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World Day of Prayer – A global ecumenical player in intercultural understanding

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Women's World Day of Prayer (WDP) is a global, international ecumenical Christian movement initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions. The origins of WDP date back to the Christian women's movement in 19th-Century USA and Canada (Hiller 1999). The movement is symbolized by an annual day of celebration – the first Friday of March – to which all people are welcome. The service for this celebration is written by a different country each year and women of that country become the focus of the world's prayers on the day itself, which begins over the islands of Tonga in the Pacific and continues across each continent

In 1994, women of Palestine were invited to write the WDP service. The result was significant clarification of the political situation and reduction in prejudice towards Arab (Palestinian) women, who had been mostly seen as part of a terror campaign against Israel. On a theological level, unconditional support for Israel had been considered the duty of Christianity because of the Shoah and the history of antijudaistic stereotypes. The controversary that surrounded the preparations for WDP was documented by WDP Germany (Dt. WGT-Komitee 1995). Research on the controversary and the underlying conflict was carried out only by women who were involved in or connected to WDP (Bechmann 1993).

An academic analysis of the WDP approach to the annual preparations reveals a highly complex communication structure involving political, religious, spiritual, and gender issues and their practical implications. This structure has emerged from a policy of allowing interested women to participate in complex processes of learning and understanding, while at the same time being the agent of that process. WDP is a model for cross-cultural and interreligious competence, and lays a solid foundation for the acceptance of "others". WDP's effective and simple, yet multidimensional structure of interpretation is not (and could not be) the result of purely theoretical considerations. Instead, it has grown organically from the life and faith of individual women in a global movement.

The representation of time among different cultures and musical systems

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Practical background. People from different countries generally present different lifestyles, depending, for example, on geographic and economic features, or on historical and social heritages.

This is also reflected in different ways to manage time. Such differences can possibly contribute to the construction of stereotypes that alienate one culture from another, as do racial prejudices.

Research background. The contrast between the mechanistic models of Western scientific thought and the holistic cosmologies of many non-European cultures is rather obvious. However, little scientific research has been undertaken until now to specifically underline and understand the implications of the different perception of time within music performance among different peoples.

Aims. As an hypothesis, we propose that music can be read as an index of a culture's understanding of time, and therefore different forms of musical and terminological expression indicate different cosmological understanding of time, and consequently, of space.

Main contribution. We compare terminology regarding the perception of time in different cultures and languages, specifically in the Western classical musical system, Japanese court music, Arab and Turkish classical music, and Western Amazonian magical songs.

Implications. The results show that the intriguing dichotomy of European thought about musical time – if it pertains to the external or the internal – is not shared in non-Western cultures. Moreover, the handling of time in music seems to connect and interrelate individual times and therefore "good" timing in music appears as a social phenomenon. From the critical analysis of the meaning of temporal aspects connected to single sounds, melodies and/or musical pieces, we hope to contribute to a constructive dialogue on epistemological contents of respective cultural traditions, within a connubium of music and science.

Researching difference to inform local policy: Outcomes from a partnership project

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Practical background. Over the past few decades, diversity within schools has usually been discussed in terms of categories of pupils, such as ethnicity, gender, and [dis]ability. While these discussions have focused attention upon and changed the provision for some kinds of differences between pupils (Ainscow et al, 2007), social inequalities continue to be reproduced within schools (Ball, 2003). Public policy has responded by recognising a wider range of differences within holistic frameworks designed to acknowledge and account for a wider range of differences (e.g. Boyask *et al.*, 2009; Every Child Matters, DfES, 2003); in practice, however, holistic responses may obscure the privilege of some kinds of difference and exclude others, subtly reproducing the inequalities associated with the divisions they intend to overcome (e.g. Reay *et al.*, 2008).

Research background. This project was developed within this broader context as part of the research team's interests and investigations in diversity. With a team of education researchers working in partnership with Plymouth City Council, we shared interests in how policy might better provide for the subtle differences between young people through taking account of their lived experiences of difference. We have recently been using person-centred methodologies for eliciting rich and personally relevant information about young people's conceptualisations of difference (see Boyask et al., 2009; Waite, Boyask & Lawson, 2010). We maintain that insights into diversity are best acquired

through methods sensitive to diversity in the expression as well as the substance of the participants (e.g. allowing participants to choose personally and culturally appropriate modes of response).

Aims. A 'focus group evening' was planned as a pilot investigation to trial our person-centred methods. We wanted to find out about the most appropriate language to discuss diversity (including use of drama, visual methods, interview and conceptual mapping), to identify relevant issues and to rehearse, develop and corroborate the design of the method for a future larger project. We chose to set our study in Plymouth in the south west of England, firstly because we wanted to ground our work and develop collaborative relationships with our local educational community and secondly, because the relative homogeneity of the south west in terms of visible differences may support the development of more complex understandings about the educational effects of diversity.

Main contribution. In this paper we look at the relationship between our overall research questions (when they recollect their years in school, how do young people describe themselves and others as 'different'?; how, if at all, do they consider such differences affected their own and others' experiences in school education?) and Plymouth City Council's practical needs of attending to issues of ethnicity and racism. Through a dialogue between the research and policy partners we develop a plan for action from the findings of our recent pilot of this study with 15 18-20 year olds that suggested that whilst some young people experienced institutionalised categories of difference in their situation, and these were enmeshed in their presented identities; for others, difference at school was a much more subjective and personal phenomenon, closely associated with life experience outside of school.

Implications. We are now using the information from this 'pilot' project to develop further research and work with wider groups from local and national government to explore the interface between social group identity, such as ethnicity, and subjective experience. We intend developing resources that demonstrate how the effects of social categories are influenced by context, using a loose framing device of time, place and relationships to explain contextual variations and how they impact upon individual experience. Through this method we aim to help policy-makers interrogate the generalisations implicit in the social statistics that they rely upon, and develop the sophistication of their understanding on the relationships between categorisation and outcomes for individuals, and how contexts might be manipulated to be more equitable.

Deadly symbiosis: How school exclusions and youth crime interweave

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Practical background. Taking the cohort of Bristol's young people involved in the criminal justice system (approximately 300), I aim to cross-reference these individuals with those registered as 'looked after' to assess the degree of correlation between the two. Also, by gathering information on the levels of secondary school exclusion within this cohort, we can establish whether this phenomenon is sufficiently statistically significant to form part of the 'explanation' for committing crime. Many young people excluded from school end up receiving education 'other than at school' creating desocialisation due to their separation from mainstream provision. The graphs produced should be symptomatic of the scale of the issues around young peoples' exclusion and offending behaviour in UK cities generally, as Bristol is in many ways a 'typical' UK provincial city: so the patterns should be nationally applicable, with policy implications about how educational entitlement is regulated, and authorities *in loco parentis* should do more for the children in their care. This phenomenon is generally understood at a 'common sense' level by many professionals working with disadvantaged young people – but not counteracted by regulatory strategies within the relevant social care, criminal justice and educational institutions.

Research background. This project compiles evidence of the mentalities and behaviour generated by 'anti-social' or 'marginalising' (Wacquant 2008) effects, gathered from youth involved in the juvenile justice system, through interviews to capture life histories and significant episodes that illustrate the phenomena, and quantitative data collected to measure the key factors determining inclusion in this 'decivilising process' (Elias 2000) that forms the 'life-world' or habitus – a product of long-term interdependency generating modes of behaviour and self-control amongst social figurations over time – has been applied to the anomie of the US 'hyperghetto' and European 'neighbourhoods of relegation' by Loic Wacquant (2004).

Aims. By demonstrating the 'triangulation' effect of the three social factors – youth offending, young people 'looked after' by the state and exclusion/absence from secondary schooling; we hope to outline both the scale of the problem for this alienated minority, and how the lack of positive socialisation through education has disempowered them from overcoming advancing marginalisation. The rising level of recidivism is testament to the way in which neoliberal economic models and policies have institutionalised inequality in the outcomes of young people. This can allow new cultural forms to emerge outside the rigidities of the previous system of industrial structuration, which challenge assimilation and pose new problems of integration for society as a whole. By re-introducing a degree of educational regulation, it is possible that some of more unpredictable and anti-social outcomes of this decivilising process could be overcome.

Main contribution. The thirteen years of social democratic government which has recently ended in the UK included a theoretically sophisticated programme of social policy designed to address the problem of widening social exclusion in Britain's most deprived areas. One aspect of this was the formation of 'multi-agency partnerships', which would allow public sector workers to collaborate in resolving issues of deprivation which are so often interlinked. The author works part-time for the Youth Offending Team in Bristol, an institution formed in the early 2000s to address juvenile delinquency, which combines social workers, police officers, teachers and other support workers in a 'joined-up' team. This 'jobs gap in Britain's cities' (Turok 1999) has been complimented by an extensive educational re-organisation, which has left a 'schools gap' in the poorer localities of cities. At the same time the area education authorities have lost the legal power to regulate and ensure a comprehensive education for all, which has resulted in this minority being either 'excluded' from, or 'choosing' not to attend, secondary school. The fact that this is now effecting a second generation of young people, many of whom whose parents were the victims of the 'first generation' of mass UK unemployment in the 1980s, exacerbates the negative role models and habitus of today's marginalised youth. Britain's level of youth incarceration continue to rise alongside growth in the prison population as a whole, the highest in Europe outside Turkey.

Implications. The implication is that this long-term institutionalisation of inferiority is breeding what Elias called a 'decivilising spurt', where codes of violence play a greater role in everyday living. This leads to the principal research question: What are the implications of this growth of anti-social conditions for today's 'urban outcasts'. Will this minority who are becoming 'reluctant gangsters' (Pitts 2008), grow in proportion as 'advanced marginality' leads to 'a world of gangs' (Hagedorn 2008). Can their subculture be positively integrated through their guaranteed inclusion in the school system? By concentrating professional's time and resources at the young people whose offending behaviour puts them at risk of custody it was hoped to marginalise the social problems that often give rise to social exclusion or what Loic Wacquant (2008) has termed 'advanced marginality'. This would allow those at risk of offending behaviour to rejoin the mainstream of society through employment and further education, thus undermining their attachment to delinquency as a form of socialization and informal employment opportunity.

Cultural meaning systems of learning and their influences in the international university context

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Practical background. Intercultural trainings to prepare freshmen for studying in the multicultural environment of Jacobs University have been designed on the basis of empirical results of survey research conducted at this institution. Derived from the theoretical background of mind and virtue orientation these trainings have been designed to increase the understanding of cross-cultural differences in learning assumptions and to help students adapt to the mainly Western classroom culture at Jacobs University. These trainings have been designed and conducted by the Diversity Taskforce and peer trainers. In the past, measures have included pre-arrival trainings for large groups from Romania and Bulgaria, orientation trainings for all incoming students upon arrival and Western Classroom Culture workshops held multiple times throughout the year. Trainings include theoretical background information, interactive exercises, discussion and skill development.

Research background. The main cultural psychological theory that provides the background for the current project is the mind/virtue framework of concepts of learning, as defined by Li (2003). In a qualitative study, she found that Western students have a 'mind-oriented' approach to learning and Asian students have a 'virtue-oriented' approach. Both orientations can be traced back to the philosophical heritages in the respective cultures. At the core of the Mind orientation is doubt towards pre-existing knowledge. Learning is primarily defined as a process of developing critical thinking skills. In the Virtue-orientation, learning is conceptualized as the pursuit of moral and social development, with respect and diligence as guiding principles.

Aims. The main aim of the project is to increase the awareness of cross-cultural differences in the learning process on the international campus of Jacobs University.This should facilitate student adjustment to the mainly Western, mind oriented classroom culture at this university. Before starting university, students from different cultures have been raised in different educational environments. Due to relevant philosophical backgrounds, educational systems value different ideas about the pursuit of knowledge, the teacher-student relationship, appropriate learning strategies, etc. Although Jacobs University is modeled on the Western academic system and upholds the respective educational values, it is crucial that no group of students is disadvantaged and unable to perform to the best of their abilities due to cultural differences. The project will therefore increase awareness and understanding for cross-cultural differences in learning, for both students and faculty. Ultimately this should increase academic life satisfaction for all status groups and prevent students from underperforming.

Main contribution. Intercultural trainings have been offered to both graduate and undergraduate students at Jacobs University, during Orientation Week, for some years. These trainings cover a broad range of issues, relating to subjects such as stereotypes, non-verbal communication, on-campus living, classroom behavior, etc. Assessments have shown that students consider these trainings helpful for preparing for and dealing with the academic environment. In 2007 an Intercultural Need Assessment was conducted to assess the additional needs of students, faculty and staff related to the multicultural environment. To assess whether the mind / virtue theory applied to the international academic setting at Jacobs University and its potential impact on student satisfaction and performance, a scale based on these cultural concepts of learning was also included. Interestingly, results indicated a significant discrepancy between the values of (1.) students from different cultures, and (2.) the (mostly German)

faculty and students. This is to say that the mean virtue orientation of both Socratic students (clustered groups, based on the World Values Survey cultural regions) and Non-Socratic students was significantly higher than faculty's virtue orientation. Results for the mind orientation indicated that faculty value the mind oriented classroom behaviors much more than students overall assumed that they would. Additionally, students with non-Socratic backgrounds reported having significantly greater difficulties in showing these mind oriented behaviors than students who originated from Socratic based cultural backgrounds. The results of the survey have caused us to revamp the trainings with more focus on mind and virtue orientation, including new theoretial information, critical incidents and having the students reflect upon their own values and behaviors.

Implications. With international academic mobility increasing in both quantitative and qualitative importance, it is essential for institutions of higher education to understand and be aware of the cultural differences in the students they are welcoming. The current project aims at increasing this understanding. An improvement of the understanding and appreciation of the difference in the meaning that students attach to learning could lead to institutional changes that improve education (Tweed & Lehman, 2002).

Intercultural confidence at university

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Background. Australia has the world's second most internationalised higher education system together with an already diverse domestic student population. This creates unique opportunities for intercultural interaction, and the development of intercultural confidence. Much is known about the challenges of cross-cultural contact but less is known about how cultural diversity can be used productively, particularly to enhance learning outcomes. This paper explores the notion of intercultural confidence, and how it can be fostered through curriculum activities in professional courses. We seek to move the research agenda away from identifying the challenges of cultural diversity to determining how the opportunities created by cultural diversity can be harnessed to enhance students' professional competence and intercultural confidence.

Aims. The aims of the broader research project are twofold. Theoretical: to combine a cognitive-situative perspective, social identity theory, contact theory, and social capital theory, to understand the process of intercultural development. · Applied: a) trace how diverse groups of students shape each other's development of social identities and intercultural confidence, b) establish how curriculum activities incorporating cultural dimensions of particular professions foster intercultural confidence. This paper has a more modest aim: to outline the main issues around intercultural interaction on university campuses and in relation to learning; and to provide some options for development of social and learning activities on campus to improve intercultural confidence, particularly for professional programs.

Main contribution: The paper explores aspects of intercultural interaction and learning, including the concept of intercultural confidence, and then outlines preparation and pilot results of a 3 year study aiming to establish the process by which university students enrolled in 'professional' programs, enter and navigate the diverse learning communities in their study program and out of class, and how their emergent social identities shape opportunities to mix with one another within and across contexts. We outline preliminary work on planned profession-linked curriculum activities to foster students' awareness of their own socially constructed cultural identity; appreciation of ways cultural dimensions

affect professional competence; and positive dispositions towards cross-cultural experiences and intercultural development in study and professional practice.

Implications. The research provides a conceptual basis for the development of innovative teaching practices that capitalise on diversity, enhancing students' preparation for professional practice. Theoretical understandings will be applicable to other contexts of intercultural interaction, helping to understand the bases for social cohesion in diverse societies.

The Traveller Economic Inclusion Project: An inclusive and intercultural approach to research combining policy, practice and community in action research

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Andrew Ryder, Lead Researcher, Traveller Economic Inclusion Project

Practical background. Gypsies and Travellers are one of the most excluded groups in society as reflected in low life expectancy and poor rates of educational achievement and participation (CRE, 2006) There are reports of growing unemployment and welfare dependency (CRE, 2004). Site managers in Niner's 2003 study reported that 'on seven out of ten sites a minority of households work', with over one third of site managers noting that less than ten per cent of residents were in employment (Niner, 2003). Traveller economic inclusion has been neglected by researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

Research background. The main theoretical issue is whether Gypsy and Traveller identity can be preserved through economic inclusion and whether acculturation needs to take place. According to Acton (1974) Gypsies and Travellers develop a range of strategies in response to exclusion which includes 'conservatism' (maintenance of tradition), 'cultural adaptation' (accepting influences from other cultures), 'Passing' (assimilation), 'cultural disintegration' (poverty leads to assimilation). Another principal concept is 'social capital' both 'bonded' and 'bridged' notions of social capital (Halpern, 2007) and the role they play in diverging life strategies feature in the research. The 'Traveller economy' where cultural conservatism and bonded capital are fused has been well documented (Clark and Greenfields, 2006), less consideration has been given to the impact of 'Traveller mainstream economic activities' based on bridged social capital and acculturation (Derrington and Kendall, 2004).

Aims. The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain with key community and research partners is carrying out research to find out how some Gypsies and Travellers have secured economic inclusion. The project is being funded by the Big Lottery Fund to influence local and national policy and practice and will produce and disseminate evidence-based knowledge to improve policy and practice on Traveller economic inclusion.

Main contribution. The Traveller Economic Inclusion Project is focusing on the following: How some Gypsies and Travellers have achieved economic and professional success; Schemes and initiatives that have assisted Gypsies and Travellers to achieve this success; Actions that local and national government, as well as other agencies, can undertake to improve the economic inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers. The Traveller Economic Inclusion Project will increase understanding of Traveller economic activities and existing and emerging life strategies. These factors are being considered at different stages of the life course and across gender as well as consideration of whether radical departures are taking place from tradition and whether acculturation, 'new ethnicities' (Hall, 1991), 'reactive identities' (Ballard and Ballard, 1977) or cultural assimilation (Hawes and Perez, 1997) is evident. Action Research is a key dimension of the research (Greenwood and Levin (1998).

Gypsy and Traveller involvement is achieved through: Traveller representation on steering group; Traveller interviewers conducting 100 qualitative interviews with the community; Giving Travellers who have been interviewed a chance to participate in analysis through regional seminars where findings are presented; A 'call to context' ensuring the Traveller voice is heard by using a high number of direct quotations and Traveller life histories. Interculturalism requires an inherent openness and willingness to be exposed to the culture of the "other". Once a person is exposed to an element of a different culture, and seeks to understand, a dialogue will ensue, where all participants embark upon understanding the culture of the other. The project believes that the issue of economic and social inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers has been neglected by both community members and policy makers in terms of policy discussions. Through intercultural research the project will initiate dialogue between Gypsies and Travellers and policy makers and service providers, creating greater understanding and change. Such debate is also an embedded feature of action research – where 'insiders' and 'outsiders' join in a mutual learning process (Greenwood and Levin, 1998).

Implications. A detailed lobbying strategy is another innovative feature of this project. Community groups will forward the findings in a campaign strategy. The innovative research strategy will feature in a research manual to help organizations conduct research projects so that in future research is carried out 'with' Gypsies and Travellers and not 'on' this group as has been the case in the past.

Building organic capacities: The pepper in the melting pot

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Practical background. "Researchers on the Move. Intercultural Dimensions in Sciences and Humanities" is a project which facilitates critical discourse about interculturality in sciences and humanities and at the same time creates an opportunity for students/researchers from industrialized and developing countries with different backgrounds and nationalities to meet and exchange their views. The project started in 2008 with a weblog where students/researchers from Kenya, Nigeria, Palestine, Eritrea and Austria have since been sharing articles as part of a wider network of social media. Radio programs with interviews, reports and public opinion surveys constitute another activity of this work with the intention to communicate intercultural and development matters to a broader public. Finally, three workshops further developed and addressed challenges on intercultural relations in international cooperation. Researchers from Uganda, Bulgaria, India, Austria and Argentina were invited to share their personal experiences with interculturality during their studies or work abroad. Not the least their intercultural experiences are imbedded in a historical gap between the so called "North-South" in particular facing unlike challenges in (higher) education and research. As part of this project students/researchers and partners from the KEF worked together on developing a better method of understanding interculturality and development matters from examples of international cooperation.

Research background. Communication between members of different cultures is a global-historical inevitability and a challenge of everyday life and therefore a significant concern in our today's world. However we still have need of substantial insights into conditions of inter- or transcultural communication work. Power relations due to "(under)development" such as the gap between "North-South" in (higher) education and research particularly are often neglected. The questions discussed in our platforms are not only about respect for different cultures and in particular between students/researchers from the so called South. But also with focus on questions on development issues and their ties to a better understanding for the living or working conditions in particular of student/researchers from developing countries. Development matters such as development aid and cooperation, poverty, corruption, mobility in and for (higher) education and research and at the same

time this working together for solutions with respect to the knowledge of the people from these concerned regions as a strengthening of intercultural relations.

Aims. The project intends to offer virtual and real spaces for critical discourse about interculturality in sciences and humanities for students/researchers from the so called "North-South" with different backgrounds and nationalities to meet and exchange their views and to build networks. Examples of how intercultural dialogue and development matters in particular in (higher) education and research between students/researchers from industrialized and developing countries can work are to support groups and subject matters which may otherwise not gain much publicity and which are until now under-represented or not at all represented in the mainstream. Further too definitely and purposely prohibit power relations which are historically narrowed in international development but go far beyond for example in colonization, such as racist, sexist, fascist subject matters subject matters which violate human dignity to raise awareness and to sensitise a broader public.

Main contribution. It has become the norm that students/researchers travel and work internationally. However, Austria has not proven to be the best example in Europe in terms of its treatment of and policies towards people from different backgrounds and nationalities. Considering this apparent contradiction one might ask: Can Austria be considered as an attractive place for scientific cooperation? What are the living and working conditions for students/researchers in Austria? The past few years have shown that there is only a very limited level of dialogue possible in Austria about some of its most pressing issues. How and where might science and research position itself with respect to students/researchers from Africa, Asia or Latin America and to development matters as a ground for the so called gap between North and South?

Implications. In the course of this project two workshops and four radio broadcasts were organized. The workshops were an opportunity for representatives from different scientific disciplines as well as from different countries and backgrounds to meet and discuss prejudices, stereotypes, and barriers from their very personal experiences and to discuss potential solutions towards a more respectful way of life in our society. These events facilitated an exchange of experiences and networking among invited participants representing different stakeholder groups about intercultural dialogue and questions of western and non western ways of approaching for example (higher) education and research. Respect and understanding of each other were also topics and how individuals can connect voluntarily to such "idealistic" projects to open new horizons of tolerance.

Applied ethnomusicology as an intercultural tool: Some experiences from the last 25 years of minority research in Austria

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My paper is very much based on my own research activities in the discipline ethnomusicology, with a focus on minority research and applied ethnomusicology which I interpret as applied interculturality. The main topic is music and its intercultural potentials.

I will give a short theoretical survey of ethnomusicology and its intercultural potentials as well as the concepts of applied ethnomusicology and minority research on an international level. These are the main tools to understand what follows: case studies from Austria and my own applied research over the years. The case studies I refer to involve two so-called "autochthonous" minorities in Austria, the Roma and the Slovenes in Styria. In both cases there was a close cooperation with NGOs. Both are to be understood from the background of the political situation of that time, and critical reflection is needed from today's standpoint.

In the process of political recognition of Roma in Austria (initiated in 1989 and the following years) their traditional music and its presentation in public contributed enormously to proving that a group of people who had been discriminated against and who formerly were merely seen as a social minority were in fact an ethnic one, with a distinct cultural heritage of their own. Several research projects by Austrian scholars on Roma music formed the basis for activities in the broadly conceived field of applied ethnomusicology, yielding work in the areas of: cultural mediation, political activism, public promotion and education. Public promotion of "ethnic" music was my main approach in 1990 and onwards and I will critically reflect on the process itself and the socio-political outcome.

My second example comes from a very different background. It is about a minority, the Slovenes in the southern parts of Styria, which officially did not exist when we started doing fieldwork there. Due to the history of conflict in that region, being located at the border between the former Yugoslavia and Austria, especially during both World Wars, the existence of a Slovenian speaking part of the population of the region was denied in official Austrian politics, as well as by some part of the population there. The fieldwork we did there in the years 1999-2001 was a political act in itself, because by documenting songs in Slovenian language we contradicted the official "non-existence" of this minority.

My goal is to contribute to an interdisciplinary discussion by showing potentials as well as discuss weaknesses of applied ethnomusicology in an intercultural context. Ethnomusicology since its beginnings (in 1885) had an interdisciplinary approach, therefore joining forces with other disciplines is in accordance with tradition. And this tradition should be explicitly put into practice if it is a major topic like applied interculturality research.

India is my country but the world is my home: Transculturality through literature

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Over the last decade and more, among the various buzz-words used, misused and abused in academia are those related to culture, cultural studies and its variants. While one agrees that cultural studies is indispensable in today's world, there is no denying that there is little unanimity in the definition of what comprises culture and what is inter- or cross- or transculturality. Theories abound in plenty between the covers of erudite anthologies, literary, historical and anthropological studies, encyclopedias and dictionaries, but much needs to be done in practical terms so that these black-and-white ideas are taken out of the printed page and transformed into practice.

Dealing with the notion of transculturality as distinguished from interculturality, I am concerned with the erasure of borders, the breaking up of boundaries and the formation of global networks. This, as I will illustrate in my presentation, is not simply an armchair concern but one that I have lived in action and still actively continue to practice. With Thomas Friedman, I believe that we are today living in a flat world where the playing field is so leveled that everyone has the chance to get on it and play. At the same time, rules of the game have to be followed or else one is likely to be edged off the field. In times that have acquired a distinguished character thanks to the twin forces of globalization and information technology, it is no longer possible to live in isolation. Although located in fixed spatio-temporal specificities, one is inescapably a part of the global village that Marshall McLuhan spoke of. Other forces like economic realities, terrorism and Security issues cut across national borders and contribute towards the shrinking of a world that was once perceived as fragmented and disjointed.

My paper falls into three main divisions: the first, quoting from reputed critics and thinkers, outlines the forces that contribute towards a creation of unified world. Secondly, I highlight the inadequacies of

critical theories and approaches that have dominated academia of late – theories which divide the world into categories, nation-states and fixed ethnic groups. The third part of my presentation highlights the work I am engaged in (i) as a teacher / scholar working in an Indian university, (ii) as the head of a state-run body that promotes literature and culture, and (iii) as the head of an organization that annually brings together scholars and researchers from across the globe to debate upon topics of common concern.

In conclusion I speak of the concept of cosmopolitanism or, as in Indian philosophy, *vasudhaiva kuttambakam*: "the world is my home". This is an idea I not only subscribe to but one that I practice in my private and professional life. My field is literature, so my views are literature-oriented. I draw examples from literary texts, highlighting connections and interconnections between works produced by writers from different cultural / geographical locations. My audience may be a heterogeneous one from different disciplines, but my endeavor is to cut across disciplines and reach out, thus reinforcing the ideal of "One world, one dream!"

Race, genes, and racism

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The article provides a review of traditional concepts and recent findings concerning the issue of "race". Additionally some recommendations for intercultural research und practice are drawn.

The concept of race has no genetic basis. This expert conclusion (UNESCO-Workshop 1995) is based on biological facts: genetic differences between individuals within a geographic area are larger than genetic differences between the means of populations in different geographical areas; patterns of DNA and genetic traits are not confined by continental boundaries and do not correlate with any classification of so-called races.

The classification of human groups is a fundamental source of racism. The biological concept of race is essentially associated with racial prejudice.

A fundamental element of racism is generalisation. If not reflected, generalisations become *pitfalls of simplification*. Simplification may involve types (racial stereotypes), dichotomies (e.g. "blacks and whites") and median values of groups.

Keys to overcoming racial thinking are focusing on the individual and acknowledging the special character of human diversity.

The impact of intercultural competence on Franco-German business relations

Gottfried Klein, CultureCom, Wiesbaden

Angelica Rieger, Department of Intercultural Studies, RWTH Aachen

Anna Schumacher, Department of Intercultural Studies, RWTH Aachen

Practical background. Intercultural Training has strongly developed in the last decades, as well as the wide range of theoretical approaches to intercultural communication. Yet, the Western world concentrates more and more on Eastern markets, and so do the coaches, neglecting the still important intercultural differences between European – and especially Franco-German – businessmen. The 'clash of civilizations' seems to take place on the other side of the world, and there are very few

specialized inter-European or Franco-German training opportunities like those of Jochen Breuer and Pierre de Bartha.

Research background. There is a lot of literature on intercultural communication, mainly from a linguistic point of view, but very little on the more complex concept of intercultural competence. Rieger's "Intercultural Romance Studies" research unit at RWTH Aachen University deals, within the framework of a broad empirical study, with topics such as the teaching of intercultural competence beyond language courses to people involved in Franco-German and Hispano-German contexts in business, media, culture, literature, art, etc. We shall present the results of the first in a series of studies, dealing with business relationships. The enquiry provides assured data on the awareness of the interviewees' need of intercultural competence in Franco-German business relationships, on the problems and concrete material losses resulting from the lack of it and on the measures they have taken to fill these gaps.

Aims. This joint venture of practical and research activities aims to bring together Franco-German and Hispano-German partners from three areas: scientists, business people of both technical and commercial orientation and counselors, in order to create an innovative triangle of communication between these three parties on all subjects concerning intercultural competence and its impact on international relations.

Main contribution. The results of Rieger's enquiry on intercultural competence in Franco-German business relations clearly show the awareness of the interviewees that a lack of intercultural competence causes serious damage to their commercial success, mainly the loss of time and money. They are aware of the need of intercultural training, and complain about the very general configuration of most training opportunities, or, putting it in an exaggerated way: If I have to deal with a partner in Paris, I do not need to know the fifty ways to say "no" in Japan, but I have to cope with his sandwich technique placing criticism. The results of these special enquiries enable us to formulate clear desiderata and guidelines for the practitioners. Building up on the results of the first enquiry, CultureCom, lead by Dipl.-Kfm. Gottfried N. Klein, now offers highly specialized and individualized training and teaching modules for the German, French and Spanish speaking world, designed especially for expatriates, managers, export business people, but also for students preparing for employment abroad. Nowadays, no student should leave university without a minimum degree of intercultural competence.

Implications. The results of empirical studies can influence the programs of trainers and coaches in the development of intercultural competence directly, allowing them permanent improvement and specialization of their offers for business clients. They generate awareness of the need of specialized intercultural competence in public institutions such as universities. The RWTH University, e.g., has become aware of the need of specialized intercultural competence for engineers in order to meet excellence objectives like internationalization, for both staff and students, and the RWTH Academy of Advanced Vocational Training is taking over a training program from CultureCom in December 2009.

The Educating City: An intercultural approach through social-educational mediation processes

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Practical background. The growth of cities all over the world has contributed to an increasing concentration of poverty, social disruption and environmental damage; on the other hand, urban agglomerates offer the best opportunities for social-economical development, for both people and

communities. Urban contexts appear to be challenging, yet privileged, platforms for intercultural dialogue, the understanding of the inherent developmental potential of conflict situations and the promotion of an inclusive, live-long education. This understanding of education as something that isn't limited to academic experiences is fundamental to our project, in which we see mediation as both a tool for rehabilitating informal institutions, the relationship between them and with the community (and thus informal educational opportunities), and a process that configures new social regulation devices.

Research background. Our work is rooted essentially in conflict mediation, because it is in this sphere that, in the field of social and human sciences, mediation is more substantially studied and, it is also there that its practice has achieved more visibility and repercussion (Mayer, 2004; Moore, 2003). Mediation is a confidential and non-adversarial process, guided by a third party, neutral and without power to decide on the source of the conflict. It is worth mentioning that mediation seeks to habilitate the parties towards the resolution of future conflicts (hence it may refer to a notion of empowerment). As the devices that used to ensure a relatively stable social integration (for example, consider the status traditionally associated with the place where a person worked/the type of work a person did, the role of elderly family members in raising young children, the importance of having a diploma when entering the work market, etc.) start to show signs of growing feebleness, proximal management of social tensions becomes increasingly relevant (Castel, 2005). A mediation service, while it aims to solve communitarian conflicts, helps make local institutions visible to one another, in an effort to optimize resources and social-educational opportunities.

Aims. Our main purposes are to, through the concept of Educating City (e.g. Bernet, 1990; Villar, 2001), identify a set of local institutions that, through their daily work, contribute to the social-educational development of their communities, and to improve the use of communicational resources between such institutions and the people that they aim to serve, through mediation processes. This is a type of research work that is also a work of constructing that which one is researching: given that this project was developed and is being put to practice by a social-educational mediator, we believe that the research work itself produces institutional interaction dynamics which are worth analyzing.

Main contribution. Given that we understand the work of mediation not simply as a task of working out or simplifying interpersonal processes, namely from conflict situations, we think that the idea of Educating City somehow frames the type of social and educational work that we defend. The model of local organization and intervention privileged in the context of the development of a Educating City has the following features: «an increase in the degree of complexity of the interrelations of organization; a step forward in the creation of interdisciplinary teams; an evolution in the benefits system to an intervention based in projects and programs; the population is no longer conceived as a consumer but as a producer of benefits; the professional is no longer a distributor of answers but a mediator» (Villar, 2007: 67). Our analysis of local social-educational dynamics, informed by the potentialities of mediation processes, is focused on the transformation of the city's "fabric" and the production of sociabilities, both referring to an "original" sense of belonging and a second sense of belonging, produced by the mediation processes. We have addressed public and private schools and other training facilities, local companies, citizens' associations and local government entities, in an effort to understand their organizational dynamics and their relationship with the local community, as well as their concern with education, not only in the traditional term, but also in a broader sense, i.e., the social, cultural, cognitive, psychological... development of people throughout their lives. Our findings so far suggest that, in urban contexts, non-formal and informal education has an increasingly important role in promoting intercultural dialogue and developing a sense of belonging, and that social-educational mediation professionals/instances may offer a valuable contribution in that matter.

Implications. This project may offer an alternative path to understand the social-educational-cultural consequences of urban growth and intercultural conflict. Validating and promoting non-formal and informal local educational platforms, aside from allowing people of all ages the access to a variety of cultural assets, also increases interaction opportunities and a more effective use of public resources (such as local infrastructures).

How to manage Eastern and Western Christians successfully in one organization?

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Practical background. Geographical and historical conditions have made Podlaskie Voivodeship (North-Eastern part of Poland) a place of coexistence of various nations and cultures. Multinational character provided background for the creation of distinct systems of values and attitudes, characteristic of representatives of different denominations inhabiting the north-east of Poland. Nowadays, those who constitute the largest ethnic group for the most part are members of Catholic Orthodox Church. The main practical issue is how to avoid conflicts resulting from belonging to different religious groups by workers in organizations in the Podlasie region and representing different cultures based on religious assumptions. It concerns the ABW Superbruk company, the producer of road-building materials, which work force is not culturally homogenous. They represent two different Christian religions: Catholics and Orthodox. ABW Superbruk operates in the most religiously diverse region in Poland. Other practitioners in the region have not noticed the importance of the problem and, the majority ignores it "Mazur, (2009)".

Research background. In theory of management the conflicts between workers in heterogeneous organizations are usually taken to the ethno- racial basis, hardly ever to any other basis even though diversity has many different sides. The issues of diversity in Poland are considered mainly on the demographic basis (women-men, the young-the old), not on religious basis which is sensitive data. The broad theory of managing cultural diversity lacks a reference to religion, which has a culture-building meaning and is the source of value preferences, behaviors and attitudes for believers. Most Europeans avoid discussing religion because of historical reasons (Simons, 2002). Overall, there is no specific theory of management for Catholic and Orthodox believers (Mazur, 2008).

Aims. The main aim of the article is to discover and elicit theologically-cultural differences between Catholic and Orthodox denominations on the basis of the reference literature and identify them in the ABW Superbruk company. They include: Individual v. social aspect of Christianity, Didactics v. mysticism, Rational v. irrational knowledge, Dichotomy of freedom, Grace v. merit. It is also intended to make managers more conscious of the religion influence on employee value preferences and his/her attitudes at work to let them be more effective managers.

Main contribution. The level of diversity in the world is systematically increasing due to the globalization and integration processes. In order to make diversity more 1 http://www.superbruk.com.pl/ tangible and comprehensible, various dimensions of diversity representing "subcategories of diversity" have been developed. The main categories comprising diversity are as follows: gender, nationality and ethnicity, social class background, sexual orientation, age, mental and physical capability, and religion. The last is considered by psychologists one of the most influential on human's behavior because it deals with values of key importance for human identity. The main contribution of the article is the thesis supported by empirical evidence that despite globalisation cultural differences resulting from religious backgrounds of employees are sometimes

fundamental to organizations. The article consists of three major parts. In the first one, the review of main cultural differences between catholic and orthodox religions is presented, in the second part the possible influences of cultural values resulting from those religions on employees' behavior at work are predicted. The third part of the article aims to prove that the company is an open system and that employees representing different cultural (religious) backgrounds behave accordingly to the cultural values specific for their religion. To support the assumption on the impact of cultural values on employees' conduct the example of ABW Superbruk–bicultural company operating in Podlaskie Voivodeship in Northern Poland will be used.

Implications. The awareness of religious biculturalism at ABW Superbruk will not be universal, because every company working in the conditions of religious diversity of human resources should discover and analyze its own cultural environment. On its basis, the companies will be able to efficiently manage cultural diversity under the condition of individualization of the religions of its own workers. The usage of that knowledge will contribute to the prevention of conflicts resulting from different religious values, understanding particular attitudes of the representatives of various religions, move workers' understanding from the company to other basis of social and political life.

Neuland: Bringing refugees and Austrian residents together

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Practical background. The main practical issue of our project "Neuland" (German: new ground) is to find a way of communication between Austrian residents and refugees in rural areas of Lower Austria. With the experience, network and attendance of our organisation we provide our target groups the possibility to get to know each other on a personal level within a protected area. By this, we are eager to dismantle and consequently overcome prejudices on both sides. What distinguishes our approach from other practitioners is the fact that we aim to propose an exchange on equal terms. Participants meet each other not to either learn or teach, but to learn and teach at the same time. Evaluation of this project attaches great importance to continuous feedback of all participants, such as discussions and the completion of evaluation forms, as well as participant observation from our side as project leaders.

Research background. Since the cultural turn in social science, many social phenomena have been described as cultural phenomena. Dunja Larise defines the radical refusal of modern universalism as common denominator of all different currents of theorists of the cultural turn (2009: 145). Questions of culture, religion and identity became central for the scientific and public discourse, while gender, class or other social categories got less important. In fact, many proponents of such a culturalisation of social science even tend to culturalise these other social phenomena, like class, power and gender. Concurrently, these social categories have received less importance in the works of many social scientists. Debates on mulitculturalism or interculturalism reflect these developments. Yet the idea of a multicultural society is not an antiracist idea. Slavoj Žižek called the Idea of Multiculturalism „a disavowed, inverted, self-referential form of racism, a ‚racism with a distance'—it 'respects' the Other's identity, conceiving the Other as a self-enclosed 'authentic' community towards which he, the multiculturalist, maintains a distance rendered possible by his privileged universal position" (Zizek, 1997: 44). While multiculturalism conserves this distance, interculturalism focuses on the exchange and intermixture of so-called identities. Intercultural communication focuses on exchange and change

of societies, both of natives and migrants. Hybridity, cultural knowledge and intercultural competence have become keywords in this intercultural discourse (see Schmidinger in Rosecker/Müller, 2007, p. 183-190). The premise for the acquirement of these intercultural competences is communication. Communication gives impulses for all partners involved, and therefore helps developing intercultural understanding between refugees and locals.

Aims. The aim of our project is to encourage and develop intercultural communication in Lower Austria between residents and refugees who live in this region. It is aspired to engender sensitisation and to encourage participating communities to vividly exchange and to act as supporting multipliers. The project „Neuland" intends to be an information and exchange platform for Austrians and refugees, and thus eagerly supports an interchange between these groups. Another focus lies on contentment of all participants, which is a very important factor for the success of the project. If participants are satisfied, they will on the one hand reach the project goals (like integration, overcoming prejudices, intercultural understanding…) more easily, and on the other can be good multipliers for the project.

Main contribution. „Neuland" is a tandem project, where 30 tandem-pairs with 60 participants are formed and supervised for a period of nine months that is located in three different districts in Lower Austria: Wiener Neustadt, Baden and Neunkirchen. An information campaign and public relations about the project and the topics of asylum and integration accompany the project, which are aimed to reach at least 2.500 people. We offered workshops for participants in order to compensate lack of information, and in order to sensitise participants for problems that may occur during their respective tandem-partnerships. By planning and organising activities and events together, the collaboration of "Neulanders" might as well take place besides formed tandem groups, which also encourages dismantling barriers. Through these formal and informal practices, intercultural dialogue is enhanced.

Implications. The project releases processes that stimulate participants on both sides to overcome prejudices, and therefore requires a number of different local agents. Thus, it helps to establish a common space of locals and migrants/refugees, which is the base for creating a society on common grounds.

Transcultural school social work practice

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Practical Background. The overall aim of this study is to establish ways and means of realising the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and a broader human rights culture within school social work service delivery. In 1998, a community-based school social work service agency began operating in secondary schools throughout the western Austrian province - Vorarlberg. This agency offers (1) casework, comprised of: confidential assessment, diagnoses, counselling, crisis care, recreational opportunities, advocacy, referral and, (2) social pedagogy to include group activities in classrooms which are conceptualised and carried out in the form of social, cultural and experiential education. The casework and social pedagogy approaches focus on the enhancement of competencies and skills. This encourages children to further develop empathy, reciprocity, self-respect and self-esteem. The aim of the social workers at the agency is to assist children and teachers gain better understanding of social justice, human dignity and equality. Through the social workers guidance and reflection, teachers overcome barriers that interfere with the pupil's success in learning, adjustment and growth. The primary objective is to maximise well-being through the provision of a targeted, non-stigmatising program. As an advocator for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the agency seeks to fulfil the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) obligation to confront those who violate this convention. This process involves documenting violations and assessing the corresponding

unmet basic human needs of the service users. An example of this is when a child reports experiencing discrimination on grounds of a cultural, linguistic or religious distinction. In this case article 2 of the UNCRC, the right not to be discriminated against, has been violated. Further incidences recorded include bullying, name-calling and being told to go back to the "country of origin". Children of immigrants report not being permitted to speak their native language during lessons or, in some cases, on school grounds (Schneider, 2007). Accounts such as these have lead to the agency's decision to explore and develop culturally sensitive methods and tools for school social work practice.

Research background. Six case studies of children of immigrants, suspended from school for a fixed period, are analysed using a multi-level theory, the systems paradigm of social work discipline and profession (Staub-Bernasconi, 2007). The key aspects of the study are (1) social economic disparity (2) cultural-religious based characteristics (3) language barriers and, (4) relationships. The challenges experienced by these children are analysed using Werner Obrecht's theory of basic human needs (Borrmann, 2005).

Aims. Clarify the possibilities and challenges in realising the UNCRC in social work practice. Develop culturally sensitive methods and tools. Develop a science based action plan for transcultural social work with focus on overcoming social exclusion and building social cohesion.

Main contribution. Personal and social problems, on the micro, meso and macro levels, are made visible and the causes explored. This results in a differentiated view on the challenges confronting children of immigrants and increases the understanding and knowledgebase of parents and teachers. The necessity to development specific guidelines, principles and benchmarks for school social work practice is underlined. The best interests of pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are served by (1) challenging practice in the field of secondary education that neglects the rights of the child, and (2) identifying and disseminating best practice.

Implications. The results of the study facilitate further development and implementation of a culturally sensitive rights-based social work practice that engenders respect and cohesion as well as providing protection from discrimination (Ife, 2001). This approach corresponds with that of transcultural social work in advancing equality in secondary schools (Schneider, 2009). Children of immigrants are encouraged to recognize their abilities and actively participate in processes concerning their well-being (John, 2003). The agency reviews the knowledge base and skills of staff members.

Intercultural competence in professional contexts

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Practical background. As a result of the global economy, the rise in touristic mobility and the rise in global organizational competitiveness, an increasing number of people criss-crosses cultural boundaries, and requires competencies to deal with diversity and interculturality on the job (Brew & Cairns, 2004). In all these contexts people need to know how to approach others in an interculturally appropriate manner. Lists of do's and don'ts for coping with cultural differences - often mentioned in touristic guides and occasionally in academic literature - are no longer sufficient in a professional context (Catteeuw & Coutuer, 2005). Although academic literature refers to a wide range of intercultural instruments, usually developed from international experiences of expatriates and

international exchange students (for an overview see Paige, 2004), literature so far does not offer a coherent frame of reference for intercultural competence.

Research background. Despite this absence of a coherent frame of reference for intercultural competence, increasing numbers of actors seem to recognize the importance and the practical relevance of being intercultural competent in professional contexts. As a result, both in the professional and in the educational domain, ways are being sought to assess people's level of acquired intercultural competence. Illustrations of more recent instruments or attempts to develop these competences are for example the competence matrices (Botta and co-workers, 2007; Catteeuw, 2006), or portfolios (Jacobson and co-workers, 1999).

Aims. We intend to develop a professionally sensitive instrument to assess intercultural competence in two specific domains: education and office management in business contexts. Whereas international business and foreign language teaching has a firmly restricted focus, i.e. cultural accommodation of expatriates and acquiring intercultural competence via learning a foreign language, this tool seeks to widen the scope of intercultural competence by integrating all the available insights from research and practice. Complementary to this instrument we aim to develop an adjusted training module that can be offered in educational and business environments respectively.

Main contribution. The instrument and complementary training help to map out the acquired intercultural competence of actors in the educational and business setting. While portfolios follow up the development of a person in the long run, our instrument offers a quick overview of the strengths and weaknesses of a person's intercultural competence. In order to reach this objective, different steps were undertaken. First, the main conclusions of the literature study were the starting point for the clarification of the followed definition of interculturality and its relevance to intercultural competence. Second, in order to adjust the instrument to the expectations and needs of these work fields, interviews were carried out among management assistants and human resource managers. In addition to the interviews, a digital survey was sent to alumni students of the Office Management and Teacher Education programs at the University College of Mechelen, and to management assistants belonging to different professional networks. Third, based on these clarifications, a general intercultural framework (an intercultural matrix) is developed and concrete indicators to measure people's level of acquired intercultural competence were identified. Fourth, the instrument will be tested in both work fields. Besides the testing, the tool will be linked to a specially adjusted training offer for actors in the two work fields to improve their intercultural competence.

Developing children's awareness and knowledge of cultural diversity

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Practical background. This study took place in a large suburban primary school accommodating approximately 700 pupils. Over the past five years, there had been an increasing number of children from diverse ethnic backgrounds being enrolled. The subject of multiculturalism had not been addressed by the staff hitherto; consequently, there was no clear policy on how best to deal with difficulties that might arise in relation to the integration of these children in the school.

Research background. "At the heart of what makes a school multicultural lies managing diversity…..which includes changing mindsets as well as the underlying culture of a school" (Rosado, 1997, p.10). Korn and Bursztyn (2002) focus attention on two main issues, relating to teachers and to parents, which schools need to focus on when addressing multicultural education. Firstly, they maintain that "…many teachers, both black and white, fear that they will be isolated or rejected by fellow staff members if they speak openly about issues of race and class" (p.60). In addition, they stress that schools need to address ethnic minority parents" sense of powerlessness, caused by "lack of

know-how in negotiating the school bureaucracy". In 2005 the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) guidelines entitled "Intercultural Education in the Primary School" were distributed to every primary school teacher in the Republic of Ireland. However, two factors militated against their realisation. The Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) and the School Development Planning Support (SDPS) were providing a major initiative on curriculum reform at this time. Consequently, as Mc Gorman and Sugrue (2007) indicate "many practitioners did not attach adequate attention or priority to intercultural concerns in a very crowded, if not overlooked, professional renewal, school improvement agenda" (p.16). They argued that this was a lost opportunity to facilitate discussion and debate amongst teachers regarding interculturalism.

Aims. Having set the research question, i.e. „How best can the integration of children from diverse ethnic backgrounds be promoted in our school?‟ three main aims were identified: To identify children from diverse ethnic backgrounds attending the school, to explore the backgrounds and cultures of these ethnic groups, and to foster more tolerant and understanding attitudes towards other nationalities in the school community.

Main contribution. The method of inquiry chosen was "action research", because of the critical importance of the reflective nature of such research, and is best summed up by Mc Kernan (1996): "The practitioner is not cast as an expert but as an inquirer and co-learner treating his or her practice as provisional" (p. 34). In this case, the ultimate aim was to improve the quality of action i.e. to increase the effectiveness of teachers‟ practices in relation to the integration of pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The pupils first set about identifying the children from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the school (a total of 12 classes, 365 children). This information identified 15 families and nine countries from which children from diverse ethnic backgrounds had enrolled in the school within the previous five years. The families completed a questionnaire and returned them to the classroom, where pupils, at a later stage, recorded the information onto audio files using their own voices and speaking in the third person. Pupils researched the historical and geographical backgrounds of the countries from which identified families had come, through the use of the Internet. Another stage involved the transfer of data using digital tools such as audio files, Word, PowerPoint and Photo Story and producing clay animation films using the "Frames" software. Another aspect of the study involved parents of ethnic minority children, showcasing national costumes and national foods in the school hall. The final phase of the study involved building a web-project incorporating all the work that pupils had completed and the completed project can be viewed at www.teachnet.ie/rward/wholiveshere.