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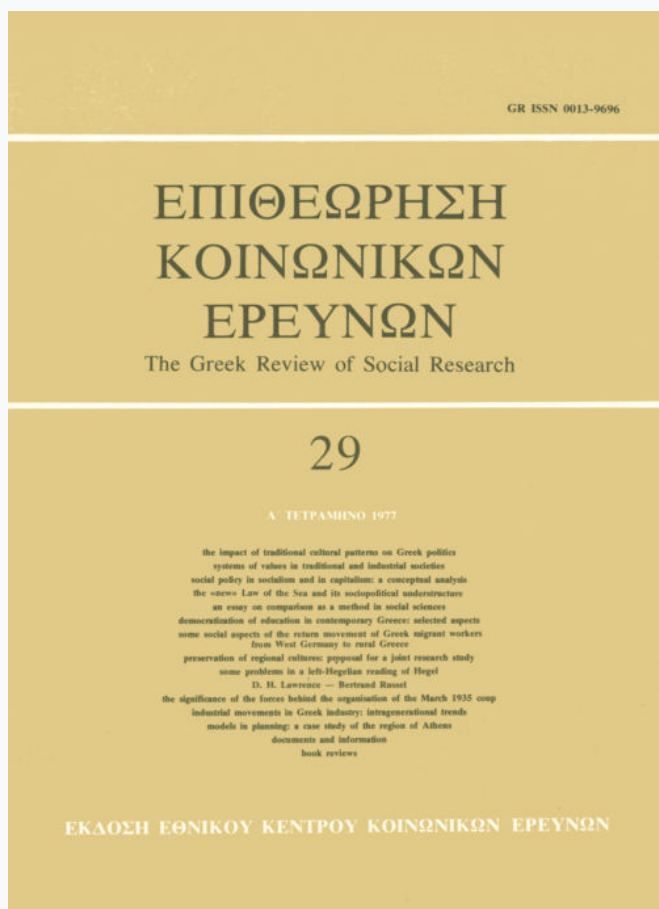
Preservation of regional cultures: Proposal for joint research study

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preservation of regional cultures: proposal for a joint research study

by

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Bonn meeting

Following the Recommendation No 15 of the Unesco Helsinki meeting in 1972, the Unesco meeting of experts was organized in Bonn in 1975; its aim was to decide on the joint studies on various subjects of cultural policy. The participants that represented 19 member states at the meeting decided on 14 different joint studies. Greece accepted the role of Coordinator for the Joint Study No 3 on «Preservation of Regional Cultures». France, Italy and Ukranian SSR agreed to participate in the above study. Ukranian SSR, however, withdrew its participation from the very beginning.

The National Center of Social Research in Athens, having taken the responsibility for the coordination of the project, held a meeting in Athens (February 1976) for the representatives of the above countries in order to set the theoretical and methodological background ·in which the project would proceed.

After a year of frequent correspondence with France and Italy, the Center, as Coordinator of the project, decided to discontinue it and informed accordingly the Unesco Headquarters. Neither the French Unesco committee nor the Italian one were able to raise funds and organize their research teams for the pursuit of the project, although they recognized the relevance and need of such a project. It was precisely the importance of this study and the hopeful feeling that the project could be resumed that we undertook to publish this paper.

The present paper comprises the following:
1. the preparatory bibliographic work that the Greek party had collected in view of the February meeting;
2. the general proposal that was submitted for discussion and the modifications and agreements that resulted from the discussion;
3. an analysis of the theoretical framework and the key concepts that would guide the study together with the methodological cautions and other limitations that would have to be considered.

outline of the project-interpretations of the Bonn meeting and limitations of the objectives of the project

The outline of this project No 3 that was drafted in Bonn by the representatives of the Unesco Member States (Greece, Italy, France, Ukraine SSR) only expressed their preliminary views on this project; the outline was consequently subject to further elaboration and changes when the

working group met under the initiative of the Coordinator.

During the February Athens meeting, Mr. Maraghidis, the Greek representative at the Bonn meeting, was present and explained the outline of the project which was modified as follows:

Point 2: «Détermination des régions de chaque pays ayant developpé une culture locale». The working group ruled out the possibility of investigating all regional cultures of a country; on the contrary, one region of each country would be studied in depth.

Point 3: «Détermination des caractéristiques de chacune de ces cultures et des activités qui persistent encore de nos jours...» After the agreement that was reached on point 2, the problem was to set the points of departure and the criteria for the choice of the region that each country would take for study. Both the criteria as well as the whole process of the project should be formulated on a comparative basis.

Aim of the project: «Préservation des cultures régionales dans un même pays» (sans allusion à des groupements ethniques ou minoritaires, thème qui fera l'objet d'une étude à part). It was agreed that local cultures of ethnic minorities should be avoided for study since they are the object of another joint study. However, it was strongly emphasized that even though no special effort should be made to find and study ethnic minorities, if in the region chosen for study according to the criteria set by the team an ethnic or minority group should be found, the culture of that group and the role it played in the region should not be ignored. As Marc Netter, the French representative noted: «Ethnic minorities are part of a living culture and if we ignore these minority populations we don't give them the possibility to live; we are led to state that whenever a local culture interesting enough for study is found out, the people there bring forth various claims; we cannot possibly hide that whenever we speak of maintenance of life within a local culture we have to mention the political problem; from there on it is up to the State to choose the ways to act.»[1]

Point 5: «Récommendations pour la sauvegarde de ces cultures». It was stressed that the project should be of practical value; namely, it should be of use to administration not only of the participant countries but of other Unesco Member States as well. In that sense it should ultimately aim at changing legislation.

The other points of the outline were simply discussed analytically.

[1]. Statement made at the Athens meeting discussions.

Point 1: «Détermination de la méthode de travail»; *Point 4:* «Ingérence de ces cultures dans la culture générale du pays; *Point 6:* «Etude comparative entre les pays participants».

objectives and philosophy underlying the study on preservation of regional cultures

It was considered necessary as an introduction to this project to briefly state a series of well-known assumptions:

a. In our era everybody talks about national development; by development it is mainly meant the change of economic and social factors of a people's life. This change is conceived as following the direction from labor to capital production.

b. Economic development is generally considered identical with industrialization; socio-economic development is identified with the concomitant conditions of an industrialization process, that is, urbanization, improvement of the standard of living for a greater number of people, etc.

c. This socio-economic development brings about a total change of modes of life, of the hierarchy of values, and the transformation of existing institutions. In the case of less developed countries old institutions may be replaced by new ones adopted from countries which are already on a higher level of socio-economic development and whose experience is sought to be repeated.

d. The individual and national crises have recently brought about a reaction which at times has even the character of nativistic or revitalization movements. Such crises have been caused by: I. an abrupt cutting of the bonds with more humane ways of living, II. a destruction of the environment which has played a primary role in the formation of an individual's or state's identity, III. an adoption of another culture's models of life.

e. These reactionary movements against the process of rapid acculturation are guided by the principle of cultural stability.

f. A form of cultural stability is attempted through preservation of a country's culture.

g. Within a country the antagonism of cultural stability vs. acculturation exists between metropolitan and local cultures.[2]

h. Preservation of regional cultures is the main objective of this project. By preservation is understood here not only the museum-like conservation, the protection, and even renovation of the

[2]. This problem as viewed from the aspect of cultural policy is well illustrated in Jean-François Cotter, Marc Netter, *Le développement culturel de la Corse: Problèmes, objectifs*, Secretariat D'Etat à la culture, service des études et recherches, France, 1974, vol.I-III.

products of material culture[1] but mainly the regional life that continues to be expressed in traditional and non-traditional (transformed) ways.

a brief survey of works already done on the subject of preservation of regional cultures

A review of the literature on the problem of preservation of regional cultures was done by the National Center of Social Research which, in addition to a preliminary bibliographic research, sent a circular letter to various European and Mediterranean institutions which study relevant problems. This research was by no means exhaustive but traced some main national and international tendencies. It revealed a variety of definitions of the terms «preservation» and «local» (or regional) culture. Analogous seem to be the approaches and policies which are followed in materializing these concepts.

Taking into consideration the recent preoccupation in such projects and studies as well as the variety in the ethnic background and the developmental stages of the various countries, the synthesizing work is a difficult task and cannot possibly comprise all the existing trends and efforts.

As a start it should be mentioned that to the degree that countries have become aware of the need to search and preserve any form or manifestation of a regional culture, their efforts are mostly influenced by the degree of their industrialization / urbanization process and by the emphasis that is put either on the folkloric or wholistic approach.

The most classical and well-known approach in dealing with the concept of preservation of local culture is the folkloric or ethnographic one (in the old notion of the term). It mainly concerns the collection, archiving, and exhibition of elements of life, most often peasant life, from a bygone era. This approach is still present in many countries but it is often contrasted or complemented by other approaches, even within one country.[2]

Similar to the above policy, although the material is extracted from still living cultures, is the study of local or ethnic languages, dialects, etc.,—whenever ethnic or linguistic groups are

found in a country—vs. the dominant or metropolitan language.[3] Even if language as a determinant criterion of a local culture is not explicitly stated, it is implied in the study of cultural traits manifested in the form of verbal art.

Keeping records of local history on the community or municipality level is also similar to the above approach although much more synthetic as it stimulates and reinforces the local awareness and identity.[4] Furthermore, it is done by specially trained teachers or other people. Such and parallel efforts have even reached the state levels which often strongly motivate them. «Culture is by nature creation and cannot thrive without fresh impulses, yet it also depends upon tradition and continuity. At the present time with deep going structural social changes, with people moving from outlying districts to urbanized centers and with growing influence from without, many threads will be lost.»[5] Such an awareness is gaining grounds nowadays in both developed and developing countries. Revealing is the state of affairs as it is described in the Unesco report on Malay culture,[6] where it is stressed that through the nourishment of oral traditions both the process of nation-building and the establishment of regional identity can be gained.

The idea of preservation has flourished recently in certain aspects of material culture by restoring or renovating castles, palaces, architectural masterpieces, etc.[7] The effort, which is more evident in highly industrialized countries, is to preserve whole historical urban centers, traditional villages or parts of them. This effort found an organized expression in the «Année Européenne du Patrimoine Architectural, 1975». In Amsterdam, where the Conference took place, the integrated

1. See also Andreas Symeon, «A Synthetic Approach to Conservation Problems», *Proceedings, Elliniki Etairia*, Athens, 1975, p. 39-40 (in Greek).
2. As for example in Poland where both preservation of folklore takes place and stimulated creativity as well as reproduction by craftsmen, etc. The information was given by the Société polonaise d'ethnologie, Centre de documentation et d'information, through correspondence.

3. Examples of this sort are the study of the Berber culture in Algeria (information given by the Centre de recherches anthropologiques, préhistoriques et ethnographiques, Alger), the Lapps culture (*The Lapps of Norway*, Information published by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, UDA 309/73), The Samer culture («Diminishing Minority», *The Norseman*, No.2, 1973), etc.
4. Rolf Fladby, «Local History in Norway», *The Amateur Historian*, vol.6(8), London, 1965, 262-265.
5. Rolf Fladby, «The Norwegian Institute for Local History and Local History Research», *The Local Historian*, vol.11(4), London, 1974, 217-224.
6. *Promotion of Malay Culture Studies*, Final report of an international conference, Bonn, September 2-6, 1973, German Commission for UNESCO, Köln, 1973.
7. See for instance, *Some Factual Information about Protected Monuments and Sites in Denmark*, Ministry of the Environment, Denmark, February, 1975; *Conservation of Nature Act* (Consolidated Act No.445 of October 1st, 1972); *Nature conservation in Denmark*, The Royal Ministry of Cultural Affairs. *The Preservation of Historic Monuments in the Netherlands*, Icomos, International Council of Monuments and Sites.

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conservation was seen under the light of a centralized policy which would take into consideration the local cultures.[1] Through such efforts one can see that the approach is no more to just preserve single cultural elements but to integrate them into their «biotope». Such an endeavor is clearly seen in the Danish examples of landscape preservation. «A cultural landscape is created by an interplay between its fundamental endowment by nature and the human activities carried on there through the ages. Each epoch will have left an imprint while at the same time erasing some of the older marks there.»[2]

Two major shifts can be generally observed in the area of preservation. The first one is a sway from the museum-like and old folkloric approach to a global and creative approach that could also contribute to the present quality of life. People are actually encouraged to reproduce cultural artifacts in a way meaningful for the community. Organizations like the Heimatwerk[3] and Heimatschutz[3] in Switzerland lead one to see that the preservation process is an affair closely related to the general cultural policy that each country follows.

Additionally, it should be mentioned that in highly industrialized countries the notion of «peasant culture», which is often implied in the notion of local culture, has disappeared. The industrialization process of over a century has had an equalizing effect on the level of local cultures. Instead, the notions of «working class culture» or «rural culture» have developed and an interest in recording oral history relevant to the working class history has been growing.[4] This case as well as the local history approach are examples which show that the trend is towards a living, present-day preservation.

The second major shift that can be detected is in the area of the environment: single buildings or fragmented cultural elements are not being preserved so much in order to testify of a past time, but whole neighbourhoods, villages, or urban centers are being reanimated together with their surrounding features. Furthermore, these are not only preserved for their historical value but are integrated in functional terms, namely to contribute to a better quality of life.[5]

In Greece two main paths have been followed in the past by both the academic and the state authorities in the effort to preserve the traditional heritage.

1. Within the science of folklore (in Greek *laographia*) the aim has been to collect, record and archive the peasant tradition. Preference has been given a) to verbal arts, mainly these genres which can compete with the products of the written literature; b) to folk art, especially whatever is related to folk costume and jewellery; c) from the domain of the material culture a very small segment has been considered worth preserving, so the spirit of a bygone era has failed to survive. Such efforts useful as they may have been in maintaining the tradition, viewed traditional life in a static and fragmented way. This philosophy is clearly illustrated in both the academic curricula and the folkloric museums.

2. The second sphere of preservation has been in the area of archaeological and historical remains. Until recently the authorities had ignored the recent Hellenic past, namely the period during the Turkish occupation and after the liberation. With the unavoidable exploitation of the land and industrialization, rapid urbanization, tourism and the concomitant socio-cultural changes, it has become evident that a destruction of the heritage is taking place at a galloping pace. Authorities, groups and individuals are stating openly that any single preservation plan cannot help much the threatened environment by fragmented efforts. The whole process should be incorporated in the general economic, regional and urban planning.

Such an awareness contributes to a turning point in the Greek preservation policy. Whilst in the recent past the effort was centered on safeguarding a monument from destruction, in even restoring it to its old form, the present situation is characterized by a tendency to renovate a building or an ensemble of them by giving them same use or function in an organically intergrated surrounding.[6]

Such mentality has started to find its expression as for example in the program of the Ministry of the Interior. The idea was to trace and record the existing traditional settlements in all of Greece and according to the international IPCE

1. *Déclaration d'Amsterdam,* congrès sur le patrimoine architectural européen, 21-25 octobre, 1975, Conseil de l'Europe.
2. Arne Bondo-Andersen, *Landscape Analyses in Denmark,* Copenhagen: Ministry of the Environment, 1975, *p.* 10
3. See the Bulletins carrying the titles of these organizations.
4. This tendency is well developed in Great Britain nowadays (Information was given by Stuart Hall, director of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, The University of Birmingham, through correspondence).

5. A. Fenton, «Regional Ethnology and Environmental Awareness», *Museums Journal,* vol.73(3), 1973, 107-113.
6. A. Markopoulou, «The Contemporary Approach to Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage and its Institutional Problems», *Architechtonica Themata,* vol. 9, 1975, 157-160 (in Greek).

system to describe their present state and need for protection according to priorities. It was characteristically emphasized in this effort that «the study of traditional settlements was not only a study of traditional art and architecture; that was a necessary didactic detail; since it concerned shells of humans who live in a system of basic relationships, it was this system or systems that we should initially study».[1]

Another effort worth mentioning[2] is the National Tourist Organization Program for the transformation of certain selected traditional villages or parts of them into hotels and pensions. Caution should be expressed at this instance on how alongside the aim of protection, safeguarding, renovating, one may be led sometimes into a mild situation of exploitation and eventually of speculation. Since, however, this Program has not yet been put to work, no criticism could be formulated.

The recommendations that were put forward on the occasion of the Année Européenne du Patrimoine Architectural 1975, concerned the issues:
1. updating the legislation on protection,
2. collaboration of the public, authorities, legislators, technicians towards dynamic and drastic methods,
3. the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Sciences to promote a systematic effort of recording, evaluating, informing for the programming of necessary studies,
4. the recruitment of specialized scientists in a multidisciplinary framework of collaboration,
5. the creation of graduate and specialized schools,
6. the creation of a special agent,
7. proper socio-economic conditions in the government policy so as to provide for the gaps and pressures inherent in the technological evolution,
8. development of the cultural policy so as to reach the public through school programs and mass media information,
9. encouragement of the citizens' participation in the planning and application of the programs.[3]

critique of the underlying principles of these trends

With the exception of the scientific approach which is characterized by the study of the strong

motivation for preserving a local dialect for reasons of development or cultivation of the feeling of ethnic identity and belongingness, all other approaches in spite of their differences have common elements:

I) The prevailing idea in the policy of preserving a local culture or cultural forms is that of freezing the historical life of a given people.

II) Any attempt to preserve past social and cultural forms, at the phenomenological level, has mainly educational, scientific and very often touristic purposes.

III) Preservation has been mainly attempted in the field of material culture because it is more tangible and it changes more rapidly than the expressive culture.

IV) Although classical anthropological definitions of culture (an ensemble of values and norms, the universe of the behavior of a group and the ensemble of material and non-material products that have resulted from this behavior) and more recent ones (culture is all communication between human beings) have been inserted into these approaches, the humanistic concept of culture still dominates them.

The humanistic concept of culture derives from the past participle of the Latin verb «colere» which means tilling of the soil. The notion of cultivation was transferred to the human mind. And as the cultivation of the soil implied the process of progressive refinement of the domesticated crops, the term culture, in a broader sense, was applied to the state of maturity of the individual.

The concept of culture implying the process of progressive refinement was combined with the biological and social notion of evolution, which was the key-word for the scholars of the 19th century. This combination of concepts resulted in the optimistic notion of «progress».[4]

Social Darwinism, which validated the policy of territorial expansion of the great political and military powers, further reinforced the concept of evolution in culture. The policy of these powers provided the scholars with a model of dissemination of the «refined» culture from certain culture centers. According to the theory of evolution, culture traits diffuse from high cultivated centers to areas less culturally developed.

Both the artistic products or the high values obtained in the process of civilization and the enlightened society emphasized the sense of perfection. This contrasted to the «imperfect», the «uncultivated», the «low» which, according to

1. Arghyris Petronotis, «A Study of the Traditional Communities of the Peloponnesus and Southern Ionian Islands», *Proceedings, Elliniki Etairia,* Athens, 1975, p. 73 (in Greek).
2. Ilianna Antonakopoulou, «Workshop on Tourism and Development», in this issue, p. 176.
3. Athanasios Aravantinos et al., «Conclusions», *Proceedings, Elliniki Etairia,* Athens, 1975, p. 197-199 (in Greek).

4. Roy Wagner, *The Invention of Culture,* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975, p. 21.

this logic, was represented by the peasant, popular or primitive cultures.

The «opera-house» concept of culture, which is evaluative and elitistic in character, dominates the cultural policy that various States practice, and it works in favor of the ruling groups of any society.

The humanistic concept of culture and the theoretical and methodological approaches which derive from it can not be primarily utilized in this research project, for two fundamental reasons: First, this study is based on the principle of a dynamic notion of preservation of local culture. Second, the specific circumstances that have developed in the countries which originally decided to participate in this research project require the utilisation of anthropological concepts of culture.

Greece, as Dr. Filias pointed out,[1] has not undergone an industrial revolution; yet it does behave as an affluent society. Consequently, Greece haw failed to develop an «urban culture». At the same time local cultures tend to disappear. «Local» people create modern mass culture without taking into consideration their «local» cultural forms. Actually, they are losing their sense of continuity.

The situation in France is quite the opposite where certain regions, from the condition of extreme centralization, have ended up claiming autonomy during the last decade. The fact that those regions have become conscious of their culture identity is observed in the emergence of various movements, cultural, economic or other. The idea which directs the actions of the people of those regions, seems to be that «one can not be citizen of the world without being citizen of his own land» as Marc Netter[2] stated it.

The idea that Netter submitted for consideration is very common among cultural region analysts as well as those who believe that the development of «culture identity» in a region does not work against the capacity of a State to play a positive political, cultural and economic role in the world. Moreover, they see it as an ideal case whenever people work a systematic hierarchy of loyalties and allegiances which elevates from the level of family to the human race.[3]

principles governing the present study

In the process of organising this project the idea was that its results are going to be utilized

1. Statement made at the Athens meeting discussions.
2. Statement made at the Athens meeting discussions.
3. Raymond D. Gastil, *Cultural Regions of the United States*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1975, p. 304-305.

by governmental officials in charge of cultural policy planning.

Any cultural policy has two objectives today:
I. the social development of people and
II. the activation of social groups so that they may become conscious of their culture identity and feel their responsibility towards their cultural development.

The mobilization of the people to successfully carry out this cultural policy works towards two directions: First, participation of the people in the creation of new cultural forms. Second, preservation of old cultural forms or modes of life.

Preservation. The term preservation has been used with three different concepts; that is, preservation of
I. non-functioning cultural forms
II. still funtioning old forms and
III. the features which characterize regional culture identity.

This threefold concept of preservation creates serious problems in any cultural policy. Some of these problems are ethical in nature. They appear in the notions I and II of the term preservation.

Crucial questions such as the type of cultural forms that should be preserved, which agent should make the choices (the central government, the local authorities, etc.), finance the projects, etc. must be anwered before any cultural policy project should be put into practice.

As things stand now, any Greek cultural policy would be ineffective, because of three particular reasons which did not allow any solution to the aforementioned problems:
I. There is a confusion between the concept of the Greek regional cultural policy as such and the act of recording or collecting products of material or expressive culture.
II. There is neither a central governmental body entitled to define the general principles governing the cultural policy of the country nor a governmental agent to watch these principles put into practice. Oppositions among various departments of the government in the administration of specific and very often contradictory cultural policies are, therefore, unavoidable. Just one example suffices to clarify our point.

While the main Greek agent of cultural policy, e.g. the Ministry of Culture and Sciences, tries to preserve certain regional traditional elements, the Ministry of Education passes an educational program which fails to consider or actually ignores the distinctive cultural traits of the very same areas. As a matter of fact this program of education has an equalizing effect upon regional differences that, indeed, are little. If we may use a linguistic parlance, the regional differences may be consi-

dered as allophones or allomorphs of the same cultural forms. Since one man can not serve two masters simultaneously, the policy of preservation of regional cultures is accused to complete failure. The program of education introduces the values and forms of the metropolitan culture in all Greek regions even the most remote ones, and consequently it suppresses the development of local culture forms.

III. There is always the problem of what is worth preserving and who is to decide what culture forms must be preserved. Voluntary associations might provide the answers. Still, it is hard to recommend this solution in the case of Greece, for reasons which will be explained right away.

In Greece voluntary associations which are interested in the sociocultural development of a region are of two types: a) those whose members are coming from a particular region and live in an urban center, b) those whose members stay in their home region.

The first type of associations holds a very romantic and very often unrealistic concept of the meaning of preservation of non-funtioning cultural forms in the region of their origin. The members of the second type of association being influenced by the official program of education and mass media tend to accept the metropolitan culture and they rapidly change their traditional ways of life. The former argue for the preservation of the material and expressive culture of their region of origin. The latter argue against it. And since the latter are affected psychologically, economically and from a cultural point of view by the policy of preservation, their reaction cannot be ignored.

In this case a solution could be that if the intellectuals saw that certain things are being menaced, they should sensitize the population about the situation and let the very population take up the whole thing.

Region. The criteria that scholars have accepted in defining a region and differentiating it from others are many. None, however, fits in all cases. It seems that the terms culture or subculture are useful tools in identifying the people of an area.

Culture in this sense is considered «as a sum total of non-biological methods of activity and their results characteristics only of humans. Included into culture is not only materialized labour but also everything that society has achieved in the field of morality, the 'culture of feeling', the arts, science and philosophy, as well as such specific phenomena as mentality and language».[1]

This general idea has been used by various scholars in different ways. For instance material culture has not been considered as a characteristic element of a culture region because, by its mere nature, it is readily transmitted across cultural boundaries.[2] On the contrary, non-material or expressive and institutional culture is less readily borrowed because it is less observable and it forms a complex system. Therefore, elements of expressive culture such as language, folk arts, oral creative activity, customs, rituals, religion are thought of as more stable components of a culture.

Very often scholars reduce a whole culture or subculture complex to one or two distinctive features, e.g. language, customs, religion. Although this approach is a convenient way to define a regional culture, yet as a method of study endorses many weaknesses. A cultural feature alone is not enough to differentiate a cultural region from another. Even a sum total of all cultural features is not enough unless they can form an integral body, diachronically shaped.

Since this project was planned to be carried out by an international research team, the criteria set for defining a cultural area ought to endorse a broader range of evidence.

The attempt to find common criteria was, from the very beginning, confronted with many difficulties. In certain countries it is easy to tell a cultural region from another when the element of ethnic identity is very distinctive. In other nations, though, it may be impossible to use effectively well known and broadly utilized discrete criteria such as linguistic, religious and economic ones.

The countries participating in this project decided that each one should be free to use a modified version of the concept of culture region, appropriate for its own case. The idea behind this decision was that models from various culture areas could enrich the final model of the joint study.

As far as Greece is concerned, lacking separate and distinct criteria for defining a culture region, it was decided that the research team should take into consideration the criteria that Greeks from various parts of the country used to define themselves. The realisation, by the members of a region, of the sence of their belongingness is a peculiar one but at the same time a very substantial feature of a regional culture.

Even when the Greeks are away from their

1. Yu. V. Bromley, *Soviet Ethnography: Main Trends,* Moscow: «Social Sciences today», USSR Academy of Sciences, 1976, p. 11.

2. Roger D. Abrahams, Rudolph C. Troike (eds), *Language and Cultural Diversity in American Education,* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972, p. 31.

home village or region they carry with them, for a long time, the cognitive and perceptual models of their regional culture. These models help them differentiate themselves from compatriots of other areas. A strong feeling of «we» opposed to «they» is developed when they form their various voluntary associations of first, second and third grade. They are able to define and identify the region of their origin by using a taxonomic system of inclusion and exclusion which they put in a broader frame of reference.[1]

Regardless of the approach that a country participating in the project intends to use to define a regional culture, our research team has decided that every research group should take into account the following characteristics of the region chosen for study:
I. non-isolated
II. exposed to contemporary life
III. big-enough
IV. rather homogeneous
V. partly studied or proposed for a study by other agents-scholars.

Culture. We have previously referred to culture as the most appropriate key-term in the study of a region. We have also referred to the fact that this term has caused many comprehensive problems to scholars. Yet, we have indicated how it has been abused. Part of the confusion comes from the persistence of its humanistic use alongside with its use in social sciences. According to the humanistic approach, culture is the phenomenal world as it is perceived in the form of various social and cultural artifacts. Culture, according to social scientific approaches, mainly the recent anthropological ones, is the way that the members of a particular society perceive the surrounding world and organize their experience.

Changes in the phenomenal world (the humanistic notion of culture) do not always reflect changes in the principles that underlie and administer the organization of the surrounding world (The anthropological notion of culture).[2]

If the distinction of the two basic concepts of culture holds, the problem of preservation takes another dimension. It has to be decided whether preservation will be attempted at the level of the phenomenal world or at the level of conceptual

principles. If judgment is made in favor of the latter, one has to discover the principles that govern the perceptual and cognitive style specific to the members of the society to be studied before any suggestions are made. In this particular case the role of the people is minimized in the process of decision making policy.

To proceed with the organization of the research project without any great difficulties, the research team decided, at the Athens meeting, to investigate the two levels of culture as they appear among the people of a specific region.

Since we have to do with living beings whose culture is continually undergoing change we have further elaborated the above mentioned two dimensional scheme of culture to be able to follow the direction of change. That is, in order to become more sensitive to the problem of stability and change in culture, we developed it in four planes (international, national, dominant, and regional culture).

Culture, as a mental phenomenon, is the notion, the image, the model, which exists in the minds of the inhabitants of a region and which directs them in the world of their reality, in their actions (culture in the forms of various social and cultural artifacts). It is possible that both people's actions and behavior are affected by the four models of culture existing in their minds, that is international, national, dominant and regional ones. It remains to be discovered which models dominate in their mind and consequently how they affect their actions.

The two notions of culture in the four levels scheme can be given diagrammatically (see next page).

If we look at things from the standpoint of process, the model of four levels of culture can become much more complex. In addition to these levels of culture, other individual factors, for example, professional, of age, etc. make a society multi-cultural.[3]

In our research project we have decided to limit ourselves to the scheme described above.
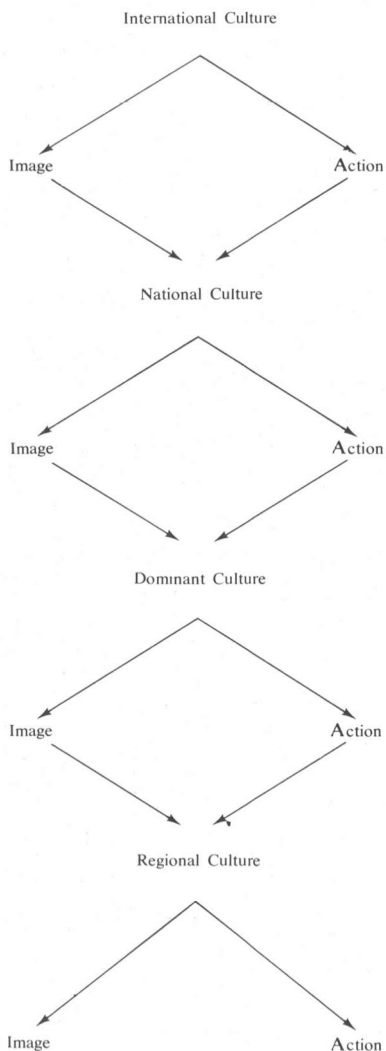
methodology

The objectives of the study and the aforementioned multi-leveled concept of culture determined our methodology. As a start, from the three methods: I. secondrary analysis, II. questionnaires and III. participant observation, the last one was deemed as the most appropriate in our

1. Gregory Gizelis, *Narrative Rhetorical Devices of Persuasion: Folklore Communication in a Greek-American Community*, Athens: National Center of Social Research, 1974, p. 50-80; G. Gizelis, I. Antonakopoulou, O. Gardiki-Passa, A. Karatza, *Report on the Organisation of Sociocultural Activities in Greece*, Athens: National Center of Social Research, 1977 (in Greek).
2. Gregory Gizelis, «Parga: Regional Ethnology», *Epirotike Estia*, issue 289-290, 1976, 377-387 (in Greek).

3. Ward Goodenough, «Multiculturalism as the Normal Human Experience», *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, vol.7(4), 1976, 4.

International Culture

Image   Action

National Culture

Image   Action

Dominant Culture

Image   Action

Regional Culture

Image   Action

case. The others will be used as auxiliary tools. Their rejection as primary methods was made on the following basis:

I. As long as we don't believe that a culture is preserved unless it becomes more and more internally alive and dynamic, we cannot possibly limit ourselves to the compilation of the material only; if so, we will lose all the pertinently sensitive aspects of that culture region.

Secondary analysis based on bibliographical surveys from various sources (anthropological/folklore, sociological/demographic, historical/literary, architectural and linguistic (dialects, oral literature)) would be a preliminary step in this research project. As a matter of fact, secondary analysis is necessary in order to find out the cultural patterns that have been prevailing in the region before the advent of urbanization, tourism and mass media in the area.

II. We have to know the immediate context in which the notion of culture is intimately linked with action. To obtain this information we have to go further from what is visible. With the questionnaires we would get very little.

For better organization in the conduct of the field-work it was decided to divide it in the three following stages:

I. Static aspect (Period of non-intervention of the researches). During this period efforts would be made to describe the specific cultural values at a certain period of time. Here, the research team would have to trace the elements of cultural expression behind what one says.

II. Dynamic aspect (Dynamic research on the systems of cultural functioning). Here, the researchers would have to detect how the cultural system functions now, what adjustments have been made so far and how the people will behave in the immediate future.

III. Projection towards the exterior. The elements of national dominant and international culture would be discovered along with the diaspora (and consequently the influence of local people upon other regions).

On the level of international culture, attempts would be made to investigate how the «region» is perceived by the foreigners.