# COMMUNICATION ACROSS CULTURES IN MULTICULTURAL CITIES
Papers Abstracts

## What is special about art/cultural projects?

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What is special about art/cultural projects?
The present issue focuses on the contribution made by art/cultural initiatives to the development of multiple identity in some of the European cities.
The art/cultural projects have a special character to offer because:
They engage people's creativity, and so lead to problem solving.
They are dealing with meanings, and enable dialogue between people and social groups.
They encourage questioning, and the imagination of possible future actions
They offer self-expression, which is an essential characteristic of the active citizen.
They are unpredictable, exciting and fun.
It is more than evident that social field and economic field are not separated from cultural one beside the tendency which is putting them in opposition as artists and the world rather than artists in the world.
Artists do not aim specifically to produce multicultural work but since they are living in specific time, and since art is rooted in real life problems, the realities of everyday life are transposed into their work and emerge transformed where intercultural dimension reflects certain implementation on social, political and aesthetic levels in the cities. Renegociation of multicultural discourses on the arts shows a new model of cross-cultural collaboration at work during 'workshopping solutions'. Its the landing of interculturalism in private relationships with proactive engagement far away from official discourses.
Some experince from art/cultural field are shifting this attention towards the people themselves: their imagination, their shrewdness, motivation, demands, fantasies and only than the city is becoming a cultural product, a community construction.

Recyclart – Belgium
Recyclart is a dynamic, multi-discipline project attempting to get a grip on the problems in the desolate centre of Brussels.
De Valigia – Holland
European train heritage project - De Valigia was exposed in Holland, Italy, Germany, Denmark and Greece collecting around 200 artworks.De Valigia train was travelling through Europe making several stops stages in between, keeping on collecting city's suitcases to represent the European cultural heritage.
AES – Russia
The Moscow based art association AES has change the landscape of the contemporary world by producing a series of imaginary postcards of well-known cities in the world (in the future?).AES has pushed forward one of the main charasteristics of contemporary visual art - ambiquity.
Life stations – Austria
The Installation Life Stations was a topographical installation, which documented various historical and emotional aspects of the living past and present of a particular urban microcosm. It was a collage of life experiences of a particular district of Vienna - the Second District – called 'Leopoldstadt'. It is a district with a very high proportion of foreigners.
Collective Distribution - alter globalisation arty collectives (United Kingdom, France, Spain, Belgium, Holland, Yugoslavia) during the Brussels's Summit 2001.
Although they tackle global political and economic problems, their links and loyalties belong primarily to their local communities 'artist residencies'- it represents the laboratory of exchange between artists of different disciplines and nationalities on one hand, and artists and local population from Brussels.What is their desire for new intercultural policy and practices in the cities?

## The use of languages in a multilinguistic Brussels

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Nowadays the term 'globalization' presents itself as a new angle on the study of economic internationalization and its inherent political, social and cultural consequences. However, the phenomenon of migration, one of its main consequences, always had an important impact on society. Primarily boosted by an economic reality, cities have

always been a major pole of attraction for foreigners and people from the countryside. As a result, Brussels, like other European cities, has within its limited confines dozens of different nationalities. After World War II, the lack of local labor forces called for an influx of unskilled foreign workers from poor south European nations, and later from Turkey and Morocco. The growing international importance of Brussels as headquarters of both the European Union and the NATO alliance and international companies and organizations following in its slipstream, has caused a wave of immigration of highly educated West Europeans. Apart from these trends, Belgium's colonial history in central Africa and the developments in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall have also left their traces in Brussels. At the same time, Flanders and Wallonia continued to account for a "regular" influx while there was also plenty of movement within Brussels itself. Migration however did not destroy the culture nor the language of the people involved. In this paper, I will approach the diversity of the Brussels population from a socio-linguistic point of view.

In a multilingual environment, the choice of a particular language in which communication takes place is not evident. On the one hand, language is a carrier and producer of the culture of a given group. In this respect, the use of a language refers to the membership of a specific group or community. On the other hand, language use often expresses complex social meanings and codes of conduct. One person might use several languages, depending on the situation. If one wants to analyze a sociolinguistic situation, one has to unravel these different meanings and codes. Often the theoretical framework is narrowed to majority/minority theories where the minority group slowly adapts to the language of the majority with bilingualism as an in-between-stage. But an urban linguistic environment is often too complex to fit into this majority/minority framework. Different national and immigrant language groups are living together, such that majority and minority became relative notions. Contemporary sociolinguistics is looking for a new conceptual framework to grasp this diversity. In this respect, the interdisciplinary dialogue on the different aspects of globalization is a fruitful soil. This paper presents some basic research about the linguistic situation in Brussels in order to get some insight into the dynamics of language use in a multilingual environment. First of all this paper discusses some methodological problems inherent to the operationalisation of linguistic variables. The chief problem introduced here is the operationalisation of language groups within a multilingual area. Three grounds for operationalisation will be discussed: the official/political status of a language, the 'mother tongue' of the speakers and the level of competence. The presentation is based on the experience with survey research in Brussels.

Secondly we will discuss the language use of the immigrant groups: Which groups are involved? To what extend have local languages replaced migrant languages? Does the communicative repertoire of the second and third generation differ from that of their local peers?

Afterwards we will have a closer look at the 'local' languages, Dutch and French. How do these evolve in the given circumstances? How does the local population act within these circumstances? What's the role of the economic situation on these local languages?

Finally the future of multilingualism and multiculturalism in Brussels is discussed: does Brussels evolve towards an anglicized or frenchified city or will we be confronted with a growing diversity? ... knowing that the linguistic aspect is but one indication of this complex process.


## Communications across cultures: from cultural awareness to reconciliation of the dilemmas

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In this globalising world there is a growing need for understanding different types and forms of interaction between people in intercultural environments, i.e. working places, cities, etc. This implies that people refer more and more to various communication models and practices to fully master communication across cultures. These models ultimately lead to applying best practices in intercultural communication. One of the most popular models in the one developed by Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner that we will present in the workshop. This model works with a three-step approach:

1) Cultural awareness, i.e. knowing who you are on the cultural map and being aware of the otherness and hence of the existence of cultural differences in the world;
2) Respect for these cultural differences, i.e. showing respect, tolerance or empathy for the other and for these differences;
3) Reconciliation of these cultural differences, i.e. reconciling dilemmas which feature these differences to which practitioners are confronted in their daily work. This process will ultimately make it possible to find and apply best (communication) practices.

In this presentation we will first review the concept of culture related to this practical model. Second, we will present the 7 dimensions of the model which features differences and the related dilemmas people face in intercultural communication settings. Finally, we will review the reconciliation theory as presented by Hampden-

Turner & Trompenaars. This will be a combination of theory with an exercise. Participants will practice the reconciliation methodology in its 6 different steps using a concrete example. This includes starting with Eliciting the Dilemma (step 1) and going all the way to Reconciling the Dilemma (step 5) and Implementing the New Design (step 6).

# Immigrants' Entrepreneurial opportunities: the case of Chinese in Portugal

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As in other receiving countries, in Portugal immigrant minorities are more likely to be self-employed than natives. However some groups are more likely to become entrepreneurs than others. Chinese do not stand out in this respect in relation to other foreigners with residence permits, but they are more likely to be independent workers than the majority of non-European foreigners.

In this context which factors explain the tendency of some immigrants to work on their own account? Would cultural factors explain the concentration of some ethnic groups on entrepreneurial activities, when abroad, and not others?
Can the specific context of the receiving country (e.g. immigration history, governmental legislation on foreigner access to labour market) explain some of the differences? Or does the Portuguese economic structure of opportunities force a specific economic adaptation of immigrants? Is it that the formation of an ethnic enclave, traditionally built by Chinese immigrants entrepreneurs abroad (e.g. New York Chinatown - Zhou 1992), is context independent?
We believe that to understand the main characteristics of Chinese immigrants mode of incorporation in Portugal, both in its similar and different tendencies with other host societies, we must consider the institutional framework (related to the different forms of state organisation, namely through their welfare states – neo-American and Continental Europe models – as Kloosterman 2000 put it.); the reasons that generated the migratory flow, which are linked to the history of the co-ethnic community in the country and its economic incorporation; the operation of social networks in the host society and throughout different countries, whether or not it is possible to raise capital from within the ethnic community; and the extent to which the host society market is truly open. And that is to say that opportunities connected with immigrants co-ethnic resources (as Portes suggests in the 'enclave model') and with structural factors of the host society (as Rath and Kloosterman 2000) must be considered. The specific context cannot be the only explanation, since as several researchers found the same immigrant group shows common entrepreneurial activities in different host societies. This is the Chinese case across the world, namely, in the ethnic restaurant sector.

This case study is important to highlight that immigrants also contribute to the definition of the host society market opportunities. The Chinese case brings to light the ability of immigrant entrepreneurs to draw on the inner group resources, transforming them into opportunities to their economic success. And so cultural factors that drive immigrants into certain segments of the labour market are not to be understood as a need of network or psychological protection, rather as a rational economic opportunity creation strategy in itself. However Portugal specific structural opportunities, affect the formation of an enclave. In Portugal, as in Southern Europe, the informal economy can be an opportunity to self-employment - not so easy in North European countries where institutional control its stronger and competition is higher. On the other hand, the Chinese population is still very recent and small when compared with other countries. Nevertheless, the specific Portuguese context show that Chinese entrepreneurs use the opportunity of the free circulation in the European market to compensate for the short comings.

In other words, Chinese immigrants in Portugal searched for the host society opportunities, combining local, regional, European and transnational connections, drawing on the inner-group resources. During the last twenty years Chinese entrepreneurs have spread throughout the country and have been developing new ethnic strategies – revitalising shopping streets, with new products and new marketing strategies; opening up trade links with co-ethnic entrepreneurs, residing in other host societies (mainly in Europe). These strategies illustrate the new alternative form of immigrant economic adaptation that Portes et al (2001) called 'transnational entrepreneurs'. In this case showing how immigrants take advantage of the opportunities related with Portugal participation in a single space as the European                                                                                                          Union.
We believe that more important than to consider the physical borders of Portes' model, which is linked to a specific urban context of the USA, one should highlight the ability of Chinese entrepreneurs to draw on the inner resources of the ethnic group in order to achieve success in economic competition (as Portes also suggests). A spatial concentration of the co-ethnic group would, therefore, not be a necessary condition of the model.

# Managing Diversity in Urban Environments

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The events of the last century, in particular World War II, have resulted in European societies being affected by widespread feelings of insecurity and instability. Ce siècle sera l'un des plus étranges que la terre ait porté. On l'appellera le siècle de l'homme, mais ce sera le siècle de toutes les pestes. [E-E. Schmitt, Le Visiteur, ed. Actes-sud, pg 45]. The main characters in this scenario, where uncertainty, danger and social transformation are rife, are above all the "foreigners", who feel this insecurity more than most. For the West, immigration evokes the fear of losing its wealth. Racist feelings emerge in all European countries, with variations determined by the different historical backgrounds. However, it is possible to detect some common elements in this respect; the fear of diversity which is part of the makeup of human beings, social transformations which erupt in 'cultural' conflicts, and changes in migration patterns.

The fear of strangers is part of our 'social unconscious'. The multiplicity of existing races, with all its implications, provokes a crisis in individual and social identities. Man is afraid when he no longer knows who he is and why he is. Diversity is the concrete representation of the possibility of his not being what he is [S. Gindro, Il mondo delle diversità, pg 25]. The insecurity which characterises modern society, particularly in the world of work, and the consequent fear of foreign competition, have increased this fear of diversity, generating prejudices and stereotypes. Nevertheless - considering as a premise the theories of Jean Piaget's - 'stereotypes' are also the first level of learning. A 'stereotype' could be defined as a collective image concerning another group. It is based on a process of categorisation, in the measure in which a representation always implies assigning certain characteristics to a defined whole, in a process of differentiation between the self (or one's own group) and the other (or others). For this reason we must consider 'stereotypes' to be the result of a social construct, where social identity is derived from the comparison between the representation of one's own group and those of other groups, thus generating two distinct and 'diverse' identities. 'Prejudice' and 'interethnic relations' are therefore essentially two communication constructs which should be analysed in their structure, in the relationships with social-economic and power dynamics. The interpretation of reality would thus occur through the use of suitable interpretation models, which are developed through communication and in everyday life; in this sense 'prejudice' can be considered to be a whole comprising dialectical forms which a given community uses to describe the relationship between different groups in a coherent fashion, using a more general system of interpretation of reality. 'Stereotypes' and 'prejudice' viewed in this light, as the first attempts at learning, in this way lose their negative connotation and become essential stages in reaching for deeper knowledge. They become dangerous only when, through these primary considerations, the individual or group display discriminatory behaviour or ascribe a hierarchical classification to peoples according to their 'race'. In this case a person tends to always bear such a classification and social comparison in mind, and relates to others, even individually, as representatives or their own group rather than as individuals endowed with particular characteristics and personalities.

In order to better understand the management of diversity, certain theories have looked for the causes of conflicts and attempted to identify those cultural stimuli which facilitate integration. Comparative studies of immigrant and local populations which go beyond the concept of a presumed racial superiority have produced interesting theoretical explanations which allow us to better understand the problems which may arise in the construction of a multicultural society. In the 30s, starting from the conception that values and rules of behaviour are transmitted from parents to children, and serve as guidelines for them, Sellin noted that this transmission is interrupted by migration, where there is an overlapping of diverse cultural systems (that of origin and that of the host country) and original values lose strength while the host values are still weak, resulting in conflicts linked to integration. Conflicts can derive from processes of social discrimination and from the modification of the original culture as influenced by the new social context, generating factors of insecurity which result in deviant behaviour. Studies on immigration have analysed the fracture with one's origins and family context, showing how it results in a feeling of grief and loss because the person thus loses his/her reference points and his/her external 'containers'. In this case a positive reception and a family network are helpful factors in allowing immigrants to accept their diversity more easily, and prevent damage to their identity which could result in destructive and/or self-destructive behaviour. Both immigrants and local inhabitants encounter difficulties in the construction of a multicultural society and the greatest conflicts arise particularly in cities. This is because cities are where cohabitation between diverse cultural groups mostly occurs, where different groups compete for the same public spaces. The place one lives in is a complex dynamic system of social relationships and the more civil a society the less conflict is generally experienced in a city. Cities are continuously evolving, with a tendency towards multiculturalism, and for this reason require constant attention and renovation, so that they can be adapted to the needs of their inhabitants, whether local or immigrants. In an urban context the management of diversity is born of a will to resolve cultural conflicts where diversity should be considered to be a source of richness, rather than a problem and a cost, as is often the case. In this complex situation diversity is a challenge which needs to be met by the member states of the European Union

through a common approach to the migration impact. This requires an effort on the part of cities on various levels, such as in healthcare, education and services. New intervention strategies are now being activated for conflict management in multicultural environments, with the creation of new professional figures such as cultural mediators, spokespersons, etc.

# A biologist's view of individual cultural identity for the study of cities

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To a biologist life is a state of continuous chemical activity, which has the key property of persisting by selecting conditions which do not vary too much from the optimum. The latter process is called homeostasis, the maintenance of the constancy of internal conditions. In animals the maintenance of constant external conditions is the job of the nervous system, which gets sensations from the outside world, evaluates them, and makes decisions for appropriate reactions so that it will never stray into danger.

In a sense this is true of all human societies. They persist as long as they maintain conditions within a tolerable range. Cities will only function in a survivable way as long as their societies stay within certain limits, and within societies there are mechanisms to ensure members can coexist. Our problem is to understand how they may work when people follow diverse and possibly competitive or conflicting systems of behaviour. I am studying the development of children who move between countries, and looking at what happens, not seeking particular solutions to specific defined problems. As a biologist I can accept that some individuals and some systems fail, and that homeostasis may not succeed in maintaining the internal conditions.

With this freedom from commitment to solutions (or problems) in mind, I looked for a model of cultural identity in terms of the value-system which guides human actions, to try and understand better how the human unit of society works. Since homeostasis is the adjustment to changed conditions, we need to know why some adjustments are easy and some difficult.

The chosen model is based upon Social Psychology (notably a branch of Personal Construct Psychology called Identity Structure Analysis), Cultural Anthropology, and Neurology, which I believe triangulate consistently. Humans have a huge capacity for remembering and associating sensations, so that our problem becomes one of reaching decision in a practical time. Values are seen as being agents of bias in the nervous system, such that certain sensations will be likely to lead to certain onward connections and quickly produce certain actions. The actions may be physical or mental, such as memory, interpretation of perceptions, classification and recognition of sensations, coding or decoding into language, evaluation of the strength of sensations. The effect is that throughout life we acquire a tendency to react in certain ways to certain stimuli from the environment or from our memories and imaginations (syntheses of past events into possible future events).

This pattern and these values are acquired through experience. The most effective transmission is through social contacts with whom we have an emotional bond, whom I call validators. The strongest is the mother or principal carer, but later validators vary in salience. The bonding, the convention of communication we develop through this contact, and the material transmitted during life, will tend to be inherited to ensure that we pass the benefit of our experience .

There are three important consequences of this system:
- absorbing values into a system with which they must be consistent gives the individual a coherent set of values which will direct actions; substantially, this is the identity (Cognitive homeostasis)
- acquiring values from those in the immediate and salient social environment gives people raised together a similar set of evaluations; substantially, this is a culture or a Cultural Meaning System (Social homeostasis)
- since an historically accumulated set of values is a precious means of survival, there will be a tendency for such a set to be passed only to kin, and not to competitors; this results in the innate need to discriminate between in-group and out-group.

Returning to biology, there are parallels with the body's immune system. Using the model, and the somewhat fanciful metaphor of the immune system, we can ask some fundamental questions about what level of flexibility we can expect of citizens. We can see concentric cultural identities, some suited to coexistence, some not. And we can see in ourselves attitudes which filter our sensations and make us formulate questions and seek solutions in terms of our own values, not those of the citizens.

# The role of city in fostering intergroup communication in multicultural environment: Saint – Petersburg's case

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Saint-Petersburg, a city that I belong, is often called "The Window to Europe". Ask residents of Petersburg what is meant by this expression and, besides answers of comparatively democratic orientation and the historical purpose of the city, they are sure to mention the atmosphere of tolerance and respect in relation to different cultures and religions.

Over the last ten years there were problems in interethnic relations in Russia, though even in the tensest periods in St. Petersburg, a nearly 5 millions city where representatives of more than 50 nationalities live, everything was quite.

So, St. Petersburg is an interesting example and suitable object when we discussing the role of city in fostering intergroup communication in multicultural environment. What forms the so-called inclusive culture of the city, and where are the possible implicit complications here? It is interesting to answer this questions drawing the analogies with the Dutch experience.

St. Petersburg was built to secure the entrance to the sea, crucial for Russian trade and contacts with Europe, on the land reclaimed from the marsh. The city was build to tie different cultures, to promote trade and to learn from other cultures. Tolerance is one of the city's myths, a pattern determining the intergroup communication. Tolerance is the part of St. Petersburg's identity quit as the Netherlands "polder model".

The "polder model" is related mostly to the practice of policymaking, however an ingrained habit of co-operation and consultation concerns multicultural issues as well. The Dutch republic was long welcoming to outsiders and today's Netherlands still prides itself on this. Especially since the WW2 the Dutch have been highly sensitive to anything that smacks of picking on ethnical minorities. Yet behind this the Netherlands has never come to terms either with being an immigrant country or with multiculturalism. In Amsterdam and Rotterdam ethnic minorities make up over one-third of the population, and Mr. Bolkestein observes that, within 15-20 years, the figure will be over half the population.

In St. Petersburg we have the resembling tendencies, especially as the population ages. There are increasing concerns about it on the grass roots. Dutch voters also mention immigration among their most pressing concerns. What's dangerous for communication in the multicultural environment is when some politicians use immigration matters as a populist political platform, Mr. Fortuyn for instance. In Russia, where civil society is developing and self-identification is a pressing question it's important not to seek it in bilateral oppositions.

How it joins with the myth of tolerance? Well, the basis of the myth was and is pragmatic. Intercultural communication is fostering by trade, by the quantity of inevitable in the city intercultural contacts developing into the new quality of better understanding across cultural borders, by the synergetic effect of the social networks. What is crucial to realize is that while living in our own world we have to live in the global world. Debating on the necessity of the integration or accepting multiculturalism, it's crucial to realize that St. Petersburg and Amsterdam, for instance, are multicultural already, - this is one of their great assets. Then, different cultural groups should learn to learn about and from each other. Preparing to 300-anniversary of St. Petersburg in 2003, we try to foster intercultural communication. There are many projects initiated by citizens groups, enterprises. For instance, I am a member of St. Petersburg – Moscow club "European Metropolis", designed to promote the role of St. Petersburg as Russian cultural capital and one of the Europeans cultural centers. One of our projects is construction of a site about the Petersburg of different nations and preparing excursions to the national Petersburgs.