ANNEX 1.1

Cultural Planning and Cultural Diversity

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1. Introduction

Culture, as stated by the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico City in 1982, is a leading source of intellectual renewal and human growth, and can be understood as embracing all creative activity, not only the traditional, or 'high', arts but popular ma ss culture as well. Anthropologist Ulf Hannerz gives it a collective slant when he defines culture as "the meanings which people create, and which create people as members of societies" (3). In *The Long Revolution* , Raymond Williams identifies three general categories in the definition of culture, one of which is relevant to this paper, where he states that culture can be understood as "a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning, but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour"(57). Thus, bearing in mind this fundamental link between culture and society, this paper will be mostly concerned with an exploration of new approaches to cultural policy, such as cultural planning, and with the applicability of t hese frameworks to societies where cultural diversity is increasingly challenging and replacing vertical and hierarchical policy models with a fragmented patchwork of different ethical orientations, or as French sociologist Michel Maffesoli puts it, 'affinity-based' social groups (69).

This paper will first offer an overview of the issues raised in current debates about cultural diversity. It will then introduce the cultural planning framework as a tool employed in the development of a more integrated approach to cultural development in contemporary urban settings. And finally, issues of governance and ethics will be raised as areas where further research is needed.

2. Cultural Diversity and Planning: Issues and Current Debates

In the post-war era, European discourses about cultural diversity have been focused on the liberal principle of equal respect for all where the aim of minorities groups struggles' has been to get rid of difference as an ideological construction in order to rescue a more universalistic idea of justice. More recently, other ways of reading difference have gained intellectual ground. In Charles Taylor's perspective, for example, differences, instead of being undervalued, are prized and cultivated as empowering forces which deserve public recognition (1992).

Contemporary debates have developed Taylor's insights by claiming that difference needs to be considered as the constant intersection of many features where none of them can claim importance over another (Agamben 29-38). This approach advocates the intrinsic hybridity of identities. This condition of 'in-betweenness' (Bhabha) presupposes a deeper acceptance of human existence as a porous, constant flux of definitions and redefinitions where nobody belongs completely to any one identity. This way, differences proliferate, opening the way to constant cultural contamination.

This ideal of infinite cultural translation, however, poses serious policy implications as it radically challenges traditional top-down interventions, which have so far been bent on efficiently keeping difference within, for example, the narrow constraints of multiculturalism. Moreover, if it is true that culture has always been an arena of negotiation, and that globalisation has, to a certain extent, always been present in the constant and reciprocal exchange between continents, cultures and social groups, the challenge posed by the new spatial logic of the informational revolution could seriously impinge on any attempts by any single state to legislate for any single cultural identity.

As Manuel Castells argues, "The informational revolution allows for the simultaneous process of centralisation of messages and decentralization of their reception, creating a new communications world made up at the same time of the glob al village and of the incommunicability of those communities that are switched off from the global network" ("European Cities" 20). This highlights two main features in contemporary urban living that policy -makers cannot afford to ignore: that of spatial s egregation and the commodification of space.

Citizenship, says the geographer Alisdair Rogers, is inconceivable without some reference to its spatiality, and, if one thinks, for instance, about the mass of homeless people expelled from the business and tourist districts in 20th -century Western cities, it becomes evident that the denial of citizenship is often experienced also through physical, social and economic exclusion from such spaces (6-7).

Conversely, state multiculturalism has at times fostered anapproach akin to a commodification of public space, a space where consumers and not citizens are allowed. Here the city offers itself as a stage of an empty spectacle to be viewed by a mass audience (Harvey). The result of this is the creation in some cit ies of a sort of 'multicultural theme park' where differences are sanitised through the consumption of 'exotic' cultural products. In global cities, on the other hand, as competition for scarce public resources between different stakeholders makes community politics a politics of conflict over the allocation of resources, marginalised social groups are increasingly claiming their right to ensure that their existence, and their cultural identities, are recognised by those who hold political, economic and soc ial power (Sassen 195-6).

Given the complexities outlined above, there is a feeling among both cultural practitioners and policy-makers alike that there needs to be a re-examination of policy delivery mechanisms as national and supranational institutions often work through hierarchical departments which are too detached from local territorial dynamics. A decade ago, commenting on this issue, Castells observed that (and this

is still true today) because of their flexibility and knowledge of the resources of the local civil society, local governments or forms of democracy are now better placed than national states at managing new urban contradictions and conflicts (351-3).

The cultural planning approach has emerged out of this debate as a way of enabling pol icy-makers to think strategically about the application of the cultural resources of localities to a wide range of public authority responsibilities. By linking culture and other aspects of economic and social life, cultural planning can be instrumental in creating development opportunities for the whole of the local community. In other words, while cultural policies tend to have a sectoral focus, cultural planning adopts a territorial remit. Moreover, as Franco Bianchini and I have argued elsewhere, it is important to clarify that cultural planning is not the 'planning of culture', but a cultural (anthropological) approach to urban planning and policy (Bianchini and Ghilardi 84 -85).

This insight derives from a tradition of radical planning and humanistic m anagement of cities championed in the early 1960s, chiefly, by Jane Jacobs. Cities are our own artefacts, argued Jacobs and the trouble in dealing with them is that planners can only contemplate a city's uses one at a time, by categories (155 -156). Jacobs saw the city as an ecosystem composed of physical-economic-ethical processes interacting with each other in a natural flow. While developing the idea of the city as a living system, Jacobs implicitly acknowledged her debt to the Scottish biologist and phil osopher Patrick Geddes, who, at the beginning of the 20th century, imported from French geography the idea of the 'natural region'. For Geddes, planning had to start with a survey of the resources of such natural region (whose ingredients were Folk-Work-Place), of the human responses to it, and of the resulting complexities of the cultural landscape and of the human response to such a natural region (Hall, 137 -48).

The idea of a territory as a living ecosystem, made up of diverse resources which need to be surveyed and acknowledged by the local community at large before policy can intervene, is very much at heart

of cultural planning. The notion of cultural planning, widely applied in both the USA (since the 1970s) and Australia (since the mid-1980s), by Robert McNulty and Colin Mercer (McNulty; Mercer 1991a, 1991b; David Grogan and Colin Mercer with David Engwicht 1995) is however, still uncommon among European policy-makers.

Whereas in the USA precedents of the concept can be traced back to the civic programmes of the New Deal and to the strong tradition of neighbourhood-based community arts centres, in Australia applications of the concept can be related to the community cultural development of the 1980s, and to the local autonomy lent by the federal systems of government to local agencies, which could then run independent cultural development programmes. In Europe, where aesthetic definitions of culture tend to prevail and policies for the arts are rarely co-ordinated with other policies, cultural planning has had, so far, little application. In the UK, however, in the past five years, strategies for the development of the cultural industries sector have partly been based on a framework which, in its attempt to move away from basic cultural policy-led urban regeneration, could be said to be close to a cultural planning approach. This is due among other things, to the fact that policy-makers tend to interpret the notion of local cultural resources in a rather narrow way, mostly as heritage, thus overlooking potential synergies between sub-sectors of the local cultural economies.

By reviewing some examples of good practice in the application of cultural planning in different social and economic contexts, and by analysing some recent European policy frameworks which take an integrated developmental approach, the next section of the paper assesses the capacity of cultural planning to deal with issues of social and economic development within cultural diversity.

3. Cultural Planning – A Review of Current Applications

The central characteristics of cultural planning, as described by Franco Bianchini (1993) and Bianchini and Ghilardi (1997), are a very broad, anthropological definition of 'culture' as 'a way of life', along with the integration of the arts into other aspects of local culture, and into the texture and routines of daily life in the city. Cultural planning, furthermore, can help urban governments identify the cultural resources of a city or locality and to apply them in a strategic way to achieve key objectives in areas such as community development, place marketing or industrial development. More precisely, in the words of Mercer, "Cultural planning is the strategic and integral planning and use of cultural resources in urban and community development" ("What Is Cultural Planning?" 1).

Cultural resources are here understood in a pragmatic way and include not only the arts and heritage of a place, but also local traditions, dialects, festivals and rituals; the diversity and quality of leisure; cultural, drinking and eating and entertainment facilities; the cultures of youth, ethnic minorities and communities of interest; and the repertoire of local products and skills in the crafts, manufacturing and service sectors. Cultural planning has therefore a much wider remit than cultural policy.

In moving away from a narrow definition of culture as art, and in putting cultural resources at its centre, Mercer argues that – compared to traditional cultural policies – cultural planning is intrinsically more democratic, more conscious of the realities of cultural diversity and more aware of the intangible features of cultural heritage and patrimony ("Brisbane's Cultural Development Strategy").

Key moments of implementation of the concept in the Australian context have been: a) the 1990 Brisbane Cultural Development Strategy (Mercer 1991), which first outlined the logic behind cultural planning and guaranteed a wide circulation of the model among policy-makers keen to develop a framework for the strategic development of their community's culture; b) the Joondalup Cultural Plan (1992), which was the first time the principles had been applied to a newly built greenfield city development; c) the endorsement in 1993 by three levels

of government of the policy framework C ultural Development in South East Queensland; and, d) the publication by Arts Queensland and the Australia Council of the *Cultural Planning Handbook* , compiled by David Grogan and Colin Mercer with David Engwicht.

Brisbane's Cultural Development Strategy is particularly relevant as it constituted the first attempt to develop a truly culturally inclusive framework for the city. In this document, Colin Mercer stated a set of principles on which to base an effective policy. One of them is that, to assure cultural pluralism, it is essential that cultural planners understand what different segments comprise the community, conduct discussions and carry out research with each group, and include representations from each group on boards, committees and in the evaluation process. This principle calls for a community cultural assessment as an integral and necessary component of cultural planning and establishes the objective presence of the community within the planning process rather than simply as an 'object' of planning (*Cultural Planning Handbook* 14–17).

In addressing issues of access, equity, participation, employment and quality of life, cultural planning speaks also about the nature and meaning of civic culture and re-defines the civic realm of a place; in the case of Brisbane, this translated into, among other things, a special focus on women's access to the city centre and its perception and external image as perceived by local ethnic and aboriginal communities and young people.

In the USA, during the past 20 ye ars, Partners for Livable Places – a non-profit organisation working locally to promote quality of life, economic development and social equity – has provided new thinking about cultural policy which moves away from the compensatory logic of some arts programmes. It has also addressed issues of access, equity and participation within the framework of more general objectives for social and economic development at all levels: that of the city, the region, the state or the nation.

In 1992, Robert McNulty, project director of Partners for Livable Places, published "Culture and Communities: the Arts in the Life of American Cities", a collection of case studies focusing on cities and towns representing a cross-section of life in the USA. The overall aim of the research was to place the arts and culture in the broader context of community development, building on their economic role, and expanding that role to include other social and community concerns. Using some examples of cultural planning strategies, the report considers the way in which more and more communities in the USA are seeing the arts as a means of fostering community pride and cultural identity.

McNulty's report suggests that, in general, the arts and cultural policy need to be seen not as isolated events or institutions, but as essential to the way we understand communities. Furthermore, cultural planning needs to be integrated into other aspects of planning – such as economics, transport, education, environment, urban renewal – in order to play a truly effective role in citizens' lives. The now renamed Partners for Livable Communities, continues in the development of initiatives (1995, 1996, 2000) which, essentially, seek to demonstrate the social impact of the arts by stimulating cultural -community partnerships at the neighbourhood level. In this context, the use of cultural assets is clearly seen as a resource for both community improvements and economic revitalisation.

4. Relevant European Examples of Policy Frameworks

In the past decade, in Europe, as a result of an overall reduction in public expenditure on culture, cultural research and its implementation have often emphasised the economic importance of the arts and cultural activity. However, policy concerns have mostly focused on the development of cultural industries, the building of Europe-wide modern communication infrastructure and the development of cultural tourism with a particular emphasis on

employment effects and on the balance of payments through the circulation of cultural goods between countries.

As one of the countries to experiment extensively with culture -led revitalisation and cultural industries strategies in the 1980s, the UK has continued to develop integrated policies designed to strengthen the framework for quality of life for local communities. In particular, the present Labour government is committed to encouraging local authorities to develop cultural strategies aimed at a greater degree of integration of all cultural services. In June 1999, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport published "Local Cultural Strategies: Draft Guidance for Local Authorities in England", in which all local authorities were called on to develop a cultural strategy by the year 2002. Among the benefits of Local Cultural Strategies mentioned in the document is that "strategies should help policy makers to focus on the needs, demands, and aspirations of the community" (13). The document also calls for a great deal of consultation with communities but, considering that it only marginally engages in debate on the issues relating to what constitutes a local culture, and that there no discussion of the different methodologies and theories that can inform cultural plans, it is difficult to see how inclusive local authorities can be in their strategies.

This is not to deny that the document could constitute at least a basic platform on which to build more qualitative assessments of local resources on a cultural planning model. Good examples of such assessments are the numerous initiatives created by the various Cultural Industries Development Agencies set up in the past five years across the UK. The cultural industries support services developed within those agencies focus on issues of access, social inclusion and participation as much as on business generation. Social inclusion is here understood as an incentive to cultural production and as a way of fostering civic pride, and a sense of local identity and ownership.

The philosophy behind the above developments is that of a 'productive' use of diversity to create a sustainable skills base and a culture of innovation capable of yielding economic rewards for

everybody. This is an approach that sees cultural diversity not as a problem to be controlled by top-down policies, but as an asset for the development of the local community.

Some of the developmental concerns mentioned above in relation to culture-led urban revitalisation formed the premise for the Urban Pilot Programme, launched by the European Commission a decade ago and completed in 2000. The programme was designed to explore new ways in which the economic potential of cities, together with their problems arising from social exclusion, industrial decay, environmental degradation, could be tackled and lessons shared throughout Europe. Although a definition of cultural diversity was not spelled-out, and there was a bias towards building-based initiatives and away from more innovative schemes focusing on empowering, networking and skills enhancement projects, some of the projects funded managed to implement interesting examples of integrated solutions.

In Randers in Denmark and in Friedrichshain in Berlin, for instance, culture was used as a motor for regeneration, especially to create more inclusive urban strategies dealing with the issues raised by the multicultural background of those cities. In Randers, in particular, The Wonder project, has devoted an area of the city to education facilities and exhibition spaces, as well as to workshops and entrepreneurs belonging to the immigrant and refugee population (32% of the total). The overall aim here is to allow minorities to achieve a stronger presence on the labour market as a base for further integration. In Turin, Italy, the Living, Not Leaving project has adopted a more cultural planning approach, with interventions aimed at the revitalisation of a run-down district of town through initiatives directly managed by immigrants, youth and women resident in the area. Issues of crime, safety, housing and community empowerment are tackled under the umbrella of quality of life and community renewal.

5. Strategic Directions for Further Research

The final section of the paper attempts to explore the implications, for policy-makers, of the adoption of a cultural planning framework capable of addressing cultural diversity. As Franco Bianchini and I have pointed out (1997), in a study for the Council of Europe on the impact of cultural initiatives on neighbourhoods of 11 different cities across Europe, traditional cultural policies tend to show their limits, both when dealing with the changes affecting contemporary cities, and when tackling new cultural movements, such as lifestyle groups, which often reassert their origins and loyalties in an anti-policy, non-hierarchical way. The same study also concluded that more research was needed into the questions related to the implementation of a cultural planning approach.

Two areas of research were identified which are still relevant today. The first concerns a need for experimentation and the piloting of new, more integrated and overarching structures for policy-making capable of bringing together different local government departments. As cultural planning has to be part of a larger strategy for urban and community development, and has to make connections with physical and town planning, with economic and industrial development objectives, with housing and public work initiatives, cultural planners need to link up with other agencies responsible for planning and development.

The issue here is that there is a need for experimenting with more open and creative structures of policy-making (Bianchini and Ghilardi 85-87). This can start with a *re-training* of policy-makers and administrators so that they can acquire a broader knowledge of other disciplines involved in the understanding of how the urban and social fabric of a location functions (Bianchini and Ghilardi 85-87). For example, co-ordinated training schemes for local leaders, such as government officials, artists, youth workers, developers and other

community representatives, have been used effectively in some cities in the USA as a tool for strategic community revitalisation, and for dealing with issues of civic participation, racial understanding and youth development. Examples of 'leadership training schemes' such as these could be adapted to the European context through a Europe-wide research programme.

Another aspect linked to the development of new structures of policy-making is that of the redefinition of organisational policies and goals. A reassessment of the role of civic institutions such as libraries and museums, for instance, can both enable traditional institutions to discover new functions for themselves and help them to deal more effectively with issues of cultural diversity. Libraries, for example, can be pivotal points in assisting local communities to adapt to new challenges in society; they can become important access point to information and training for local communities. Equally, museums can serve as a resource to any community dealing with issues of multicultural understanding. Research on the diverse role these institutions can play has already been undertaken in the USA (Partners for Livable Communities) and in the UK (by the Comedia and Demos think-tanks) with encouraging results.

The novelty of this approach lies also in the challenge it poses to the traditional quasi-economic measures of output that have characterised public funding for culture over the past twenty years. Culture and cultural institutions alike are seen in this context as tools for the improvement of the quality of life of local communities and for providing the necessary resources to help them to develop skills, confidence and organisational capacity.

On this last point, however, a word of caution concerning the evaluation of the 'social impact' of arts-related initiatives needs to be introduced. In the past five years, particularly in the UK, cultural development agencies have increasingly engaged in the debate around the development of more subtle and creative ways of showing how quality of life can be improved through integrated, people-centred cultural activity. As a consequence, evaluation exercises have been

carried out focusing mostly on the positive effects that participation in arts-related activities can have in dealing with cultural diversity; but the research underpinning these evaluation exercises often tends to confuse indicators with 'desirable outcomes' thus creating an obvious research bias (Matarasso).

The issue here is that although there is a case to be made for advocating the importance of arts and cultural activities in generating equal participation and in fostering citizenship (as shown above in the Australian and American examples of cultural planning), there is also a need to develop effective evaluation tools. These need to be built at a conceptual level and through primary research (by, for example, comparing the outcome of a series of cultural planning projects implemented Europe-wide over a period of time).

One other area for further research is related to the need for a conceptual and ultimately sociological redefinition of what is meant by social, civic participation today. As two important aspects of cultural planning are cultural mapping and community participation (for the development of any particular locality), the question surely has to be: what is the ethical basis of social life in contemporary multicultural societies? How can we live together with our differences? These questions highlight the importance a redefinition of social subjects will increasingly have in the future. On this topic, Alain Touraine (2000) argues that, so far, we seem to be stuck between a 'liberal' conception of universalism and a 'communitarian' logic. The former appears to guarantee respect for difference and tolerance, but is so far removed from real social relations that it provides no principle for social integration and inter-cultural communication, and the latter instead tends to privilege homogeneity over diversity only by falling back on a vague idea of tolerance (135-136). Along with Anthony Giddens (1991), Touraine argues that the definition of 'Subject' is one of the central elements in modernity. In Touraine's view, the Subject rests on the recognition that "every actor, collective or individual has the right to assert and defend himself as such, or in other words as an actor who is

capable of being involved in the technological world and at the same time, of recognising and reinterpreting his identity" (138).

Similar preoccupations with the definition of the subject can also be found in the work of Stuart Hall, who maintains that resistance and policies which do not suppress heterogeneity of interests and identities are possible. These, in fact, make political contestation possible without necessarily fixing political boundaries for eternity (130). In other words, social movements are increasingly shifting the core of collective action from politics to ethics.

A renewed interest in ethical discourse clearly shows the need to conceptualise a different intellectual and pragmatic space in which to envisage social interaction, and that is precisely where more research is needed. This calls for not only a renewed interest in sociology – since it is through the work of sociologists such as Ulrich Beck, Michel Maffesoli, Gilles Lipovetsky, or Manuel Castells that we have been able in the recent past to unravel how the new social subjects are shaped in contemporary urban society – but also a need to think more pragmatically about how new, more 'tolerant' urban s paces (Sennett 358) can be created through policies. It is here that, perhaps, cultural planning needs to be more closely scrutinised as a viable model of small-scale, locally rooted policy framework. The risk is that this kind of approach could, if not ha ndled with a good degree of political tolerance for failure, end up by paradoxically promoting more closed social spaces, inward looking and trapped in the logic of rediscovery of local distinctiveness as a weapon for surviving economic global competition.

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