„Communication is the fundamental basis of human existence and a fundamental tool in the process of social change“

process of social change”. But communication can either be a tool for building bridges between communities and societies or a channel to fuel hate and mistrust and ignite violence. The use and abuse of information and communication technology (ICT), which has heavily changed our ways of communicating over the past decade, plays a key role in shaping attitudes and behaviors.

In countries where the circulation of information is restricted, these kinds of tools can make a major contribution to the democratisation of societies and the creation of public opinion because they encourage freedom of expression. Yet in itself, ICT is nothing more than a tool. More important are the messages of freedom, human rights, good governance and tolerance which are transmitted via these communication tools, in particular the internet and satellite television. ICT transcends borders, despite the efforts of repressive regimes to cut off channels of communication. In the case of Mubarak’s Egypt, the network was completely shut down. But the regime “is just buying time”, according to a report entitled “Digital Africa” in a recent edition of the British magazine “Intelligent Life”. “Within hours, tech-savvy Egyptians were turning to ham radio and finding ways to access the internet using proxy sites abroad”.

There is no doubt that the message of

“The cost of internet access, mobile phones and, increasingly, smartphones is falling in Africa. Combined with better educational opportunities, this means that young Arabs are not only able to discover what the rest of the world has to offer, but what they have been deprived of in their own countries.”

freedom reached the Arab world and, in particular, young Arabs; a demographic factor which has to be taken seriously in light of the region’s high birth rates. The cost of internet access, mobile phones and, increasingly, smart phones, is falling in Africa. Combined with better educational opportunities, this means that young Arabs are not only able to discover what the rest of the world has to offer, but what they have been deprived of in their own countries. Most importantly, it has become affordable to talk to the outside world and, crucially, to each other. These small steps towards freedom of opinion have long been underestimated by authoritarian regimes – clearly with major consequences.

The transition to democracy in the Arab world is being closely observed by Western democracies with a mixture of hope and fear. Certainly, this is a challenge and there is much to lose if we, the European Union and its member states,

miss this window of opportunity. But where there is much to lose, there is always much to gain. The EU acted quickly by publishing its strategy paper, “Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean” in early March. The idea behind this Partnership is to help the countries of the Southern Mediterranean in their transition process and bring a new dynamic into the EU’s relations with our Mediterranean neighbours. This is currently in the implementation phase.

It has also become clear that the EU must cooperate at all levels to foster intercultural dialogue. It is therefore most important that we continue with, and increase, our public and cultural diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is generally understood to mean communication with foreign publics to establish a dialogue designed to inform and influence. According to the Murrow Center at Tufts University in Boston, a leading research institute on public diplomacy, “Public diplomacy ... deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural

communications.” The Center finds that “Public diplomacy is becoming more important as the conditions of international relations, particularly the telecommunications revolution, have changed so radically. Today a ‘new conception’ of public diplomacy is developing which shifts the focus from indirectly influencing the policies and actions of other governments to shaping the attitudes of other societies.” This new kind of public diplomacy requires, of course, increased and in-depth knowledge of cultural diversity.

### *Digital culture*

The recognition of diversity among cultures, as an integral part of their identity and the very element that promotes intercultural communication and cooperation, is a phenomenon of our time. Globalization processes, characterized particularly by market expansion, new and more dynamic ways of moving people and goods, and ICT innovations, have opened up new ways for individuals, institutions, communities and regions to be brought into intercultural and international communication. The new possibilities opened up by ICT – global connectivity and the rise of networks – challenge our traditional ways of understanding culture by now also spreading

to digital culture. Digital culture is a new and complex notion: digital trends are increasingly penetrating the world of culture and arts by involving different aspects of cultural rapprochement, social media and information technologies, and influencing new forms of communication and dialogue.

In a broad sense, cultural diplomacy can be seen as a means of transforming traditional prejudices into objective information, enlightenment, understanding and a desire to cooperate. It offers the potential for minimising tensions and managing difficult situations, wherever they occur, through the process of introduction, interpretation and, hopefully, sharing experiences. In its critical approach, as seen during the recent events in the Middle East and Northern Africa, cultural diplomacy can make a special contribution when societies are pressing for political, social and economic reforms.

### *Shared spaces*

Intercultural dialogue takes place in shared spaces – physical, situational and communicational. We need opportunities to engage in dialogue. We need spaces that expose us to new understanding about ‘us’ and ‘others’.

Public and cultural diplomacy can

play a key role in transforming a territory into a shared public space. The media, and new media in particular, play a major role in the development of our vision of the world. The way different cultural backgrounds are presented and explained in the media has a great influence on individual ideas by either reinforcing or deconstructing stereotypes. Public information should make every effort to present multiple views, to preserve, research and communicate the cultural phenomena they are creating and to engage people in participatory dialogue and make sure that different views are represented to create a balanced perspective.

The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership among 27 diverse democracies united in their commitment to peace, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The EU seeks to uphold these values in Europe and beyond, to build and share prosperity, and to exert collective influence by acting together on the world stage. As a major economic and commercial power and the world’s biggest donor of official development assistance, the EU’s influence stretches far beyond its physical borders. Working together with its global partners the EU seeks to achieve a more secure and peaceful world and to tackle global challenges ranging from poverty to disease to terrorism.

Therefore the nature of the European Union, with its state and non-state characteristics, makes it a unique player

when it comes to public and cultural diplomacy, as it does not fit into the normative structures of hard or soft power. So how does the EU exert power today and how does it try to communicate with the world and influence public opinion?

There are numerous historical, ideational, political, and material variables that impact on how Europeans communicate and project themselves to outsiders. In practice, the EU is striving to make its presence known on the international stage as one of the global players in world politics. Although the EU is undeniably the greatest example of voluntary international cooperation among states in modern times, it is still not fully on many people's radar. On a theoretical level, EU public and cultural diplomacy provides an acid test for the spread of norms. It sheds light on why certain norms are chosen over others, and what makes them strong or weak.

Soft power — the combination of policies, values, political ideals, and culture — is a powerful instrument in the international relations toolbox. Whether framed as a “war of ideas,” “winning hearts and minds,” or “population-centric foreign affairs,” engaging with the broader public as well as with governments is essential to building the mutual understanding and long-term relationships that sustain cooperative interna-

tional action. The “soft power” of public and cultural diplomacy plays a crucial role in the external relations of the European Union, and is closely integrated with EU policy both at home and abroad. Addressing today's global challenges — climate change, security and terrorism, the global economy, and poverty, hunger and disease in the developing world — requires not only collaboration with partner countries and multilateral organizations, but also a broad measure of global support, both official and popular, to succeed.

Once again it is clear that diplomacy — like statesmanship — is not a science; rather it has to be considered an art.

The EU — in an effort to exercise its power intelligently — is committed to achieving its foreign policy goals primarily through diplomatic channels. It is fundamental to EU relations with member states and other countries to engage, inform and influence specific target groups. Extensive educational exchange programmes among member states contribute to a broader understanding of other European cultures and the EU as a whole, and their success has led to the launch of similar programmes between the EU and non-EU nations. In non-EU countries, some 140 EU Delegations increase awareness of the EU; ensure broad understanding of EU policies, initiatives and messages; and build relationships

“Diplomacy is not and has never been a science; rather it has to be considered an art.”

with state and local officials, community and business leaders, the media, students, and civil society. EU Delegations collaborate closely with EU member state diplomatic missions to ensure that national initiatives which focus on the relationships between the host country and individual member states complement and are coherent with actions to enhance understanding of the EU as a whole.

Let's look at one important example where the EU and its 27 member states are actively engaged in an intercultural dialogue at a multilateral level. I am referring to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), an initiative proposed by the Spanish government and co-sponsored by the Turkish government in 2005. This initiative seeks to galvanize international action against extremism through the forging of international, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation. The Alliance places a particular emphasis on defusing tensions between the Western and Islamic worlds.

The 2011-12 Action Plan between the EU and the Alliance covers areas such as exchange of experience in integration policies, understanding factors leading to radicalisation, intercultural exchange programmes, the promotion of freedom of religion and freedom of expression and sexual equality.

This cooperation is already bearing fruit in the media domain. The Rapid

Response Media Mechanism (RRMM) for the Euromed region launched by the European Commission, UNAOC and the Anna Lindh Foundation, mobilizes the power of the media in order to prevent or defuse intercultural tensions and counter prejudices and misperceptions. We believe that the media, including social media and the new ICT, is part of the solution, not part of the problem! Important media networks have been established under our regional information and communication programmes that allow the EU and media professionals to discuss together common problems such as xenophobic and racist media, terrorism, freedom of expression and the safety and security of journalists. The success of the RRMM is a testament to what can be achieved through a spirit of cooperation and the pooling of resources.

### *Engaging the new decision-makers*

With the rise of the internet, social networking, and virtual worlds, the traditional concept of “key decision-makers” has shifted. Recognizing that key decision-makers on some of the most urgent global issues like climate change, democracy and human rights, and economic development are no longer elites in smoke-filled rooms, and that credible public and cultural diplomacy now depends on the activities of a range of well-informed intermediaries, the EU's public

and cultural diplomacy programmes engage with a much wider and more widely-dispersed network of individual and groups than ever before.

A thriving civil society empowers citizens to express their concerns, contribute to policy-making and hold governments to account. It can also help ensure that economic growth becomes more inclusive. Key to making any of this happen is the guarantee of the freedoms of expression, association and assembly. Another challenge is to facilitate the emergence of democratic political parties that represent the broad spectrum of the views and approaches present in society so that they can compete for power and popular support.

In order to address this situation and support political actors striving for democratic change in their countries (especially political parties and non-registered NGOs or trade unions and other social partners), the High Representative and the Commission support the establishment of a European Endowment for Democracy. This Endowment will seek to bring greater influence and consistency to the efforts of the EU, its member

“Culture is the key to enriching inter-generational and intercultural dialogue and for community building. By working on perceptions, by deepening awareness and sensibilities, it can be a “soft” driver on “hard” issues.”

states and several of the large European political foundations that are already active in this field.

Civil society plays a pivotal role in advancing women’s rights, greater social justice and respect for minorities as well as environmental protection and resource efficiency. The EU will support this greater political role for non-state actors through a partnership with societies, helping CSOs to develop their advocacy capacity, their ability to monitor reform and their role in implementing and evaluating EU programmes. In-country EU Delegations will seek to bring partner countries’ governments and civil society together in a structured dialogue on key areas of our cooperation. EU funding for such actions could be delivered through the establishment of a dedicated Civil Society Facility for the region.

There is, however, no doubt that intercultural dialogue must be a central aspect of public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. Culture is the key to enriching inter-generational and intercultural dialogue and for community building. By working on perceptions, by deepening awareness and sensibilities, it can be a “soft” driver on “hard” issues.

But at the same time we cannot deny that cultural diversity may also be a cause of tension and social conflict, especially in the context of socio-economic diffi-

DELTA  
AIR LINES

Coca-Cola

ALL  
GYMNA  
IN

FIVE FIVE FIVE





Natural Foods

*Miller*  
Genuine Draft

SONY  
Video

ROOTERS



culties. This has become very evident in recent years. The issues of integration, migration and interreligious dialogue have been driving the political agenda in many countries. The aftermath of 11th September and the current economic crisis have exacerbated the difficulties of conciliation and have often led to the rejection of the so-called „other“.

Creating platforms for exchange and mutual learning on how to deal with conflict, on how to negotiate differences and possible difficulties while at the same time grasping the benefits of diversity, is a contribution that the European institutions can make in order to make progress on this issue.

Intercultural dialogue is, in fact, at the heart of the process of European integration en route to a comprehensive community of values. After the Second World War, Europeans found reconciliation through dialogue. Dialogue restored people's confidence at a time when they still lived in fear of war and of the "other". The European project exists thanks to dialogue – the effort that citizens of all member states made to understand others. If it was possible then for Europeans to overcome their fears and hatred after such terrible wars, then there is no reason why it should not be possible today to enter into the same kind of dialogue with other cultures.

This is why intercultural dialogue is

“Intercultural dialogue is, in fact, at the heart of the process of European integration en route to a comprehensive community of values.”

one of the long-term priorities of EU policy. In 2008, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue aimed to raise the awareness of all those living in the EU, in particular young people, of the importance of developing an active European citizenship open to the world, respecting cultural diversity based on EU common values. The European Year of Creativity and Innovation in 2009 followed as a natural evolution of this idea, as it emphasized the importance of openness to change and cultural diversity. Creativity is very much about unlocking potential, giving shape to ideas that so far have been there in mute mode. An open dialogue with the "other" may help to deepen self-awareness, and thus unlock the personal potential within each of us.

In 2010, the Commission celebrated the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The year focused on solidarity, giving voice to the concerns and the needs of people experiencing exclusion, and helping deconstruct stereotypes and stigmas attached to poverty. In that context, the integration of migrants and minorities was a central theme for debate. Intercultural dialogue represents a permanent priority in many Community programmes. The education of young people in the spirit of tolerance, comprehension and respect for the other is the basis for any future dialogue among cultures.

We are well aware, in fact, that the highest stakes of intercultural dialogue are played out at local level, in the world's cities and towns – it is there that the challenge takes on its full dimension. It is in cities that people can meet and decide on talking or confrontation; whether to get together and create something new or to close up and perpetuate traditions in parallel communities. It is in cities that conflict and violence often arise. It is hence the – very complex – task of local policymakers to shape policies and public spaces in ways which enable people from different cultural backgrounds to mix, exchange and interact. Freedom, a flourishing economy and openness to “the other” appear very closely inter-related. It is clear that openness to the “other” is much easier in times of peace and economic growth. But at the same time a strong dialogue with the “other” is necessary to build peace and growth. Creating a shared space, where all generations and all groups can express themselves and can participate actively in the life of the societies in which they live, is very much what good government is about.

Trust is the fundamental factor which increases the chances of successful communication in order to build a better society. But trust is also the foundation for institutions in our societies; institutions that are able to become the trustees of in-

## Public and Cultural Diplomacy in the EEAS

Working in close cooperation with EU Commission services, the EU Delegations in third countries and the European Parliament, the role of the EEAS instrument for “Public and Cultural Diplomacy” is two-fold:

### 1. By contributing to the realization and implementation of EU public diplomacy the EEAS aims to:

- enhance the effectiveness of public diplomacy, especially by developing tools and instruments to promote the EU model of peace, freedom, human rights, the rule of law and democracy;
- cooperate with institutions at bilateral and multilateral level to promote EU values in third countries;
- contribute to the coherence and impact of EU public diplomacy, notably by supporting concerted action by EEAS and Commission services and promoting constructive and forward-looking EU/EC common positions;
- further develop public diplomacy strategies and design efficient tools and instruments for EU Delegations in third countries;
- participate in specialist conferences and think-tanks, contribute regularly to specialist periodicals, and address special audiences within the youth, educational, civil society, and media communities in third countries;

### 2. By promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue, the instrument the EEAS aims to:

- establish it as part of EU external policies, including dialogues with third countries, country and regional strategies under the external relations policies, but also into policies towards third countries, which reflect EU internal policies, such as youth, education, media, anti-terrorism or migration policy;
- carry forward a policy of outreach and dedicated intercultural and interreligious dialogues and consultations with third countries and multilateral organizations such as UNESCO and UNAOC, with a view to fostering intercultural and interreligious understanding and cooperation at both bilateral and multilateral level;
- develop and support EU thematic strategies through analyses in the field of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, with a view to promoting specific issues, such as relations with Islam;
- maintain close relations with civil society and non-governmental organizations, from both the EU and third countries, that are working in the field of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, in close cooperation with the European Commission and the European Parliament, with a view to strengthening the tissue of civil society engagement in this respect;
- help raise public awareness of the EU role within public and cultural diplomacy and achieve greater visibility for its partnership with UNAOC and other organizations.

dividual aspirations. The EU – the Commission, EEAS and European Parliament – should, in the context of a coherent, effective and visible public and cultural diplomacy, make use of the opportunities provided by “networked communication” to build trust in the “other” on a global scale. Without trust and the ability to communicate trust through free communication, future societies will always be characterised by deficiencies and fears and consequently lack the ability to achieve real social transformations and bridge gaps in mutual perceptions.

In order to increase the influence of the EU at a global level, the EEAS is in the process of drawing up roles for public and cultural diplomacy (see box). These combine elements of the European communications strategy, traditional diplomatic methods and international relations.

A functioning democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are fundamental pillars of the EU partnership with its neighbours and global partners. There is no set model or a ready-made recipe for political reform. While reforms take place differently from one country to another, only a deep and sustainable democracy will help to create the conditions necessary for lasting economic

growth, stimulate trade and investment and act as a catalyst for the development of stable countries with open societies. Democratic government is therefore the ultimate benchmark against which the EU can measure its public and cultural diplomacy. The digital age will facilitate and accelerate these processes.

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**Europa** [geografie] (Ned., Duits, It., Sp.; Eng.: *Europe*; Fr.: *l'Europe*), een der werelddelen, het kleinste van de drie werelddelen die samen de 'Oude Wereld' vormen (Azië, Afrika, Europa). De naam is **Europa** [geografie] (Ned., Duits, It., Sp.; Eng.: *Europe*; Fr.: *l'Europe*), een der werelddelen, het kleinste van de drie werelddelen die samen de 'Oude Wereld' vormen (Azië, Afrika, Europa). De naam is vermoedelijk afgeleid van het Oud-Assyrische of Fenicische *ereb* (= zonsopgang) in tegenstelling tot *ereb* (= zonsopgang), waarvan de benaming Azië is afgeleid. Europa ligt op het noordelijk halfrond, tussen 40° W.L. en 66° O.L. en 71° en 36° N.Br. en beslaat ca. 8% van het landoppervlak der aarde. In het noordwesten, westen en zuiden vindt het werelddeel natuurlijke grenzen in de zeeën. Door het niet strikt vaststaan van de begrenzing met Azië en het wel (bijv. IJsland) of niet (bijv. Cyprus, Groenland) tot Europa rekenen van omringende eilanden, staat de oppervlakte niet geheel vast. De meest gebruikelijke schatting is ca. 10 miljoen km<sup>2</sup>, waarvan dan 6,5 miljoen km<sup>2</sup> door het vasteland, 2,7 miljoen km<sup>2</sup> door de zachterlanden en 780 000 km<sup>2</sup> door de eilanden wordt ingenomen; het inwonertal bedroeg in 1987 ruim 701 miljoen (67 inw. per km<sup>2</sup>), ca. 14% van de wereldbevolking. De autochtone bevolking behoort tot de \*Europide rassen en spreekt overwegend \*Indo-europese talen.

**A necessity, not a luxury** China and India are increasing their public diplomacy efforts. Even though Europe is among the culturally most diverse and attractive regions in the world, it has still not built an adequate cultural strategy for its foreign policy activities. The development of the External Action Service is an ideal opportunity to tighten and coordinate the EU's existing cultural strategy. **By Marietje Schaake**



“Without music, life would be a mistake, a tiring obligation, an exile.” Friedrich Nietzsche’s quote hits the nail on the head: culture is what makes life beautiful. A good book, a moving song, an impressive piece of art or architecture, an excellent glass of wine – these are the things that enrich our lives.

Culture and education constitute the pillars of open societies. With its intrinsic value, culture can be a vehicle to shape values and goals. Culture may contribute to a nation’s economic and social development, foster democratisation and heal or prevent conflicts between people. In February 2011, I witnessed once more how culture can help reconcile differences. I visited Kriterion Sarajevo, a foundation of young and ambitious students, who told

me they were setting up a politically independent cultural centre in the heart of Sarajevo for people to meet and discuss films.

More than a decade after the Balkan war, ethnic and religious divisions are sadly still present in Bosnian society, but the students of Kriterion Sarajevo are determined that the focus should no longer be on a divided past, but instead on a shared future.

Kriterion Sarajevo is an example of people-to-people diplomacy. The project was established with the help of Dutch students working at Kriterion Amsterdam. This film centre and cafe has been a cultural meeting point for more than half a century. Arising from the rubble after the devastation of World War II, Amsterdam’s young generation wanted to rebuild the city culturally at a time when the focus was mainly on economic recovery. The narrative of Kriterion Amsterdam inspired Kriterion Sarajevo and has led to lasting contacts between the Bosnian and Dutch people.

Throughout the years, nations have been using their country’s culture to achieve international ambitions and interests. Well-known examples from around the world include the Alliance Francaise, the Goethe Institute and the cultural diplo-

macy and information programmes of the US State Department. Emerging powers such as China and India are increasingly engaging in cultural diplomacy. While the European Union is among the most culturally diverse and attractive regions in the world, it does not have an adequate EU strategy for its external cultural relations. My report for the EU Parliament on “the cultural dimensions of the EU’s external actions” seeks to change this. Without wishing to blend or change the diversity of cultural heritage and content, the fragmentation of policies should be rethought in order for the EU to be more efficient. In the report, the European Parliament urges the European Commission and the European External Action Service to set up a policy framework for the EU to act as a global player. A coherent, coordinated EU strategy on the role of culture in the EU’s external actions is needed.

### *A glue called rock ‘n’ roll*

Whenever people spontaneously share ideas about literature, film, music or heritage, doors of understanding are opened and bridges between people are built. Informal cultural dialogue builds trust and facilitates conversation. In some countries, it is even considered rude to go straight to the point in a conversation. In Japan, businessmen will ask their future trade partners about their favourite singer or football team in order to connect and set a tone of trust before getting down to business.

Identity, values and freedoms are in-

tertwined with culture. Values are represented by cultural expression, and the values of a society that enables or hampers freedom of expression are implicitly stated in its cultural products. This is why exchanges are so fruitful for artists. A change of scenery leads to different paintings, different theatre performances, different literature. Iranian students in Europe are part of a ‘European’ lifestyle and automatically learn about the democratic values and fundamental freedoms which form the essence of the EU. Such people-to-people contact is increasingly taking over the traditional role of diplomacy between governments. Cultural diplomacy can often find ways through and build bridges when political relations are strained. Artists, students, journalists and entrepreneurs may well be the best ambassadors for a country. Governments should not get in the way but rather should encourage civil society, the cultural sector and people-to-people contact.

Access to culture can open doors unexpectedly. Andras Simonyi, Hungary’s former Ambassador to the United States- said: “Rock and roll, culturally speaking, was a decisive element in loosening up communist societies and bringing them closer to a world of freedom”.

However, radio and rock ‘n roll were not the only factors involved in tearing down the walls and bringing people into the free world. Many EU member states actively work on their country’s reputation and influence abroad. France, for example, through the Alliance Française, is among the highest spenders per capita when it comes to positioning itself and its

“Culture and education are the pillars of open societies.”

language in the rest of the world. The United Kingdom has chosen a model where the British Council takes quite an independent role from government in developing cultural, educational and science-related policies. EU member states have traditionally adopted a bilateral approach to cultural diplomacy. At EU level there has been considerably less engagement in cultural diplomacy because of an unjustified fear that such an EU-wide diplomacy could lead to a watering-down of the EU's cultural diversity.

A common EU-wide approach towards culture in its external actions can perfectly co-exist next to member states' individual cultural diplomacy policies. Member states often focus on promoting specific cultural characteristics, whereas an EU-wide cultural diplomacy is about Europe's rich cultural diversity and the EU's shared set of values.

In times of global competition for talent, tourists and audiences, a common strategy is a necessity, not a luxury. For their international relations, many third countries explicitly seek to address the European Union and not only the different member states. A common approach is also desirable, as coordinating cultural diplomacy, programmes and strategies will ensure a more effective and efficient use of limited resources, something which is most welcome in times of public budget cuts. EU member states and their national cultural representations must first of all improve their cooperation. Secondly, the EU must open up Europe's cultural wealth to the whole world.

In cities such as New York, all EU mem-

“A common EU-wide approach towards culture in its external actions can perfectly co-exist next to member states' individual cultural diplomacy policies.”

ber states are represented by their national representations and some also have cultural institutes such as the Alliance Française and the Goethe Institute. All these embassies and institutes organise separate cultural events to promote their own country's cultural products and characteristics. Cooperation would allow them to save on budgets and expand their audience.

The report for the European Parliament contains a plea for coordination through the European External Action Service (EEAS), which was created with the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. The EEAS should take a stand on cultural activity by designating one focal point for each EU representation overseas for the coordination of cultural relations and interactions between the EU and third countries. Rather than reinventing the wheel, the EU could then build on the best practice of member states. The European network of National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) is expected to support the EEAS in facilitating this coordination. The current set-up and development of the EEAS make this the perfect opportunity to streamline and coordinate the existing external cultural policy of the EU. The present fragmentation between trade, development, culture and education as well as external relations directorates should be replaced by coordinated mainstreaming of culture in the EU's external actions.

The EU must remove all barriers to mobility, irrespective of whether they are of a bureaucratic or financial nature. The introduction of cultural visas for third country nationals for example, would facilitate collaboration and exchange between cultural actors. Additionally, increased involvement of third countries in EU mobility, youth, education and training programmes will stimulate this type of cultural diplomacy. Initiatives such as Erasmus Mundus (to promote mobility among students and researchers), Media Mundus (to strengthen cultural and economic relations between European and third country filmmakers) and many other small-scale initiatives such as Euromed Audiovisual III (to support intercultural dialogue by providing cinematographic and audiovisual capacity in Mediterranean partner countries) must be broadened and deepened, and there should be improved communication about these initiatives.

Along with increased access to European culture, the report calls for the inclusion of digital diplomacy in the EU's cultural diplomacy. And, in the meantime, work should be done to reform legislation relating to intellectual property and introduce the digital single market into the EU. At present there are four times as many music downloads in the US compared with the EU because of the fragmented EU licence markets, which make legal content online very expensive. The EU should also use and expand existing tools such as Europeana – the online digital library of millions of digitised items from European museums, libraries, archives and multi-media collections – to help people all over the world

learn more about European culture.

After all, in today's day and age, people no longer have to be in the same place to be connected, to share and to interact. New media and the internet have opened up a world of opportunities for creating, preserving and sharing culture. And while new technologies offer endless opportunities, it is access to these opportunities which is the key. Therefore, internet freedom, access to information and ending censorship are essential parts of the report on the role of culture in the EU's external actions.

During the revolt against the Mubarak government in Egypt earlier this year, black flags bearing the emblem of a white fist were carried around the streets of Cairo. In the 1990s this flag was the symbol of the OTPOR, the peaceful Serbian resistance movement that ousted the Milosevic government. Most Egyptians have never been outside their country, but activists learned the tricks of nonviolent struggle for democracy from Serbs over the internet.

### *A means of control*

On the downside, technology is used by governments as a means to control information flows and oppress their people. In Egypt, Mubarak shut down the internet to stop people from communicating and mobilising, from accessing information, and from sharing videos of human rights abuses. Information and communication technologies are important for cultural relations, but also for people's fundamental rights and freedoms.

Cultural diversity is what makes Europe rich and attractive. Furthermore, culture can be a vehicle to promote democracy,

human rights, trade, development and innovation. But the current fragmentation of EU policies is hampering the strategic mainstreaming and effective use of resources.

Instead, the EU should act as a global player and develop strategies to foster culture. They should provide the best possible means of connecting to cultural offers and enable the necessary access to these offers. People-to-people diplomacy needs to be facilitated, as it is increasingly taking over the traditional role of government-to-government diplomacy. A fantastic opportunity is presented by the effective use of new media to open up access to cultural content. In a broader context, internet freedom should be an essential part of EU policy, as it allows freedom of expression, press freedom and access to information. These values are increasingly important in guaranteeing people's fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as in allowing people all over the world to access Europe's rich and diverse culture.

**Marietje Schaake** was born in 1978. Since 2009 she has been a Member of the European Parliament for the Dutch party Democrats 66. She belongs to the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. She is a founding member of the British Council's Transatlantic Network 2020 and has been involved in the Transatlantic Forum on Migration and Integration set up by the German Marshall Fund. In 2008-2009 she was also a board member of the Martin Luther King Award Europe.

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Daring the impossible Europe is not short of intellectuals and artists who reflect European complexity. We export architects to China, designers to Singapore, art house films to Brazil. We are successful at marketing our cities, regions and nations. But we still lack a common understanding and vision of the shared political and cultural project that is Europe. This is a task for the EUNIC network and the EU's External Action Service. By Gottfried Wagner



It is my personal view that the new spirit of inter-cultural cooperation, that essential aqua vitae of global affairs, can be brewed up in a transnational European distillery – but not without adding a few herbs and spices. So here I am throwing a few provocations into the pot in order to stir up a good debate.

First of all, I would like to mention “Maitre” Voltaire, but unfortunately his *“Candide, ou l’Optimisme”* (1759) doesn’t help in this case. Candide was living a sheltered life in paradise before his slow and painful disillusionment. We all have probably witnessed and experienced great hardships in our diverse Europe and its institutions, let alone in the bureaucracy of the member states.

Yet it is too early to give up on all sense

of optimism, as Voltaire did in his *“Candide”*. We have to cultivate our gardens – the gardens of national cultural diplomacy – if only because (to make a free interpretation of Leibniz), “this world, the world of the European Union, has to be the best of all possible worlds”.

We still have one or two opportunities to prove that we can avoid Candide’s fate. We all know about global cultural diplomacy and European cultural policy. And so far we have no reason to share the pessimism of Jonathan Swift, the author of *Gulliver’s Travels*. Have we ever, like Gulliver, found ourselves washed ashore after a shipwreck of our national cultural institutes? Have we ever woken up to find ourselves prisoners of a race of tiny people, less than six inches high, the administrators of the republic of Lilliput? Have we ever supported the crude Lilliputian cultural strategies or the Lilliput populists who just want to oppress their Blefuscidian neighbours?

On the contrary, we have been peacefully sailing along on the oceans of cultural exchange, increasingly in listening mode, emphasising reciprocity and mutuality, intercultural dialogue and respect

for cultural diversity and local empowerment.

But sadly our ship “Adventure” has been thrown off course by the storms of financial crises, competitive ideologies, and the lack of transnational stewardship. Right now, we are being forced to take refuge in the lands of Ashtonia and Barrostan for want of fresh resources, just to find ourselves, like Gulliver, confronted by giants. The giants of our times are not only the markets, but also countries’ core agendas, real life diplomacy and hard power in the form of military force.

Struggling for survival, we are fighting against the notion of a purely representative culture and the instrumentalisation of culture. But we, and the cultural sector, cannot always avoid Gulliver’s fate of being treated as a curiosity and exhibited for money; or indeed exhibiting ourselves, and branding’ our nations for the sake of money, glory and pride.

Nowadays we are even hoping that our message of European cultural diplomacy penetrates the public consciousness and that the Queen of Brobdingnag wants to see our show. We hope she loves us (like Gulliver), but not too much, because she bought him and kept him at court as her favourite.

Like Gulliver, we are probably still too small to use the huge chairs, beds, knives and forks of the External Action Service; we hope the Queen will build us a small house in which we can be carried around from Directorate-General to Directorate-General, from EU Delegation to EU Delegation, not just as individuals, nor as national versions of Gulliver’s “travelling box”, nor as cultural institutes, but as a flexible European platform, a “unique” (EUNIC) box among boxes.

Let us refer to this “unique” box as a Swiftian rotating network box; a paradox designed to help us cope with the magnitude of the challenge. But it is still somewhat naïve and tiny in terms of its central structures. This explains some of the adventures which we, like Gulliver, are having, such as the fight against the giant wasps, probably coming from the Commission. Gulliver also discussed the state of Europe with the King, but the King was not impressed by Gulliver’s stories. He especially disliked the discussions about hard and soft power, about guns and cannons (but of course all this happened way back in the 18th century...)

### *Stranded cultural imperialism*

Gulliver had lots of bad luck. His “travelling box” was seized by a giant eagle; his ship was attacked by pirates; and he was marooned. But he also had some good luck and in the end was rescued by the flying island of Laputa. Laputa is a kingdom devoted to the arts and music (and admittedly also to mathematics and accountability). This play on the rescuing qualities of art and culture, and their home on a flying island, could indeed provide the key to the success of European cultural diplomacy, despite all of Swift’s pessimism, (though it should not be forgotten that Gulliver was able to use these qualities for his own ends.)

What a wonderful metaphor this is – an island of the arts which is able to fly off at any time. In our sector it is not just a

question of national cultural exports and cultural representation, but also of transnational routes rather than just transnational roots.

Islands can be prisons. Robinson Crusoe was one of the most famous European prisoners, despite his rather more optimistic outlook. But do we want to build Europe's new intercultural optimism on the basis of Daniel Defoe's famous novel? I suspect the Irish would not be too keen on this.

For the Irish author James Joyce, Robinson Crusoe was the true symbol of British domination: "He is the true prototype of the British colonist. ... The whole Anglo-Saxon spirit is in Crusoe: the manly independence, the unconscious cruelty, the persistence, the slow yet efficient intelligence, the sexual apathy, the calculating taciturnity."

However, if we leave national prejudices out of the equation, who among European elites did not grow up with Crusoe, with a belief in the individual, and how this is reflected in European technology, agriculture and political hierarchies? Crusoe refers to himself as the 'king' of the island, which is his 'colony'. The idealised master-servant relationship between Crusoe and Friday can still be found in today's cultural imperialism: Crusoe represents the 'enlightened' European whilst Friday is the 'savage' who can only be redeemed from his barbarous way of life through assimilation into Crusoe's culture.

In Jean-Jacques Rousseau's treatise on education, *Emile, or: On Education*, the protagonist Emile is only allowed to read one book before the age of twelve – *Robinson Crusoe*. And it was Karl Marx who made an analysis of Crusoe in his *Capital*.

"Swift, Voltaire and Heinrich Heine would have loved to work with Ai Weiwei in a European-Chinese project on Liu Xiaobo."

In his words, Crusoe's experiences on the island represent the economic value of labour over capital.

But isn't it true that Robinson Crusoe doesn't really fit into the 21st century? This and many other novels and their heroes who entranced us as children have a lot to do those European principles which we have in the end proudly left behind us. But at the same time they also provide the content of many narratives and ideas which we have lost, and we now have very little to replace them in their simplicity.

China has opened over 300 Confucius institutes and will open another 700 by 2020. Is Confucius the new hero of Chinese, or even global, narratives? Have you read Confucius? To be honest, he provides a rather ambivalent reading experience. Of course this ancient text should still be subject to critique and interpretation, but the poor man shares the fate of Mohammed and the Qur'an in being instrumentalised. Deep-frozen texts have been defrosted for political purposes; something that we have also experienced in Europe. But now we can be proud of the fact that we have honed our critical faculties.

Debating contemporary ambivalence towards shared narratives has now become a global business which involves both Hollywood and Bollywood: Mi-

ckey Mouse, Alain Delon, James Bond and hundreds of today's stars. "Face value" has turned into Zuckerberg's Facebook; the biblical apple has been turned into Macs and iPads by Steve Jobs. Fascinating stories can be "googled" wherever we are, thanks to Larry Page, the Robinson of today.

What does this mean for Europe's cultural and digital industries? For its diplomacy, whatever its size, and for European cultural diplomacy and the unique EUNIC? Don't we need new, powerful European strategies, and new European basic principles, which are both compressed and complex, along with strong messages about these European principles?

The Nobel Peace Prize 2010 awarded to Liu Xiaobo, and the empty chair in Oslo during the ceremony, has probably contributed more to cultural and political debate than many official and often purely representative cultural events.

One thing is certain – Swift, Voltaire and Heinrich Heine would have loved to work with Ai Weiwei in a European-Chinese project on Liu Xiaobo.

On the topic of European narratives, today's Europe may be a little short of literary heroes, but we still have Harry Potter and the like. We are not short of intellectuals and artists who reflect Europe's complexity. Europe has a whole raft of extraordinary cultural icons and provocateurs such as Vaclav Havel, Mikis Theodorakis, Orhan Pamuk, Eco, Bourdieu, Habermas and Houellebecq. And we have become ever more successful at branding and marketing our cities, regions, and nations. Cultural tourism is a growing market; we export architects to China, designers to Singapore, art house films to Brazil and blockbusters globally.

Yet we are still lacking a common and understandable concept of our shared political and cultural project, Europe. This is a job for EUNIC and the European External Action Service (EEAS) and goes beyond national or nationalistic agendas and the battlefields of language policies.

Perhaps it helps here to quote Johann Nepumuk Nestroy, one of the greatest Austrian writers and critics of the Metternich era, an era which was characterised by the green shoots of nationalism in Europe: "The noblest among the nations is resignation". But perhaps I shouldn't quote this when I am trying to argue in favour of cross-border European cultural diplomacy.

### *The tough business of soft power*

Let us return to the tasks of the organisers – the menu for transnational European cultural diplomacy and the role of its caterer, Eunic.

I suspect that off-the-record we could all tacitly agree on a few assumptions and proposals. Let's start with a few of the more unpleasant details.

Pecunia non olet (money doesn't stink). If the Commission would allocate more resources for joint European cultural actions we would use them wisely, wouldn't we?

Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. But keep him at arm's length from art and culture. In other words, yes, we need a strategy and resources for European cultural diplomacy, but in practice

let us work on it together, in collaboration with non-governmental organisations. Independent cultural institutes know how this works and have developed their own diplomatic skills. They have learned the art of getting others to do what they want them to do.

Diplomats can always make themselves misunderstood. This is why cultural diplomacy needs experts, regardless of whether it is ministries of culture or the Directorate-General for Culture and Education working together with the EEAS.

Paradoxical intervention – encouraging bad behaviour in the hope of ending it. At the moment, it is a tough business to try to establish EU soft power and cultural strength amongst the tough guys. EUNIC has to play hardball, but so far there is little sign of this. The EEAS needs proper structures and mechanisms for co-ordination with the DG for Culture and Education.

Small is beautiful. This could be an excuse for slow progress. Could this be the case with the central structure of EUNIC? It's time to raise the bar.

I began with some down-to-earth questions and now would like to raise a few fundamental issues:

*Spes contra spem* (Hope against all hope, Thomas Aquinas):

More than anyone else, cultural mediators know how much this crazy European Union of differences and diversity needs a clear, powerful, internal and external cultural strategy. It is time for us to come together to build the structures we need.

Subsidiarity. We need to complement (not replace!) national objectives and instruments with credible European ones.

The famous paradigm shift. Comple-

ment (not replace!) competition with co-operation. There are more problems that can only be addressed together than benefits to be gained by working alone. This is not only true if we are to survive in the world, but also applies to the nations of Europe and their own specific cultural strategies.

Build soft power politics on conscious European scepticism. Trust European history and its enlightened mistakes and learn from the past. And do it vigorously and persistently in face of all forms of short-sighted populism.

Dare the impossible. Don't give up trying to create new European principles in favour of the common good and European culture. It would seem like a miracle if this year the EEAS created the opportunity to break down the barriers of the past. Laputa, the flying island, has landed right here in Europe, so let's use it to our advantage.

A lot is at stake, and the main addressee is no secret. To quote Swift's Gulliver for the last time: "This made me reflect upon the fair skins of our English ladies, who appear so beautiful to us, only because they are of our own size."

**Gottfried Wagner** is an advisor to the Austrian Ministry of Culture and Education. For many years, he was Director of the European Cultural Foundation, Europe's only independent, supranational and pan-European cultural foundation, and of KulturKontakt Austria, a European centre of excellence and resources for education, culture and the arts in Vienna.

**More than just image** The diplomacy of the European Union has evolved continuously since its modest beginnings in the 1950s. With the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS), it has entered into a new, qualitatively different phase. What role does culture play in external relations? What is the point of it? By Steffen Bay Rasmussen



**T**he European Union's basic narrative has its origins in the earliest days of European integration following the destruction of European states in the Second World War. It portrays the European Union as being primarily a model for structural peace among states, a model which is successful because it is based on interdependence and integration and not on principles of territorial sovereignty and balance of power politics. Instead of territorial sovereignty, the EU is based on the universal values of democracy, human rights, multilateralism and international solidarity. This identity as a model for peace is still the primary message of the European Union's external communications.

Through its belief in the value and

universality of its own normative foundation, the Union is convinced that this foundation should be adopted globally. This is an advantage if countries are striving to interact on a national or regional basis. Instead of simply explaining the nature and function of the EU or following specific policies, the communicative challenge of the Union's public diplomacy consists above all in how to impart EU values and communicate its role as a model of peaceful coexistence among countries.

An often-voiced criticism of EU diplomacy is its lack of coherence, caused by the multitude of actors involved in it, and by the complex distribution of authority and legitimacy among them. The call for the EU to speak with one voice in international relations has been particularly persistent, something that once again raises the question of better strategic planning and coordination of EU foreign policy in general, and EU public diplomacy in particular.

The Lisbon Treaty and the establishment of the EEAS can be interpreted as the EU's response to these criticisms. Although it is too early to evaluate the

implications in practice, the Lisbon Treaty and the EEAS have the potential to increase the coherence of the EU in international relations, and particularly with respect to its public diplomacy, for which a dedicated department of the EEAS is envisioned.

Nevertheless, with respect to the formulation of the core messages of EU public diplomacy related to its normative foundation, the impact will probably not be great, since there is ample agreement within the Unión about these messages. Indeed, it is difficult not to agree with the part of EU public diplomacy that is dedicated to the promotion of EU values and Europe as a model for peace and functioning diversity.

### *Visibility of the EU as an international player*

Along with improved coordination in EU public diplomacy, the fact of having a common diplomatic service representing the Union, headed by a single person, should have a marked effect on the visibility of the EU as an international player. Particularly the representative unification of the pillars of the EU in the High Representative and the Union Delegations in third countries will boost the image of the EU as an important player on the international stage. It is still too early to estimate the impact of this increased visibility on the EU's identity, but it seems likely that the EU will find it easier to communicate its existence, nature and main policy views to foreign publics. In this sense, the EEAS will probably make it easier for the EU to influence global political debates, as well as

particular debates in third states, since the EU representatives will no longer be restricted to limited policy domains (although they will still be restricted to represent opinions where there is more or less consensus within the EU).

However, apart from the challenge of communicating the new institutional setup of the EU to the foreign general public, the increased visibility and coherent actions of the EU also bring new challenges to EU public diplomacy, related to existing tensions within EU diplomacy in general, and their manifestation in EU public diplomacy in particular. To increasingly speak with one voice and increase the visibility of the Union in international relations means running the risk of augmenting the aversion of foreign publics towards what is at times perceived not as the spread of universal values by a benign actor but rather as an imposition of pernicious principles by a foreign power acting in its own narrow self-interest.

One of the tensions in EU public diplomacy that will probably increase with a fully functional EEAS is that which exists between the visibility and coherent action of the EU on one hand and the ambition to spread its values and export its model for structural peace on the other. The problem is that the projection of the EU's identity requires it to present a more unified image abroad, but at the same time this increased international visibility will lead to a reduction in the normative foundation for the projection of EU values.

The argument is simple: if an NGO working in the area of democracy and human rights in a non-EU country displays EU symbols in its communications and acknowledges the financial contribution of the Union, as set out in EU guidelines, then this may water down the positive message of the NGO by making it seem like just a reflection of EU interests. It could give the impression that the EU is trying to impose something and lead to the EU being perceived as a traditional power-based player that defends its own narrow geopolitical and economic interests, rather than as a benign player acting on the basis of universal values and in possession of enough experience to be able to share them with others.

On top of this there are tensions within European diplomacy, and it is likely that these will only increase once the EEAS becomes fully operational. In the EEAS headquarters in Brussels, a strong new institution has emerged that should contribute to resolving political problems. It should also help to simplify communication between the various Directorate-Generals of the Commission and between these and the Council.

“Instead of simply explaining the nature and function of the EU or following specific policies, the communicative challenge of the Union’s public diplomacy consists above all in how to impart EU values and communicate its role as a model of peaceful coexistence among countries.”

And the fact that EU Delegations in non-Member States now represent the EU in all policy areas should have a similarly positive effect.

### *Laws of the jungle*

The EU’s new role as a diplomatic actor in the wake of the Lisbon Treaty and the EEAS can be interpreted as an attempt to shift the previous network-based structure of the EU towards the traditional ideal of acting as a coherent unit. The EU will be increasingly capable of defending its material interests via concerted action through established diplomatic (and military) practices in a competitive international environment.

This corresponds to a vision of the EU as a community of values that is, however, still prepared, if necessary, to follow the laws of the jungle, as it has been aptly described by Robert Cooper, a recently-appointed EEAS Counsellor and long-time foreign policy strategist within the EU. Undoubtedly, it will initially be easier to spread this vision of the EU and its role in the world than to gain general acceptance of EU values and integration models in other parts of the world.

However, this same vision brings with it the risk of undermining the long-term objectives of achieving a structural transformation of third countries and the international system through the spread of EU values. As Martin Ortega of the European National Institute for Security Studies has argued, the EU de-

depends on the global transformation of the international system into a global community for it to be able to prosper as a value-based actor. Therefore, the EU needs to choose between a paradigm of interests and a paradigm of values as the basis for its diplomacy. The EEAS seems to indicate a preference for the former, an interpretation underlined by the political prioritisation in EU foreign policy in recent years. A good example is the policy towards North Africa. Here, the geopolitical interest of having political stability in neighbouring states, and a working cooperation to regulate immigration flows from these countries, has clearly outweighed the promotion of democracy and human rights.

A further paradox, and one which is bound to grow as a result of the EEAS, is the tension between a public diplomacy seeking to disseminate values and project the EU as a peace project, and the 'traditional' foreign policy practices of the EU. Its roots can be found in the fact that the EU seeks to gain influence in the world in the following two ways that are to some degree incompatible:

1. The EU as a model worth emulating (EU soft power), and
2. The EU as a decisive actor (EU hard power).

The logic is that it will be difficult for the EU to construct a value-based global community based on its own experience of the friendship of former enemies if at the same time it is defending its own

“In its foreign relations with North Africa, its geopolitical interest lies in having political stability in neighbouring states, and a working cooperation to regulate immigration flows from these countries.”

economic and geopolitical interests in a climate of global competition between potential enemies.

This tension is a general problem within EU diplomacy. The establishment of the EEAS indicates that geopolitical viewpoints are coming to the fore. This constitutes a serious communicative challenge to EU public diplomacy. On the one hand, the EEAS contributes to a stronger *Us vs. Them* dynamic between the EU and other countries, but on the other hand, the EU is seeking to communicate a model for structural peace among states who have overcome this dynamic, and thus portrays itself as an altruistic actor which is upholding the universal values of democracy, human rights and multilateralism.

The general development of the EU, as symbolised by the EEAS, means that the EU will increasingly be forced to have an opinion on controversial issues and hence take up political positions that others may disagree with. The traditional image of the EU as a qualitatively different kind of international actor – an image which in the past has played a major role in public diplomacy – will now be more difficult to sustain.

One way to prevent any potentially negative effects caused by the EEAS on

the EU's core message in both the short and long-term is to more actively promote European culture around the world. This would mean putting some flesh on the bones of the rather abstract EU slogan of "unity in diversity," in order to make the essence of EU identity more tangible.

The promotion of culture in international relations does not identify opponents of interaction. So the EU identity could be strengthened in this way without at the same time strengthening the exclusive Us vs. Them type of EU diplomacy.

One could also argue that the communicative value of culture is greater than any number of glossy brochures explaining EU policies. If the EU wishes to communicate about human rights and conflict, why not complement the references to international treaties with a display of Picasso's "Guernica"? But would the EU generally dare to appeal to the emotions of foreigners rather than to their rationality?

Whereas the existence of an EU culture is doubtful, the combined cultural richness of its Member States is not. If the EU could use its external communications to actively associate itself with this cultural richness, this would be a great asset for EU public diplomacy. At the moment it is still unclear whether the EEAS will give cultural relations a special role, as the word "culture" seems to be largely absent from official documents and political debates. But whatever the future

may bring, the active involvement of the member states will be pivotal. There is a lot to be gained by gradually introducing a common European dimension into the work of the national cultural institutes in countries outside of the EU, just as is happening in other aspects of member state diplomacy. The network of EU National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC) seems to be an obvious key player in this respect, not only due to the already existing and continuously developing patterns of cooperation, but also due to its ample experience and presence on the ground in third countries.

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**Less hysteria, more listening** The ratification process for the Treaty of Europe was overshadowed by an often hysterical debate over the pros and cons of Turkey's EU membership. Greece has been turned into Europe's scapegoat in the current eurozone crisis. The continent needs to pull together when times get tough. And if it wants to play a meaningful role in North Africa, it needs to listen to the voices of people at its peripheries. By Joseph Muscat



A search for the word 'hope' in the texts of the treaties of Rome (signed 1957, came into force 1958), Schengen (1985), Luxembourg/The Hague (the Single European Act of 1986/1987), Maastricht (1992/1993), Amsterdam (1997/1999), Nice (2001/2003) and Lisbon (2007/2009), yields the result 'no matches found'. The word 'hope' occurs only once in the never-ratified 156,447-word Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe (signed in Rome in 2004, in homage to the city, caput mundi, that witnessed the signature of the Treaty of Rome forty seven years before). Now in 2011 it is difficult – as we sail perilously close to the perfect storm that is the euro crisis and the social and political strains that it is pre-

cipitating – to repress a sad smile when we revisit the resounding words of the Preamble of the Constitution. Therein we read that the European Union offers “the peoples of Europe the best chance of pursuing, with due regard for the rights of each individual and the awareness of their responsibilities towards future generations and the Earth, the great venture which makes of it a special area of human hope.”

With the wisdom of hindsight, one is tempted to say that a more sober language might have shortened the distance that separated the individuals that ultimately make up “the peoples of Europe” and the authors themselves. It is certainly the case that many of its citizens – especially if they are unemployed, but also if they are employed or pensioners but still unable to make ends meet – would, even in the pre-recessionary period in which the Constitution was drafted, have regarded the expression “a special area of human hope” as indicating a disconnection from the real world.

We must concede, however, that the very inclusion of the idea of ‘human hope’ in a constitutional document of

unprecedented political scope and cultural ambition, was in itself a noteworthy gesture, indicating an awareness that the Europe of the time was not the best it could be and that there was the potential for a better Europe beyond the present-day continent.

It is true that ‘hope’ can take on a variety of meanings, ranging from muted expectation without any concrete assurance of its fulfilment to a belief that one’s expectations will be met; a belief as unshakeable as the faith that people have in God, who is after all the “God of hope” (Romans 15:13). However, both the latter absolute idea of ‘hope’, an idea that from a post-modernist perspective appears archaic and which seems to belong to a world view that, at least since the time of the French philosopher and literary theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard, has been classified under metanarratives, and the former weak use of the word – a use that many consider as more consonant with the predominant mood of contemporary Europe – do have a common feature.

### *Idealistic weakness, humanistic strength*

Apart from implying a certain profound dissatisfaction with the world as it is, (otherwise there would be no point in hoping for a better one), underlying both the absolute and the weak variants is the conviction that (under the right circumstances, in the weaker version, and under any circumstances, in the absolute one) change for the better is possible, and indeed that a better, fairer, more socially just, world is possible. This is why, in my view, the description of Europe as

“a special area of human hope” is what gives the ultimately abandoned European Constitution of 2004 its humanistic cutting edge as well as its idealistic – and ultimately its fatal – weakness.

This is not, of course, to suggest that the Constitutional Treaty was killed off because it dared to hope for a better Europe. It failed because it was not able to adequately address the fears and problems of ordinary citizens who, already frustrated by national governments perceived as too distant from their everyday concerns, were now being presented with the prospect of an even more distant and insensitive mega-government in a possibly even bigger Union.

We should not forget that the Constitution’s ratification process took place in the shadow of an often hysterical debate about the pros and cons of Turkey’s membership. Referring to Europe as “a special area of human hope” in those circumstances – and even more so if it were to be used again in today’s circumstances – simply rubbed salt in the wounds of frustrated and angry ordinary citizens, especially in the Union’s older member states.

The word ‘hope’ somehow got lost in all the reflections and did not survive the so-called ‘period of reflection’ that began after the abandonment of the process of ratification of the Constitution following its rejection by voters in France and the Netherlands in 2005. The fact that the document was thrown out by the very people it was purporting to address should have ensured that the authors of

the Treaty of Lisbon avoided hyperbole when drafting the new version. In fact they went even further and avoided presenting a new text altogether. So the first official version of the new treaty (replacing the Constitutional Treaty) consisted of a series of amendments to the existing treaties (namely, the Maastricht Treaty a.k.a. Treaty on European Union, and the Treaty of Rome a.k.a. Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) that effectively brought them into line with the abandoned text (namely, the Constitution) without reproducing the text it purported to replace.

A comprehensive grasp of the whole was thus rendered very difficult for non-specialists. Former Italian Prime Minister, Giuliano Amato, has even suggested that the new Treaty was purposely made unreadable and invisible. The European Commission actually published the official consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in 2010, so after they had come into force (2009). The short-lived “constitutional” passage describing Europe as “a special area of human hope” was removed from these “consolidated” texts. So the reference to Europe as an oasis of hope was turned into nothing more but a regrettable and momentary lapse.

However, this has not prevented

thousands of individuals outside Europe from continuing to hope that in Europe they will find what is denied to them in their homelands. For these people, Europe continues to be a special area of human hope. It seems that no matter how hard the magician tries to make the white rabbit disappear back into the top hat, for these desperate hopefuls from some of the world’s special areas of human hopelessness, the rabbit simply refuses to vanish.

Twenty-first century Europeans are probably sceptical about Europe’s qualifications as “a special area of human hope”, particularly today, when the economic foundations of the Union are being shaken by the sovereign debt crises of some countries at the continent’s geographical margins, notably but not exclusively in the south. One expects this scepticism to be more pronounced precisely where the present crisis has erupted, in those countries that, with the wisdom of hindsight, may be regarded as the weakest links in the European financial and monetary system. The draconian corrective measures demanded by the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank, measures which

“It seems that no matter how hard the magician tries to make the white rabbit disappear back into the top hat, for these desperate hopefuls from some of the world’s special areas of human hopelessness, the rabbit simply refuses to vanish”.

are rendering life even more difficult for the working and middle classes who have already been squeezed by the slow recovery from economic recession, have exacerbated this resentment – a resentment that in some countries has often escalated to involve protests and dangerous street battles with the police.

And yet in 2005 Greece, Spain and Italy were amongst the most enthusiastic supporters of the constitutional text that hailed Europe as “a special area of human hope”. The reader will recall that when the Greek parliament ratified the European Constitution on April 19, 2005, it did so by 268 votes to 17. The Italian lower house ratified it on January 25, 2005, with 436 votes in favour to 28 against and 5 abstentions; the Italian Senate (upper house) ratified it on April 6, 2005, with 217 votes in favour and 16 against. On April 28, 2005, Spain’s lower house voted for it with 311 in favour to 19 against; in the Spanish upper house, on May 18, a majority of 225 senators voted in favour, with only 6 against and 1 abstention. This was preceded by a consultative referendum on February 20, 2005, when 77% of Spanish citizens have the green light and only 17% voted against (although the turnout was only 42%). Greece, Italy and Spain belong to the 18-strong Friends of the Constitution group, together with Austria, Belgi-

um, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Portugal and Ireland were also in favour of the text of the Constitution but opted to freeze preparations for a referendum after the French and Dutch ‘no’.

### *The South’s endorsement*

The trend was for the states that joined the Union in the 2004 enlargement or later (Romania and Bulgaria were accepted in 2007) to be enthusiastic about the Constitution. In fact, of these only the Czech Republic and Poland are not in the Friends of the Constitution group. Out of 18 members of the “Friends” group, 10, so the majority, joined in 2004 and after. The older members were split 50/50: 8 were Friends of the Constitution, and the other 8 varied in their attitude from wait-and-see to downright hostile.

In the non-enthusiastic countries, it was the voters who opposed the Constitution, even when the political classes were not against it. All Mediterranean member states except France – to the extent that one can classify France as a Mediterranean country – supported the EU Constitution, irrespective of the year they joined the EU: Spain, Italy, Malta, Cyprus, Greece and Slovenia. We have already given the results of the vote in Spain, Italy and Greece. In the Slovenian parliament, on February 1, 2005, 70 deputies voted for the Constitution with 4 against. In Cyprus, parliament ratified it with 30 votes in favour, 19 against and 1 abstention. In my country, Malta, par-

liament ratified the Constitution unanimously on July 6, 2005.

But how would ordinary Greeks, Spaniards and Italians – to mention only those that are now confronting severe debt crises – react today if they were asked whether they agree that Greece is part of “a special area of human hope”? It would seem that it had to take a crisis such as the present one to dampen the enthusiasm of the countries at Europe’s Mediterranean edge.

Cynics would say that if we are to perceive Europe as “a special area of human hope”, we would have to look at it from a very long way away. In fact, if we cross the Mediterranean, and look at Europe from North Africa or, even better, from sub-Saharan Africa, Europe is still synonymous with hope. For hundreds of thousands in Africa – not to mention in parts of Asia and Latin America – Europe is still sufficiently attractive for them to risk everything, even their life, to get there. For them Europe is still “a special area of human hope”. The position of Malta, right on the periphery of Europe and midway between North Africa and the European continent, makes it ideally placed to watch at close quarters the drama of south to north migration. It is a veritable human river, driven by conflict and famine in the migrants’ countries of origin and by the difference in population growth rates in the rich North (low growth rates), which urgently needs labour and the poor South (high growth rates), which is incapable of providing productive employment for its inhabitants in sufficient quantities to sustain

growth and development. For now we will leave to one side the critical issue of the infrastructural capacity of Malta – an Island state of just 321 sq km – when we are looking at the relatively large numbers of illegal migrants, most of whom see the Island as a transit point on their way to mainland Europe.

Admittedly, the Maltese are culturally ill-equipped to cope with African migration, although it must be noted that this is beginning to change, albeit slowly and not thanks to any significant initiative by the state. What initiatives there are come from civil society, NGOs and religious organisations. Outstanding for its attempt to understand the cultural roots of our unpreparedness – specifically the “relation between institutionalised education and ethnic minorities”, is a study by C. Calleja, B. Cauchi and M. Grech, ‘Education And Ethnic Minorities In Malta’, commissioned by the Maltese partner of e-Spices (Social Promotion of Intercultural Communication Expertise and Skills), a European project involving partners from Belgium, Germany, Greece, Malta, Poland and Turkey. The authors argue convincingly that at the roots of our difficulties in coping with African immigration is the myth of

“Cynics would say that if we are to perceive Europe as “a special area of human hope”, we would have to look at it from a very long way away.”

an unchanging and homogenous Maltese ethnic-religious identity (European and Christian) and the notion that co-existence with Africans (characterised as necessarily non-Christian) on our national territory threatens the ‘essence’ of our culture.

We should bear in mind that generations of Maltese schoolchildren have been nurtured to define their identity as the Christian opposite of a cultural Other, one located in a mythical space over the sea to the south and to the east of Malta, from where turbaned ‘Turks’ or more generally Misilmin (Muslims) were forever poised to pounce on the island. This Other was, and to a considerable extent still is, conceived as the enemy and to some extent corresponds to German philosopher Carl Schmitt’s concept of ‘the enemy’. It is quite possible that, in 2011, Maltese schoolchildren have a more vivid picture of the Great Siege of 1565 – an attempt by the Ottomans to take Malta from the Knights of St. John – than of Malta’s role in the Mediterranean theatre of operations in the Second World War.

Although this mindset will be slow to change, it is not unchangeable. The opposition Malta Labour Party is a significant political force with 34 out of 69 seats in the national parliament and 4 out of 6 seats in the European Parliament. The Malta Labour Party is a secular party in a predominantly Christian society and its members are mainly Christians. This year we decided to invite Malta’s Muslim community to celebrate Iftar, the breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan.

The community is predominantly, but not exclusively, made up of Libyan expatriates, who were all understandably worried about the fate of their families and friends in neighbouring Libya. Although there were a few sarcastic remarks and a number of hysterical reactions to the initiative, the event was very much appreciated by the Muslim guests and was openly welcomed by most Maltese Catholics and prominent Church leaders who commented on the event.

### *The myth of a never-changing identity*

If Malta is to play a meaningful and valuable role within the framework of Europe’s interest in promoting economic development, democracy and stability in the Mediterranean region and specifically in North Africa – an interest that, in my view, needs to be revisited and redefined in the light of the Arab Spring – then it must free itself from the cultural straitjacket that limits the ability of its political classes, its diplomats, businesspeople and intellectuals to understand what is happening on the southern shores of the Mediterranean and beyond, south of the Sahara. This is the homeland of most of the immigrants who risk their lives to cross the desert and sea in search of the “special area of human hope”.

Stanford historian Aron Rodrigue investigated this issue of the periphery in the work of Turkish Noble Prize winner Orhan Pamuk. Pamuk’s novels, argues

Rodrigue, reflect “the travails of the attraction and repulsion, the love hate relationship with the West that those on the periphery, those rendered to be in the periphery, feel and act, in the face of the all mighty West, reacting, emulating, imitating, adapting, adopting, or rejecting, in a kaleidoscope of the questioning of the self and the other.” The issue “spans world history” and has become “the question of our age whose different manifestations are present in the news every day.”

If Europe or indeed the West, which sees the Mediterranean region as being peripheral, is to play a meaningful role in the changes unfolding in North Africa and the Middle East, then the West has to stop listening only to its own voice, which has been the case in the past. It has to listen to the voices of the so-called periphery, without – as Edward Said taught us – distorting them to suit our prejudices and narrow interests. If we listen closely enough we will realise that the voices of the periphery are not at all peripheral. 440 years after the Great Siege the Turk Orhan Pamuk has opened a crack, allowing the light to flood in. According to Rodrigue, Orhan Pamuk has begun using his own words to write literature from his periphery. But, paradoxically and ironically, he has now been catapulted into the centre, right into the heart of the universal. Even the periphery is “a special area of human hope.”

**Joseph Muscat** is Leader of the Opposition in the Maltese parliament and leader of the Malta Labour Party.



**It's good to be different** The scientific method, democratic politics, the concept of universal values - these are palpably better concepts than those that existed previously. Not because Europeans as hosts and sponsors to these are a superior people, but because many of the ideas and philosophies that came out of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment are superior. To argue this today is, of course, to invite the charge of Eurocentrism. By Mike Hardy



**D**iscussions about what we call modernity can create a context in which we review crisis, change and tensions in our contemporary space. Modernity is the sense or the idea that the present is discontinuous with the past; that through a process of social and cultural change life in the present is fundamentally different from life in the past. We experience modernity as a proliferation of alternatives in lifestyle, of relationships or of historical possibilities. This is a very different worldview, then, from tradition, that portrays the pre-

sent as a continuous development from the past. In a traditional worldview, the present in some way repeats the forms, behaviours and events of the past. Traditional cultures see themselves as repeating a finite number of alternatives in the present; in modern cultures, the future opens up a vast field of historical and lifestyle choices.

The proliferation of alternatives is a source of stress and tension for some and hence great anxiety and often results in cultural attempts to restrict alternatives in the face of this anxiety. The 'crisis of modernity' is the sense that modernity is a problem; that traditional ways of life have been replaced with uncontrollable change and unmanageable alternatives. The crisis implies that the present is a transitional point not focussed on a clear goal in the future, but that change happens through forces outside our control. Could the Arab uprisings, protests and rioting in Greece and the UK, the anti-capitalist movements be interpreted as an expression of this crisis?

In contemporary Europe, we experience change as either progress or tran-

sition. We view our historical situation and our lives teleologically, deriving meaning and value in some unrealised future. Modernity has created a worldview in which we experience the world as composed of discrete, fragmented, and separable units. In addition, we form social groups that are largely based on abstractions, such as corporations, nations, religions or sexual preferences, race (which really is an abstract rather than a physical or biological category). As a result, membership in social groups tends to be unstable and transitory, as one can easily move between social groups. Our identities transit to complex multiples or ‘cocktails’, mixtures of a bit of this and a bit of that. Abstraction is the idea that areas of existence and culture can be separated from other areas of existence and culture.

### *An inherited “world house”*

Finally, although seeing ourselves as having lost tradition, we repeat tradition in unrecognisable forms. Modern cultures still perform traditional rituals, such as sports (which are originally religious rituals) or shaming rituals,

“What has changed is social memory; we have disconnected many of our behaviours, relationships and ideas from our collective memory of their origins and meaning.”

yet the origin and original meaning of these rituals have passed out of the culture. Modern cultures still repeat ways of thinking in the past—in fact, the bulk of modern culture is based on traditional ways of thinking repeated relatively unchanged—yet modern cultures tend to view these ways of thinking as innovations.

Although we base our social groups on abstract categories, the structure and content of these social groups are quite repetitive of the structure and content of kinship groups, in other words, we base our abstract social groups on principles derived from real, biological relationships; we do not, however, experience these social groups as real, biological relationships. So, this leads us to reflect on the view that modernity—the sense that the present is discontinuous with the past, is an illusion—and this illusion creates modernity itself.

What has changed is social memory; we have disconnected many of our behaviours, relationships and ideas from our collective memory of their origins and meaning. Take Martin Luther King Jr., for example. Though best remembered for his concern for colour, King showed that race was only one part of his broader concern with human relations at large. His ethos applies not only to the question of race, but to faith as well.

“This is the great new problem of

mankind. We have inherited [...] a great 'world house' in which we have to live together — black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu ... Because we can never again live apart, we must learn somehow to live with each other in peace."

In the same way as the headlines of the 20th century read of conflict between races, headlines in our times are full of violence between people of difference generally – including faith. So, for example, what the colour line was to the 20th century, the faith line might be to the 21st. We live at a time of conflict abroad and tension at home often in the name of religion. During King's time, extremist views ranging from white supremacy to black militancy believed that the races were better apart. Today, the same is said of division along the lines of faith. King insisted that we are always better together.

### *Belief in pluralism*

In a future 2020 European context, a mono-layered European identity is less likely (and maybe even less desirable); socio-economic and political crises, along with a deteriorating climate, will provoke increasing protectionism – essentially stronger boundaries and potential exclu-

“What the colour line was to the 20th century, the faith line might be to the 21st.”

sion. So, 'It's good to be different' might be the motto of our times. Comfort with difference, respect for pluralism, avowal of identity politics - these are regarded the hallmarks of a progressive, antiracist outlook. Belief in pluralism and the multicultural society is so much woven into the fabric of our lives that we rarely stand back to question some of its assumptions.

The British-Russian philosopher Isaiah Berlin wrote about 'value pluralism' saying, "Life may be seen through many windows none of them necessarily clear or opaque, less or more distorting than any of the others". However, for Berlin, there was no universal truth, only a variety of conflicting versions of a story: different peoples and cultures have different values, beliefs and truths, each of which may be regarded as valid. Many of these values and truths are incompatible and incomparable, lacking a common language as the basis for comparison. In this line, value pluralism could be seen as the best defence against tyranny and against ideologies, such as racism, which treated some human beings as less equal than others. This argument for pluralism is, as many have pointed out, logically flawed. A pluralist can never claim that a plural society is better, since, according to his own argument, there is no impar-

tial or universal viewpoint from which the claims of all particular cultures can be rationally assessed. Once you dispense with the idea of universal norms, then no argument can possess anything more than, at best, local validity.

Many multiculturalists argue not simply that cultural values are incommensurate, but also that different cultures should be treated with equal respect. So, different and individual experiences, culture and social contributions require public affirmation and recognition so that they can be considered socially equal.

And we at times struggle when we try, and worry about the encouragements of separatism and parallel lives when we do. To treat different cultures with equal respect we have to be able to compare one with the other. If values are incommensurate, such comparisons are simply not possible. The principle of difference cannot provide any standards that oblige us to respect the ‘difference’ of others. At best, it invites our indifference to the fate of the Other. At worst it licenses us to hate and abuse those who are different.

The idea of the equality of cultures (as opposed to the equality of human beings)

“The idea of the equality of cultures (as opposed to the equality of human beings) denies one of the critical features of human life and human history: our capacity for social, moral and technological progress.”

denies one of the critical features of human life and human history: our capacity for social, moral and technological progress. What distinguishes humans from other creatures is capacity for innovation and transformation, for making ideas and artefacts that are not simply different but also often better, than those of a previous generation or another culture. It is no coincidence that much in the modern world has been shaped by the ideas and technologies that have emerged from the Renaissance and Enlightenment.

### *Capacity for innovation and transformation*

The scientific method, democratic politics, the concept of universal values - these are palpably better concepts than those that existed previously. Not because Europeans as hosts and sponsors to these are a superior people, but because many of the ideas and philosophies that came out of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment are superior. To argue this today is, of course, to invite the charge of ‘Eurocentrism’. And to argue these without proper reference to the many other steps forward sponsored by other cultural traditions is a serious mistake.

We live in an age in which there is con-

siderable disillusionment with politics as an agency of change, and in which possibilities of social transformation seem to have receded. What is important about human beings, many have come to believe, is not their political capacity but their cultural attachments. Does the biological reality of a particular ancestry somehow make a human being incapable of living well except as a participant of that culture.

Clearly no human can live outside of culture. But to say this is not to say they have to live inside a particular one. To view humans as culture-bearing is to view them as social beings, and hence as transformative beings. It suggests that humans have the capacity for change, for progress, and for the creation of universal moral and political forms through reason and dialogue.

The end of the Cold War, the collapse of the left, the defeat of most liberation movements in the third world, the demise of social movements in the West and the powerful rumblings in the Arab world have all transformed political consciousness. Campaigning for equality means challenging accepted practices, being willing to march against the grain and believing in the possibility of social transformation. Conversely, becoming very comfortable with differences between peoples allows us to accept society as it is - it says little more than 'We live in a diverse world, enjoy it'. Consider, for

instance, the distinction made by British sociologist Tariq Modood between what he calls the 'equality of individualism' and the 'equality encompassing public ethnicity: equality as not having to hide or apologise for one's origins, family or community, but requiring others to show respect for them, and adapt public attitudes and arrangements so that the heritage they represent is encouraged rather than contemptuously expect them to wither away.'

### *A truly plural society*

A truly plural society would be one in which citizens have full freedom to pursue their different values or practices in private, while in the public sphere all citizens would be treated as political equals whatever the differences in their private lives. Today, however, pluralism has come to mean the very opposite. The right to practice a particular religion, speak a particular language, follow a particular cultural practice is seen as a public good rather than a private freedom. Different interest groups demand to have their 'differences' institutionalised in the public sphere.

Culture, faith, lifestyle, feelings - these are all aspects of our private lives and

“Profit maximisation of traditional business is replaced by profit optimisation, in conjunction with social or environmental outcomes.”

”Talk of a developed and a developing world is being replaced by the notion of a multi-polar world, where the battleground for resources, customers, talent and technology is heating up.”

should be of no concern to the state or other public authorities. A potential and powerful irony of so-called multiculturalist policies is that, as a political process, they undermine what is valuable about cultural diversity. Diversity is important, not in and of itself, but because it allows us to expand our horizons, to compare and contrast different values, beliefs and lifestyles, and make judgements upon them. In other words, because it allows us to engage in political dialogue and debate that can help create more universal values and beliefs, and a collective language of citizenship.

### *Convergence: a recipe for partnerships*

With difference and with this complex array of ideas, living together in the public domain is a challenge; it is all the more so when we reflect on the stability of our public domains.

Globalisation has lost some of its shine. Our world in 2011 appears almost out

of control; wherever we look we confront global challenges – in energy, food, finance, climate, demographics. Whose responsibility is it to solve these problems? In a developed country context, citizens look to governments to take the lead on global problem-solving, lobbied into action and held to account by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society. Talk of a developed and a developing world is being replaced by the notion of a multi-polar world, where the battleground for resources, customers, talent and technology is heating up.

The so-called multi-polar world is characterized by increasing interdependence across both geographies and the sectors, as society faces an increasing number of global challenges: climate change and debt do not recognise arbitrary borders between countries, and their impacts are indiscriminate between businesses, governments and charities. The challenges of water access and its responsible management are as strategic to beverage companies and food producers as they are to the desperately poor in India. The scourge of HIV/AIDS destroys the livelihood of a community in the same way as it destroys the productive capacity of a workforce. If no single or separable domain, be it a nation, a region or a local community, is immune to these challenges or indeed can solve them, and if the challenges themselves recognise no single

sector, the present and future is ‘convergence’ – a convergence of challenges, of approaches and of solutions.

So to the confusions of difference, the co-existence of cultures in public domains, we add the inability to avoid or isolate from global impacts. This feels more and more like a world where convergence on now has become most important of all.

So what exactly is convergence? In very practical terms, convergence is characterised by where the motivations and objectives of each sector align with the needs of society as a whole - the joining together of private enterprise with positive social, economic or environmental impacts on development. It may take many forms, sometimes driven and initiated by business or, in other instances, by civil society or government.

Such convergence is characterised by contemporary drivers: markets, outputs, scalability, sustainability. The ‘difference’ between sectors in terms of interests (profit versus benefit etc.) has become less important and less a source of anxiety.

At the same time, international NGOs are coming to terms with the notion that thinking and behaving like private enterprises may be part of the solution, as opposed to part of the problem. And governments and multi-lateral institutions are waking up to the increasing

“Leaders in all sectors – public, private and civil society, for both whole regions and local communities – will need to recognise and embrace the convergence trend and understand the important role their organisations can play in driving change”.

importance of markets and enterprise approaches to poverty reduction and to community cohesion. And when it comes to trust, businesses can learn a lot from NGOs as they look to re-build battered reputations.

### *New hybrid organisations*

Social enterprise and entrepreneurship has captured a lot of media attention in recent years. Profit maximisation of traditional business is replaced by profit optimisation, in conjunction with social or environmental outcomes. It is likely that over the coming years, convergence will drive the formation of more new hybrid organisations or corporate social enterprises whose missions will reflect a stronger commitment to creating shared values, than creating value per se (and then sharing!). Hopefully these new hybrids will take the opportunity of building on and exemplifying the best practices in all sectors.

We live in very interesting and engaging times. Living together in diverse communities facing common and globalised challenges is creating real pres-

sure on policymakers. Scarce resources may well begin to flow toward those who can demonstrate and articulate a positive socio-economic impact on a global stage and away from those whose stories are ambiguous or whose journeys are exclusive. All traditional sectors must change in this modernity. It's likely that in a converging world, global businesses will have far greater roles to play in positively impacting social outcomes than they've had to date. Harnessing and re-directing the power of the private sector for positive socio-economic impact is going to be one of the major challenges of development in the 21st century.

Leaders in all sectors – public, private and civil society, for both whole regions and local communities – will need to recognise and embrace the convergence trend and understand the important role their organisations can play in driving change. This is a challenge which cultural relations organisations are beginning to recognise and gearing up to address. This is the backcloth for the transformation of our discourse on difference.

**Mike Hardy** is Professor of Intercultural Relations and Executive Director at the Institute of Community Cohesion, Coventry University, Great Britain. He was appointed to frame and lead the British Council's global programme in intercultural dialogue, before taking up his current role.



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**Reconciling the irreconcilable** Artists are and always have been trailblazers – leading the way, seeking adventures and new horizons, sharing, exchanging, learning and wanting to use their new-found knowledge for personal growth. This spirit needs to be the fuel that drives cultural policy in European external relations. Once the internal approach is right – an understanding of Europe and a belief in Europe – then things will fall into place externally. **By Katherine Watson**



**C**ulture is a defining aspect of Europe and is seminal for a peaceful, open and democratic union. Culture (and cultural differences) is the glue that holds us together; culture defines us. It provides the way for us to live together as Europeans – with a view to a shared future.

But we are still being constantly challenged to make the case for “culture”. This is not a new challenge, but it is becoming ever more acute in the face of the public sector’s diminishing commitment to culture and the resulting reduction in funding, especially on a national level.

And it’s not just that there is less and less money available. Europe is constantly changing and is a very different place to what it was 50, 20 or 10 years ago, or even last year or last month. We have to

constantly adapt to new ways of living and working. Given this ever-changing landscape and the need to find a meaningful place for Europe in the world, the question of what role culture should play in Europe’s external relations is becoming increasingly pressing.

We are also living in times that are dominated by economic issues, and indeed these problems have become even more significant over recent weeks. Finding a response to these issues fills the heads of policy-makers and people alike, leaving little space for arts and culture. In view of the pressures on the public purse and the state’s withdrawal from the cultural sector it is now even more difficult to make the case for the importance of culture and to really anchor it at the forefront of external relations, both national and European. The fact is, culture creates connections, (but unfortunately also divisions) and promotes better mutual understanding. This is why it is a non-negotiable aspect of Europe’s external relations.

On a national level, we have often witnessed the tug-of-war between ministries of foreign affairs and ministries of culture

– a tension that increases when emphasis is placed on the instrumental value of culture rather than its invaluable role in connecting people. On a European level, we have the opportunity to resist this tension and conflict of interest and to start from a better position. We can take a fresh perspective on the role of culture in external relations simply because Europe is not a nation state seeking to brand itself in the international marketplace.

### *Looming instrumentalisation*

Traditionally, national experiences of culture in external relations or “cultural diplomacy” have been closely tied to the national interest and often to economically-driven perspectives and issues. This approach is inherently at cross-purposes with the possibility of a European or pan-national perspective and therefore seems quite unsuitable.

When considering culture and its role in European external relations, it is necessary to reconcile some seemingly irreconcilable differences and allow fresh opportunities to arise from these new challenges. There needs to be a will to significantly shift the paradigm.

Firstly, we should re-think cultural di-

“We must act according to the guiding principle that European external relations cannot consist of either a singular vision or a cacophony of 27 individual voices, perhaps all trying to sing off the same song sheet.”

plomacy in a 21st century context. The usual cultural diplomacy that we have come to know on a national level cannot be simply transferred to a European level. There is no doubt that the rationale behind cultural diplomacy – that “soft power” is a force to be reckoned with – should be welcomed. However, it makes much more sense to exploit the power of culture by using it to connect people and as a medium for exchange between equals, rather than trying to sell, promote or market one culture to another. We must act according to the guiding principle that European external relations cannot consist of either a singular vision or a cacophony of 27 individual voices, perhaps all trying to sing off the same song sheet.

There must be – and there can be – an added European value to a national perspective, allowing for complementary dual (and multiple) identities. The national identity retains its strength but is enhanced by the rich diversity of the community. It is critical to define and communicate the role of Europe in a global context in addition to the role of each individual nation (or city or region).

The shift in concept from cultural diplomacy to one of cultural exchange – a two-way flow rather than a one-way delivery – is evident on a national level. These experiences should provide models for the development of external cultural relations at a European level and for internal European support of cultural co-operation and dialogue.

Our strength lies in Europe’s cultural

plurality with its myriad opportunities for involvement that complement national external cultural relations. Surely “diplomacy” is most successful and most lasting when it plays out on a personal level, and this is precisely what cultural dialogue and exchange is all about. We live in a world of multiple identities and it is no longer worthwhile to identify solely with one facet of our individual make-up. This can and should extend to Europe. The relatively free-moving flow of people within Europe and the ease of staying connected to one’s roots in other parts of Europe or far beyond the continent’s geographic borders, via all imaginable types of media, mean that it is no longer possible, or even desirable, to shed one identity completely in favour of another.

In any event, it is never possible to completely shed one’s identity, so multiple identities should be welcomed, considered the norm and viewed in a positive light. People can and do identify with their family, their city or town, their region, their country, their familiar surroundings and the continent in which they live. Artists have always been trailblazers; leading the way, seeking adventure and new horizons, sharing, exchanging, learning and wanting to use their new-found knowledge for personal growth. This spirit needs to be the fuel that drives cultural policy in European external relations.

Once we admit to ourselves that making a plea for “culture” may be a losing battle, we should look at the role that art and culture play in a broader context. We do ourselves and artists a disservice by staying in our familiar (although now threatened) milieu. Art and culture can play a large part in dealing with current problems. We need to make the case for the value of art

and culture as a key element in solving present and future problems. Artists are not afraid to speak out about many of today’s pressing problems. Their work and their connections to a broad audience are raising the discourse to a new level, communicating the urgency of the issues at hand and pointing to possible solutions.

### *Cross-sectoral and international*

Looking at Europe’s challenges in a global context, the role of culture should not be underestimated. We should think in a way that is both cross-sectoral and international.

It would be advisable to move away from the flawed concept of a “common” European policy, which is simply the sum of its 27 parts and of all of the diverse elements which are part of each of the 27 member states. What are the truly European issues and questions that touch, connect and invariably divide the 27? What are the messages and narratives that we share, which are of course best communicated externally once they are understood and embraced internally? Once the internal approach is right – an understanding of Europe and a belief in Europe – then things will fall into place externally.

We have strong European messages and goals. In this respect we should mention the Digital Agenda as part of the Europe 2020 initiative, which has the goal of providing all Europeans with access to broadband internet by the year 2013. We have the

“There is already a great deal happening in the arts and cultural sector which can certainly be described as external cultural relations.”

technology to make this possible, but can this connection be viewed on an interpersonal level? What will bring hundreds of millions of Europeans together? I believe they will be brought together by each other and the world. This is the basic premise of Europe’s external message and culture acts as the connector.

Whose minds do we need to change in order to turn theory into practice, concept into reality? The European External Action Service (EEAS) will need to take this on board and communicate the idea of culture as a fundament of external relations. There is already a great deal happening in the arts and cultural sector which can certainly be described as external cultural relations.

This is often the work of individual artists and cultural organisations.

We should build on the experiences of artists and cultural organisations and find ways to continue to support ongoing dialogue.

EUNIC, the network of European Union cultural relations institutes, has recognised how valuable collaboration and shared European messages and goals can be in the area of cultural exchange. External cultural relations should take this wealth of experience to a higher level of “European added value”. But first doors will need to be opened within the EEAS and advocates found to champion this idea and represent it both internally and externally.

When thinking about how to develop the role of culture in the EEAS, it would be a lost opportunity to only have a specialised and probably relatively small “culture” department, and this is not something we should aspire to. Cultural experience should be brought into other domains and all team members involved in external relations will need to have intercultural skills.

More than ever before it is now time to be bold in the way we approach both culture and Europe. We need to consider present-day Europe along with the new and future Europe by being forward-thinking and not clinging on to old ideas and models that have never really worked.

**Katherine Watson** is Director of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) in Amsterdam. The ECF is an independent foundation and its work is dedicated to the two key ideas of Europe and culture. It was founded in Geneva in 1954 by some of Europe’s main “architects” of the post-war period, including Robert Schuman and Denis de Rougemont. For these European pioneers, culture played a crucial and creative role. The Foundation moved its base to the Netherlands in the early 1960s.

Seeing the world in a new light London, Athens, Madrid, Mexico City, Tunis and Cairo – the people of many cities around the world are harbouring a sense of anger against the state and the system, against the rich and globalisation. What can Europe do? Does culture have a role to play? It can show how open debate and freedom of thought are vital to a dynamic and democratic society. Europe should take advantage of these opportunities. By Mary Ann DeVlieg



‘values’, like ideologies, are in themselves subjective. Having ‘no policy’ is policy-by-default, as a lack of policy also has consequences. Ideally, a policy framework should be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for new, surprising and innovative responses and methods and new ways of looking at things.

So, which values do we want to use as the basis of Europe’s policies? Free market economy? Definitely. Social protection? Of course. We don’t want a hypocritical Europe, but one which embodies humanistic values in its treaties, conventions and charters. We want Europe to differentiate itself from other continents by upholding its social values. If we accept that public policy is a set of fundamental ideological choices that influence behaviour, then we need to create EU policies that reflect our values. Or, in the words of British historian Tony Judt, “to practice ethical politics is to show coherence between intentions and acts.”

If Europe stood for freedom of expression, it would respect the fact that most of the latest wikileaks were already in the public domain and none of them had been classified as ‘top secret’. And the six percent classified as ‘secret’ would have been

Politicians tend to be obsessed with GDP growth and the economy, while often neglecting the long-term interests and wellbeing of the majority of their people. As Will Hutton, former editor of *The Observer* writes, “There is the sensation of being impotent, of being forgotten, to see services being taken away from us with nothing in exchange and above all, of not being listened to. It is not possible to treat society as a budget line.”

Policy provides a framework for incentives and disincentives, opportunities and effective actions in support of the desired goals. All policies are value-based and

available under various freedom of information acts. So European politicians should not (as some have) call for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to be “strung up”, regardless of their thoughts about the man.

If Europe stood for respect for the life and the dignity of the individual, it would not have found seven Tunisian fishermen, who saved 44 Africans from starvation and drowning off the coast of Sicily by taking them to the island of Lampedusa, guilty of aiding illegal immigration. Previously, Europe had not brought any charges against those who had beaten African migrants to death in the same region.

### *Joined-up morality*

The British speak of ‘joined-up thinking’; but how about ‘joined-up morality’? Bankers’ bonuses and relaxation of the arms trade...no wonder people are angry. No wonder the Egyptians are saying, “We don’t need the West.”

Yet morality – like ‘democracy’ and ‘terrorism’, ‘revolutionary hero’ and ‘enemy of the state’ – can be slippery concepts. They need to be looked at more closely. Morality has to be discussed, debated and tested in real life; it needs agreement and decisiveness. “Thou shalt not kill”, “Ah yes, but, well, you know, there are cases when...”

It’s the same with democracy: ‘voting’ is not its definition. Voting is merely the end result of a whole series of preconditions such as clearly-defined and transparent options, which are understood by

an informed population who understands the complexity of their environment and the impact of their free choices. Preconditions such as a society which understands the opportunities they have to approve, amend or sanction the political direction of their representatives. Would our ideal Europe send election observers or would it focus on working with the local population to create these preconditions? If it’s the latter, then the arts and culture could have a lot to offer.

Imagination, empathy, critical thought, creativity, curiosity, an interest in complexity and analysis are all qualities that are cultivated in the arts. They are amongst the preconditions for democracy in our globally interdependent world. They help guard against the manipulation of weaker members of society and against the kind of aggressive nationalism and populism that is based on fear-mongering. They support the spread of thoughtful, questioning populations who can make democratic choices. This quality of innovative thinking based on empathy can also help decision makers and politicians to combine economic growth policies with those favouring human and social development.

However, arts and culture cannot mend what’s broken. They cannot miraculously build instant trust in people whose confidence has been systematically destroyed and replaced by cynical protectionism. But they can stimulate the mind and show that open debate, freedom of thought, concern for others and the acceptance of new ideas are essential for a dynamic and democratic society.

“No wonder people are angry.  
No wonder the Egyptians are saying, ‘We don’t need the West.’”

**The following words still ring true today. They were written by an American (or more precisely, an Irish-American), and Europe would be well-advised to heed them today:**

“Too much and too long, we seem to have surrendered community excellence and community values in the mere accumulation of material things. Our gross national product ... counts air pollution and cigarette advertising, and ambulances to clear our highways of carnage. It counts special locks for our doors and the jails for those who break them. It counts the destruction of our redwoods and the loss of our natural wonder in chaotic sprawl. It counts napalm and the cost of a nuclear warhead, and armored cars for police who fight riots in our streets. It counts Whitman's rifle and Speck's knife, and the television programs which glorify violence in order to sell toys to our children. Yet the gross national product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education, or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages; the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage; neither our wisdom nor our learning; neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country; it measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.....”

(Robert Kennedy, March 1968)

Cultural institutes and the new European External Action Service (EEAS) can work together to strengthen and provide a forum for the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights as recognised in the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon and the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity. Together, they can promote arts and culture projects that exemplify the European values of unity through diversity, cooperation and collaboration and the added value provided by working together. These are special, though not unique, aspects of the European project, and we should be proud of them. Cultural institutes and the EEAS can support the new, positive, angry movements in the arts, such as the EU-funded partner project *Sostenuto*. This project introduces a paradigm shift by uniting the arts, business, sociology, climate change, human rights and city planning in a cross-sector collaboration combined with modern management methods.

Like the new International Coalition of Arts, Human Rights and Social Justice, founded in 2010, the cultural institutes and the EU can support initiatives demonstrating our freedom to criticise society, in order to, in Martha Nussbaum's words “ask the imagination to move beyond its usual confines, to see the world in new ways.”

**Mary Ann DeVlieg** has been working in the cultural sector for more than 30 years. Since 1994 she has been the Secretary General of IETM (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts). In 2010 she co-founded the International Coalition on Arts, Human Rights and Social Justice.

Europe's dowry Europe was too small when the Arab spring of 2011 led to thousands of migrants from North Africa landing on Italy's shores. The ageing continent that invented humanism battened down the hatches. But European values are not inextricably linked to being physically part of the European continent. How can these values help Europe to develop globally? By Farid Tabarki and Rindert de Groot



“Europe has its history to give to the world as a dowry.” With these and other words, Zygmunt Bauman, a philosopher and sociologist with Polish-Jewish roots and a successful professional career in England, shows that he is truly a European. It is not surprising that he was asked to be the keynote speaker at the European Culture Congress that was held at the Centennial Hall in Wrocław, Poland from the 8th to 11th September, 2011.

This magnificent building, designed by architect Max Berg, opened in 1913, in the years when Wrocław (then Breslau) was part of the German Empire. Shortly after the Second World War, when Wrocław became part of communist Poland, the city was quickly emptied of all Germans and in front of the Centennial Hall the new lea-

ders erected a gigantic cast-iron spike, for no other reason than to make an oversized statement to the architects of the building which stood behind it.

Some sixty years later, the Centennial Hall reopened after extensive renovation. Representatives of the whole cultural spectrum of Europe gathered together, from experts to bureaucrats to “ordinary people”, providing one of the highlights of Poland's term as EU president.

Philosopher and sociologist Zygmunt Bauman left communist Poland during the government's anti-Semitic campaign in the seventies, and re-invented himself as a post-modernist thinker based in the UK. His idea of liquid modernity redefines identity as a fluid concept, no longer embedded in strong institutions and social structures. Each individual therefore has to invent his or her own identity. At the European Culture Congress, Bauman applied his theories of liquid modernity to culture in a European context and marked the occasion by making it the subject of a book, (*Culture in a Liquid Modern World*, Polity Press, 2011). One of the aspects he covers is the cultural transition from nation-building to globalisation. Migration

routes which are “formed and reformed ad-hoc” and the free flow of ideas in cyberspace lead to identity and culture no longer being tied to a specific area.

A modern or liquid Europe is therefore boundless. European culture no longer has clear geographic boundaries showing who does or doesn't belong. In other words, Europe is at the same time a political structure, an artistic continent and home to a wide variety of people – a truly fluid concept.

Some of today's leaders see Europe as a fortress that provides protection from the evil outside world and protects a rich continent with its beautiful and fragile culture. This view is erroneous for several reasons.

### *Overlapping ethnic archipelagos*

Europe was too small when the Arab spring of 2011 led to thousands of migrants from North Africa landing on Italy's shores. Rather than being thankful for an influx of people who literally had the entrepreneurial spirit to cross borders, Europe's leaders introduced restrictive measures and closed their frontiers out of fear.

The same fear can be heard in the words of the xenophobic far right who argue that immigrants are driving out their traditional culture and that the migrants' identity is incompatible with this culture. In an effort to create a pan-European ideology, Anders Breivik described in his manifesto '2083 – A European Declaration of Independence' how Europe needs to purify its society from the Islamic threat, in order not to be overtaken by it.

Zygmunt Bauman couldn't disagree more. He believes Europe is all about dealing with the Other. Solidarity may be

harder to achieve, but tolerance is an absolute prerequisite in a Europe transforming into an “agglomeration of overlapping and criss-crossing ethnic archipelagos”. This is, in fact, true for any open society. If we wanted a final, clear-cut definition of what constitutes European and national identity, we would have to re-establish a closed society. That would be a very unwise course of action, because it would destroy the uniqueness of Europe.

Throughout Europe, governments have been struggling with the concept of national identity to such an extent that they have lost sight of a European identity. It was only when there was a vote on the European Union that they felt it necessary to tell their citizens what Europe was all about, and in this they generally missed the point entirely.

In The Netherlands, the presidency of the EU in 2004 used the spectacularly uninspiring slogan: *Europe, quite important (Europa, best belangrijk)*. Rather than focusing on what Europe actually meant for people, the focus was on the concrete actions of the European Union, a rather technical business that people know little about and can't influence directly. So they focus on regulations saying that bananas can no longer be curved and the fact that they have to pay the debts of other countries – things which people are of course not going to find easy to support or identify with.

In other words, if Europe is to create a notion of itself that can in some form be used for the purposes of identification and culture, then it cannot sell what it does at

EU level to its citizens as being a way of forging identity. Nor can we view European identity as an amalgam of hundreds of millions of people who all have something in common as opposed to those people who do not live in Europe. There is really nothing that would lend itself to this purpose. Being European can therefore easily become an empty notion. The formal proceedings of the European Union seem rather incompatible with the loosely defined, liquid culture that Bauman suggests is what our current global society needs, and that Europe has to offer. Maybe we have to forget about a clear-cut definition of what Europe is, who belongs to it, and what's in it for you and me.

### *Scalable Europe*

We would like to introduce the idea of a scalable Europe. Europe is not primarily a geographical area, as it has no physical borders. Rather, it is an ideal that changes shape, depending on whether you are looking at it from a global or an individual perspective, or from something in between.

The great variety of our scalable Europe has its roots in the history of the continent. Those with a xenophobic bent may like to point out that it has a 'Judeo-Christian tradition', but this is inaccurate. It is much more typical of Europe that after centuries of religious strife, we succeeded in re-

placing religious wars with strong nation states. These still clashed, but after World War II the newly-founded European Union managed to keep violence out of the nationalist equation and turned to economic cooperation instead. Its recently liberated Eastern neighbours have fitted remarkably well into the new reality.

The result of this history is a secular continent with respect for the individual and a very strong respect for freedom of opinion. Gay couples are able to get married; women have the same rights as men and religion is respected, but will never provide a foundation for worldly power. There are still a lot of stories to be told about our history, our differences and the current problems resulting from these, and indeed these stories are being told. Culture and art are flourishing as never before, uniquely linking high art with alternative and mainstream popular culture.

In other words, history has forced tolerance upon us, as well as a strong sense that human rights and freedom of expression are a good thing, and essential for survival in an open society.

This historical 'unique selling point' is not dependent on being physically part of the European continent, no more than our history, to use Bauman's terminology, is really a 'dowry' to the world, so something that we can give away. Instead, we should understand it as a successful way of overcoming differences internally and helping us grow globally.

This history also applies at a personal level – we could call it pocket-sized Europe – just as much as for Europe's global role.

“Throughout Europe, governments have been struggling with the concept of national identity to such an extent that they have lost sight of a European identity.”

This does not mean the European Union has to be shrunk to the size of the individual, but rather that ideas, individuality and an eclectic cultural mix should be combined. It's a case of each individual finding out what Europe really means for them personally.

Frequent travellers will have noticed that one of the best ways to discover who you really are is to travel far from home. If you go to Kazakhstan, you first of all become aware of how different you are, then if you bump into a Briton or a Spaniard you suddenly realise how European you are. When you are in a strange and foreign setting you can suddenly see your own continent with the benefit of a little distance.

So this 'pocket-sized' version of Europe is all about open-mindedness. This applies to individual citizens, but is also just as valid when applied to cultural organisations or to companies. It lies in the differences between people and groups just as much as in the things that hold together a diverse culture and in the shared value of tolerance.

In order to reconcile the global and individual dimensions of Europe, we could consider some activities which would strengthen Europe's well-earned role as a secular, individualistic cultural powerhouse.

A crucial aspect for European culture is communication. We should forget about the physical boundaries of the continent, and instead realise that by exchanging with others – inside or outside the continent –

“If you go to Kazakhstan, you first of all become aware of how different you are, then if you bump into a Briton or a Spaniard you suddenly realise how European you are.”

we understand who we are and how we can fulfil our role. One possibility would be to learn Mandarin, as the ability to communicate with Chinese people can only strengthen our own identity, not weaken it. More urgently, however, Europeans need to improve their skills for communicating with their neighbours. Why not learn Finnish or Serbian? English is an important tool, but not the Holy Grail of communication, and especially not in a European context.

It's not easy to be European and constantly have to reconstruct your own individual identity and approach strange things and people in a creative and open-minded way. But although it is far from easy, we need to protect this open-mindedness. Europeans should say no to anything that restricts the free flow of ideas. For example, net neutrality (the rule that internet providers may not interfere with how a user uses the internet) should be protected.

Beautiful ideas are sometimes institutionalised into oblivion. The current lack of appeal that the European Union has for Europeans is a good example of this.

However, the notion of a scalable Europe necessitates the bringing together of all the many instances of Europe, even if they are conflicting. Although we shouldn't view the European Union as the home of European identity, it can still strengthen the cornerstone of its open-minded atti-

tudes and culture. We shouldn't hesitate to invest heavily in Europe's cultural infrastructure.

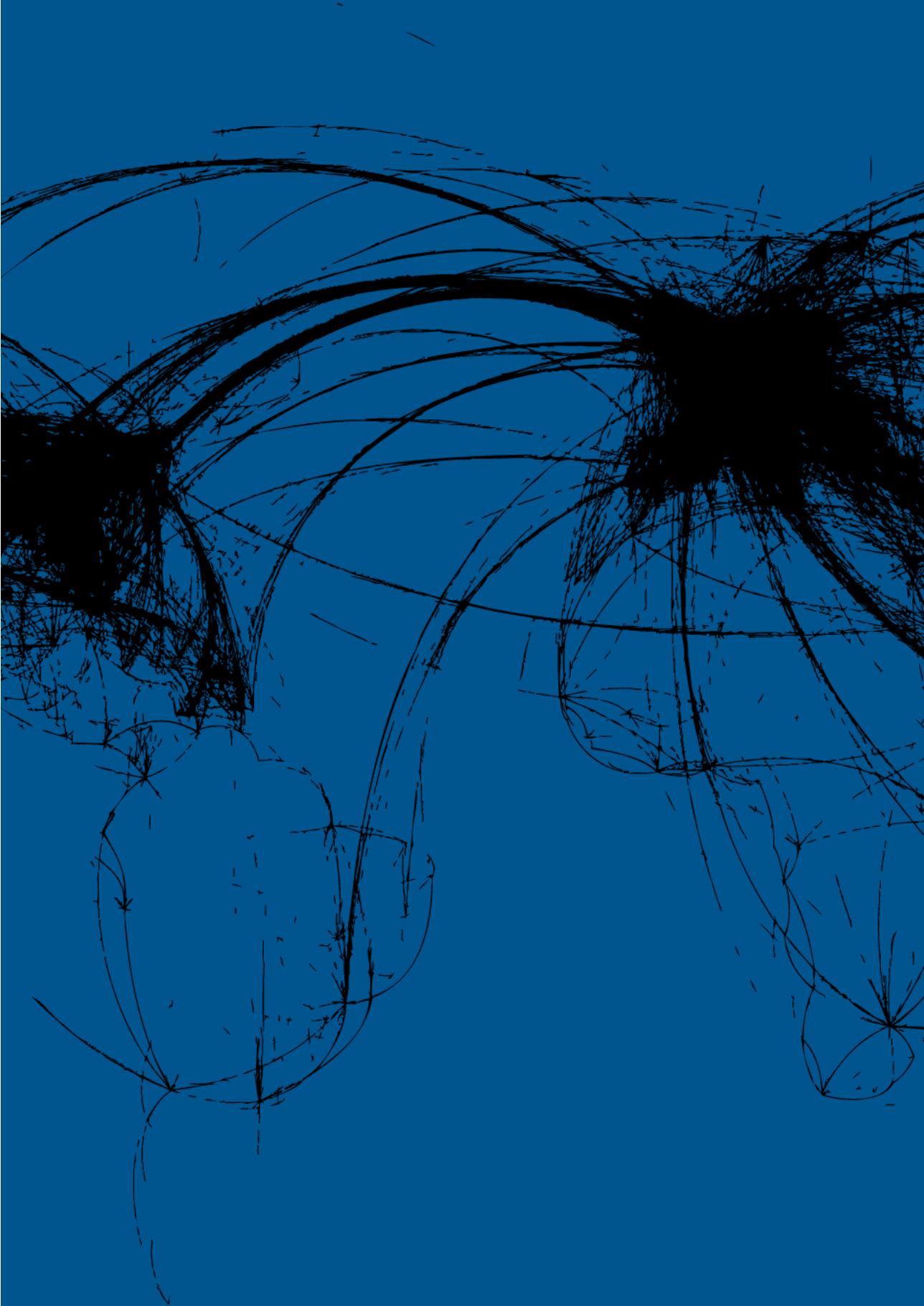
Another institution worth mentioning is the Council of Europe. Much larger than the European Union in membership, it concentrates on those values that Europe is founded on: human rights, the rule of law and democracy. It should be allowed to grow and become even more European in the process.

But we have to bear in mind Zygmunt Bauman's lessons telling us that we need a very private, non-geographical, and non-institutional approach to living a European life. An example of how to reconcile ideas with the institution is the 'A Soul for Europe' initiative. Through its lobbying activities in Brussels, it brings together representatives of culture, art, politics and civil society in a quest to find what binds us.

A lovely example of Bauman's liquid culture was on display in the Centennial Hall. Polish composer and director Krzysztof Penderecki joined forces with British electronic musician Aphex Twin. It turned out to be a very loud musical experience, with surprising twists and turns. European culture obviously doesn't need to be hidden away in silence. It's a perfect sign of what Europe is good at – a mixture of classical and pop which brings together old and young and uses cultural differences as a tool for beauty rather than conflict. And all this reaches a surprisingly large audience.

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**Rindert de Groot** develops content and concepts for different media, from books to documentaries. He founded UNISCA, an annual course in the form of a UN simulation which takes place at the University of Amsterdam. He was also the Dutch youth representative at the United Nations. He is the author of "Europe's Smallest Travel Guide" and the "Smallest Picture Book of the Netherlands".





## A new beginning for Europe – the EUNIC network

Culture and cultural policy is of strategic importance for Europe's relations with the rest of the world. Until now there has been a lack of a common, coordinated EU strategy for the role of culture in the continent's external relations. For more than a century, individual countries have been running their own organisations for cultural diplomacy. The establishment of an umbrella organisation for European cultural institutes (EUNIC) in 2006 heralded a new beginning for Europe's international cultural diplomacy and external relations. Just the fact that EUNIC's member organisations have 2000 representations around the world offers huge potential for European external cultural action. How can EUNIC help to develop a common policy for external European cultural relations?

**Singing in harmony with others** In this age of major European unification and intercultural dialogue, all cultures communicate with one another in a way that is not unlike the instruments in a classical ‘concerto grosso’. National cultural institutes should recognise that the best way for them to present their individual cultures externally is to do it in concert with all other European cultures. By Horia-Roman Patapievici



I'm writing this paper in a threefold capacity: as a member of the EUNIC presidency team for three years, as head of the Romanian Cultural Institute for two terms and as a public intellectual from a formerly communist country of the European Union. It may seem somewhat incongruous that I refer to myself in this capacity, but I am very keen to ensure that we do not lose this part of our European memory and never forget the communist catastrophe that overtook the European continent. It is also important that we retain this memory as part of our awareness of a common European identity.

Allow me to briefly summarise my experiences as head of the Romanian Cultural Institute: in 2005 I took over an insti-

tute with 7 branches abroad, out of which only three were operational; currently we have 17 fully-operational branches. Before 2005, the Institute I took charge of was at best carrying out a kind of cultural diplomacy; at worst, it was engaged in propaganda for officially-sanctioned Romanian culture.

In 2010, in a presentation on the cultural policies of recent years, British policy advisor and analyst, Rod Fischer, referred to the Romanian Cultural Institute, alongside the British Council and a few other national cultural institutes, as having undergone over recent years a true paradigm shift, moving from the promotion of national culture as a form of cultural diplomacy to the promotion of direct, people-to-people cultural cooperation between two or more cultures. What I have attempted at the Romanian Cultural Institute is to free Romanian artists and purveyors of culture from the obligation of having to be the representatives of official Romanian culture for Romanian institutions.

I have refused to continue the policy in which only those artists who represent

what the authorities consider to be “national art”, “national values” and “patriotic works of art” should be promoted. I have changed the Romanian Cultural Institute from being an institution that consecrated all things national and made artists toe the official line, into an institution that refrains from promoting and instead aims to support and facilitate. The Romanian Cultural Institute has set itself the aim of enabling direct contact between the Romanian cultural market and foreign cultural markets. In other words, we have shifted from the promotion of values by means of state propaganda (no matter how soft) to facilitating direct contacts (no matter how difficult this may be), by working with a range of partners on projects which involve different cultural markets. The mission of the Institute is not so much a desire to unify the different cultural markets (a rather undesirable utopia), but as much as possible to bring them into direct contact with each other.

You can easily imagine the resistance such a cultural policy triggers in a formerly communist country, where everything had to be “official”, “national”, “patriotic”, “partisan”, “in the service of the people” and so on and so forth. I only mention this to remind you that today’s united Euro-

pe is also made up of countries that not only have different memories to those of Western Europe but that have also had a totally different experience of the public realm and public spirit.

Institutional reform developed as a result of the intellectual, moral and value clashes that were generated by this difference between the East and West European public realms. Through these institutional changes, we have transformed the Romanian Cultural Institute from an institution of cultural propaganda and cultural diplomacy (at best) into an institution answering its cultural call by harmonising its own voice with the voices of others.

### *A clash of values*

Of course, this point of view can be rejected on purely national grounds. Ultimately, the budget of a national cultural institution is national and it reflects both a particular taxation policy and the vision of that particular nation on how it should spend its tax-payers’ money. The argument would be that it is inappropriate to spend tax-payers’ money on benefiting other cultures. This is a valid argument, in that cultural cooperation essentially leads to a “denationalisation” of the monies allocated by national institutions for national representation abroad. However, it fails to take into account the fact that major cultures, or even former cultural empires, are no longer able to go it alo-

“What I have attempted at the Romanian Cultural Institute is to free Romanian artists and purveyors of culture from the obligation of having to be the representatives of official Romanian culture for Romanian institutions.”

ne but must work together with others. The world we live in is essentially intercultural. And in the age of unavoidable contacts between cultures, national representation should take other forms, even if it is just to enable this national representation to continue.

Prior to the great post-war European unification, the great cultures gifted us a common culture. This situation can be compared to opera and its great arias – “Un bel di vedremo”, from Puccini’s “Madama Butterfly”; “Nessun dorma”, from Puccini’s “Turandot”; “Casta Diva” from Vincenzo Bellini’s “Norma”; “O mio Babino caro”, from “Gianni Schicchi” by Giacomo Puccini. All these are formidable examples of great arias that everyone knows and wants to listen to. And then there are also the pieces in between these arias which just serve to lead us towards them and highlight their uniqueness.

The great cultures, which everyone knows and wants to make their own, were like these great arias. The rest of the music was just, dare I say it, a filler, and this was the role which lesser cultures have played in the past. But today the relationship between major and minor cultures is no longer hierarchical, but dialogue-oriented. In this age of major European unification and intercultural dialogue, all cultures communicate with one another in a way that is not unlike the instruments in a concerto grosso. It is no longer the opera with its single arias that provides

us with a model for the relationship between cultures, but rather the interplay of individual instruments in a classical concerto grosso. National cultural institutes should recognise that the best way for them to present their individual cultures externally is to do it in concert with all other European cultures.

### *The birth of EUNIC*

This brings me to the moral, institutional and intellectual environment that has led to the birth of the association of national cultural institutes. What I am going to present will not be a historic reconstruction but what Karl Popper would have called a reasonable reconstruction of history.

The original idea of creating an association of national cultural institutes in Europe was mooted in 2004 and 2005 by some of the heads of national cultural institutes and a few important cultural activists. The basic premise is extremely simple: good things can happen if people decide to work together.

What could be more obvious? In 2006, EUNIC came into existence as a partnership of public organisations working in international cultural relations and co-operation, whose members, based in European Union member states, operate at arm’s length from their national governments.

“Today’s societies are no longer prepared to wait for their nation to provide them with a form of international expression.”

This basic idea, though simple, was far from naïve. It hinged on two basic findings that seem fairly obvious. The first of these is that in today's world, multipolarity tends to have the upper hand over bipolarity. The second is that today's societies are no longer prepared to wait for their nation to provide them with a form of international expression.

These two factors lead directly to two conclusions. The fact that bipolarity tends to be subordinated to multipolarity has a destabilising effect on the rigid, typically modern opposition between centre and periphery, north and south, developed countries and underdeveloped or developing countries – either by an easily-predictable relativisation or by an unpredictable but extremely interesting metamorphosis.

And the fact that today's societies tend to transcend the framework of their respective nations leads to the conclusion that traditional cultural democracy has become too narrow a framework for modern societies to achieve their goals of cultural cooperation. They prefer forms of direct cooperation over those mediated by official institutions.

These two findings and their conclusions form the foundation of EUNIC's basic concept. They provide the philosophical structure that underpins both the existence and the strategic principles of the organisation.

EUNIC's members are organisations

that meet the following criteria: they support national cultural diplomacy and act as cultural relations organisations. They are funded by the public sector and operate with a degree of autonomy from government. They work outside their home countries. EUNIC does not operate on a country or inter-governmental basis: it can, and does, have more than one member from any country. It is a question of what they do, rather than which country they come from. The "EU" in the EUNIC acronym is a geographic not a political expression. To date, EUNIC consists of 29 members from 25 EU member states, operating with a degree of autonomy or at arm's length from their governments: this "arm's length" varies from case to case, depending on the institutional architecture of the country in question.

### *EUNIC: a brief description*

EUNIC promotes European agendas and values. EUNIC is an active network encouraging members to implement shared projects at many levels. It is a learning network sharing ideas and practices between members. And it is also a partnering network working with partners including the European Commission, the Council of Europe and others around the world. It is an advocacy network raising the awareness and effectiveness of building cultural relationships between people worldwide.

EUNIC is active through an increasing diversity of projects, not only cluster-based but multi-cluster and multi-member, and advocates cultural cooperation and direct cultural relations. EUNIC members benefit from working together, formally and informally, and partnering with the European Commission as well as with other organisations. The European Commission recognises EUNIC as a source of advice and policy. Relations with the European Commission and the European External Action Service are close and supportive. In 2007, for example, the European Commission sent a letter to all its Delegations asking them to support the work of their EUNIC clusters.

Today EUNIC has over 65 clusters worldwide, carrying out over 400 shared activities in 2011. The most effective clusters develop over 10 projects a year; innovative projects that go beyond the standard arts festivals. The commonwealth of EUNIC consists of over 2,000 branches in over 130 countries, with over 25,000 staff, including over 7,000 teachers, teaching over 2 million students a year and providing over 8 million language qualifications. It is highly revealing for the EUNIC potential that in 2011, the 29 EUNIC members had a turnover of over 2.5 billion euros.

To sum up, how can EUNIC be described? EUNIC is a network, not an organisation. As with all networks, members get out of it what they put in. The

heads of EUNIC member institutes may all have their own reasons for joining the network, but all share the same desire to work together.

There is a strategic and operational added-value in their membership. EUNIC presents itself to the outside world in everything it does, not just in jointly-organised activities. It is the size and collective expertise of our member organisations that gives us our reputation and influence. One way to look at EUNIC is by comparing it with the airline alliances, such as Star Alliance and Sky Team. Each airline is independent and has its own brand, but as an alliance they come together in order to lobby as a single body, code-share (similar to our joint projects), learn from each other and strive towards similar standards (as in our teaching centres).

### *From the accidental to the strategic*

The year 2010/2011 was a decisive phase in EUNIC's growth from the accidental to the strategic. This phrase was coined by the General Secretary of the Goethe Institute, Hans-Georg Knopp, a former president of EUNIC. EUNIC's operating strategy was agreed on at a meeting of institute heads in Brussels in December 2010, and a budget was set. The strategy includes an office in Brussels, scheduled

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to open in September 2011, and a think tank designed to provide the heads with expert advice.

This strategy group has already started work and delivered its first reports at the biannual heads’ meeting in Lisbon in June 2011. At the heads’ meeting in Bucharest in June 2010, the question of membership was resolved. At present there are clear rules on the membership of clusters: every member at head level can nominate a representative in every cluster to become a full member. Cultural institutes automatically become full members. For embassies, the decision is taken centrally rather than locally (embassies can easily become associate members. This, for example, means that Switzerland and Norway can be included at cluster level).

Moreover, at the heads’ meeting in Brussels in December 2010, we voted in favour of Hosting EUNIC, a mechanism meant to “equalise” the presence of all EUNIC members in the EUNIC network. It allows EUNIC members who do not benefit from an institutional presence in an area of interest to be hosted with concrete projects by one of the institutes already present there.

Despite the fact that EUNIC is limited to the EU countries and membership is restricted to organisations based in the

EU, EUNIC members operate in over 130 countries. There are clusters in over 50 countries and the number is growing rapidly.

I would like to finish off by looking at the tasks which EUNIC may be facing from a philosophical perspective. These thoughts are a result of my experiences as a member of the EUNIC presidential team and as head of a national cultural institute. I would like to make two points.

Firstly, what I like to call the “double visibility” extended to a given society by a good cultural programme or a good cultural strategy.

### *Double visibility*

In order to clarify what I mean, let me start with a question: why would a national cultural institute invest significant amounts of its budget in cultural programmes? One of the reasons for this is clear – to promote its national culture. This is clearly a nationalistic strategy that can assume the form of soft cultural diplomacy or hard cultural propaganda. Both are legitimate objectives, though when it comes to ‘national culture’, the emphasis is different in each case. Cultural diplomacy seeks to promote national culture by emphasizing ‘culture’, while cultural propaganda promotes national culture by laying the stress on ‘national’.

In the post-WWII and post-Holocaust

period, Europe went through a very unusual phase. Western countries decided not to behave in a Hobbesian way, involving being perpetual enemies in a never-ending war. The result of this was the creation of the European Community. The desire for unity became the centre point of joint economic cooperation.

After 1989, the collapse of the communist regimes made it possible for the whole of Europe to be peacefully united for the very first time, despite the historical conflicts between religious, political and cultural traditions which are still going on to this day. The European Community became a European Union, an entity that is at heart a political and profound institutional cooperation among member states. A union that was founded for the purposes of economic cooperation had developed into a institutional, political union.

In these circumstances, cultural diplomacy tends to turn into overly-rigid cultural promotion centred on the idea of the nation state. Why is it “overly-rigid”? Because the most important contact processes within the European Union are no longer based on propaganda and promotion. Rather, they are geared towards direct cooperation. It is not nation states that foster direct contact, but their societies and cultural markets.

Post-modern societies transcend the borders of nation states that used to present the only opportunity for international representation. Now societies repre-

sent themselves and transcend national borders with their culture of contact and direct relationships with other cultures in their main markets. We are unconsciously witnessing a paradigm shift that is gradually being embraced by everyone who is engaged in the cultural sector. National cultural institutes are increasingly moving away from traditional cultural diplomacy into direct people-to-people cooperation.

National cultural institutes must be alert to, and conscious of, these developments. A consequence of this shift is the answer to the question: ‘Who and what does a cultural programme make visible?’ During the days of cultural propaganda, a cultural programme made visible a given cultural ideology, namely, a particular official’s view of the country’s national culture. In times of softer cultural diplomacy, a cultural programme makes visible a given cultural identity, namely, a certain vision of institutions with regard to a given society’s or nations’ cultural identity.

Nowadays, in these times of direct cultural cooperation, a cultural programme makes visible cultural aspects of a given society from the ground up. This provides us with what could be called a vision of ‘a society’s cultural anatomy’. And, as direct cultural cooperation is based on equality, a double visibility is achieved: both the source and the target society in-

“A well-functioning national cultural institute will make sure it makes the culture it is involved with visible to the society it represents.”

volved become visible via a good cultural cooperation programme. Both the offer and the acceptance become visible in the process of giving. Cultural cooperation programmes mean that both societies become visible to each other.

### *A society's cultural anatomy*

From this, a well-functioning national cultural institute will make sure it makes the culture it is involved with visible to the society it represents. If I open a Romanian Cultural Institute in South Africa, it must not only represent Romanian culture in South Africa, but also offer an image of South African society in Romania. If the programmes I am working on do not make South African society visible to Romanians, then I have failed. I believe this is the only possible view that can be held by a modern cultural institute.

This new situation obviously represents an advance in our knowledge, even if this progress is more of a possibility than an obligation. What is really relevant though is that, at least in principle, a given society's most hidden and deepest realms can become visible to another society's artists and cultural proponents. Cultural institutes can make intelligent use of this potential resource. Cultural programmes can be much more than just the presentation and representation mechanisms of the arts showcase. They can be used as in-

telligent instruments of knowledge, both with a view to investing cognitive content into today's generalised democracy, and to offering the double cultural visibility that is in such demand in modern society.

Secondly, cultural institutes need to have the right attitude towards culture. As I mentioned earlier, the promotion of culture by institutions has been through several stages: instrumentalisation by the state, cultural propaganda, cultural diplomacy, and cultural cooperation. A possible future could consist of creating direct contacts between cultural markets. This cooperation would allow for the separation of the market's value-oriented criteria, but would not mean an aggregation of the markets or the value-oriented criteria. In this way there would be even more profound cultural contact that goes beyond cultural cooperation in the same way that cultural cooperation goes beyond cultural diplomacy. It is about creating contacts between cultural markets, without dissolving them into one single market. In our specialist jargon we say that we are developing an approach with a "common theme" and "local implementation". But it is in fact much more than this.

EUNIC will find itself confronted by increasingly unified cultural markets within Europe, while outside Europe it will come up against cultural markets that are either indifferent or hostile to unification, or tightly bound up in the centre/periphery, developed/backward dialectics.

EUNIC will be unable to respond in a uniform way to these deeply diverse challenges. A policy strategy is needed with no hidden agenda, no matter how progressive that agenda may be. Outside Europe, EUNIC should act like an old and valuable mirror that reflects local societies. The activities of EUNIC members should make visible to Europe the irreducible specificity of non-European cultures. Of course, EUNIC is going to promote European values and topics. But if it wants to penetrate into local societies, it will have to put aside its know-it-all attitude that implies EUNIC is on the side of progress while the others are still unknowingly trapped in their backwardness. Through the eyes of EUNIC clusters outside Europe we should see not nations, but their societies.

### *A policy strategy with no hidden agenda*

Within Europe, the task of EUNIC might be to contribute culturally to the content of European identity. This is already happening. In Bucharest, for instance, I have noticed the emergence of a strong feeling of unity and solidarity. This is the result of something as simple as establishing regular meetings between the directors of all active cultural institutes in Romania's capital. Getting to know each other has resulted in new ideas, not the other way round. The founding of each EUNIC cluster is based on friendship, which is perhaps not so paradoxical. It is not only knowledge, abilities and skills that are important, but also warm rela-

“For us as Europeans, EUNIC is a laboratory where experiments are carried out on the moral and intellectual relationships that will form the foundation of the new European identity.”

tionships. This sense of friendship can spread through society in a more lasting way than any skills that have been passed on. I believe building capacities should be seen as the development of friendly relationships.

I like to point out imponderable things because they are rarely discussed, if at all. In South Africa, where I headed up EUNIC regional office for sub-Saharan Africa, I heard philosopher and political scientist Achille Mbembe say that he'd had enough of Africans being treated like starving people. “We don't want culture as a compassion surrogate for our caved-in stomachs.” Mbembe severely criticised the instrumentalisation of culture. What I mean is that, in some instances, even the soft power of certain cultural programmes is too hard. This should provide food for thought. There are times when even compassion is a sign of arrogance. EUNIC has the momentous opportunity to build programmes outside Europe that can create direct contacts between cultural markets rather than between specialised cultural institutes.

Through the nature of its activity and its capacity to extract the tacit knowledge

of a cultural environment, EUNIC has many keys at its disposal, most of them still undiscovered.

I have a feeling that not even those of us who are directly involved in setting up and consolidating our network really have a clear view of the huge range of possibilities offered by our EUNIC project. We talk about cultural programmes, cooperation, capacity building, unifying and creating contacts between cultural markets, but there is much more to it than that. In many ways, EUNIC is a laboratory for the future.

For us as Europeans, EUNIC is a laboratory where experiments are carried out on the moral and intellectual relationships that will form the foundation of a new European identity. EUNIC is making its own modest but direct contribution to the shaping of a new European identity, and to testing out the moral equality of all the European actors, irrespective of the initial inequality of their resources. Today's Europe does not look like yesterday's, and the society created by the EU looks more like the one described by Avishai Margalit in *The Decent Society* than the one described by Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*. EUNIC's contribution to shaping a decent society in Europe is a most important one.

For societies outside Europe, I like to think that EUNIC is already a laboratory that is trying to achieve “double visibility”. This is what makes me so optimistic as far as EUNIC is concerned. It is not just a union of national cultural institutes. If used properly, it can be an instrument for extracting the tacit knowledge that

lies buried in the cultural practices of a given society.

At its best, EUNIC embodies global creativity born out of joining together local initiatives. You never know how much you can achieve until you join forces. EUNIC allows the type of creativity to emerge that even creative people do not see before they realise by virtue of their own work how creative they actually are.

But this remarkable potential will not be fully capitalised upon unless EUNIC and our national cultural institutes observe a few simple, yet vital, rules which I picked up from all corners of the globe during my year as EUNIC president. I have brought together ten of these rules to create a Ten Commandments of Good Practice that should be observed by every good national cultural institute in Europe:

- 1 Never act alone
- 2 Always strive for cooperation
- 3 Don't be patronising
- 4 Make it possible
- 5 Be part of it
- 6 Get involved
- 7 Be committed
- 8 Make friends
- 9 Make yourself known by making others known
- 10 Get to know others by making them known

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# No panacea

The EU thinks in terms of industries, systems and sectors. But culture is not some kind of social system or industry sector. Rather, it is the foundation, the modus operandi, the treble clef which sets the tone for society's systems as a whole. What does this mean for a common European foreign cultural policy and how can such a policy benefit from this?

By Berthold Franke



Anyone who is new to Brussels and to the business of the European Union will have a special kind of experience whenever they hear the word “culture”. There is barely an event, symposium or congress where this word fails to crop up, and sometimes (though less often) whole lectures and debates are dedicated to this theme.

But “culture” always seems to be dealt with in the same way as a business sector or industry. The arguments generally run along the lines that something must be done for culture so that culture is then in a position to achieve this, that or the other; that Europe and its culture are something special and the EU should display more commitment to this area, and so on. If you listen closely, you realise they could

be talking about any industry, like agriculture, fisheries or energy – it's only the headings which are different.

If I interpret it correctly, it seems to me that this way of talking exposes an error of categorisation: culture can never be understood in terms of sectors, but has to be conceptualised in a much more fundamental way. Culture is not some kind of social system or sector of industry. Rather, it is the foundation, the modus operandi, the treble clef which sets the tone for society's systems as a whole. In his 2007 essay entitled “A Culture of Freedom. Ancient Greece and the Origins of Europe”, historian Christian Meier wrote:

*“Cultures provide ways for people to organise their world, both in terms of their environment and themselves. This not only means adapting to different technologies and systems and different forms of civilised behaviour and human development, but it is also a question of finding one's way in the world in the right way, so that the world goes along with the assumption that things are as they should be.”*

In this sense, culture is “always there”. It is the process which underlies all shared human existence and which provides the channels for this existence to play out, depending on the particular place, com-

munity or nation, social class or historical situation. When we express something we use language, and so we are of necessity bound by that language's parameters, but at the same time we can shape the language afresh every time we use it. In the same way, we are always part of culture in everything that we do, and of course are constantly changing that too. This is why culture can never be thought of as a sector, industry or social sub-system.

A good indicator of the misguided concept of culture which prevails in the EU is the way the word has become fashionable and hugely over-used in the creative industries and how it has become such a major focus of attention over recent years. So in fact there is a sector: designers, architects, fashion, etc. and their associated businesses. This provides the necessary degree of concreteness to give bureaucrats a foot in the door, along with the longed-for stage on which to parade value creation, employment and other factors which can be reflected in GDP. But I think things are different when it comes to culture.

I believe it is no accident that this way of looking at culture is so popular in EU circles. The EU thinks in terms of industries, systems and sectors. This is how it has been set up and this is how it views reality. This is the price to be paid for the fact that up to now the EU has basically existed as a bureaucracy rather than as a

“A good indicator of the misguided concept of culture which prevails in the EU is the way the word has become fashionable and hugely over-used in the creative industries”

political project, and certainly not as a cultural project. This is a criticism which has been made about it often enough, so there is no need to repeat it again here, but just to state it as a fact.

When we look at what is happening in Brussels we can make another observation: whenever Europe's official representatives talk about culture – usually with the best of intentions – a strange thing seems to happen with remarkable regularity. They all seem to claim that culture is something wonderful and magnificent that enriches people and their lives (they seem to have in mind a huge playground for artists and intellectuals, for debates and events, where, as we say in Germany, “das Gute, Wahre und Schöne” (the Good, the True and the Beautiful) can be nurtured). They then love to whole-heartedly proclaim that this wonderful culture should now be applied wherever things are not going so well.

### *An ambivalent relationship*

So “culture” is constantly being bestowed with wondrous, almost supernatural powers along the lines of: we have a problem here, we're not getting along, we have a clash of opposites, there is social and economic unrest and all the usual remedies from politicians and social workers have had no effect. So let's try throwing in a bit of culture and everything will be just fine – culture will sort it all out! It seems to me that “culture” is being treated as a kind of miracle cure with almost magical properties.

Of course this kind of talk is not an EU invention; rather it is a symptom of the ambivalent relationship between politics and culture in many modern democra-

cies. As far as the Goethe Institute is concerned, this can also be said of German foreign cultural policy. This is reflected in the way our foreign office politicians regularly seem to espouse the idea – with the best of intentions – that “Germany still doesn’t have enough friends around the world, but the Goethe Institute will make these friends for us”. Or: “Germany wants to sell its manufactured goods all over the world – so throwing in a bit of Beethoven or Habermas won’t do any harm.” Or: “We need to upgrade our relations with such-and-such an important partner country, so let’s bundle together parts of our culture to show it off in some ‘Germany Weeks’”.

To say the least, I think this is a fundamental misunderstanding which has arisen from the mistaken categorisation of culture which was discussed earlier. If it is true that culture should be seen as something more radical than just a kind of social sticking plaster, then culture won’t let itself be exploited in this way. It means that culture as a whole can be “applied” or “employed” to a much lesser extent than was previously thought. It also sends the rather disturbing message that – despite so many claims to the contrary – culture is not always “one of the good guys”.

A more appropriate and radical idea of culture means that culture is no longer innocent – quite the opposite in fact. Culture is not a priori good or bad, but is a part of the fabric of all social action. Unfortunately it is more often part of the problem than part of the solution. Who would deny that such issues as fundamentalism, racism or even the new right-wing populism which is gaining ground in Europe are anything other than cultural phenomena? Let’s take this one step further – isn’t it true to say that war is in fact culture in the most ex-

treme sense of the word? But all this means that we, and particularly the EU, have to make a fundamental shift in our political understanding of culture. Anyone who takes European culture to countries outside Europe, to North Africa for example, is soon going to find out that our culture is generally viewed in a very ambivalent way. It is seen as being a bearer of great humanitarianism, while at the same time bearing the stigma of colonial oppression. Culture is simultaneously guilty and innocent, and we have to reflect this dichotomy by being particularly self-critical when we turn up somewhere with our European culture.

### *New instruments and institutions*

In the meantime, the EU is changing: the reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty have brought with them new tasks and different institutional configurations. The European Parliament now has more powers (though it remains to be seen whether it actually has more power), and its members have developed a new sense of self-confidence. Apparently all the well-known shortcomings in the area of foreign policy will now be sorted out. With the creation of the position of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the establishment of the European External Action Service, new instruments and

“They then love to wholeheartedly proclaim that this wonderful culture should be applied wherever things are not going so well”

institutions for the EU's external representation have been unveiled to the world.

If the member states really had the political will, there would now be no more obstacles to prevent them speaking to the international business world with a strong and unified voice. But could they also speak with one voice when it comes to culture?

It is stated quite clearly in the Lisbon Treaty that culture is not part of the EU's remit. And first indications from the nascent European External Action Service do not suggest that it has any particular plans for a European foreign cultural policy. But on the other hand, this does not mean that these newly-established EU institutions will keep their fingers totally out of cultural affairs. On the contrary, I tend to think that the wide scope of cultural issues will provide the new European diplomats with a major sphere of activity. Indeed, many EU delegations have already set up cultural or quasi-cultural projects in poorer countries under the banner of development cooperation. Unfortunately, these have generally not been organised in a very professional manner, often just throwing around too much money and sometimes displaying a barely-concealed spirit of paternalism.

We can expect to see more and more of these kinds of initiatives, not only in the poorer countries, and of course not just because diplomats understandably love to cut the coloured tape at exhibition openings, see themselves listed as patrons in catalogues and adorn their receptions with invitations to prominent artists.

### *Sherpas in pin-stripes*

Indeed, there are good professional reasons for engaging with culture, as is apparent from the paradigm change which has taken place in the area of diplomacy. These days, the traditional functions of diplomacy, such as representing international law and reporting back to the home country are fading more and more into the background (80 percent of intelligence information is nowadays gleaned from the internet). And those activities which were traditionally the focal point for foreign trade representatives in post-war Europe have also become less prominent. This is because of an increasingly balanced multilateralism in worldwide institutions and a new culture of direct relations between governments, as evidenced by the global continuum of all kinds of summit meetings. Diplomats are largely left out in the cold, or just find themselves playing the role of Sherpa.

But otherwise they are working on new forms of diplomacy, in the areas of communication, media and – culture! The magic words are “cultural diplomacy”. Good diplomats have to strive to get results in the public domain of their host countries, where they try to position themselves as being credible representatives of their nation and its interests. “Soft power” is the second buzzword of this new approach, and this is where EU diplomacy will be looking for opportunities. This is how Europe hopes to present an international image of being a peaceful continent which is committed to human rights, development and dialogue. Its foreign diplomats will act accordingly, not just because of their personal commitment to this mission but also because, for the time being,

“hard power” will remain with national representatives.

So does cultural diplomacy also form a hidden agenda for the new EU delegations, in particular of course in non-European countries? This certainly seems to be supported by the fact that this form of diplomacy will end up being a major part of the European External Action Service’s portfolio, which is still being drawn up. In principle, this would not be a problem, if it were not for the fact that experience has shown us that the words cultural and diplomacy to some extent present us with an unsolvable paradox. Diplomacy is about politics and even if it is not part of a power game it is at the very least a legitimate representation of interests, if not indeed part of the power game. Even if its aims are to achieve understanding and cooperation within the democratic spectrum, it is still part of the paradigm of national interests and it will always be viewed as such.

On the other hand, culture – in the sense outlined above – needs the freedom and openness of a radical reflection such as can be found in bold artistic action or intellectual debate free from taboos and restrictions. This is where diplomacy really reaches its limits, bound as it is by its ineluctable professional code of consideration, protocol and procedure (which in themselves have a high cultural value!). In isolated cases it may be possible to fill the credibility gap resulting from this paradox at the heart of cultural diplomacy – mainly through charismatic individuals – but generally it is just a case of trying to square the circle and has other consequences for the system as a whole. In short, these consequences entail a structured removal of diplomacy from Europe’s and the EU’s cultural dialogue. It has even got to the point

“Europe’s international cultural image and activities would be more successful if they were conceived and carried out without diplomatic influence.”

where the argument has been made that Europe’s international cultural image and activities would be more successful if they were conceived and carried out without diplomatic influence. This point of view is supported by professional experience. The story of the Goethe Institute also proves that it makes sense to design international cultural exchange programmes without diplomatic influence. The Institute is an official, but independent, intermediary organisation which has links to foreign policy contractually and within a clear set of rules of engagement but which sets its own quality standards and makes its own decisions in terms of content.

At first this particularly German structure was faced with a dilemma because of the way Germany’s cultural reputation had been destroyed by the war and the political and cultural catastrophe of Nazi rule. The new idea of having a Goethe Institute which was free of diplomatic influence arose from an anti-state movement (after the disaster of National Socialism’s centralisation of culture, which had been previously unknown in Germany, people hearkened back to a more traditional German federalism). The new approach systematically set out to restore the country’s destroyed credibility in the long-term by means of non-governmental action which was directly rooted in culture, art and the mind and spirit.

These post-war problems have now

been resolved. The benefits which have accrued from the way German foreign cultural policy has been set up are still having an effect, despite the fact that the world is now politically a different place. If we now take stock on the occasion of the Goethe Institute's 60th anniversary, we can say with some justification that its greatest successes have tended to come at times when it has consistently acted as a non-diplomatic organisation.

Despite their histories being quite different to that of Germany, many other European countries have decided to set up their national cultural organisations along similar lines. EUNIC, the European Union National Institutes for Culture, provides an EU framework for all these different national institutes, and it stresses that its operations are not necessarily part of the diplomatic process. Joint, multilateral actions also offer institutes that are more closely linked to diplomacy a chance to act more independently and keep official foreign policy at arm's length (without wishing to call into the question the right of politicians to draw up policy guidelines). This is how EUNIC can make a strong contribution to the EU.

### *On-the-spot*

The map showing the locations of the various EUNIC cultural institutes around the world paints an impressive picture. The potential is clear, not only in the sheer number of offices, but also in the dense network of contacts which have been built up over many years. Our institutes are on-the-spot, we know the local scene and wherever possible we are part of it, right at the heart of civil society. Inter-

nally, EUNIC can provide its institutional partners in the EU with reports, access and contacts; while externally the EUNIC institutes stand for credibility, sustainability and creativity.

The times of bilateral showcase events are long gone. Important issues for the future now have to be dealt with in a way that is both interdisciplinary and with multiple perspectives. However, multilateralism is not just a method; it is at the same time a hands-on way of getting to grips with the diversity that we are always hearing about. The mere fact of so many individual players coming together under one European banner is proof positive of how specific EUNIC projects can reflect core European values.

As things stand, the omens for culture in the EU are not particularly auspicious. "Agenda 2020" and the prospect of a stagnant budget over the next seven-year financial period send out a clear message and are currently causing pessimistic noises to emanate from the Commission. But a new ally has appeared in the shape of the European Parliament. Early in 2010 its Culture Committee published its "Report on the Cultural Dimensions of the EU's External Actions" – to all intents and purposes with the new diplomatic service in mind – which called for serious efforts to be made in the area of an EU foreign cultural policy (even though such a thing is not officially allowed!).

EUNIC presents an outstanding opportunity, not just for Europe's national cultural institutes (and particularly for the institutes of smaller countries which find that arenas and spheres of activity are being opened up to them through their partnership with larger institutes that they would never have had access to before with their

own limited means). And it seems that many EU bureaucrats are now starting to recognise these opportunities. They have now not only grasped the fact that national cultural institutes now have a lobbying umbrella organisation (just like European handball players or the textile industry), but also that this organisation can potentially become a uniquely-qualified partner.

The usual methods of the EU Commission which involve projects and funding aimed at civil society are still basically the right approach: stimulating and encouraging projects at grass-roots level. But in countries outside of Europe these kinds of projects have to be set up quite differently from those at home, they need to be developed on the ground and realised by means of fair partnerships. It is precisely here that EUNIC can find its new role, by acting as a creative intermediary with the right partners.

At the moment there is a window of opportunity open, but it may not stay open for much longer. EUNIC has to act quickly if it wants to take advantage of these opportunities. This also requires some shrewd self-assessment, because it is clear that EUNIC will never be the kind of organisation that many strategists dream of: a powerful European institution with a strong base and a dynamic and efficient network of offices all over the world that enjoy the same kind of relationship as the Goethe Institute's offices abroad have with their parent in Munich. So we have to quickly prove that we have a certain degree of flexibility and efficiency. Some quite respectable pilot projects are to be announced in the area of encouraging multilingualism. It can be assumed that this is an area which will be a priority for EUNIC's work within Europe in the immediate future.

Another field of activity could be the area of international cultural education. A European scholarship and training programme, certified by EUNIC (perhaps also in collaboration with appropriate universities) with internships at the head offices of the various EUNIC member institutes in various countries and a period spent in Brussels would be a tempting offer for many young people who are interested in pursuing a career in culture. But more importantly, the current challenge of quickly delivering high-quality projects in the southern Mediterranean region and its new developing countries is becoming something of a stress or litmus test. Much of EUNIC's future depends on this challenge being successfully met.

We do not need a crystal ball to predict that this new offspring of the European project, like all those which have gone before it, will have to suffer the usual European birth pains and childhood illnesses. It would be a miracle if it were otherwise. For EUNIC, like for every other European project, success will only be achieved by thinking and acting in a way that is simultaneously realistic and utopian.

**Berthold Franke** is Head of the Brussels Office of the Goethe Institute and of the South West Europe region. He is also the Goethe Institute's representative at the EU.

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**Evrópa:** næstminnsta heimsálfjarðar; nær yflr vestasta hluta: 697 mljó.<sup>88</sup>

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**Focusing on its strengths** Its history, culture and the peaceful orientation of its foreign policies are all valuable assets that Europe should put to good use. The goal of any credible and effective cultural diplomacy should be the development of relations based on sustainable cultural exchange. In order to build trust, we need to promote a cooperative approach at institutional and civil society level. The EUNIC network is the ideal instrument for this purpose. **By Delphine Borione**



**A**t a time when economic systems, trade and production are all becoming increasingly globalised, it is more important than ever before to promote culture in order to counter the risk of increasing uniformity and the loss of individual identity. To meet the challenges of the modern world we need to develop European foreign policies that promote cultural and linguistic diversity and a dialogue between cultures as part of an integrative approach. To do this we need to focus on common values such as the rule of law, freedom of opinion, human rights and peace.

For Europe the goal of any credible, ef-

fective cultural diplomacy must be the development of relations based on sustainable cultural exchange and built on a foundation of reciprocity, understanding, respect, the exchange of ideas and knowledge, as well as openness towards other people and cultures. In order to build trust, we need to promote a cooperative approach at institutional and civil society level. The EUNIC network of European cultural institutes, which meets this need for dialogue between cultures and a higher degree of cultural exchange between civil societies in Europe and the world, is the ideal instrument for this purpose. Europe has a lot to offer the world but it also has much to gain. Working in a spirit of partnership is therefore to the advantage of all concerned.

The development of a European foreign cultural strategy must build on the steps taken by the Union and its member states when they adopted the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. This strategy should be further developed by defining a framework for cultural cooperation in which existing funding and cooperation instruments are integrated. Culture should also be seen as a part of economic and social

development so that, as a key component of any partnership between the EU and other countries, it is guaranteed sufficient funding in the future.

Along with other countries and international organisations, France has endorsed the Convention's project and supported a foreign cultural policy in which the 2005 UNESCO Convention acts as a pillar for steering cultural issues worldwide. In effect, the UNESCO Convention which has been ratified by the European Union and 25 of its member states, has established a new and ambitious framework for international cultural cooperation in two important respects.

Firstly, it recognises the distinctive nature of cultural activities, goods and services that “convey identities, values and meaning”, as stated in the preamble, and secondly, it promotes the permanent establishment of more extensive and more consistent cultural exchanges. The influence of the UNESCO Convention on the European approach to culture is clearly expressed in the definition of the strategic orientation of EU external relations as one of the three objectives of the European Culture Programme (2007-2013) and as one of its own objectives in its work plans. As a result, every future European strategy in the area of culture as well as at the level of regional, bilateral and multilateral EU relations needs to be developed with the UNESCO Convention in mind. This will also help to provide a frame of reference for the Union's dealings with other countries in cultural

matters, including audio-visual media and film. With the help of the protocols on cultural cooperation Europe needs to develop a global, yet at the same time tailored strategy for dealing with other countries which will maintain the autonomy of the cultural sector while guaranteeing the implementation of an ambitious and coherent European cultural policy.

### *The process of reflection is underway*

To this end, we should give priority to a strategic, cross-functional concept of culture in our external relations. The European Union started a process of reflection on cultural issues with the ratification of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, with the European Culture Programme (2007-2013) and its resulting work plans, the conclusions of the Council under the French presidency in 2008 on the protection and promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in EU foreign relations and also with the recently published report on these issues from the European Union.

At present it is clear that the common mechanisms are serving to deal with culture in a fragmented and inconsistent way. These mechanisms are badly suited to the needs of those involved and are insufficient to achieve the objectives of genuine European cultural diplomacy. The number and complexity of these intervention mechanisms need to be carefully reassessed wi-

“Culture should also be seen as a part of economic and social development.”

thin a strategic framework. In terms of the Union's budget, the low level of funding is evidence of the lack of interest in cultural issues at the very highest level.

Culture should be the stimulus behind all current cross-functional programmes and policy approaches. Culture is a key element in human, social and economic development and the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity can also contribute to the realisation of wider goals, such as the promotion of democratic values or human rights, as well as playing a role in conflict management or in sex equality issues. Culture should be involved in European Union policies and foreign policy mechanisms relating to all these aspects, especially in key regions such as the Union's neighbouring countries, the ACP countries and the emerging economies.

In terms of future budget planning and financial instruments, the European Commission and member states need to consider how EU cultural measures can be expanded and how the coordination of activities by member states and national European cultural institutes can be improved. Funding methods should also be better adapted to the needs to those involved, as the particular nature of cultural issues often means that although limited funding may be required, it needs to be provided via various different funding methods. Above all, European programmes should give more support to the structuring of the cultural sector and the mobility of artists. The current challenge is to ensure that culture is given appropriate consideration by setting up well-defined objectives and processes for future budget

“The current mechanisms are badly suited to the needs of those involved and are insufficient to achieve the objectives of genuine European cultural diplomacy.”

planning and with a view to developing financial instruments for external funding.

Europe needs to focus on its strengths. The history of our nations, our cultural heritage, the cultural appeal that Europe has for people all over the world and the overriding peaceful nature of our foreign policies are all valuable assets and we should see it as our duty to put these assets to profitable use.

It needs to think about new developments at institutional level that will contribute to improving the coordination of cultural cooperation and creating a better dialogue with partner countries.

### *Involvement of EU delegations*

Within the framework of EUNIC, the individual networks of cultural institutes in the various European countries serve both individually and together as both the fulcrum and interface of European cultural diplomacy. The commitment to common projects and the creation of effective partnerships are vital for the success of common activities and programmes. A good example is the Intradance Festival in Russia which brings together over 100 European and Russian contemporary dance groups from 18 countries. This is the result of a joint initiative between the French Institute in Moscow, the Goethe-Institut, the British Council, the Camões Institute and the Ita-

lian Cultural Institute and is supported by significant amounts of European funding.

The experience of the European Commission also offers huge potential. In the medium term it would be a good idea to reassess the potential role of the European External Action Service in EU foreign cultural policy, of course working in close cooperation with the relevant bodies at the Commission. The EU delegations could also be involved in this, especially in terms of dialogue with partner countries. This would require each country to nominate a contact person responsible for “culture and development”. In developing countries this would fall under the remit of the cooperation body. This new mechanism could lead to an improvement in liaison and cooperation as well as in the complementarity of actions taken by the Commission, the European External Action Service, member states and the EUNIC network.

The principle of subsidiarity clearly applies here, along with the principle of the EU’s responsibility to provide support. This could therefore result in effective, pan-European links between the leading organisations for cultural diplomacy in each individual member state as well as joint cultural diplomacy carried out at EU level with particular emphasis on those measures supported by the EUNIC network.

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Softly, softly towards a green revolution Whether it's the Slow Food movement or the designation of biosphere reserves as World Heritage sites, the transition to an ecological age is also a question of culture. Culture can help change lifestyles and turn the earth into a sustainable planet. Can Europe become the trailblazer for a new, global ecological movement?

By Olaf Gerlach-Hansen and Finn Andersen



Culture acts as a mediator between nature and man. Since the dawn of humanity, culture has evolved through various different epochs as the expression of the interaction between humans and the planet they inhabit. The industrial age, forever linked with the idea of “modernisation”, was until recently seen as the high-point of human cultural development. Over the last 40 years, modernisation and the industrial age have increasingly come in for criticism, but the only result is that for the last 15 years we have found ourselves in the information age. However, the philosophy of the industrial age based on the belief that natural resources are infinite still remains the principle behind production today.

But there is hope. In recent times the-

re have been growing signs pointing to a consensus that over the next 40 years the world must make the leap from the industrial age to the ecological age. After such a leap, the relationship between nature and humans will be based on the recycling of natural resources.

Unfortunately, it is generally not the man-in-the-street but only the experts who understand the language and goals of the ecological age: for example “lowering the global carbon footprint by 50% by 2050” or “achieving a global ecological footprint of 1.4 hectares per person by 2050, assuming a world population of 9 billion at that time”. And finally, “significantly improving the Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Programme in line with the Millennium Development Goals.”

It would probably be more appropriate and easier to understand if we simply said that it is now a matter of life and death for most people and the planet.

For one thing is certain, a failure to make this transition to an ecological age will have catastrophic ecological, social and cultural consequences by the end of the century. According to experts on the

UN Climate Change Panel and independent researchers, global greenhouse emissions must be reduced within this decade. That is why reaching specific targets by 2020 goals is so important.

### *A cultural challenge*

A successful transition to an ecological age is not something that should simply wait until 2050, as it can offer significant cultural, social and economic opportunities in the coming years as well. The economic, technological, business and political advantages of such a change have already been well documented in reports and studies. A good example is the report by Britain's Sir Nicholas Stern on the negative economic impact of climate change. His fellow countryman, Peter Head, supported this view from an engineering perspective in his lecture "Entering an Ecological Age" in 2009. In short it has been scientifically proven that there are short and medium-term economic benefits to be had from investing in climate protection.

However, the general public is still not really aware of the great opportunities that exist and many people don't totally understand them. People and politicians alike are often confused and unsure of which way to turn, even if the choice seems obvious and the cost of climate change continues to rise. Without pressure from civil society, politicians are reluctant to implement climate protection measures with any degree of conviction, as has been seen during a series of unsuccessful climate treaty negotiations, during which only minimal targets were agreed. As a result a successful transition from a "brown" economy (based on fossil fuels) to a "green" economy

still remains our biggest global challenge, with major implications for all other areas of policy.

The "brown" economy, like every other sector of the economy, has its own vested interests, and these are promoted by people whose thinking tends to be short-term and whose prosperity and income are dependent on this sector. There is no single blueprint for the industrial restructuring required to make the change to a green economy, as different solutions and processes may be required in different parts of the world. And what is also clear is that the brown economy cannot successfully defend its interests through party politics, whether to the left or right, because the planet does not have an infinite supply of natural resources such as crude oil, gas or uranium.

In order to guarantee international energy security, it is better to use regional, sustainable, renewable energy sources than to obtain oil, gas and nuclear power from sources which are potentially politically unstable.

Of course, people in positions of power and those who fear the loss of their jobs tend to be more resistant to new ideas and change. They will need to be gently steered in new directions. In his famous book "The structure of scientific revolutions", the American scientist Thomas Kuhn tries to describe the mechanisms of scientific progress. He argues that old scientific paradigms only die out once the initial supporters of those paradigms have themselves died. The problem is that this process takes over 40 years – and we don't

have that much time.

We need a kind of global enlightenment to take place in order for there to be a paradigm shift. However, it is a well-established problem of the information age that more information and more scientific knowledge do not necessarily result in people becoming more enlightened.

Instead of waiting for the death of those who still believe in the brown economy, it makes more sense to use communication and incentives to reach their hearts and minds, in order to bring about a change in their attitudes and behaviour. This is the cultural challenge. Cultural development can accelerate a green paradigm shift over the next ten years.

### *Changing attitudes*

Young people around the globe all want a positive economic future – whether in China, India, the USA, or Europe. However this dream will not be fulfilled if the transition to the ecological age goes awry. Interestingly, studies show that it is young people in particular who have a more positive attitude towards “green” politics.

To help further promote this change in attitudes the Danish Cultural Institute has developed the programme “Culture | Futures”. In addition to those institutions and key players within the culture sector who are in a position to promote cultural development, its main target group is young people.

What is the best way to raise people’s awareness? The Large Cities Climate Lea-

dership Group (C40) has suggested that the best way to motivate people to get involved is through the use of attractive advertising campaigns with clear messages. C40 refers to the 40 largest cities in the world, which, under the leadership of New York’s Mayor Michael Bloomberg, have made a commitment to fighting against climate change. The study concludes that in every city people were somehow getting different messages and that this was more confusing than helpful in terms of changing people’s attitudes and behaviour. What is lacking is a public commitment that goes beyond single issues and is capable of stimulating people’s enthusiasm and passion for an ecologically sustainable lifestyle. We need attractive and innovative ways of communicating that will provide a link between culture and nature.

At a workshop held in Hong Kong in November 2010, co-organized by “Culture | Futures” and by the then chairman of the C40 group, David Miller, Mayor of Toronto, it became clear that cities cannot do this by themselves. They need the help of cultural institutions and the wider culture industry, which is currently the fastest growing industrial sector in the world.

In order to achieve what is necessary there are a number of key requirements. Firstly, we need creative leadership. Storytelling and fantasy can be used as a basis

“What is lacking is a public commitment that goes beyond single issues and is capable of stimulating people’s enthusiasm and passion for an ecologically sustainable lifestyle.”

for winning people over to a greener lifestyle. James Cameron's *Avatar* – the world's most successful film – is a great example of how to kindle people's enthusiasm for an ecological lifestyle, even if the film is set on another planet in the year 2154. Popular literature, such as science fiction writer Isaac Asimov's Foundation Series, can also offer a kind of "eco-fantasy", and in this series the planet Gaia is presented as the future of the galaxy. This classic series has still not been made into a film.

Global food movements, such as the Slow Food movement started by the Italian Carlos Petrini, have become more and more popular in recent years and have helped to stimulate a desire for better agricultural practices and ecologically sustainable, local gastronomy. Originally considered only a grassroots movement, Slow Food has in recent years seen its influence extend even to the world of haute cuisine. The restaurant Noma in Copenhagen, for example, was ranked as the best in the world in 2010 and 2011 by the respected magazine *Restaurant*.

In addition to creative leadership we also need social leadership. Designers and architects follow the so-called "cradle to cradle" principle by reconciling urban planning and construction with the principle of recycling resources. The Dutch architect Philip Vencken, who works in Rotterdam, Venlo and other cities, has shown that sustainability must not necessarily be achieved at the expense of aesthetics and attractiveness. It cannot be repeated often enough that if green is to succeed it must offer some kind of better alternative. This

should involve the systematic inclusion of cultural elements, such as partnerships with cultural institutions for ecological projects in cities and regions.

### *Urban farming*

Another great example of a creative social vision that millions of people could take advantage of immediately is urban farming, a concept that is rapidly gaining in popularity and which aims to combine combating of carbon dioxide emissions and food shortages with the greening of city landscapes. The Spanish artist Hernani Dias has built an online laboratory for urban farming, which is being used as a social network in cities such as Barcelona, Beijing, New York and Buenos Aires. Major cultural institutions such as the Centro Cultural in Sao Paulo, Brazil are now re-designing their rooftops to make urban gardens accessible to all levels of society.

Finally, we also need technical leadership. Cultural institutions that promote ecological lifestyles will never be trusted if they themselves are not technically capable of lowering their own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and ecological footprints. A good example is provided by the discussions held between the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, and the city's creative sector, in which it was agreed that the city would aim to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 60 percent by the year 2025. This agreement has been followed up by a number of activities and leaflets aimed at showing how cultural institutions can support this initiative in a concrete way. So far the music, theatre, creative arts, film and fashion sectors have all been approached to see how they can help.

Changes to institutional practices are

normally driven solely by self-interest, especially during times of financial crisis. The leaders of these organisations will need to be shown how ecological change can benefit their bottom line. Most cultural institutions will only be prepared to take a leading role if they are convinced it is their own best interests. It is not easy to accurately measure the benefits that can be derived from technical, creative and social leadership, so it is important that the following eco-social factors and how they can benefit institutions and society as a whole can be somehow measured:

- Reducing an institution's CO2 emissions and ecological footprint is achievable and can actually reduce the institution's running costs.
- Institutions need to create innovative new products and expand their revenue streams through sponsorship and public donations.
- They need to find new audiences, new partners and new support through community outreach programmes.

“Culture | Futures” is, therefore, looking at how to establish a system of certification for eco-social initiatives undertaken by institutions in partnership with the American Association of Performing Arts Presenters and the consultancy firm Arup. This new system of certification would be similar to that used by businesses for their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. The benefit of certification is that it helps to highlight what cultural institutions really need in order to be successful in this area. Certification also acts as a means of measuring benefits and levels of responsibility.

But certification is not the only potential solution. Cultural institutions such as

museums, art centres, libraries and even sports clubs are notoriously under-funded in many parts of the world and so are not in a very strong position when it comes to implementing change. In some places, whole cultures and languages are even at risk of dying out and one of our biggest challenges for the future is how to preserve both biological and cultural diversity. To do this we will require traditional political and religious leaders to work closely together with experts who have indigenous knowledge, community leaders and many others who can contribute to the process.

“Culture | Futures” is developing a 4-year programme of conferences and events to help cultural institutions in cities and regions around the world take a leading role in ecological change. Yet the main challenge still remains: how do we build better global co-operation between the more and less affluent regions of the world, so that they can work together towards a sustainable lifestyle by the year 2050?

**Olaf Gerlach-Hansen** is a consultant and director of the “Culture | Futures” programme at the Danish Cultural Institute.

**Finn Andersen** is Secretary General of the Danish Cultural Institute.

**EUROPA**, continent în emisfera nordică, întins de la N la S pe 4.000 km, între Capul Nord (71°51' lat. N) din Pen. Scandinarvă și Capul Tașca (36°11' lat. N) din Pen. Iberică și de la V la E pe 6.000 km, punctele extreme fiind Capul Roca (8-30' long. V) și Capul NE Roca Uralului (67-20' long. E). Suprafața sa este c. 717 mil. loc (1990) și are un teritoriu de 10,4 mil. km<sup>2</sup>, sunt în prezent 44 de state. Tărâmurile N de Oc. înghețate în V de Oc. Atlantic, iar la S de M. Mediterană și Marea Neagră. Limita fizică geografică dintre E. și Asia urmărește linia fizică geografică dintre M-ților Ural și M-ții Kuma-Manici și Marea Neagră și râul Emba (după unii autori, M. Caspică, S. M-ții Caucaz și Marea Neagră). Împreună cu Asia formează ansamblul continental Eurasia. Relieful mișcărilor tectonice este foarte variat, datorită formării diverselor platforme diferențiate și istoriei tărâmurilor dentate, reliefurile sunt foarte complicate și climatul este foarte variat, tectonică estică un relief pronunțat oceanic, iar E. tectonică mare și relief monoton, stabilitate. Munții ocupă aproape 17% din suprafața continentului (1,5% având înălțimi mai mari de 2.000 m). Înălțimile mai mari de 1.000 m sunt predominant rămășițe a continentului antic alpin. Alitudinea medie max. de 4.807 m (M. Mont Blanc). Unele regiuni (S. Câmpia Mexicului și tărâmurile Mării Nordului) se află sub nivelul Oceanului. Planetele (Câmpia Nordului și Câmpia Germano-Rusă). Florele. Câmpia Rusă și tărâmurile europene ocupă aproape 50% din suprafața continentului și N. În partea de

**Trust: why it matters** We understand the benefits of people-to-people engagement across countries and cultures; at least, we know them when we see them. It is important however, to name these outcomes outright in order to understand the efficacy of our endeavours and learn how to improve delivery in the future. What we need is an evidence-based approach to trust-building. A contribution by the British Council.



The British Council has paid particular attention to the measurement of trust as an outcome of cultural relations in recent years. In 2010 it undertook research with the agency YouGov, surveying a panel group of more than 1,000 young people, with minimum secondary level education, in each of the selected countries: India, China and Poland and nearly 500 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). These young people, aged 16-34, are not representative of entire country populations but as an educated, urban, online community they do reflect their respective society's influencers. Importantly, they were an independently constituted group and neither chosen because of previous involvement with the work of the British Council nor of any other cultural relations organization.

As a base-line exercise we asked respondents to self-assess their level of trust in both people and government in the UK, US, Germany and France. Figure

1 in the Appendices shows the results averaged across the panel from China.

Although the detail changes by country, the results from the China panel illustrate an important general finding; that the level of trust in people is different from — and generally exceeds — that in government. It seems that respondents can and do discriminate between individuals and their political and governmental representatives. Even though the actions of states and government inevitably impinge on the global perceptions of their citizens, there appears to be independent room for trust building at a people-to-people and community-to-community level, the space in which cultural relations seeks to operate.

As a next step, the British Council then screened the respondents by asking whether they had participated in a variety of cultural relations projects. For example, these projects could include whether respondents had: been involved

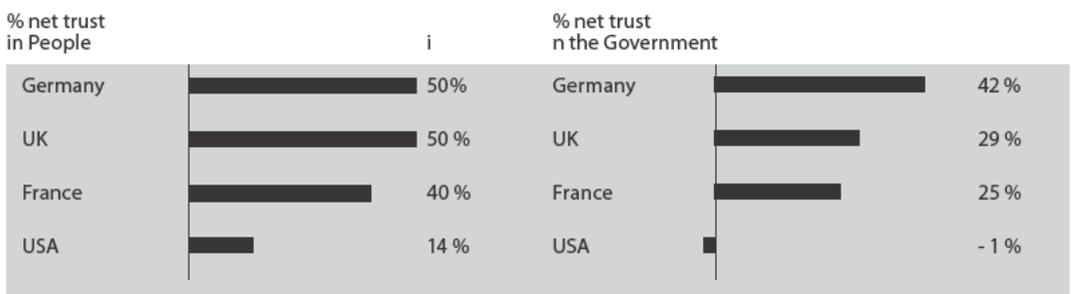
in international school-to-school collaborations,; studied abroad; and whether they attended an international arts, cultural exhibition or other cultural activities. The survey was analyzed and looked again at their self-assessed level of trust in people and governments.

The headline results for the UK across all four countries are shown in Figure 2 and are quite striking. They show a clear positive association between involvement in some form of cultural relations activity involving the UK and the self-assessed level of trust in both people in the UK and government in the UK. Broadly speaking, these results are replicated for respondents involved in cultural relations with each of US, Germany and France.

The measured difference in net trust between those who have and have not been involved in cultural relations varies by country but typically lies in the range of 10 to 20 percentage points. What

**Figure 1**

**Baseline average net trust in people and government (China panel)**



Net trust = (Strongly Trust + Trust) – (Strongly Distrust + Distrust)  
 Source: YouGov Online panel survey of respondents aged 16-34 with minimum secondary education (March 2010).  
 Base: KSA (279 CR, 241 non-CR), China (993 CR, 212 non-CR), Poland (982 CR, 223 non-CR), India (994 CR, 209 non-CR)  
 Data presented here is weighted to reflect the original population of the online panel.

is particularly noteworthy is that while cultural relations deliberately operates at the people-to-people level and might therefore be expected to be associated with an increase in people-to-people trust, the data show that there is sometimes an even stronger association between participation and an increased level of trust in government.

*Why is increasing trust important?*

If we accept the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the practice of cultural relations and the building of trust between people, there still remains a fundamental question of whether increased international trust is

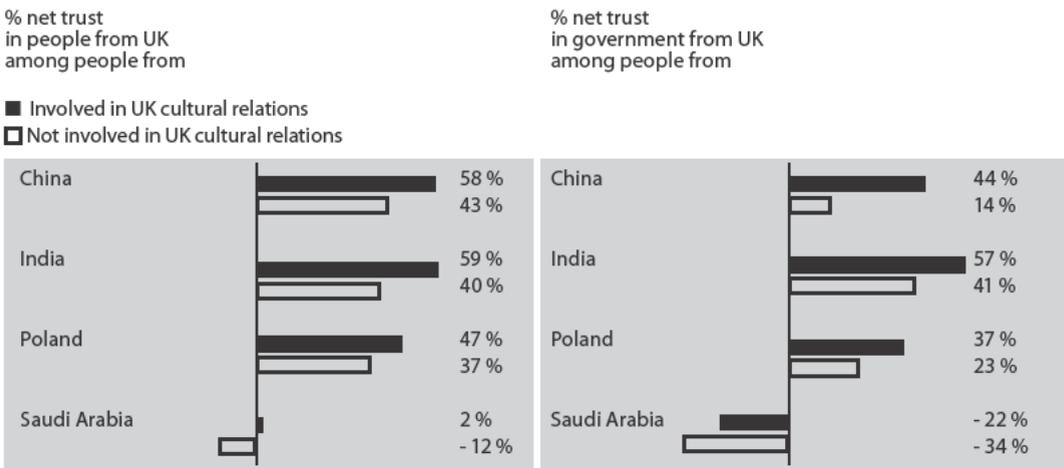
in itself of any tangible benefit to individuals, communities and countries.

The British Council’s research directly explored respondents’ willingness to engage with UK, US, France and Germany along various dimensions related to business, tourism, education and arts. In turn we analysed these results by the level of self-assessed trust in the relevant country. In all cases there was a positive association between levels of trust and a willingness to engage further with that country.

Qualitative and quantitative evaluation studies which many organizations conduct on a project by project basis, and broader more experimental research at the national level such as the present study, can make a powerful case for the value of cultural relations. It is imperative

**Figure 2**

**The strong positive association between trust in people and government from UK by involvement in cultural relations with UK**

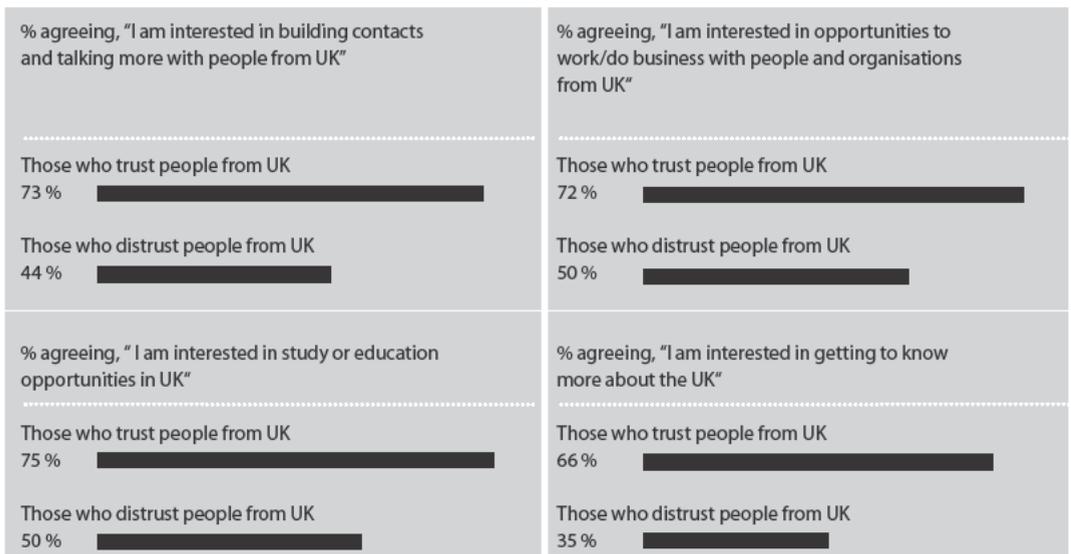


for international organizations working in the people-to-people business to continue demonstrate the effectiveness of their work to funders, stakeholders, and in many cases, governments.

It is this link between trust and an increased openness to and interest in wider international engagement which gives cause for optimism about the ultimate power of cultural relations. These relationships do not simply prevent misunderstanding but contribute to the economic and cultural enrichment of countries and societies.

**Figure 3**

**Increased trust is associated with an increased desire to engage (India panel)**



EUNIC Annual Report 2010-11 The network of European Union National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC) marks a new departure in international cultural diplomacy and relations. For over a century, individual countries have developed their own cultural diplomacy organisations. After a series of conferences and meetings in 2005 and 2006, nineteen of the organisations formed a formal network in 2007: EUNIC.



Before EUNIC was set up, national cultural institutes tended to work together on an occasional basis. In many cities around the world, they came together for a shared event on the annual Day of Languages. At other times, they partnered each other in organising film or jazz festivals in support of the rotating EU presidency, or to celebrate a local anniversary. In Berlin, Vienna, Paris and especially Brussels, the institutes joined together to form city networks.

EUNIC is different. The Heads of EUNIC members have come together to form a global network, with the potential for a more strategic and progressive set of operations.

The objectives of the EUNIC network are:

- to create effective partnerships and networks between European Union National Institutes for Culture in order to improve and promote cultural diversity and understanding between European societies and to strengthen international dialogue and cultural cooperation with countries outside the European Union;
- to act as a partner of the European Commission and other European institutions, in defining and implementing European cultural policy;
- to act as an advocate of the value of cultural relations in promoting better international understanding and, as part of this, argue for a strong and independent voice for the cultural sector;
- to undertake joint research that will be of value to the European Commission and to other organisations (e.g. the Council of Europe) in furthering understanding of European wide cultural issues;
- to share best practices and discuss issues of common interest.

By 2011, membership had increased to 29 organisations from 25 of the EU member states (listed at the end of this report). Each member state organises its cultural diplomacy in a different manner and the EUNIC membership reflects this.

The activities of the EUNIC network fall into several categories. At its heart it is an *active* network that encourages and facilitates its members to develop shared events and projects. It is a *partnering* network that works with a wide range of partners at multilateral level, such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe, and with national organisations around the world. It is a *learning* network, as its members share best practice, set up training programmes and explore new ways of working, and finally it is an *advocacy* network for the increasing role of cultural relations in today's international programmes.

### *Worldwide clusters*

By September 2011, the EUNIC network had over 70 “clusters”, the majority of them outside the European Union. The cluster – a network of members in a given city or country – lies at the heart of EUNIC's activities. An event or project needs the involvement of three members in order to earn the EUNIC label. Clusters plan their own programmes as the circumstances and opportunities for cultural relations vary from country to country. Some clusters organise a great many events, while others focus on just a few. In 2010-11 the clusters organised over 300 events under the EUNIC label.

The clusters come together in a series of regional meetings to share plans and

ideas, forming part of the learning function of the network. In 2010-11 there were regional meetings for clusters in Europe (Madrid); Sub-Saharan Africa (Johannesburg); South America (Sao Paulo) and in Rabat (North Africa).

A few examples can illustrate the depth and variety of EUNIC events and projects. Most clusters engage with local partners for film, book and music festivals. The theme is usually decided based on the needs of the local partners. These events help raise awareness of the EUNIC network and form the bedrock of many clusters' activities. As the clusters gather momentum, they are increasingly able to expand their horizons as more and more opportunities arise.

In Chile, the EUNIC cluster worked with local partners to organise the Festival of Contemporary European Drama in 2010. The competition was designed to showcase Spanish translations of plays by authors from Austria, France, Germany, Italy (and also from Spain in their original version). The plays had to have been premiered within the previous two years.

A Chilean jury of playwrights, directors and critics selected two plays from each country, presented either as readings or staged by Chilean directors. Workshops and exchanges with the European theatre professionals invited for the festival (Spanish playwrights José Manuel Mora and Paco Bezzerá, Swiss expert Silvie van Kaenel, German theorist Hans-Thies Lehmann and French authors Frederic Sonntag and Koffi Kwahule) helped this kick-off event turn into a lively encounter between European and Chilean theatre.

### *European Day of Languages*

Languages are a central part of many EUNIC members' activities. Between them, the members employ over 7,000 teachers and reach over 2 million learners each year. Perhaps surprisingly, over 80 percent of these are not learning English! EUNIC now has a specialist strategic group devoted to its languages activity.

The annual Day of Languages provides the trigger for many clusters to showcase language learning. The Warsaw cluster has the most developed programme. It is worth quoting this report in full because it highlights many of the typical characteristics of EUNIC events: working with local partners and with the EU Delegation, speaking with a single voice, and nowadays, of course, with an increased online focus:

The European Day of Languages 2010 in Warsaw = 8 days, 22 partners, €24,000 budget, 13,000+ unique website visitors, 1,200 fans on Facebook, 67 lessons and workshops in 19 languages attended by 1,500 students, 9 experts on multilingualism, 360 conference participants, 19 films in 12 languages, 100 street game participants and dozens of media mentions.

How can you work with all 22 partners on organising a venture like this? We had a tight group of core organisers (the British Council, Goethe Institut, European Commission and as the local partner, the Foundation for Development of Education Systems). The group coordinated the work of other main partners, including the University of Warsaw, Warsaw City Hall and EUNIC members. We all had one face and spoke with one voice, which translated into a very effective promoti-

onal campaign. How can you talk to audiences who don't come to your events? This year we have all taken a quantum leap in the way we were reaching our audiences and have landed in the virtual world. The EDL website had over 65,000 page views and channelled registration for all the events. The conference was live streamed online in cooperation with Microsoft, and also Tweeted. The EDL Facebook page was brimming with competitions and facilitated interaction with our audiences and now is full of photos from all the events.

"Without our partners it wouldn't have been the same. Nowhere near the same" said one of the partners from the European Commission. The common goal, the enthusiasm, the resources, the pool of talent – that's what partnership was all about and that's what has made the European Day of Languages successful. Thanks to the partnership, we have managed to secure sponsors, free venues and patrons, including the patronage of the Ministry of Education and the President of Warsaw. How can you summarise the range of activities and the impact they made? Mr Marczewski, Director of the Foundation for Development of Education Systems said about the conference "You've managed to gather the biggest names in the field of multilingualism in Poland in one place."

### *Focus on multilingualism*

Multilingualism is a central part of two other major EUNIC projects. Both are strongly supported by the European Commission in pursuit of its multilingualism agenda, which is a key element in

its EU2020 policy. EUNIC chairs the EC's Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism. The Platform brings together over 30 European networks associated with all aspects of languages. The Platform has developed its action project, Poliglotti4EU, which seeks to raise awareness of language learning across Europe (<http://www.poliglotti4.eu>). Over the next two years the project will:

- issue a paper on current issues in multilingualism with recommendations at European, national, and local level (the paper will be submitted to the European Commission which will incorporate it into their next Communication to European Governments);
- create an on-line multilingualism observatory containing information on the key motivators and inhibitors of multilingualism, a catalogue of best practice and testimonials and video clips by "Ambassadors for Multilingualism" (celebrities, business, sportspersons, politicians, journalists). A database of contacts and events will be a public-facing aspect;
- commission fresh research into adult language learning, pre-school language learning, and social/community language services for social inclusion.

Language Rich Europe is a project led by the British Council with four other EUNIC partners and over 30 other partners including the Council of Europe (<http://languagerichblog.eu/>).

The project's core activity is to carry out professional research that will result in an innovative and interactive measure-

ment tool called the "Index of Multilingual Policies and Practices in Europe". This Index will help visualise the role of and support for multilingualism in the participating European countries and highlight good practice.

It will measure how these countries perform against European standards in the following seven areas:

- Databases on language diversity
- Languages in (pre-) primary education
- Languages in lower and upper secondary education
- Languages in adult vocational and university education
- Languages in public services and public spaces
- Languages in business
- Languages in the media

### *Czech literature nights*

Language and the arts are also coming together in another EUNIC project. The Czech Centres are taking the lead with their European Literature Nights, (<http://www.literaturenights.eu>).

These events focus on contemporary literature and translation, and under this overall banner, clusters have the opportunity to develop their own programmes with local partners. In 2011 over 20 clusters, from Hanoi (children's books) to Moscow to Lisbon took part. In London the clusters' efforts over three years on this project, working in collaboration with the British Library, have led to a new network for British publishers, booksellers, festivals and agents who have an interest in expanding the translated litera-





ture market in the UK. There is a similar focus on raising awareness of the translation market in New York:

“For nations in Europe, be they small or large, literature will always be one of the keys of their cultural existence. We have established as a strategic objective, a long-term commitment to break through the American market”, commented Corina Suteu, representative of EUNIC in New York, USA and director of the Romanian Cultural Institute, to the New York Times (8th December 2010 edition). She speaks about EUNIC’s members’ policies of encouraging literary translation from European languages into English, aiming at the US publishing industry.

The New York Times reports that currently literary translation stands at a mere 3% of the American book market. “Cultural institutes and agencies are subsidizing publication of books in English, underwriting the training of translators, encouraging their writers to tour in the United States, submitting to American marketing and promotional techniques they may have previously shunned”, writes New York Times journalist, Larry Rohter, about the wide spectrum of support for translation.

A central feature of the activities of EUNIC clusters is holding specialist conferences where experts can share and exchange views and experiences. In South Africa, the clusters use architecture and urban planning as their theme. In March 2011, the EUNIC cluster in South Africa’s Architecture Studio investigated opportunities for improving the design of the South African government’s low-cost housing programme, and refurbishment opportunities in the semi-abandoned centre of Johannesburg.

### *Architecture and town planning in South Africa*

The third Studio also looked at strategies to improve and renovate an inner city building. Florence House, formerly a maternity hospital, is now occupied by nearly 1,000 residents living in poor conditions. Architecture students from South Africa and France made proposals for improving the living spaces and shared communal spaces in the building. They also undertook urban design studies, looking at the local context of the building. The proposed development of Florence House will help regenerate a part of the city which has been in decline since the end of apartheid and will provide much-needed affordable housing, along with employment opportunities. Architects from France, Italy, Poland, Spain, South Africa and the UK worked with and mentored the students throughout the week.

The results of the workshop were presented to the general public, who were also invited to join the Studio participants in a guided tour of Johannesburg’s architecture and to attend a presentation by Lorenzo Romito of Stalker entitled “a laboratory of urban art”.

The EUNIC cluster in Brussels played a key role in the Council of Europe’s conference “Culture and the Policies of Change”, which reflected on the impact of decreasing public sector budgets for the arts. EUNIC president Horia-Roman Patapievicu gave the keynote speech and Steve Green, team leader of the Presidency Support Team, acted as the conference reporter. (Reports are available at: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/cwe/conference10\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/cwe/conference10_en.asp))

Cultural relations today are increasin-

gly concerned with developing long-term relationships and sharing and learning, as opposed to one-way promotional activities. In Russia, the cluster is building on the success of its Intradance project in 2009-10 and now has launched a new programme, the Russian-European Curatorial Exchange.

A young generation of Russian curators, not only from Moscow but also from numerous ambitious cultural centres in Russia's regions, are now working partly as freelancers and partly as curators for young talents in institutions. These young people will decisively shape exhibitions and cultural life in the future; they will quickly manage to modernise and develop exhibition centres, biennales and institutions and aim to collect experience in other countries for their own work.

It is a challenge and a chance for the cultural institutes of the European Union to support this young generation in their training by offering them unique possibilities to network and gain professional experience at European institutions and festivals.

The aims of the programme are not only to improve the system of training for young Russian curators but also to build wider links and shared activity in the future between Russian and European contemporary art curators and institutions.

The EUNIC members involved in the project are from Austria, France, Germany, Romania, Sweden and the UK. All members have chosen institutions in their homelands that are ready to host a Russian curator for approximately one month and get him or her involved in a cultural project. These are: Haus der Kunst (Germany), Die Springerin and Tranzit (Austria), Kalmar konstmuseum (Swe-

den), Centre Pompidou-Metz (France), Anaid Art Gallery (Romania) and Turner Contemporary (the UK). The participating institutions will take in a young Russian curator as an intern.

### *Climate protection in Copenhagen*

CultureFutures is a programme led by the Danish Cultural Institute. Its aim is to raise awareness of the need to move to a new ecological use of resources and of the role that culture and the cultural sector can play in that objective. Its initial event was held alongside COP-15 2009 in Copenhagen and in 2010-11 it held events in Hong Kong and Sao Paulo. EUNIC partners in both cities organised workshops and events designed to attract attention to this topic (<http://culturefutures.org/>). More events are planned for 2012, starting off in New York and Durban.

This report highlights just a few of the activities of the EUNIC network. In just a few years it has spread across the globe and is now developing an ever-increasing range of projects at cluster level and between different countries.

## Members of EUNIC

Adam Mickiewicz Institute  
Austrian Federal Ministry for European and  
International Affairs (Austrian Cultural Forum  
Balassi Institute (Hungarian Cultural Centres)  
British Council  
Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Camoës Institute  
Cervantes Institute  
Centre Culturel Recontre Abbaye de Neumunster  
Culturelreland  
Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Czech Centres  
Danish Cultural Institute  
Estonian Institute  
Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes  
Fondation Alliance Francaise  
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Institute Francais)  
Goethe Institute  
Hellenic Foundation for Culture  
Huis De Buren  
Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Italian Cultural Insti-  
tutes)  
International Cultural Programme Centre (Lithuania)  
IfA  
Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Polish Institutes)  
Romanian Cultural Institute  
Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Slovak Institutes)  
Slovenia Ministry of Culture  
SICA: Stichting Internationale Culturele Activiteiten  
Swedish Institute  
Wallonie Bruxelles International

## EUNIC clusters' activities between July 2010 and June 2011

This list records the events organised under the EUNIC name in the last year. Several clusters missed the deadline and their activities will be added. There are a number of new clusters whose first event will be in June or July. "EDL" is the "European Day of languages"

### Argentina Buenos Aires

- Europosgrados. Post Graduate European Education Fair March 2011
- European Film Week June-July 2011
- Buenos Aires, UNESCO World Book Capital. 3 events 2011-12

### Argentina Cordoba

- "Urban Chrysalis" rehabilitation project (May - July 2010)
- Cordoba Book Fair (September 2010)

## Australia Melbourne

- Islamic Terrorism from a European Perspective, debate at Melbourne Writers' Festival (August 2010)

## Australia Sydney

- European Day of Languages (September 2010): multilingual bus
- "Neither Old Nor Dead: Europe in the 21st Century" at Sydney Writers' Festival (17-21 May 2011)

## Austria

- Europa auf der Bühne theatre project – nine evenings, 27 plays from 27 countries (January-December 2010)
- Chopin and contemporary music festival (16-26 September 2010)
- "European Memory" by cartoons project (September – October 2010)
- Mother and Daughter in Literature (30 September 2010)
- European Poetry festival at Literaturhaus (18-20 November 2010)
- Long Night of European Music within the Festival of European Culture in the MuseumsQuartier (21 June 2011)

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

- EDL in Tuzla September 2010
- Mini-INPUT conference (November 2010), working groups identity and education
- European Film Week (May 2011)
- Two Bosnian productions at annual INPUT conference in Seoul (May 2011)

## Brazil

- Photo exhibition The European Way Brasilia (August 2010 – April 2011)
- Meeting with EC Commissioner Vassiliou (April 2011)
- Europe Week (May 2011)
- EUNIC in the Americas Regional meeting (Sao Paulo, 26-27 May 2011)
- Culture Futures conference (30 May-3 June 2011)

## Belgium Brussels

- "InBetween" open air readings at EESC with 4 European authors (May-July 2010)
- Conference on EU cultural policy in partnership with the Council of Europe, EC, Culture Action Europe and the EESC – one of the CultureWatchEurope series of events (6-7 September 2010 at EESC)
- Poliglottini event for EDL (25 September 2010)
- "Power of Cultural Relations" debate with ENCATC (8 October 2010)
- "Language Rich Europe" (November 2010 – March 2013)
- "Europe's Foreign Cultural Relations" expert seminar (8 December 2010)

- “Poliglotti4.eu” (1 January 2011 – 31 December 2012)
- Routes Award Public Programme: Sejla Kameric & Kutlug Ataman in the picture: partnership (9 February 2011)
- “Waiting and watching: South African moments” photo exhibition (15 March – 27 May 2011)
- Participation at the 2nd edition of the Benelux Innovators group (21 March 2011)
- Policy Paper – EC Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism (30 March 2011)
- EUNIC Dance Party at the Goethe-Institut (31 March 2011)
- Workshop on EC co-funding (12-13 May 2011)
- Culture in development network for organisations working in Africa and Latin America – meetings in Paris and Brussels + brochure (2010 – ongoing)

#### **Bulgaria**

- EDL September 2010

#### **Canada**

- “Memory Studies and the Identity problem: a Cross Reading of European and Canadian Cultural Traditions” at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto (7 September 2010)
- EDL in Toronto September 2010
- European Book Club (series)
- Book exchange and multilingual book reading in Montreal (26 April 2011)

#### **Chile**

- European Jazz Festival (September 2010)
- Festival of Contemporary European Drama in Santiago (August -September 2010)

#### **China**

- Third European-Chinese Cultural Dialogue in Shanghai (October 2010)
- Meeting with EC Commissioner Vassiliou
- Europe-China Cultural Compass, in progress

#### **Croatia**

- Mediascape Zagreb multimedia (October 2010)
- Zagreb Film Festival “The big five” (October 2010)

#### **Czech Republic**

- Educational project with Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Arts from the Charles University. Aim: to present the historical, social and political realities of the participating countries through their respective national culture. Countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia.
- Educational project with the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Film Faculty from the Academy of Performing Arts (FAMU): Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

- EUNIC cocktail at Czech MFA (15 September 2010)
- EDL (September 2010)
- B4 – Balkan House 2010 within the Architecture Week festival (October 2010)
- New Waves, New Ways Film Festival (October 2010)
- Literature night (11 May 2011)
- Czech TV programme dedicated to EUNIC (ongoing)

#### **Denmark**

- “The Art of Scene Changing”: international conference on arts & interculture (24-26 January 2011)

#### **Estonia**

- EDL in Tartu
- Communication and networking seminar, Nick Vertigans (November)
- Chopiniana series
- E-book seminar

#### **Ethiopia**

- Collaboration to study for large-scale EU-funded cultural sector programme for Ethiopia (July 2010)
- Arts and Ceramics exhibition (January -February 2011)
- Inauguration of EU information rooms in the four institutes (March 2011)
- Joint call by heads of all 4 institutions on new State Minister of Culture & his team to learn more about priorities for culture under the GoE “Growth & Transformation Plan”
- EU film festival

#### **Finland**

- EUNIC stand at Helsinki Book Fair (October 2010)
- Project “Responsible design” submission to World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 (March 2011)
- EUNIC stand at Europe Day celebrations in Helsinki (May 2011)

#### **France Bordeaux**

- Eurocall 2010 international symposium: Languages, cultures and virtual communities (September 2010)
- AEDEA annual seminar for European mobility (October 2010)
- Bordeaux – Budapest exhibition at Maison de l’Europe (October 2010)
- Youth on the Move at Contemporary Art Museum (October 2010)
- European meetings with writers and philosophers. “Berlin, Barcelona, Istanbul: Towards new cultural capitals” (November 2010)
- European languages teaching seminar (November 2010)
- European Cinema Festival (March-April 2011)
- Round table: Literature, a different view on Europe? (April 2011)

### **France Paris**

- “The Roma in Europe” - films, debate (27-29 May 2011)

### **Germany Berlin**

- Participation at Wassermusik Open Air Festival (July 2010)
- EDL at the European Commission Representation (27 September 2010)
- Debate within the Chopin Year: George Sand as fight for women’s liberation (October 2010)
- Participation at the 4th European Photo Month (November 2010)
- “Cinema Total: Calling Neighbours” within the framework of International Filmfestspiele Berlin (December 2010)
- “Europa Literarisch” series of conferences (2008-2011)
- Filmreihe Don Juan at Zeughauskino (February-March 2011)
- “Confessions” in the framework of F.I.N.D. 2011 - Festival Internationale Neue Dramatik (March 2011, Schaubühne)
- “Small languages, great literatures” forum at Leipzig Book Fair (March 2011)
- “Twist” – contemporary art from Eastern Europe (April 2011)
- Participation in “Europa ist hier!” celebrations (11 May 2011), Pariser Platz, Berlin
- “The Celluloid Curtain. Europe’s Cold War in Film” with EUNIC in London at Zeughauskino (June 2011)
- Participation in “Die Migration im Rücken” in the framework of Poesiefestival Berlin 2011 at the Art Academy

### **Germany Stuttgart**

- “Europe in the Media: between political discourse and populism”, debate at the IFA (12 May 2011)

### **Greece**

- European Youth Essay Competition “Culture Past, Culture Future” (March-November 2010)
- “Young People and Foreign Languages: Educational Challenges and Career Prospects” discussion (11 November 2010)

### **Hungary**

- “Performing Arts” conference at Budapest Art Palace (24-25 September 2010)
- European Language Cocktail Bar (30 September 2010)
- Cross promotion with Europa Pont, EC Information Centre (7 January 2011)
- Participation with a presentation at the “Identity and cultural diversity in the European Union” conference (9 February 2011)
- EUNIC day. Europe on stage at Budapest Spring

Festival (theatre, classical and jazz concerts: 2 April 2011)

- Literature Night (16/17 April 2011)
- Open Night of Cultural Institutes (6/7 May 2011)
- Duna Party (24 June 2011)

### **India**

- Literary Lecture Series (October-May)

### **Ireland**

- “Moving Worlds: Cinemas of Migration” Film Festival in Dublin (December 2010)
- EUNIC/UNIQUE Thoughts: Public Discussions on European Issues: “Opposite Dimensions – European Art Practices” at National College of Art and Design Dublin (13 December 2010)
- EUNIC/UNIQUE Thoughts: “Migration and Recession - Implications of the Economic Crisis for Migrants and Immigration in Europe” (3 February 2011)
- “12 points! Europe’s New Jazz Festival” (4-7 May 2011)

### **Italy Milan**

- MiTo Milano Settembre Musica in Milan and Torino (3-22 September 2010)
- MilanoMusica – contemporary musical journeys (3 October – 7 November 2010)
- Milano Film Festival at Piccolo Teatro (10-19 September 2010)
- “I’ve seen films” Festival at Cinema Gnomo and Centre culturel français (30 September – 9 October 2010)
- Festival Invideo at Spazio Oberdan (11-14 November)
- Filmmaker International Festival (23-30 November)
- Culture, Europe and the crisis. Studies on Europe’s cultural policies at Università Cattolica - Milan
- Europe in rhymes in Como (19 March 2011)
- Festival of contemporary music Sentieri Selvaggi (April-May 2011)
- Public Design Festival (12-17 April 2011)

### **Italy Rome**

- Regular cluster meetings (3 in 2010, 3 in 2011), preparing “Day of Multilingualism” for 19 October 2011

### **Jordan**

- Launch of EUNIC in Jordan with “Talking Books on EDL (September 2010)
- “Zakharef in Motion” dance festival support (May 2011)

### **Kazakhstan**

- Classical music concert at Almaty Conservatoire – 11 May 2011

## **Korea**

- Euro-Asia Chamber Music Festival (9-16 August 2010)
- Seoul Oratorio Gala Concert (February 2011)
- European stand at the 6th Seoul International Book Fair (15-19 June 2011)

## **Lebanon**

- "Eco?Logical" project for Europe (13 May 2011)

## **Lithuania**

- "Young people in dialogue with artists" exhibition and educational workshops in Šilagaliai, Ramygala and Naujamiestis (July – September 2010)
- "Film Bakery" Short Film Festival (25-28 November 2010)
- Forum on Multilingualism at Mykolo Romerio University, opened by Lithuanian Minister of Culture (1 December 2010)

## **Netherlands**

- "Changing Europe, Changing Arts" conferences (September – November 2010), 4 conferences
- "Curriculum Vitae": Writers' Biographic Film Festival, Amsterdam & The Hague (March 2011)
- European Literature Night at the OBA Library (11 May 2011), Amsterdam

## **Norway**

- Norwegian International Film Festival (18-26 August 2010)
- EUNIC events at Oslo Cultural Night (24 September 2010)
- European Jazz Nights à Nasjonal Jazzscene, Victoria (10-12 February 2011)
- "Eurodok" (16-20 March 2011)
- "Arts and Audiences" seminar (30 May – 1 June 2011)

## **Peru**

- "Cuerpo Presente" dance and disability experience (October 2010)
- "Monstruo" (October 2010)
- Balletto dell'Esperia (November 2010)
- "Dance of Hope" (December 2010)
- "Communicare" Dance Workshop (December 2010)

## **Poland Krakow**

- Krakow Science Festival (May 2011)
- European Contemporary Dance Festival, Bytom & Krakow (June-July 2011)

## **Poland Warsaw**

- EDL in Warsaw
- Poems on the Underground (September 2010)
- Translators' Day (30 September 2010)
- Read in Translation meetings (October – December 2010)

- Literature Night in Warsaw (16 April 2011) with Ochoty Theatre and 17 local partners
- Awakening of the Summer (17/18 June) in Warsaw

## **Portugal**

- Europe reads: the state of literary translation in Europe (November 2010)

## **Romania**

- Fashion road: dialogue across borders
- European Comics Festival (October-November 2010)
- Comic Strip Museum at National Museum of Contemporary Art (June-October 2011)
- Klezmer & More Festival at Green Hours Club (16-19 June 2011)
- Night of the Cultural Institutes (24 June 2011)

## **Russia**

- Russian – European curatorial exchange programme (to be launched)

## **Serbia**

- 3rd common stand at Belgrade Book Fair (25-31 October 2010)

## **Slovakia**

- "Languages in my family" poster competition (May – September 2010)
- EDL in Bratislava (September 2010)
- Language café (ongoing every month from 2008)
- "Donaudrama": 10 countries – 1 river – 1 play by 10 authors at Studio 12 Bratislava (October 2010 – June 2011)
- Literature night in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica, Žilina and Košice (11 May 2011)
- EuroFilmClub: Life after 1989 (March 2011, ongoing)

## **South Africa**

- EUNIC Architecture Studio in Johannesburg (22-26 November 2010)
- Regional meeting (13-14 April 2011)

## **Spain**

- European clusters meeting (2-4 October 2010)
- Cultural Competence of Regions - Point of view of Artists and Culture Operators presentation at EC delegation
- "Translating Europe" presentation at children and youth book fair, Burgos (8-9 April 2011)
- Theatres' Night in Madrid (26 April 2011)
- European youth literature presentation about authors not translated into Spanish at Madrid Book Fair (9 June 2011)

### **Sweden**

- “Double double” music festival (February – December 2010)
- REX 3rd edition of Recent Experimental Shorts (13 April 2011) at Kulturhuset Stockholm
- Europe Day at Central Station Stockholm (9-10 May 2011)
- “Multilingualism and corporate life” conference at Stockholm School of Economics (12 May 2011)

### **Tanzania**

- Launch of open day at the 3 members with language classes, workshop for language teachers and exhibition (9 February 2011)

### **UK London**

- The Virtues of European Public Diplomacy seminar (1 July 2011)
- “4th Screen Green, a Season of European Documentaries” (4-11 November 2010)
- “DancEUnion, Great Dance Talent from across Europe” (15-17 March 2011)
- “Celluloid Curtain” Film Festival at Riverside Studios (6-9 May 2011)
- European Literature Night III in British Library (11 May 2011)
- EU May Fayre @ Regent’s Park (8 May 2011)
- Cultural Diplomacy seminar at Europe House (30 June 2011)

### **Ukraine**

- Participation at the Sevastopol International War and Peace International Art Festival (May – September 2010)
- Participation at Lviv Book Forum and International Literary Festival (September 2011)
- Participation at Kyiv Offline contemporary art project (November 2010)
- “Cinema as commitment” European film festival in Kiev and Donetsk (May-June 2011)

### **USA New York**

- European Book Club (all year long)
- Moving sounds music festival (2-5 September 2010)
- Serbia – frequently asked questions (September 2010 – January 2011)
- Perpetual Peace Project (November 2010)
- 16th EUNIC in USA NY lecture series (15 November 2010)
- 7th New Literature from Europe festival (16-18 November)
- Disappearing Act III European Film Festival (6-13 April 2011)
- Best European Fiction during PEN World Voices Festival (25 April – 1 May 2011)
- Visa advocacy (ongoing) and Clinic on Visas for Artists (17 September 2011)

### **USA Washington DC**

- US launch of the Migration Policy Index III: how can legal integration lead to societal integration? Debate on MIPEX results (9 May 2011)
- Eurovision song contest presentation and broadcast (14 May 2011)

### **Venezuela**

- Application project for a 3 year artist-in-residence programme in Petare, Sucre, biggest urban slum area in Latin America

### **Vietnam**

- European Literature Days in Hanoi (27-28 May 2011)
- European Documentary Film Festival in Hanoi and Saigon (June 2011)

### **Presidents of EUNIC**

2006 Sir David Green (British Council)

2007 Emil Brix (Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs)

2008 Hans-Georg Knopp (Goethe Institute)

2009 Finn Andersen (Danish Cultural Institute)

2010 Horia-Roman Patapievici (Romanian Cultural Institute)

2011 Professor Ana Paula Laborinho (Camões Institute)



## Editorial information

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## CULTURE REPORT EUNIC Yearbook

Culture has a strategic role to play in the process of European unification. But what use is actually made of it? What is the state of cultural relations within Europe? How can European cultural policies contribute to the forming of a European identity? The first edition of the Culture Report tries to find answers to these questions. The second edition looks at the role of the media in Europe. What can it do to help promote more discussion about European democracy, and to awaken curiosity as well as more argument and critical debate? The third edition of the Culture Report tackles the subject of literature in Europe and the European book market. Well-known European authors such as Umberto Eco and Tim Parks examine the role of literature and culture in Europe. For the first time, the fourth edition of the Culture Report also constitutes the EUNIC Yearbook. Its theme is the contribution of culture to European foreign policy. What are the advantages to Europe of having a common foreign cultural policy? And what should this policy look like?

This Culture Report is published by EUNIC (the umbrella organisation for European cultural relations institutes), the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa) and the Robert Bosch Foundation, in cooperation with the British Council, Culture Ireland and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The fourth edition is available in German, English and Portuguese.

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