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COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL COOPERATION

CULTURAL ROUTES
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

REVITALISATION
OF THE SANTIAGO DE
COMPOSTELA
PILGRIM WAYS

Strasbourg, 22-23 November 1993

MEETING REPORT

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The meeting was opened by Mr Maitland **STOBART**, Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport.

Mr Stobart stressed how much the political context in Europe had changed since 1987, the year in which the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways were "launched" as a European cultural route. The area of Europe covered by the countries party to the European Cultural Convention had greatly expanded and the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CDCC) which determined the Council of Europe's policy in matters of education, culture, cultural heritage and sport, now had 38 member states. Still more countries were shortly to join the CDCC. (See Appendix 1 for the organisation chart of the Council of Europe structures concerned with cultural cooperation).

Mr Stobart also drew participants' attention to the recent summit meeting of Council of Europe Heads of State and Government held in Vienna last October. Many subjects addressed by the Vienna meeting - wars, violations of democracy, growing unemployment, xenophobia, antisemitism, the damage suffered by the cultural heritage - showed how urgent it was for the Institution to step up the action of programmes which made it possible to combat these dangers through the defence of Human Rights and tolerance. The Council of Europe's cultural routes, which promoted "knowledge of others" could play an important role in this context. (See Appendix 2 for the extracts from the Vienna Declaration which are more particularly relevant to the aims and principles of the programme).

Mr Stobart suggested that the Council of Europe, in synergy with other interested intergovernmental organisations, regional and local organisations and associations, should use the cultural route cultural cooperation programme to reinforce democracy and help meet the challenge to our society represented by the need to increase tolerance, respect for other religions, other languages, etc.

The cultural routes were also rich in educational applications. It was important to work on the different themes to produce "teaching packages" for both teachers and pupils and for use in distance learning (through radio and television).

Mr Stobart asked if participants had any comments to make on the agenda. In the absence of any requests the agenda was adopted.

II. CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Secretariat presented the Council of Europe Cultural Routes project as it appeared after the reorientation work.

Three distributed documents gave the bases and developments of this reorientation:

- the text of the general presentation folder "The Council of Europe's Cultural Routes";
- the introductory report;
- the presentation of the resource centre (French only).

Mrs Isabel **TAMEN** and Mr **MICHEL THOMAS-PENETTE** commented on these documents, stressing in particular the new working method which enlarged the framework of cultural cooperation for these routes. The methodological study undertaken on two new routes, "Monastic Influence" and "Parks and Gardens", had shown the need to undertake complementary actions in the fields of education, the heritage, research exchanges, contemporary arts and cultural tourism.

It was therefore a matter of planning the revitalisation of the Santiago de Compostela cultural route in a way that no longer concentrated solely on the physical route itself.

They also drew attention to the important role now played by the networks supporting the routes. As regards these networks and at the request of participants in the meeting, the presentation files of the Association International Ruralité-Environnement-Développement ("Architecture without frontiers" route), the European Textiles Network (Silk Routes) and the Académie des Arts du Geste were distributed during the session.

III. THE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA PILGRIM WAYS: THE FIRST EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTE

Mr Jose-Maria **BALLESTER** described the historical development of the Santiago routes within the Council of Europe. He recalled that pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela had never ceased since the discovery of the Apostle's relics. These pilgrim ways, which led to the shrine of Saint James, had even acquired increased importance after the conquest of the Holy Places in Palestine by the Arabs. Pilgrims from all over Europe had travelled along the Santiago de Compostela ways which

traversed the whole continent and constituted an irreplaceable setting for meeting and mutual understanding. A pilgrimage changed those who took part in it. In addition to the long journey on foot itself, there was a spiritual and religious journey.

The Santiago de Compostela ways also had a civilising influence. A common identity had been forged along these routes and could still be seen in works of art, monuments, architecture and music, among other things.

As the result of Recommendation 987 (1984) of the Parliamentary Assembly and the discussions of the 2nd European Conference of Ministers Responsible for the Architectural Heritage in 1985, the Council of Europe proposed in 1987 the revitalisation of the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways as the first European cultural route.

Through the Santiago de Compostela Declaration, the Council of Europe wished to show that these ways not only had a religious dimension but had also contributed to the formation of the European idea.

The Declaration also appealed for the identification and signposting of the roads to Compostela. In the framework of the Council of Europe, three Congresses were held successively in Bamberg, Viterbe and Porto to further this work, but much still remained to be done in this respect.

After the launching of a common symbol, how could the attention of the decision-makers be retained, how could the physical protection of the ways be assured? The four routes leading from France and many others were known, but many others again had fallen into oblivion and remained to be rediscovered.

Mr Ballester recalled that this meeting in 1993 was held to enable participants and the Council of Europe Secretariat to take stock of what had been done during the Holy Year, but above all to prepare the interjubilee period. It was now a matter of seeing how the revitalisation work launched in 1987 could be continued. (Appendix 3 contains a detailed account of the development of this work, the text being intended for a brochure presenting the Council of Europe Cultural Routes).

IV. SIGNPOSTING THE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA WAYS THROUGHOUT EUROPE

Mr Gabriele **MAZZA** took the chair for the final session of the meeting of 22 and 23 November. He called upon Mr José-Maria Ballester to introduce this item of the agenda.

Mr BALLESTER stated that a symbol for the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways had been created by the Council of Europe. It was intended for all European countries and consisted of a stylised scallop-shell (coquille Saint-Jacques), traditional symbol of the Santiago pilgrimages, in yellow on a blue background, which also symbolised the convergence of the European routes. In addition to this symbol there were the inscriptions "The Pilgrim route of Santiago" and "European Cultural Route", in the appropriate language, together with the Council of Europe logo.

The Spanish Ministry of Public Works and Transport had produced an manual of rules in four languages (French, English, Spanish and German) for the signposting of the Santiago ways which presented a set of instructions intended to facilitate the planning and implementation of signposting along the Santiago routes. Apart from a very precise illustration the booklet also gave ideas for the use and application of the symbol (it could be engraved in stone, moulded in different materials, burned into wood, etc.) and rules on its use "for goods and souvenirs", which always involved the specific authorisation of the Council of Europe.

Over 4000 of these markers had already be put in place in the North of Spain. In other regions, notably the Basque Country, in the Province of Namur in Belgium and in Italy there had also been a certain amount of signposting, sometimes using different symbols.

The Secretariat made it very clear that the Santiago symbol created by the Council of Europe had to be officially requested from the Organisation before it could be used.

The subsequent discussion on this point concerned both the practical aspects of signposting and its deontology.

Participants pointed out that certain of the inscriptions recommended by the manual should be revised because they were not appropriate in all languages. This was the case with the English, where the emphasis was first of all on the notion of the pilgrimage ("The Pilgrim route of Santiago"), contrary to the Latin languages which placed the route first ("Chemins de Saint-Jacques", "Camino de Santiago"). The lack of any indication of where Santiago (Saint James) was to be found (Galicia) could cause confusion with certain towns in Latin America in the minds of English-speakers with no prior knowledge of the subject.

Several participants pointed out that absolutely essential that the route marking should be adapted to each particular case and should be conceived in harmony with the country and the landscape. Sometimes in fact it appeared more appropriate to use a simple yellow arrow or shell (initial symbol of the routes) engraved in the stone to indicate routes, sites and monuments, while in other cases the symbol created by the Organisation would be perfectly appropriate. Thus in the Asturias, in a rural environment, a pyramidal monolith, rather than a simple post, bears a vitrified enamel plaque with the symbol in colour.

They also pointed out certain cases of too many signs which, in certain sites, could lead to real degradation of the environment. On the other hand, they drew attention to the difficulty of establishing continuous signposting in those European countries where identification of the routes had not yet been completed. As one participant put it "The trees along the routes are sometimes better than signposts". In any event, many speakers felt that the signs should be discreet in rural areas and that their use was more necessary in urban areas.

Lastly, they felt that signposting should be done with the agreement and the cooperation of the populations concerned, who had to live with these signs in their everyday environment. To cite one of the participants again: "The route is the property of its inhabitants".

All these observations inevitably led to the question of coordinating the signposting and the nature of the authority which had to both ensure that the rules were respected and at the same time combat any excesses or perverse effects.

Verification of the signposting was indeed an important question, but it could be dealt with only at local authority level, in line with a general policy decided in concert with the Council of Europe. Such concertation had to be achieved through a European structure as representative as possible of the European Santiago Routes. Furthermore, while this question was very important for the countries where the routes were dense and well-identified, the extension of the Council of Europe's action to regions in the North and East of Europe highlighted "the need to concern ourselves just as much with the essence of these routes and their emergence in contemporary civilisation through diversified actions which go far beyond just making them visible, necessary though this may be".

V and VI. REVITALISATION AND FUTURE OF THE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA CULTURAL ROUTE

What should be done to revitalise the Santiago route and stimulate, while at the same time controlling, its use?

All participants agreed on the fact that these historic pilgrim routes should be used in the interest of all those who travelled them, whether for spiritual purposes or for other reasons such as to experience the route, walking for its own sake, the discovery of monuments and works of art, intercultural dialogue and exchange, the discovery of other ways of life or to follow in the footsteps of a real European experience.

But in the rich and varied arguments put forward it was difficult to distinguish between what concerned the present and what concerned the future, so closely they were linked.

However, a certain number of key points were discussed in depth:

A. State, protection and restoration of the pilgrim ways and of the architectural heritage

Participants were unanimous about the fragile state of the Santiago routes and the cultural heritage items found along them and the absolute necessity of protecting and restoring them. Many stretches of route and many bridges had been destroyed due to the redistribution of land, regional development and growing urbanisation. The large-scale use of the routes also constituted a danger. In this regard it was to be remembered that over six million pilgrims and tourists visited Santiago de Compostela in 1993.

Many felt that the most urgent tasks appeared to be the provision of legal and physical protection for the routes, both in the country, often disadvantaged, and the towns, and more restoration work

This was what the Consejo Jacobeo was endeavouring to do, aiming in the first place to rectify the errors of the past: "The Santiago route is a cultural good of considerable extent and diversity, no doubt one of the biggest in the world after the Great Wall of China".

But it must not be thought that the comprehensive legal protection developed in Spain reflected the general situation in Europe. There were other countries in which the identification and classification of routes had only just begun.

The question of the financial resources and political priorities regarding protection and restoration still remained: why Roman art rather than Baroque, why should urban areas be favoured more than the rural heritage?

In view of the extent of the routes throughout Europe, it was in fact a matter of finding an outline programme and establishing a coordinating and controlling body which respected and encouraged concrete partnership from region to region: "Transfrontier cooperation is essential, the continuity of the routes being indivisible". In a word, for the protection of the routes it was "necessary above all to be Jacobean not Jacobin".

B. Social and economic actions

One of the most important points raised by participants was that of the role played by the Santiago routes in the context of national or regional social and economic policies. These routes should be a moving force respecting the local economy: "It is a vector linking the world of the imagination and social reality".

While "the Santiago route is the European highway on which all European cultures have travelled", it is also "a concrete place for learning vocational and social skills", "a place for job creation".

Germany had thus implemented a pilot scheme for young unemployed people, who helped restore sections of routes, bridges and buildings. Through carrying out this work they learned not only to preserve the environment, but also to recreate social links which had disappeared. The building of inns, the creation of small enterprises and the revitalisation of craft trades were also envisaged an experimental framework involving exchanges between young Germans and young Spaniards.

Generally speaking, activities along the routes were closely linked with the economy. Examples cited included art exhibitions for adults and children, competitions, art and craft workshops and "open days" where the rural population invited visitors to rediscover traditional techniques and activities.

C. Information and communication

The need once more expressed by the different partners to better know what initiatives had been taken and the actions implemented by all the actors involved with the routes made it essential to circulate information.

There was already a real information effort, but in addition to the specific publications of the different Jacobean associations and the various scientific publications there was also a need for a more immediate form of information.

In the United Kingdom, European information concerning the Santiago de Compostela routes was collected and distributed every two months.

A specialised database had been created in Galicia and the Galician representatives intended to make it available to all those who might be interested in the information it contained or who wished to contribute to it. This database and other resources such as the photographic documentation of the inter-regional cooperation association "The Santiago de Compostela routes" should be able to coordinate their work in conjunction with the Cultural Routes Resource Centre in Strasbourg.

Participants also requested that information on the Santiago routes in general and that concerning hospitality for pilgrims and tourists should be accessible along the routes. Small information and documentation centres could be set up to this end.

The Council of Europe could also make the information and publication resources of the general programme available to the Santiago de Compostela route: Resource Centre, newsletter, brochures, folders, books and videodiscs.

The importance of philately as a means of making the cultural routes known to a very broad public was pointed out by the French and Belgian participants.

D. Council of Europe partnerships: coordination and cooperation

One difficulty in efforts to promote the Santiago routes is the very diversity of the partners: pilgrims' associations, scientific organisations, Jacobean associations, research institutes, religious authorities, local and regional authorities.

Participants in the meeting therefore stressed all the more that the actions implemented by the different partners should not only be propagated through information, but should above all be coordinated. Cooperation between the regions at both national and international levels was strongly recommended.

This was already developed in Spain through the Consejo Jacobeo and in France through the inter-regional cooperation association "Les Chemins de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle", the member regions of which were Aquitaine, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées and Provence-Côte d'Azur, in association with Auvergne and working together with Andorra, Aragon, Catalunya, Euskadi, Navarra and Galicia. This last association had offered to form the base for an enlarged international network to facilitate political and technical cooperation.

Cooperation with the Association of European Regions (AER) and with the Council of Europe's Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe would also be useful to draw the attention of the regions and localities traversed by the Santiago routes to the economic and social role played by these routes.

Regarding scientific cooperation, several representatives of Jacobean associations stressed that the missions entrusted to Council of Europe experts concerning the Santiago routes should be accompanied by precise "terms of reference" or "mission letters" to facilitate their research and their contacts with the various authorities.

While certain participants hoped that general meetings bringing together associations, researchers and policy-makers would not be held too often because of the extreme diversity of the problems raised, the scientific experts themselves stressed the value of regularly throwing everything into the melting pot in this way.

It was in this spirit that the inter-regional cooperation association "Les Chemins de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle" prepared regular meetings involving both broad debates and more technical discussions. At the end of the first international colloquy held in Toulouse on 4, 5 and 6 February 1993, the organisers, the Association inter-régionale et Société des Amis de Saint-Jacques de France and the Centre Européen d'Etudes Compostellanes, together with their correspondents from the European countries, decided that such a meeting should be held every two years during the corresponding week of February. In the intervening years a smaller meeting would provide an opportunity to take stock of the state of research on specific points and decide the themes for the next colloquy.

Such an intermediate meeting was held in Narbonne on 4 and 5 February 1994 and its programme was decided in concertation with the Council of Europe.

More generally, the Secretariat recalled the importance of the "structuring" function of the cultural routes as they are implemented today, taking some examples of cooperation at regional and inter-regional level. Thus the cooperation between the Greek department of Evros and the French Cévennes on the theme of cultural rediscovery and the economic revival of silk, and the revitalisation of the Maurienne mountain region in France on the basis of the Baroque cultural route.

It was a matter of at one and the same time revitalising a focus of identity in which the local population can recognise itself and which constitutes a mobilising force for them, building cultural and economic actions around this identity, and playing host to tourists under conditions of dialogue and genuine mutual respect between visitors and hosts.

In this context the role of the networks supporting cultural routes was again stressed. A charter setting out the respective roles of these networks and the Council of Europe was being drafted. Existing networks were examples which should inspire the European extension of the cooperation associations already existing for the Santiago routes.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Mr **WEBER**, Director of Education, Culture and Sport, said that the meeting had been very useful because it had permitted participants to exchange information and to discuss the ethical, scientific and practical problems raised by the Santiago pilgrim ways.

This meeting thus began the next interjubilee period in which the Council of Europe was to work in concert with its partners on the revitalisation of this route in the framework of a general policy which was now clear.

Mr Weber drew a certain number of conclusions and axes for further work from the discussions:

- the importance of constituting a network to support and develop the diverse actions of the Santiago de Compostela cultural route and constitute a regional relay to guarantee legal protection and maintain the quality of the routes;
- the need for continuous coordination and evaluation of the actions undertaken;
- the need to improve and coordinate information through networking the existing databases and information tools, including with the Council of Europe Resource Centre and its publications;
- the importance of keeping participants informed about developments in all the cultural routes and the implementation methodologies used.

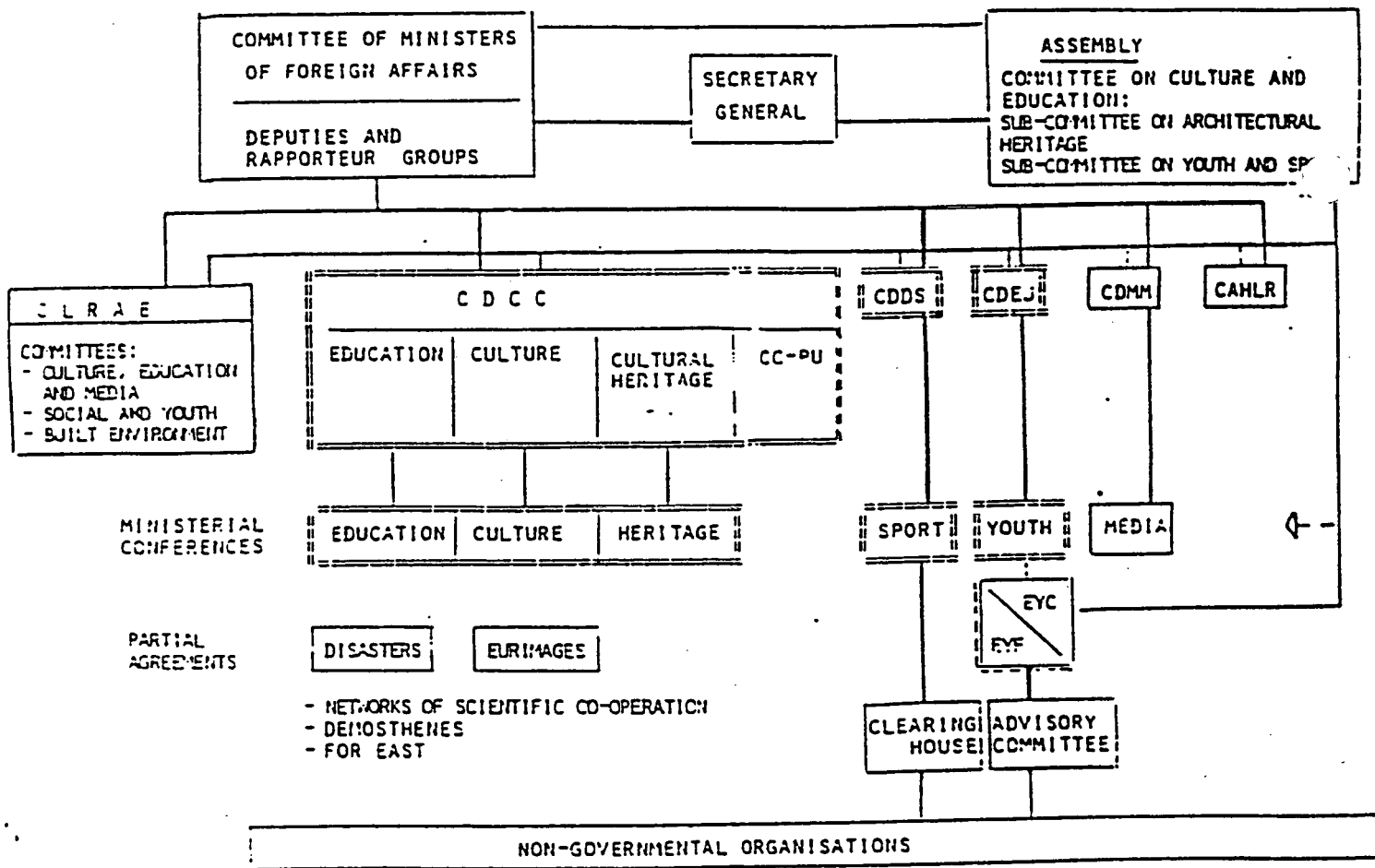
In addition, the Council of Europe could institute working parties in certain fields such as the updating of the map published by France and Spain on the basis of recent research.

Lastly, the essential role played by the Santiago routes in "meeting others" should help Europe to meet the challenges facing it today.

The conclusions of the meeting would be submitted to the Advisory Committee for Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, the Culture Committee and the Cultural Heritage Committee. They would also be submitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and to the different ministries concerned.

APPENDIX I

Organisation chart of Council of Europe structures concerned with cultural cooperation



=== EUROPEAN CULTURAL CONVENTION

APPENDIX II

The Vienna declaration states among other things:

..."This Europe is a source of immense hope which must in no event be destroyed by territorial ambitions, the resurgence of aggressive nationalism, the perpetuation of spheres of influence, intolerance or totalitarian ideologies."

...

"We express our conviction that cultural co-operation, in which the Council of Europe is a prime instrument, - through education, the media, cultural action, the protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage and participation of young people - is essential for creating a cohesive yet diverse Europe. Our governments undertake to bear in mind the Council of Europe's priorities and guidelines in their bilateral and multilateral co-operation."

and lists the following decisions among others:

"In the political context thus outlined, we, Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe resolve:

...

- to enter into political and legal commitments relating to the protection of national minorities in Europe and to instruct the Committee of Ministers to elaborate appropriate international legal instruments....,
- to pursue a policy for combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance, and to adopt for this purpose a Declaration and a Plan of Action....,
- to approve the principle of creating **a consultative organ genuinely representing both local and regional authorities in Europe,**
- to invite the Council of Europe to **study the provision of instruments for stimulating the development of European cultural schemes in a partnership, involving public authorities and the community at large."**

Extract from Appendix II:

"In consequence, we decide to instruct the Committee of Ministers:

...

- to begin work on drafting a **protocol complementing the European Convention on Human Rights in the cultural field** by provisions guaranteeing individual rights, in particular for persons belonging to national minorities."

Extract from Appendix III:

"To this end, we instruct the Committee of Ministers to develop and implement as soon as possible the following **plan of action** and mobilise the necessary financial resources.

1. Launch a **broad European Youth Campaign** to mobilise the public in favour of a tolerant society based on the equal dignity of all its members and against manifestations of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance... It will aim in particular at stimulating **pilot projects involving all sections of society.**"

...

4. **Reinforce mutual understanding and confidence between peoples through the Council of Europe's co-operation and assistance programmes.** Work in this area would focus in particular on:

...

- **promoting education in the fields of human rights and respect for cultural diversity;**
- strengthening programmes aimed at **eliminating prejudice in the teaching of history** by emphasising positive mutual influence between different countries, religions and ideas in the historical development of Europe."

...

APPENDIX III

As follow up to Recommendation 987 (1984) of the Parliamentary Assembly and the discussion of the 2nd European Conference of Ministers Responsible for the Architectural Heritage held in Grenada (1985), the Council of Europe proposed, in 1987, the revitalisation of the Santiago Pilgrim Ways as the first European Cultural Route.

The Santiago de Compostela Declaration sets out the objectives and defines the philosophy of this Cultural Route: to encourage people in this Europe under construction, and young people in particular, to rediscover the Santiago pilgrim ways, and bear witness to all that this movement towards Santiago de Compostela has brought to European cultural identity and to once more travel along these routes, but with the future in mind.

This cultural identity, as the Declaration states, has been and still is made possible by the existence of a European space bearing a collective memory and criss-crossed by roads and paths which overcome distances, frontiers and language barriers. From this standpoint the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways constitute a highly symbolic example: a space for tolerance, mutual understanding and solidarity, a space for dialogue and meeting, and space for creativity, which, quite apart from their religious dimension, have been the vectors for a civilising influence decisive for the formation of the European idea.

Europe towards compostela

In the common history of the European peoples there are few phenomena as propitious to the promotion of these values as that - never interrupted - as the pilgrimages to Compostela. From the outset, in the early middle ages, this pilgrimage had special significance in Europe. The only real pilgrim, said Dante, was he who went to Compostela or came from it. The loss of the Holy Places had disoriented Christianity. The news of the apparition of the relics of Saint James on the very edge of Europe, in the extreme west of the Iberian peninsula, spread very quickly and had a catalysing effect in medieval Europe as it approached the end of the first millennium. Very soon the whole of Europe was on the road to Compostela, in what is considered to be the biggest mass movement of the middle ages. Monarchs like Saint Louis of France or Margaret the First of Denmark, bishops and great lords, bourgeois and merchants, artisans and simple citizens, personalities like Francis of Assisi or Bridget of Sweden, shared the physical effort and the search for a common ideal in the framework of the movement towards Compostela. The Compostela pilgrim, it was said, was considered on his return to be a new man; on the spiritual plane in the first place, but also according to the ideas of the time because he had drawn benefit from his pilgrimage. Then on the human level, because he had been to the other end of Europe. He had seen other horizons, other nationalities and other cultures. Because

he had experienced other ways of life and learned to appreciate difference, because he had participated in the construction of a new world in which intercultural dialogue played a vital role.

A material and immaterial heritage

The traces of this phenomenon and the visible remains of the civilising work developed by the movement towards Compostela now constitute a first rate artistic, architectural, musical, literary, ethnographic and spiritual heritage, enabling us to retrace the pilgrim ways from one end of Europe to the other. It is through the Santiago ways that Roman art developed, then gothic art; that the chansons de geste circulated; that the synthesis of erudite and popular cultures was brought about in medieval Europe. Towns, villages and markets grew up to serve the pilgrims, often examples of the perfect mixing of nationalities, some of which even gave rise to new town planning models. The cult of Saint James which spread throughout Europe thanks to the pilgrimages was at the origin of a rich iconography of paintings, sculptures, stained glass windows and popular engravings.

The links connecting these remains are the paths followed by the pilgrims: physical roads or paths which still exist or have become military or commercial routes in the course of time, and which in some cases are at the origin of the present communications network. It is all these old routes which we now know as the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways: a true European network which traverses the entire continent to converge at four main assembly points in France and lead to the final section, or "French way", which runs along the north of Spain to arrive at Compostela. This is the materialisation on the ground of the "path of stars" of which Charlemagne dreamed.

The objective of the revitalisation

Identification

It is very important in this period of European construction to improve our knowledge of this common experience of the European peoples, to draw the obvious lessons from it, and to promote the revitalisation of these ways with the future in mind.

To revitalise this route, already established, but open to very different readings, whether at the level of the imagination, or in terms of territory, the Council of Europe has therefore set three fundamental objectives: identification of these pilgrim ways throughout the continent of Europe, their signposting with a common symbol, and the coordination of a programme of cultural activities, to be developed in partnership with other authorities, whether governmental - at national, regional and local level - or non-governmental.

The identification work is being carried out under the aegis of a group of specialists from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom who have worked in liaison with experts and specialist institutions in various countries. A detailed map showing the pilgrim ways throughout Europe was produced and served as a base for subsequent studies.

In addition, the Bamberg Congress (Germany, 1988), organised in conjunction with the Deutsche Jakobus Gesellschaft, the Viterbe Congress (Italy, 1989) in conjunction with the Italian Centre for Compostela Studies and the Porto Congress (Portugal, 1989) in conjunction with the Almeida Garret Circles have helped to advance the study and identification of the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways in the framework of this cultural route. The contribution to the Council of Europe cultural route made by the research carried out in Switzerland by the Inventaire des voies historiques (IVH) for the Federal Office for the Environment and the Federal Office for Tourism should also be noted.

A very original methodology has made it possible to identify in detail the Oberstrasse or upper road which came from Germany and led the pilgrims from Santiago to Enschilden to join the transverse routes. This research has made it possible not only to identify the pilgrim ways, but also their architectural and cultural traces. Later research will be devoted to the transverse routes running from Austria and Italy to Alsace. A recent work by Professor Almazan (University of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, USA), also published in the context of this cultural route, retraces these old pilgrim ways in Alsace. Five ways coming from Northern and Eastern Europe converge at this European crossroads and meeting place. The routes and the towns where the pilgrims stopped - some of which still keep the memory of these pilgrimages - are marked by churches consecrated to Saint James or again by a very rich artistic and musical heritage.

Similar work has been done with the help of university circles and associations in Belgium, Denmark - where very important work on the cult of Saint James has been carried out, this being the country where pilgrims from the Scandinavian countries met before going on to the German pilgrim ways - in Italy and Portugal and in Central and Eastern European countries such as Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics and Slovenia. In addition, the Council of Europe cultural route and the Saint James celebrations planned for 1993 encouraged the identification of alternative roads and paths to Compostela coming from the South of Spain and Portugal (la Plata route) or in parallel with the main or "French" route. One such route is that between Oviedo and Compostela - which is the oldest of the pilgrim ways for it was along this route that the pilgrimages began in the early middle ages - or those following the Cantabrian coast, through the Basque country, Santander and the Principality of the Asturias. This identification work is making it possible to slowly reconstitute the entire communications network which once gave a fresh impetus to European life. It can thus be considered that the first objective of the action launched by the Council of Europe has been achieved.

Signposting

The second objective is the signposting of these pilgrim ways as a cultural route, using a common symbol. This is the best way of making them known over the whole of Europe and emphasising the symbolic importance of the space defined by these old pilgrim ways. The symbol was designed by the Spanish graphic artists Macua and Garcia-Ramos at the request of the Council of Europe. It can be interpreted in three different ways: the scallop-shell, traditional symbol of the Santiago pilgrimages, the idea of the convergence of the pilgrim ways, and the dynamic idea of movements towards the West. The sign itself, yellow on blue, fits in with two other panels bearing the Council of Europe logo and the inscription "European Cultural Route". A handbook for the use of this sign, published in conjunction with the Spanish Ministry of Public Works and Transport, gives the technical details necessary for carrying out the signposting, whether on roads, paths or tracks, or to mark related monuments or sites (in French, English, Spanish and German).

The symbol, which has the appropriate legal protection, has had a very favourable reception. The entire Spanish route has been signposted with this symbol by the Ministry of Public Works, and the symbol is now appearing in the different regions of France concerned. It is also found in Germany, Italy and Portugal. It will also appear in Switzerland once the work of identifying the Oberstrasse is completed. A full signposting programme was launched in the province of Namur in Belgium as early as 1990, and other regions and provinces have expressed their intention to follow suit. In addition the symbol has been very widely used on posters, publications and other media. The Spanish government even minted coins (100 and 5 pesetas) bearing the Council of Europe symbol in the 1993 Compostela Holy Year.

The revitalisation and interpretation of cultural routes

The third objective of the action undertaken by the Council of Europe is the revitalisation proper of these old pilgrim ways and vectors of civilisation to turn them into a cultural route; a most singular route, which has existed for more than ten centuries, the origin, nature and very structure of which give rise to problems of ethics and deontology which have to be understood before cultural and tourism activities can be undertaken. The implementation of this cultural route must necessarily be preceded by collective reflection on the historical significance, present reality and future prospects of the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways. These are phenomena which, we repeat, in their historic reality and in the perception of this reality in present-day society, are open to very different readings.

A first reading would necessarily be of a spiritual nature and correspond to the primary vocation, origin and nature of the Saint James cult. Europe - which was then Christianity - set off for Compostela for religious reasons, which have to be situated and understood in the precise context of each age.

The second reading would be of a cultural nature and a function of the social impact and civilisatory influence of the pilgrimages to Compostela. This gave rise to a very significant cultural heritage - both through the material vestiges which still remain and the opening up to the imaginary and the symbolic - and made a very marked contribution to the formation of our common identity.

A third reading would be connected with the environmental values of the landscapes and cultural sites, and the idea of places of remembrance, so dear to present-day society. This includes the taking into consideration of the physical nature of the ways, their integration into a given environment. Walking - in the best tradition of these pilgrim ways - is also a form of knowledge, as Arturo Soria has reminded us. It implies a very particular approach to nature, the environment, and the cultural, historic or architectural heritage which belongs to this environment.

It is also a way of sharing effort, getting to know others better and approaching this idea of transcendence which each of us has deep inside, according to our beliefs, cultural traditions and ideas.

Any number of readings of the Santiago routes and the movements towards Compostela may be proposed; that for example of the artisans and builders of cathedrals, with their legends, their traditions, their esoteric context and their initiation rites, or that already mentioned of the chansons de geste, that of the picaresque, or that of open air sports, also dear to present-day society.

Methodology and actions

What matters is to be aware of these different readings and be able to articulate them when it comes to revitalising the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim ways. In so doing we must not forget that we are dealing with a very particular reality; so solidly based that it has borne more than ten centuries of history and at the same time so fragile that it may disappear before the broader interests of society. It is therefore urgent to define criteria for intervention and the methodology to be employed to revitalise the Santiago ways in Europe as the first European Cultural Route. This is the task now being addressed by the cultural routes team in the Council of Europe and in the framework of reflection on the cultural routes programme as a whole.

Certain broad lines of action have already emerged here:

- physically protect these ways where they still exist, to give them the status they deserve of cultural, and often archaeological, goods, and upgrade their environment;
- restore the architectural and cultural heritage associated with these paths. A certain priority attention to this heritage in the context of the respective national and regional programmes would make it possible to draw attention to these ways throughout Europe;

- establish a flexible system for activities along these ways, adapted to their structure and capable of stimulating interest in them while at the same time encouraging people above all to walk them as exercise and establishing alternative routes for motorists;
- improve and adapt the existing network of inns and lodging houses to the different types of users;
- set up a system of cultural activities, also adapted to the reality of these routes and their different "readings" so as to encourage creativity, especially among the younger people;
- set up programmes of social interest, like the Belgian experiment involving the social reintegration of young delinquents through walking along the Santiago ways - now being studied in other countries - or exchanges and training for craft workers through a whole series of schools and workshops now appearing along these routes;
- publish the information material necessary to promote these routes, ranging from brochures through guides to specialist works.

All these actions call for partnership between the different authorities concerned, whether they be governmental - at national, regional or local level - or non-governmental, especially in the associative field, and the setting up of a skeleton coordination structure or machinery which is indeed the focus of current reflection on this cultural route.

The constantly growing number of people visiting or using the Santiago ways, their expanding European dimension, the increasing attention being paid to them by public authorities and international organisations - Unesco, European Union, Council of Europe - is but a manifestation of the mobilising power of these old pilgrim ways and the movement towards Compostela in present-day society.

The Council of Europe Cultural Route is intended to provide the framework within which this interest can further develop and flourish.

José Maria Ballester

ANNEXE IV

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