

August 23



"Cultural exchanges in today's world :
identity, interdependence and solidarity"

1. The culture of our time ought to be the main focus of the cultural exchanges in the Grail. First of all, because it is the first (ontological) element of our identity.

Secondly, because that culture gives the complete picture of the interdependence in today's world : in relation to understanding + peace among nations, to the constraints put by the world economy to the growth in wealth of different peoples, to the nexus population growth/environment/development, to the features of mass communication and spreading of ideas + information.

Thirdly, because true solidarity can only be expressed when one takes into account the real needs + concerns + endeavours of the other.

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2. The historico-geographic culture is an important element of the cultural exchanges in today's world. But they appear, in contemporary books + articles, much more as an illustration of global trends than a question per se.

3. The "local culture" (in the sense we have described it) needs to be nourished by a true knowledge of history (as a repertoire + interpretation of facts) and of literature (as a picture of the mythical elements).

Africa as a whole has the chance to have already a global history of the continent. Its reading is key for Africans themselves as well as for

other persons coming to work in Africa. Literature in the 4 main languages of the continent provides an excellent ground for understanding the culture. Europe has got literature of all its regions and a renewed effort of mutual translation is being made but it lacks a comprehensive history of the continent.

5. Together with cultural exchanges across the continents, today's world needs to be "felt" + "understood" from the standpoint of each continent (and sub-continent) as a whole. Hence the need for strengthening intra-regional contacts as a way to discover one's own identity, to enrich one's own vision of the world, to build a "critical mass" in all the fields where very often only "development aid" was at stake (Africa) or to discover "kindred spirits" and alternative ways of thinking that give strength to the life + work of "cultural minorities" (Europe).



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Growing in multicultural awareness:

Communication: exchanges, visits of people, projects

1. The fundamental tool needed is one regular publication with experiences + ideas, both individual + collective.

The Netlink is not enough: there is no continuity. (It is obvious that the merging of the newsletters of the different networks into one Netlink was not the best decision).

I would plead for the revival of the "Grail review" — "innocent" title and a platform for all of us. Moreover, a "face" to those who want to read "something" about + from the Grail.

