

The World Culture Forum Alliance at the Forum Cultural Mundial Sao Paulo 2004

Focus Themes

Exploring three focus themes, the Panels and Workshops organized by WCFA at the Forum Cultural Mundial Sao Paulo 2004 integrate input and experience from the Regional Consultations held by WCFA and address questions about the preconditions and chances of the bottom-up process of entering into a global alliance to remain coherent and successfully meet the challenges of the 21st century also by making use of the potential of a multi-directional flow of information in mass communication.

CULTURE = MEMORY Diversity-Education-Identity
CULTURE = SURVIVAL Economy-Development-Sustainability
CULTURE = ACTION Politics-Human Rights-Solidarity

Panels and Workshops

Wednesday, June 30th 2004

Morning Session

Culture as a key survival factor for humankind

Afternoon Session

Towards a global culture of politics

Thursday, July 1st 2004

Morning Session

Preventing the erosion of cultural memories

Afternoon Session

Cultural evolution and the dynamics of identity and tradition

Friday, July 2nd 2004

Morning Session

Cultural differences as engine for economic development

Afternoon Session

From patterns of exploitation towards models of solidarity

See the daily conference program at the Convention Center or our website www.wcfalliance.org for details or visit the WCFA Lounge at the Cultural Marketplace.

WCFA at Forum Cultural Mundial Sao Paulo 2004 June 30th until July 2nd 2004

WCFA Panels and Workshops: See daily conference program or our website www.wcfalliance.org for details.

WCFA Lounge: Cultural Marketplace.

About the WCFA:

Starting with an effort from civil society, initiated by major philanthropic foundations, the WCFA aims at bringing together the three sectors (public, private and civil) in a solution-oriented, bottom-up process. The Forum Cultural Mundial in Sao Paulo 2004 marks the kick-off for this process that WCFA is striving to stimulate and moderate.

Learn more about our goals, values, work program and events at: www.wcfalliance.org

Get in touch with WCFA

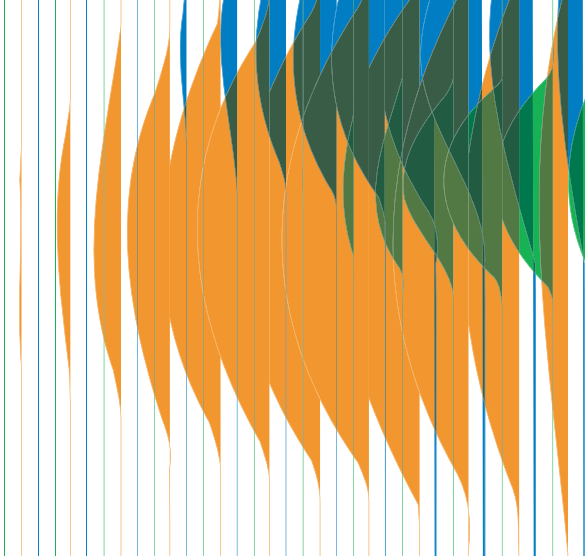
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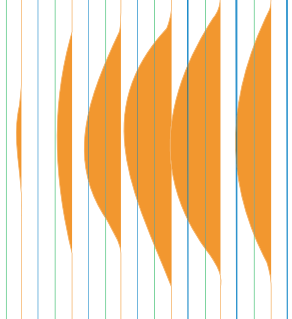
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The World Culture Forum Alliance is devoted to the priority of cultures before trade and commerce in the age of globalization, to the acknowledgement of cultural rights and the peaceful encounter of cultures worldwide. WCFA strives to maintain and expand cultural diversity and memory as key factors of sustainable human development and survival in the forming of knowledge societies around the world.

What is the World Culture Forum Alliance?



The World Culture Forum Alliance (WCFA) is a world-wide, pluralistic, non-partisan Alliance working on an international level to de-fragmentize the different, mainly isolated discourses on cultural issues, to supplement intergovernmental political processes by forming the vision of a world in which the role of culture is widely recognized as vital to human, social and economic development.

Culture enters the international agenda

The economic growth in the field of cultural enterprises and cultural industries by far exceeds average economic growth. Especially for the southern countries this means increasing opportunities for their economical and cultural development. The cultural markets of the north in comparison, are dominated by major corporations and diversity is endangered by market concentration.

The state of art and culture in societies in the early 21st century clearly bears the marks of globalism and the market, displaying a dramatic erosion of cultural memory and a decline of cultural diversity, that makes the whole of mankind poorer every day. Consequently, there is a widely felt unease with both the current local and global situation of culture.

Nonetheless the moment seems good: a cultural turn in the societies of the world begins to show and issues of cultural sustainability appear in the discussion. The worldwide structural change towards knowledge societies has brought issues of culture and cultural diversity on the international agenda: Discussions and initiatives range from WTO's GATS to inter-governmental organizations and are supplemented by activities of global networks.

WCFA stimulates an open and inclusive process

Still, the different discourses are mainly fragmented, isolated and limited to their institutional contexts. They shall now be supplemented by the efforts of the World Culture Forum Alliance in stimulating and moderating an interactive, open, bottom-up and inclusive process. WCFA has prepared this process with a series of regional consultations and initiated a first global gathering in Sao Paolo 2004 in partnership with the Forum Cultural Mundial.

Culture between Modernization and Globalization

Worldwide modernization has reached a critical mass and – together with an accelerated international exchange of people, goods and services – brings cultures into confrontation with each other in areas like the media, tourism or migration.

Culture is understood here as a necessary dimension of human life: the specific ways how we live and work, house and protect ourselves, produce, eat and consume, how we live solidarity and conflict, how we educate our children and pass our cultural memory on to the following generations.

However, the positive potentials of modernization meet the imminent dangers of a homogenization of cultures through the unequal distribution of symbolic production and consumption and the current orientation towards a priority of economic advantages alone.

Addressing the key questions

WCFA is addressing questions of how to harmonize the processes of modernization and their potential advantages for all of humankind with the treasures of traditional forms of living and of cultural diversity, or how to handle the instrumentalization of cultural identity in ethnic violence and religious fundamentalism and fanaticism by seeing these in the context of different speeds of modernization and an unequal distribution of the benefits of modernization. The objective is to achieve tangible results for the practitioners of the field, cultural entrepreneurs and artists.

WCFA takes a specific approach

The approach of the World Culture Forum Alliance follows a three-step-model: from an assessment of the situation of the cultures of the world, the development and dissemination of specific tools to solve the contradictions between modernization and cultures, to the creation of and advocacy for legal and financial instruments on a global scale to support the sustainability of cultures.

Cultural Diversity – the wealth of humankind

Even when viewed from different perspectives, cultural wealth and diversity are important factors: For the countries of the South new perspectives of sustainable development open up, from a soft cultural tourism or the production of cultural

export goods to the development of creative industries that make use of the cultural heritage. For the countries of the north the experience with knowledge work and qualities of life based on culture are determining factors in the regional competition for investment and employment.

Culture today is the resource that the arts, creative industries and knowledge workers are working with. Cultural diversity in this context gains additional importance for the economies of the future. Intercultural understanding – along with a fair distribution of benefits, access to resources and chances – is important to prevent a regressive impact by the process of globalization.

Globalization with a regressive turn means the loss of local advantages and specific cultures and speeds up the loss of cultural memory. Losing the wealth of experience stored in the collective memory of humankind does not only make humankind mentally poorer and deprived of key elements of human identity, but also drastically reduces the options for future generations in a globalized society.

WCFA Goal: give culture priority before trade

It is paramount among the goals of the World Culture Forum Alliance to form the vision of a world in which the role of culture is widely recognized as vital to human, social and economic development and regarded as important as social and ecological questions and where culture is given a priority before trade on the international agenda.

WCFA – Invitation to participate

WCFA works for these goals in bringing the three sectors (public, private and civil) - together in a world wide solution-oriented process. The World Culture Alliance strives to strengthen the role of the cultural sector, recognizing the role of cultural enterprises in generating value as well as providing solutions. WCFA invites organizations from the fields of the arts and education and creative industries to joining the alliance or to cooperating in various programs. Individuals are invited to joining projects and the open dialog in the forums at WCFA events and online.