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The UK is depressingly insular and often chauvinistic when it comes to culture - so the EU wider context that emphasises what we are connected to is healthy for the public, artists and performers.

(1) The high-visibility manifestations (such as Glasgow 1990 and Liverpool 2009) also give profile to the live culture of regional cities that are invisible to the London governmental and blinkered metropolitan-obsessed media . (2) The EU grant aid schemes for cooperation, exchange and coproduction, while small (and maybe overcomplicated) are a vital addition to smaller organisations that have very little hope of getting a penny out of the disastrously recentralised Arts Council England whose capture by London based organisations has increased massively since 2001 (mendacious rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding). (3) The UK government and NDPs tend to be unaware of the disproportionate number of UK nationals who are active and influential in Europe in cultural policy development, evaluation etc. - consultants, academics etc. (4) Activity can remind us of the major role played by local and regional authorities in culture - something that is increasingly marginalised in the UK with its 'non-statutory' (Libraries excepted) status and progressive budget cuts as statutory services have to be the main priority.

Do you think the EU should do more, or less in relation to culture, tourism and sport, and why?

It is probably at a reasonable level in activity terms - while the tiny budgets can make the overblown Commission claims and rhetoric for 'success' and influence look plain silly. It is important to recognise that the birth of the EU's 1992 'Cultural Article' (Treaties of Maastricht 192; Amsterdam 151; Lisbon 167 [2009]) was difficult and contentious amongst the member states, and that the finally agreed wording and its checks and balances had to incorporate positive and negative national positions. The President of the Commission at that time, Jacques Delors and the Commissioner for Culture, Carlo Ripa di Meana, embodied the French and Italian desires for culture to be included in EU competence – for both, one suspects, symbolic and resource motives. During the negotiation process over the Article, several member states openly displayed quite ambitious aspirations. Conscious of the growing financial burden of protecting and promoting their extended heritage(s), they saw an opportunity to supplement domestic budgets. France, with a confident – perhaps unique – sense of its own cultural identity, characteristically argued for 'Europe' to have some serious cultural capacity (in which it might expect to assume leadership). Greece, in thrall to Culture Minister Melina Mercouri (the instigator of the intergovernmental European Capital of Culture programme), led the demands for maritime archeology funding. At the same time, a group of predominantly northern European countries – Germany, in the throes of facing up to the social and economic costs of reunification, Denmark, The Netherlands and the UK (maybe plus others?) – became convinced of the need to secure legal competence in order to limit, manage and control any programmes and budgets that might now be created, not least because they suspected they might end up paying the bills.

What are the benefits or disadvantages of directing funding through the EU rather than national arrangements...

The advantage is to have a supplementary route, particularly for smaller organisations. The ACE's understanding of the international dimension is extremely poor, and with the DCMS + ACE combined expenditure pattern devoting over 70% of national taxpayer funding in England to London-based institutions and organisations (see evidence to Commons Heritage Committee Inquiry (2011 Funding

of the Arts and Heritage Report) it has become increasingly difficult to access national funding. The progressive destruction of the regional arts support system since 2001, condoned (or possibly encouraged) by central government means that there is also a massive decrease in accessible local support and encouragement throughout England for new or inexperienced young arts organisations. So far as the EU is concerned, the Culture Contact Point in member states is, at least, generally user-friendly - which the Arts Council no longer is.

Have you noticed any change in EU activity or emphasis since the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon

The grant application assessment process is slightly improved, which is welcome. For all its weaknesses it does provide an incentive and at least some open application funding for independent cultural operators, and encourages cooperation and exchange across national boundaries, even if the required number of partners can be overcomplicated and tokenistic. Nevertheless, it is much more than a supplement to the UK Arts Councils. The BBC Trust sets production targets beyond the M25 – and monitors them. ACE has no such strategy other than empty 'regional' policy rhetoric, and DCMS and Parliament fail to notice the size of the problem or do anything about it. Ironically, the French Parliament does, in a country that UK politicians think of as very statist and centralised). Some accessible EU funding is essential to organisations outside the capital of this ludicrously over-centralised and blinkered country, and is useful to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

What other areas of EU competence or activity impact on your sector and how?

The general issue (particularly post Treaty of Lisbon) of the EU recognising the economic importance of the arts/heritage/creative industries sector - but, that said, the DG for Culture and Education's research reports and claims fail to be picked up properly by the DGs responsible for industry economy, employment etc. This is partly a consequence of the poor corporate management of the Commission's 'silo' structure of competitive Commissioners. Occasionally there have been negative consequences on culture from 'general' Directives, whose likely effects have not been spotted by the DGE&C - something that the Parliament has criticised them for, but no action ever seem to follow.

What international bodies or arrangements are important to your sector beyond the EU?

The Council of Europe has, since the early 1970s, consistently had a much more mature and coherent understanding of how cultural policy relates to economic and social policy than the EC/EU, but has lacked the budgets and legal clout to move forward from exemplary project and 'research and development' mode, being dependent on its member states to implement model practice on their own initiative. Not surprisingly, this has been extremely variable. The UK's record in this has been unimpressive. Much of the CoE's work in the 1970s and 1980s was hugely influential on UK local authorities - even if Whitehall was largely disengaged. UNESCO obviously has an important role through the agreed Conventions (on heritage, cultural diversity etc.)

How could the EU co-ordinate its activity in these areas of competence to greater effect?

A bit of corporate management and internal cooperation would help. But the ridiculous Commissioner/Buggins' Turn system will always militate against this. Barroso has been mentioning in speeches since 2005 that he is convinced of the need to 'mainstream' culture in EU policy. He has

precious little to show for it! The DGE&C could – and should – punch above its weight on these industrial and economic issues, but clearly finds it very difficult to be heard clearly. It should also act as an early warning system for the professional cultural sector on Directives in train elsewhere in Brussels that may have some impact on cultural production. However, despite regular criticism from the EP Committee on Culture on this very point, it seems to be consistently ignored (not that DCMS is any better at this within the limited UK context...) The EU's post- Treaty of Lisbon 'Open Method of Co-operation' (OMC) is a weak and not very effective mechanism.

Are EU cultural programmes effective and how can they be improved?

A dispassionate early comment on the force of the Maastricht Article 192 was given in a European Forum for the Arts and Heritage handbook as follows: "the article legitimises the community's role in the cultural sphere for the first time and requires it to take the cultural dimension into account in its other operations. The article essentially provides a back-up structure, unable to coerce or reform." (Scott and Freeman, Inventory of European Legislation and Policy affecting Culture EFAH, Brussels 1994, p. 11). Agreeing and using a definition of 'culture' has been a problem since the start. Denmark's 2005 EU Presidency failed in a rare attempt to establish and secure agreement on an improved working definition of 'culture'. This problem persists. A Commission tender for a 'Study on the Contribution of Culture to Creativity' in 2007 issued through its Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), displayed rare modesty in trying to navigate these muddy waters having introduced 'creativity' into the equation: "However, even if it has become a driving force of economic growth and, as such, a subject for study amongst economists ... creativity remains an elusive phenomenon. It is indeed a very complex process of innovation, combining some or all of the following dimensions: ideas, skills, technology, management, production processes as well as culture." (EACEA 2007) The Culture Council of the EU, immediately following Maastricht, commissioned a study from an independent Brussels consultancy, Bates & Wacker S.C., Community Support for Culture - Brussels, European Commission (1993). This study analysed EC expenditure on 'culture' (using a standard definition) from the five-year budget period just concluded. The main finding was that 82.7% originated from the Structural Funds (mostly ERDF and ESF), 9.6% from General EC programmes (including research) and only 7.7% from specific 'Culture' programmes. Several of the UK's 'Objective 1 and 2' regions had been notable beneficiaries of Structural Funds applied to 'culture' as an important element in urban and employment regeneration at a time when Whitehall was perceived as rather less helpful, and this trend continued. Subsequent enlargement of the EU, and changed perceptions of the more urgent needs of central and eastern European member states has now altered this perspective and possibility. Since the mid-1980s, the EU Commission's Directorate General tasked with the primary responsibility for Culture has struggled to 'do something' for culture as a sector – as it understands it for legal and administrative purposes. At the same time, other major EU policies have embraced important aspects of 'cultural development' – notably through the Structural Funds – neither identifying any specific cultural purpose or objectives, nor in much constructive dialogue with the DG responsible for Culture. While this Directorate has often exhibited good intentions, 'culture' (in the sense of arts and heritage) is a very restricted EU policy objective and the claims often made by the Commission for its 'successes' have often seemed overblown and remote from reality and the record. The carefully drafted clauses of the 1992 Cultural Article made it very clear that the Commission would not have the freedom to try to operate as some sort of European Arts and/or Heritage Council, but limit its grant-aid programmes to additionality, cooperation and exchange. It is possibly still true today that the two

highest profile manifestations of the EU in culture that the public would recognise – the Cultural Capital and the European Youth Orchestra – were both created through intergovernmental agreements prior to Maastricht. Prevailing Confusion and Ambiguity Confusion about the role of the EU in culture (and naive expectations of what it can reasonably be expected to deliver) are rife within the UK's professional cultural sector. The prevailing ambiguity seems to have at least six different sources, often intertwined: (1) the imprecise wording in Treaty Article 151; (2) the legacy of political deals underlying Article 151's original agreement; (3) failure properly to define what is meant by 'culture' in differing EU contexts; (4) ignorance about the respective authority and influence of the EU's component parts (Council, Commission, Parliament and Court); (5) inability and/or unwillingness of member states to distinguish between intrinsic and instrumental values of culture in pursuit of other policies, and misunderstandings about the different capacities and roles of the Council of Europe and of the EU (and its 'European Council'). Even members of the UK Parliament don't appear to understand that the European Court of Human Rights is not an integral component of the EU.

How important is EU funding to the UK cultural sector? And how beneficial to the UK is the EU's focu...

It's important for the UK generally to understand that it is, culturally, a European country - specially in the light of media insularity and the constant homilies from Ministers about how things are done in the USA (where professionals in cultural organisations are generally envious of how things are done in the UK...) It is commendable that the UK government's call for evidence "aims to deepen public and Parliamentary understanding of the nature of our EU membership and provide a constructive and serious contribution to the national and wider European debate about modernising, reforming and improving the EU in the face of collective challenges." It is much needed in the UK, ill-served as it is by media bias, ignorance and ludicrous EU stereotyping. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, leading the review on the EU's competence in relation to Culture, Tourism and Sport, correctly sees these as key drivers for social development and economic growth in the UK. The brief states that the process will be "comprehensive, evidence-based and analytical." This is very much to be welcomed, and if carried out in that spirit, would be in complete contrast to the flawed process followed by the House of Commons Select Committee in producing its feeble 2011 Report. UK political and media commentary concerning any differences between the UK and continental Europe tend to be pretty smug - and usually ignorant (with a kneejerk tendency to think that the French system is wonderful for professionals, which is far from always true!).

Is there added value to UK tourism in EU activity to co-operate with non-EU countries' tourism secto...

There should be - particularly so far as using heritage and 'local' culture in the UK outside London is concerned.

If you have any other comments, please let us know in the box below.

Do I know what I'm talking about? I comment as someone who has worked extensively as a professional in 'culture' since 1969 and in the wider European context since 1986; has taught 'comparative cultural policy' as a visiting professor at UK, Italian, French and Spanish universities and am also a published observer, evaluator and critic of the European cultural scene. I have also been a

contracted independent adviser to the European Parliament's Committee on Culture, to UNESCO and delivered commissioned work and projects for the European Cultural Foundation and the Brussels Commission. See, for selective example: European Perspectives on Cultural Policy UNESCO (Paris 2001) European Programme of National Cultural Policy Evaluations (critical study of Council of Europe methodology and comparative practice – with John Myerscough, Council of Europe, Strasbourg 1997) Report of thematic study using transnational comparisons to identify and analyse cultural policies and programmes contributing to prevention and reduction of poverty and social exclusion (with Roberta Woods MP) - European Commission, DG Employment & Social Policy (Brussels, 2004) Gambling on Culture: state lotteries as a source of funding for culture CIRCLE/Boekmanstudies – coeditor and author (Amsterdam 2004) The Democratisation of Culture vs. Cultural Democracy: a continuing debate Culture Action Europe/EU Cultural Contact Point, Hungary (Budapest 2005) Briefing paper for the European Parliament on the Commission Communication “A European agenda for culture in a globalising world” (European Parliament, Brussels 2007) Great Expectations: the European Union & Cultural Policy – fact or fiction? International Journal of Cultural Policy Vol. 16/2 (Routledge, May 2010) Handbook on Measuring Cultural Participation (UNESCO/Statistical Service – December 2012) co-author For the Council of Europe I wrote their published major Reviews of National Cultural Policy in Italy (1994), Cyprus (2004) and Turkey (2013 – forthcoming), chaired and part-wrote Latvia (1998), and had a lesser role in the final Reports on Sweden (1990) and Austria (1992). I was the UK member of the Council of Europe's project team for its Culture and the Regions of Europe (1985-1989) action research, after having learned from the Head of the UK government's Office of Arts & Libraries (OAL) that we were not participating as Britain had no regions (sic). In 2001/02 I led on the European Cultural Foundation and Soros Open Society Institutes' training in capacity building in the independent cultural sector in ex-Yugoslavia (Kultura Nova – in Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia and Montenegro).

18 July 2013 / / Christopher Gordon / Independent Consultant and / Visiting Professor in Cultural Policy