"The reality on the cusp of the millennium is a fractured global order which...puts most of the world's people in contact with one another, but simultaneously maintains deep fissures between different countries and peoples within countries". (*Culture and Civil Society: New Relationships with the Third Sector*, 2001) Can cultural policies help to reduce deep cultural divisions and build a civil society? Or is this a utopian dream? Discuss.

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"Perhaps the global problem of the early twenty-first century is basically this: that across our planet a number of what may be termed demographic-technological fault lines are emerging, between fast-growing, adolescent, resource-poor, undercapitalized, and uneducated populations on one side, and technologically inventive, demographically moribund, and increasingly nervous rich societies on the other."[1]

"Meanwhile, the young people who participate in Sonidos de la Tierra are learning more than music in practising hard, learning to play in musical ensembles and bringing culture and entertainment to their communities."[2]

1. Introduction

In the age of the Information Revolution and "global" connectivity cultural institutions, artists and cultural policymakers are faced with new opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, new ways to generate creative content, enhance its distribution and promotion have significantly increased. The online presence of cultural initiatives and reviews on cultural production and the publication of policy papers opens various engagement or cooperation opportunities and attracts new audiences. On the other hand thanks also to technologies and knowledge stored on the internet everybody can also become an artist, "make art" and become a competitor for the traditional and so-called professional productions. In this context, the division between professional and amateur arts loses its significance. In addition to this, new media, the rapid growth of cultural offer combined with the current life speed in the high-income countries cause that more and more people do not have time to attend events. Moreover, the younger generation does not participate in the traditional forms of arts like classical music concerts, theatre, museum or galleries visits.

Parallel to this, the changes in demography (high-income societies growing older, migrations) make it clear that many of the cultural facilities which already face serious problems with

1 Connelly, M.; Kennedy, P. 1994. Must it be the rest against the west? The Atlantic Monthly, Dec 1994, pp. 78–79, in: *Francisco Sagasti and Gonzalo Alcalde:* Development Cooperation in a fractured global order. An Arduous Transition, IDRC 1999, online version on: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-9405-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html
2 Sonidos de la Tierra information leaflet, www.sonidosdelatierra.org.py

attendance might within the next 20-30 years become facilities attracting just a marginal number of seriously aged enthusiasts.

If failing to implement a significant outreach strategy aimed at attracting new groups of society to traditional art forms and if not supporting the cultural expression of these marginalised groups the policymakers, funders and arts managers might get confronted with a twofold problem: the justification of spending millions of taxpayers' money on the philharmonies, concert halls or modern art museums which have a very limited impact and significance for society and the other problem related to the "ecology" of arts and the fact that the current cultural landscape might lose its dynamic because of accommodating only a limited number of new topics and new forms of expression.

These tendencies require a re-definition of the cultural strategies and policies for the arts on a local and national level and suggest that sustaining the cultural landscapes with its institutions and initiatives and broadening their impact needs to go hand in hand with addressing the issues of marginalisation, social disadvantage and access being currently domains of the civil society initiatives and some governmental programmes.

Before reflecting on the question whether cultural policies can contribute to the reduction of deep cultural divisions and the development of the civil society, it needs to be determined firstly what are the areas of most significant cultural divisions and secondly what does civil society mean and whether its development can be enhanced by cultural policy making. However, in the context of the challenges briefly listed above also the question needs to be added whether cultural policy can afford to ignore the cultural divisions and neglect its active contribution to developing a participatory, dynamic and educated society because it seems very appealing that "development will be cultural in the twenty-first century or it will not be at all."3
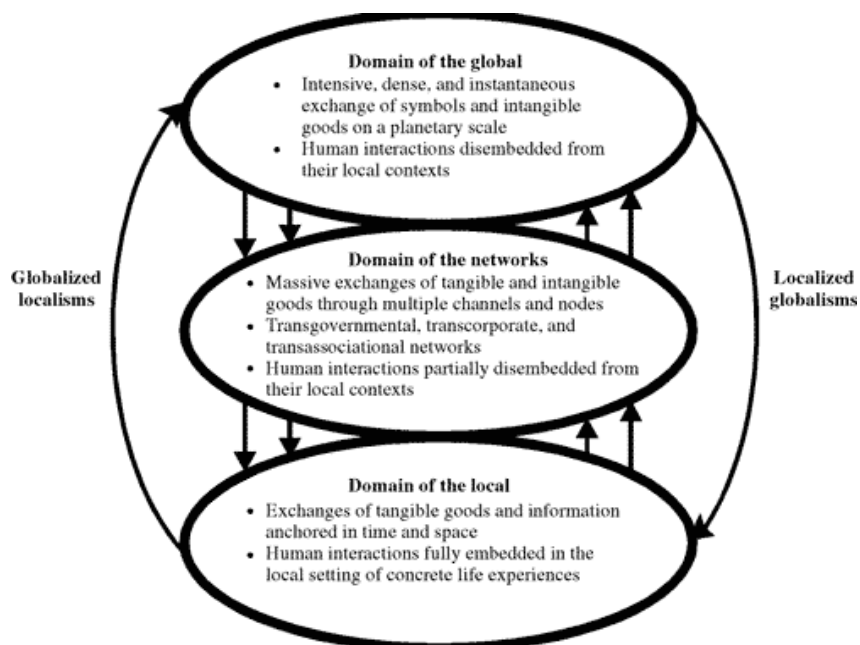
2. A fractured global order

Following Sagasti's definition formulated in *Development Cooperation in a fractured global order. An Arduous Transition*: "The fractured order is "an order a global but not integrated, that puts us all in contact with another while simultaneously maintaining deep fissures between diverse groups of countries and between peoples within countries, and that is benefiting a small percentage of humanity while segregating a large portion of the world's population." 4

The fractured global order is based on communication and information technologies disconnecting our actions from the previous, natural time and space limitations. Images, sounds and words in the form of virtual files can reach in a very short time millions of recipients all over the world.

Sagasti presents the three main domains of the fractured global order in a figure below:

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3 Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development: *Our Creative Diversity*, 1995, p 232
4 *Francisco Sagasti and Gonzalo Alcalde:* Development Cooperation in a fractured global order. An Arduous
Transition, IDRC 1999, online version on: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-9405-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Domain of the global
- Intensive, dense, and instantaneous exchange of symbols and intangible goods on a planetary scale
- Human interactions disembedded from their local contexts

Domain of the networks
- Massive exchanges of tangible and intangible goods through multiple channels and nodes
- Transgovernmental, transcorporate, and transassociational networks
- Human interactions partially disembedded from their local contexts

Domain of the local
- Exchanges of tangible goods and information anchored in time and space
- Human interactions fully embedded in the local setting of concrete life experiences

Globalized localisms

Localized globalisms

Interactions between these domains happen naturally and in both directions which means that global tendencies filter down and influence the local communities and vice versa that local initiatives can reach a global impact thanks to technology and people willing and able to communicate them to the global community and to interact with it.

"Globalised localism" and "local globalism" are the terms determined by Santos to name these interactions. Santos distinguishes further that the asymmetry in the global order is based on the fact that "the rich or 'core' countries specialize in globalized localisms, whereas the poor, or 'peripheral' countries are left primarily with localized globalism."5

Although the main attributes describing the fractured global order do not sound negative, i.e. "transgovernmental, trans-corporate and transassociational"6 the threats associated with it are connected with the impression of uncertainty and its dividing potential.

Before going over to the problem of the cultural divisions it needs to be stressed that the fractured global order, despite its impossibility to be predictable and controllable has also an enormous and already noticeable positive potential to support social and cultural initiatives and developments, to enhance civil society and its impact as well as democracy and education through communicating needs and skills of communities and individual people, through offering them sought solutions or other forms supporting their daily existence and maybe further development.

It has a potential to be a tool transforming the role of the state, the private sector and civil society. Its positive impact can be already seen in initiatives like, i.e.: www.kiva.org,

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5 Santos, B. 1995. Toward a new common sense. Routledge, New York, NY, USA, p.263
6 *Francisco Sagasti and Gonzalo Alcalde:* Development Cooperation in a fractured global order. An Arduous Transition, IDRC 1999, online version on: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-9405-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

www.abgeordnetenwatch.de, www.kandidatenwatch.de.

"Act locally, think globally" is an interesting slogan expressing the potential of the fractured global order in combination with a healthy focus on the tangible problems of real people in the defined area which could be a good a lodestar for policy makers all kinds.

3. Cultural divisions

All integration processes possible through "global" connectivity are directly intertwined with the processes of exclusion. Uneven developments do not only cause the growing division between the North and South but also between the different groups within each society. However, it should also be stressed that the global connectivity even if causing new forms of exclusion makes also the problem of the divisions between the societies and groups within this societies much more visible.

Both nationally and internationally we are facing growing inequalities of income and opportunities within societies and countries. The growing disparity between the high and low-income counties, the dependency on technology developed and distributed by high-income countries combined with the growing older of the privileged societies causes global tensions and waves of migration followed by problems with integration and xenophobia.

Everybody can theoretically to be a part of the global society, but the possibilities to use its best achievements and to participate in its cultural values are still accessible to only a very small percentage of the population.

Knowledge generation and acquisition became a new determining currency in the globally dominating "knowledge-based culture" with an almost exclusive availability to less than 25 % [7] of the earth population.

Looking at the statistics presented by Guiomar Alonso in 2001 that "96% of the world's people do not have access to the Internet, and 50% have never made a telephone call" [8] and more currently even within the high income countries in 2008 Germany 62%[9], Ireland 45%[10] and the UK 65%[11], (in comparison to i.e. Poland 29%[12] and Africa 5,6 %[13]) of the households had a

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7 Figure as per: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
8 Speech by Guiomar Alonso, Arts and Cultural Enterprise Division, UNESCO, ***Towards a Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity:*** *Addressing Creative Industry Imbalances.* Converge@Nottingham. Nottingham, UK
29 September 01,published in:
http://portal.unesco.org/culture/fr/file_download.php/41f1b54e277f41bfbadac96677aa0b73Towards+a+Global+alliance+Nottingham+Sep+2001.pdf
9 Figure for the first quarter 2005 as per:
http://www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Internet/DE/Content/Publikationen/Fachveroeffentlichungen/Informationsgesellschaft/pressebroschuere__ikt2005,property=file.pdf
10 Figure as per: http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/industry/current/issh.pdf
11 Figure as per: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=8&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=374
12 Figure for the first quarter 2005 as per:
http://www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Internet/DE/Content/Publikationen/Fachveroeffentlichungen/Informationsgesellschaft/pressebroschuere__ikt2005,property=file.pdf
13 Figure as per: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm

PC and the access to the internet it is appealing to agree with Colin Mercer the Director of the Cultural Policy and Planning Research Unit, at the Nottingham Trent University that:

"These massive inequalities in the distribution of access to communications and digital capacity pose perhaps the most urgent 'infrastructural' problems relating to the contemporary and emergent field of cultural policy and stress the need for thinking and acting in joined-up ways between the policy fields of industry, communications, community development and culture. Without concerted and 'joined-up' efforts in these areas, the negative tendencies of globalisation towards homogenisation will be very difficult to counter, and it will be even more difficult to recognise and capitalise on the positive tendencies."14

In practical terms, a joined-up programme of action to reach out to the disadvantaged groups of society developed between governments, civil society bodies, cultural policy and education policy makers in cooperation with relevant industries suppliers needs to be implemented if aimed at closing the dangerous black whole within and between them. Ensuring the basic human rights to education and to cultural expression need to be seen as a toll enhancing both sustainable societies and their dynamic and diverse culture.

Otherwise the growing gap within societies and between countries will cause not only serious social frictions, and in relation to the cultural policy an antagonism related to the justification of governmental financial support for educational and cultural facilities appreciated and used by a relatively small group of the population, mostly the one which is growing older and does not "produce the human capital" needed to sustain further existence of the society they belong to.

4. Civil society

If following the definition by Andrzej Sicinski, cited by D. Ilczuk in *Cultural Citizenship: Civil society and cultural policy in Europe*, that "the civil society is a society, in which people are predominantly bound by many horizontal (non-hierarchical) bonds; a society characterised by abundant activity of its members in many spheres of life; a society open to innovation"15 there is a clear indication that a cultural policy supporting this kind of social structure needs to be based following on the subsidiarity rule.

There is also another interesting description of civil society understood as collective, creative and value-based actions essential for development of every community by Michael Edwards presented in "Civil Society – theory and practice": "Civil society is essentially *collective* action – in associations, across society and through the public sphere – and as such it provides an essential counterweight to individualism; as *creative* action, civil society provides a much-needed antidote to the cynicism that infects so much of contemporary politics; and as *values-based action,* civil society provides a balance to the otherwise-overbearing influence of state

14 Colin Mercer: Converge@Nottingham, Introduction, Convergence, Creative Industries and Civil Society - The New Cultural Policy at: http://www.culturelink.org/review/s01/s01intro.html
15 In: Dorota Ilczuk, Cultural Citizenship: Civil society and cultural policy in Europe, Boekmanstudies/Circle, Amsterdam, 2001, p 17

authority and the temptations and incentives of the market, even if those values are contested, as they often are."16

Dorota Ilczuk states in her article that: "These institutions (civil society – MS) lessen the disproportion in the people's access to culture by caring for the rights of marginalised social groups. Finally, these institutions use many sources of financing, both public and private at the same time and thus create more opportunities for non-typical cultural projects to be implemented. Moreover, they have a significant role in creating a more varied offer of cultural goods and services."

Even if this statement is a bit too optimistic especially in terms of alternative and experimental culture, there is a great importance of presence and support of artistic events in local areas which should be included in the cultural policy and established cultural institutions' strategies. Moreover, some cultural foundations (i.e. Robert Bosch Stiftung, Europa Nostra) carrying out their activities on a regional, national or international level are contributing to the development of interesting cultural goods.

The chance for progressive cultural policy is to outreach to these places and to join in or initiate efforts to build up skills, knowledge and potentials. Of course cultural initiatives can not sort out all problems of discrimination, marginalisation and social inequality but they are well able to introduce the affected people to new forms of activities and expression, to other similar and different projects on a local, regional and national level and to give them a chance to develop and present their productions. Visits to other cultural institutions, participation in workshop and events can enhance both the bonds and engagement with the community members, but also it can make participants more familiar with places and forms of culture they are originally not used to. Access and support focused initiatives might not be very spectacular, but they are as important as putting together world-class events.

This agenda means a form of democratisation of culture which might be a scary idea for the cultural elitists. However, it is also crucial a tool to ensure a lively cultural landscape in the future, especially if realised that "citizens groups have been a prime cause of destabilization in every society since Pharaohs"17 and culture without regular shakes is a triste perspective.

5. Culture and Development

The awareness of the need to expand the concept of cultural policy seems to have made its way into a growing number of cultural policy documents but also, what is even more important, this recognition is being realised in a number of projects.

According to the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development, *Our Creative Diversity* published already in 1995 "Culture understood as the basis of development (…) implies promoting creativity in politics and governance, in technology, industry and business, in education and social and community development – as well as in the arts. It requires that the

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16 Edwards, Michael (2004) *Civil Society*, Cambridge: Polity, fragment from:
http://www.infed.org/association/civil_society.htm
17 Ibid.

media be used to open up communication opportunities for all, by reducing the gap between the information "haves" and "have-nots". It means adopting a gender perspective which looks at women's concerns, needs and interests and seeks a fairer redistribution of resources and power between men and women. It means giving children and young people a better place as bearers of new world culture in the making. It implies a thoroughgoing diversification of the notion of cultural heritage in social change. With regards to the natural environment, it means building a better understanding of the profoundly cultural dimensions of environmental management, creating institutions that give effect to that understanding."18

All the areas listed in this declaration are domains of civil society. It would be superfluous to mention that this proclamation needs to be seen as a signpost towards its destination which remains far away in our current experience of the cultural participation.

The Report lists some cultural policy documents where this approach has been included. However, the "key challenge is to move from principles to practice."19

The crucial means of promoting widely spread cultural awareness within societies and combating cultural divisions are connected with the areas of information technology and printed publications. These two tools support most efficiently equal access to knowledge for the citizens. However, there are many other areas of human activities and concerns where an engagement of cultural bodies can help by tackling real community, citizens, social or environmental problems and support development of new audiences and cultural goods and values, i.e. the "Main Street Program" implemented in Canada for revitalisation of local heritage resources supports the local communities in developing a plan of sustainable and stimulating use of their local resources.

Another important area mentioned in the introduction to this contribution is related to the growing gap between the state-supported cultural offer and the "street" culture of young people who are not interested in conventional cultural forms as well as to the problem of immigrants not integrated into the local activities: "consolidating social integration with respect to ethnic and cultural diversity, and yet inciting them to blossom, is a major public policy challenge facing cities today and tomorrow".20 Even if many young people are not interested in conventional arts, more or less generously supported by the state and its institutions, these people are or might become regular taxpayers what should oblige the state and the cultural policymakers to provide them with adequate opportunities to develop and express their own culture. This would not only enhance cultural education and integration but can it also can be used in the re-socialisation of homeless youths and young offenders as well as a tool to prevent youth violence and to build their cultural identity, improve their self-esteem and to develop their talents which they can share with their communities, i.e.: www.sonidosdelatierra.org.py

The HIP-HOP Project (Highways into the Past: History, Organising and Power) is another example of a cultural project realised as a "Civil Rights Tour" for Boston students to experience the nonviolent civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s.

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18 Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development: *Our Creative Diversity*, 1995, p 232
19 Ibid., p. 234
20 Ibid. p. 238

About the practical problem for the arts like, i.e. increasing participation in the arts a pilot project based on increasing co-operation between the arts and other social and educational institutions has been formulated in Sweden already or only in 1995.

In this context, it would be interesting to investigate further how the participation in the arts was understood and handled in history especially in the times before the development of the national states when the local area and culture where the first reference of the individual identity.

6. Résumé – "Joined-up thinking"; more "acting" to follow

Arts professionals and cultural policymakers seem finally to have started to realise that concentrating on their traditional audiences and hoping that these people who already interested in the cultural offer will participate more often in the events is a narrow-minded and naïve assumption. Instead of spending more and more money on fancy advertising and preaching to the already converted in order to develop more and new audiences some the cultural organisations and arts policymakers took a very rewarding risk and went into dialogue and interaction with groups of society previously totally neglected.

It started to be clear that these groups of the society if catered for and integrated into the already existing arts landscapes have a potential to contribute to sustainable development of the arts in the future twofold: in terms of contributing their new topics and forms of artistic expression and as a potentially new audience. Moreover, it helps the arts to provide better measurable legitimisation for their funding. The very positive impact on the social and cultural development of many marginalised society members is another encouraging aspect of this realisation.

Also, social, political and educational bodies have started to realise that implementing cultural activities and programmes is a very effective tool in the educational, social and political development of groups and individuals.

However, to fully use this potential some reforms of thinking about the arts would need to take place. It would involve a radical review of the elitists and centralised approach towards the arts.

A decentralised approach based on the subsidiarity principle would need to be widely introduced as the leading rule. Consultations and awareness of the needs of the local community groups, arts practitioners and audiences should build the reference and reality proof for relevant cultural policy documents and decisions. Cooperation with local governments, NGOs, educational institutions and relevant industry representatives should not be seen as an idealistic postulate but as an effective tool to increase their impact of the cultural organisations and institutions.

Without a commitment to fundamental human rights, inclusive culture and education starting at primary level and without policies and organisations aimed at developing the best skills in every member of society the cultural landscape in the world but especially in all privileged countries may face within the next 100 years serious problems of raison d'être.

The currently existing facilities and the opportunities given by the of digitisation of the cultural content provide enormous chances for both developing ways to reach much broader parts of the society as ever before and to give them their media to organising and express themselves. As

stated at Convergence@Nottingham: "…the creative industries *strategically* as crucial components of the strongly emergent 'knowledge economy' and as, importantly, *an industry like no other* that generates products and values that have a significance far beyond their economic currency. These values - to continue the economic metaphor - establish their 'exchange rates' in civil society."21

Even if the interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches between cultural and other bodies of the society in order to reduce deep cultural divisions and build a civil, educated, equal and open society is a dream, this dream needs to be dreamt visibly and loudly, in as many places as possible because of it crucial potential for improving social cohesion, inclusion and quality of life as well as enriching and sustaining the cultural landscapes.

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21 Colin Mercer: Converge@Nottingham, Introduction, Convergence, Creative Industries and Civil Society - The New Cultural Policy at: http://www.culturelink.org/review/s01/s01intro.html