

In the economic domain, there are important business and commercial advantages to be reaped from expanded cultural relations. Most countries have witnessed a phenomenal growth of their cultural resources in recent years. This has manifested itself in the proliferation of audiences, the construction of capital facilities and an incredible expansion of cultural products - books, magazines, films, concerts, plays, paintings, craft objects, records, radio and television programs and the like. Countries that have well developed marketing machinery for these products have experienced substantial economic returns. The sale of many of these products is now big business. Countries which are unable to capitalize on these opportunities stand to lose essential consumption and investment advantages - advantages which not only provide income and employment opportunities for creative workers, but also profit opportunities for investors. Those who doubt this need only reflect on the enormous financial gains which United States, France and Great Britain have realized in recent years from the production and sale of records, films and television programs.

These opportunities are equalled, if not surpassed, by the numerous political benefits which exist. Countries which have been astute enough to perceive the advantages inherent in cultural diplomacy - such as France, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, and more recently the United States and Japan - are now enjoying substantial rewards. In the modern world, many countries prefer to approach relations with other countries through the establishment of cultural relations, and are only prepared to open the doors to other opportunities after strong cultural ties have been established. Conversely, these countries are prepared to close off political and economic privileges if cultural ties cannot be established first. In this way, cultural relations provide the leverage which is necessary to experience important political privileges and commercial gains.

The economic and political advantages should not be allowed to obscure the multifarious cultural benefits which exist. As T.S. Eliot so astutely realized, the cultural development of a country depends on two interrelated factors: the ability to go back and learn from domestic sources; and the ability to receive and assimilate influences from abroad. In other words, there are internal and external dimensions to development which must always be taken into account whenever policies and programs are being planned and executed. To ignore either dimension is to leave the circle of development incomplete in some basic way.

Deriving and assimilating influences from abroad is critical if cultures - like the people who create and enjoy them - are mature and ripen. If this fails to happen, cultures can easily become parochial, nationalistic. Moreover, it is impossible for cultures and the creative individuals who shape them to evolve high standards of creation and performance if they are unable to benefit fully from international exposure and critical assessment of their creative efforts. Needless to say, inferior standards and excessive nationalism can only be prevented when domestic developments are counter-balanced by coherent and comprehensive programs of cultural relations with other countries.

Refusal to recognize the paramount importance of cultural relations to the modern world means refusal to accept the essential contributions culture makes to national development and the international order. In the final analysis, culture in general and cultural relations in particular determine the way in which countries interact on a worldwide basis. How do we form our impressions of other nations if