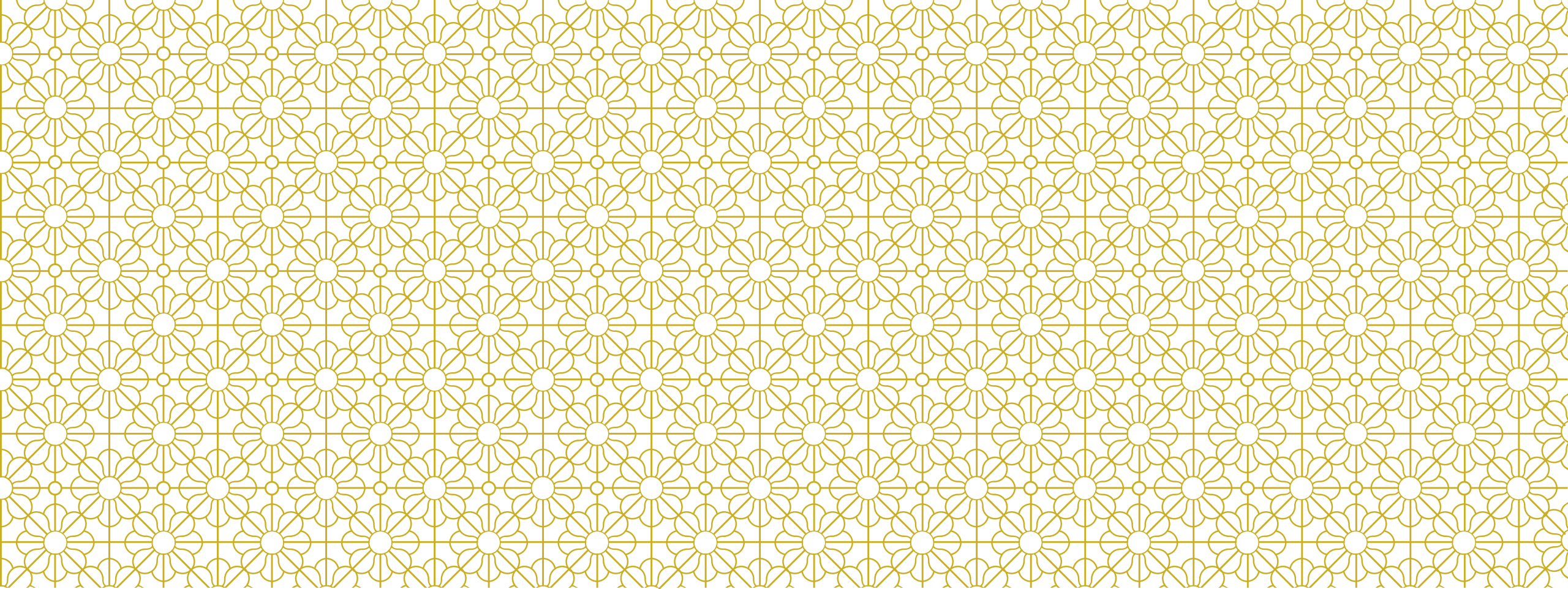




MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

*HOW CAN INTERCULTURAL
STUDIES HELP*

CULTURAL DIVERSITY



- Cultural diversity has emerged as a **key concern** at the turn of a new century.
- Two perspectives:
 - cultural diversity as inherently **positive** (sharing the wealth embodied in each of the world's cultures).
 - cultural **differences** are what cause us to lose sight of our common humanity and are therefore at the root of numerous **conflicts**.
- The *challenge*, therefore, would be to propose a **coherent vision of cultural diversity**.



With this reflection, I do *not seek to provide ready-made solutions to the problems that contextualize cultural diversity*, rather, **aiming to underline the complexity of these problems, to reach a better understanding of the phenomena, namely through the exchange of experiences, good practices and prospect of common guidelines.**

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- *Cultural diversity* is a **FACT** – in the world there are a wide **variety of cultures**, easily distinguished through an ethnographic observation.
- *Cultural diversity* is a **resource to be promoted**, with particular **regard to its potential benefits**.
- **Globalization** has brought attention to the **variety of cultures** and the **increasing dynamic dialogue** between them.
- Although *globalization is not synonymous of preservation*, it has given the concept a **wider visibility**.

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- When identifying '*cultural differences*' we are at the same time recognizing **evolution and change** in the construction of our **identity** (personal and collective).
- So, the problem rest in the **practical aspect** of these two concepts (culture and diversity), in other words, **to manage diversity in a cultural context**.
- To overcome these difficulties, we must recognize and take into consideration the **increasing world migration**, the **challenges in preserving cultural identity** and, the much needed, promotion of **intercultural dialogue**.

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- The **role of intercultural dialogue** in bridging cultural differences **translates itself in deeper interaction, stronger support and empowerment of all cultural players.**
- With an *intercultural approach*, cultural diversity, like cultural identity, should be about **understanding and reflection on innovation, accommodating creativity and receptiveness of new influences.**

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- The delimitation of *cultural diversity* constitutes a problem:
 - the **identification of the characteristics of ‘culture’** (*what constitutes a culture?*);
 - the **magnitude of ‘diversity’** (*under which parameters can diversity be objectified?*) and
 - the **relationship between culture and change** (*how has culture changed over time?; how is culture predicted to change in the future?*).

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- The growing tensions when talking about the construction of identities (specifically, national, cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, gender-based or consumer-based identities) is often the result of a **culturalization of political claims**.
- **National identity** is to some extent a **construction**, grounded in a sometimes **reconstructed past** and providing a focus for **our sense of commonality**.

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- The increasing **plasticity of cultural identities** reflect the **growing complexity of a globalized world**.
- In this globalized world, people choose to **adopt a particular form of identity**, others will want to **live in a dual living** and others will want to **create hybrid identities**.

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?



- It's important to safeguard the **manifestations of cultural diversity**, particularly, when talking about **tangible and intangible heritage, cultural expressions and cultural exchanges**.
- We should not forget, that to preserve cultural heritage, **we should also focus on intangible manifestations including oral traditions, performing arts and the traditional knowledge**.

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE



- The first step is to **assess in which way cultures relate to one another**; the **shared goals** and the **challenges** that highlight the differences.
- One of the main difficulties in establishing a open and honest dialogue is the idea that **cultures are fixed**, and **separated from each other** – but cultures exist in an **active and continuous relationship**.
- We should take into account the **cultural interdependency and interaction**.

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE



- **Intercultural tensions** are often bound up with **conflicts based on memory, interpretation of past events** and **value differences**.



The intercultural dialogue remains the key to overcome these antagonisms.



INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

- We, as **intercultural subjects**, need to master a complex set of **abilities to interact appropriately**; abilities **essentially communicative**, but **also theoretical and practical perspectives** that can help us to understand the world.
- Basically, what determines the success of **intercultural dialogue** is:

THE ABILITY TO LISTEN
(creating bridges of understanding)

FLEXIBILITY
(in our ideas and perspectives)

EMPATHY
(understanding the situation)

HOSPITALITY
(open mind/open 'house')

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE



- **Intercultural studies** offer methods that help **overcome cultural barriers**:
 - *create networking events,*
 - *cultural festivals and encounters,*
 - *urban and regional entertainment,*
 - *revisiting memories,*
 - *acknowledging faults and*
 - *open debate* (political, economic and social areas).

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

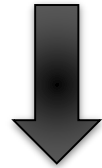


- **Museums** are a space to **revisit memory** but also to **develop intercultural communication**.
- In the same perspective, **local monuments** can foster **dialogue and interaction**.
- **School projects** and **exchange programmes** that involve cultural activities provide **mutual enrichment and intercultural relations**.

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE



- The key to successful **intercultural dialogue** lies in the **acknowledgement of the equality of participants.**



TO RECOGNIZE

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND THE BUSINESS WORLD



- **Multinational corporations** are becoming increasingly aware of the **benefits** of **diversifying and customizing their products in order to penetrate new markets and meet the expectations of local customers.**
- Today's managers need to be **aware of the cultural factors** in order to optimize the **company performance.**

FINAL THOUGHTS



- It is urgent to **invest in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue**.
- We need to **move towards the reconciliation of differences**.
- Without **dialogue** and **mutual recognition**, **diversity is lost or declines**.
- **Intercultural dialogue** must be seen as a **complex and ongoing process that is never complete**.
- It is important to **promote and facilitate cultural knowledge**.

DO YOU KNOW PORTUGAL?



PORTUGAL DIVERSITY



ANOTHER SIDE OF PORTUGAL ...





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