

Guest Editorial

Cultural Management without Borders

RAPHAELA HENZE*

Arts Management, Heilbronn University

In January 2015, the Association of Cultural Management in Germany, Austria and Switzerland held its Annual Meeting at Heilbronn University. The conference was titled *Cultural Management without Borders*. Discussions focused on the challenges of internationalization and globalization for cultural management and cultural management education. Despite their increasing importance for all those in the sector, these topics had until then not been comprehensively covered in cultural management research. This is also acknowledged in Birgit Mandel's essay in this volume giving an introduction into the status quo of the internationalization of cultural management education.

The absence of knowledge exchange between international and interdisciplinary academics, practitioners, policymakers and researchers has fostered an absence of broader understanding and critical discourse regarding the role of arts and cultural exchanges in cultural relations. This knowledge has implications for how interculturalism, cultural diversity and cultural inclusion is enacted, which is a pressing contemporary concern (DURRER/HENZE/ROSS 2016). Therefore, the conference brought together researchers as well as practitioners from different fields and fifteen different nations. They all set a momentum for putting international as well as intercultural relations into focus and for promoting greater critical discourse on the role of arts and cultural management and institutions within the context of internationalization, globalization and the increasing global migration of people.

Many of the speakers cautioned against the assumption that different cultural viewpoints of arts and cultural management practice and institutional structures are simply transferrable between cultures. This is particularly pertinent as there has been a global imbalance of knowledge exchange as to arts and cultural management. In fact, the establishment and teaching of arts and cultural management as a 'profession' is dominated by North American and European narratives, which have

* Email: raphaela.henze@hs-heilbronn.de.

further spread as a result of the internationalization of higher education (BHANDRAI/BLUMENTHAL 2011; SUTEU 2006).

This imbalance appears to privilege politically and colonially dominant practices of arts and cultural management and institutions. Especially e.g. in India, totally different approaches are required than those applied by Western cultural managers. Gaining necessary knowledge and expertise is a time-consuming as well as (for various reasons) difficult task. This is because it has the potential to challenge e.g. core-beliefs of what is to be considered art and what not. The global inequality of knowledge can arguably become normalized amongst ethnically and racially diverse populations at home (AHMED 2012; SHOME 2011). This normalization is apparent within Europe where policies in place do promote greater diversity and interculturalism. Both diversity and interculturalism not only being difficult and often misinterpreted terms but highly complex models. Social inclusion within the arts and cultural sector have operationalized a deficit model approach (DURRER/HENZE/ROSS 2016). These tactics stress the development of racially and ethnically diverse audiences for arts and culture, rather than addressing the inherent inequalities prevalent in the workforce, practice and conceptualization of the sector (CARTY 2014; O'BRIEN/OAKLEY 2015). We have to move away from the struggle for new target groups aiming to justify subsidies for cultural institutions to a model where we identify the creative potential of those that come from diverse backgrounds. Also, we have to rethink the entire homogeneous structure of the system.

Further topics raised in numerous discussions and workshops were: the critical stance with the media, world-wide networking, huge differences in the definition of art, Europe's role in the world-wide transfer of cultural goods, the role of intermediary institutions such as the *Goethe Institut* and the *British Council* and finally the role of (higher) education. Some of these topics are covered in this volume. The texts selected show how broad the field of internationalisation in cultural management really is.

Education is the pressing topic of Gemma Carbo Ribugent's article in this volume. The aim of her research is to identify the factors responsible for divergence — and the difficulties involved in promoting convergence — between educational and cultural policies. There is a lack of fluidity in that dialogue especially in Catalonia, Gemma's native country. However, the research she presents has provided evidence that cultural education can be systematized in order to improve synergies in future policies.

Volker Kirchberg's text has also strong cultural policy implications. Applying the inductive method of the „Grounded Theory“, he analyses

the impact which different – probabilistic vs. deterministic – cultural policy approaches have on how the urban cultural institutions in Baltimore, Maryland, USA and Hamburg, Germany are organized. While Kirchberg focuses on politics and administration, Patrick Föhl, Robert Peper and Gernot Wolfram highlight the role of cultural managers as central players within cultural development processes. They provide the concept of cultural managers as “masters of interspaces” who need to be empowered – not only by formal institutions, but also by local stakeholders. The concept recognizes a new need for the reorganization of cultural infrastructure that is deeply rooted in socio-environmental changes such as globalization, demographic and technological change as well as financial crises.

Miguel Peromingo’s reflections on pro-ams come just in time. Although there has always been an enormous number of amateur artists that were and are pertinent for every cultural scene, the increasing digitalization gives them a further platform which is easy to access. Peromingo recognises two main ways in dealing with amateur artists that strive towards professional standards: One is to try to stop them. The other is to help them become beneficial for society. His text on pro-am artists offers insights and recommendations on how cultural managers can help promote the latter.

Furthermore, it will become important to rethink formats of cultural events. Vittorio Iervese is asking in his texts, what happens if we abandon the essentialist view that has dominated and continues to dominate cultural studies and the study of organisations of culture proposing an idea of festivals as ‘products’ or ‘texts’. “How to observe a festival?”, is therefore an important question as it urges one to look at how and where a festival is formed, in the moment when it takes shape. It urges one to penetrate the “microphysics” of culture in the moment of its becoming. He proposes three ways of observing a festival corresponding to three distinct objects of observation: practices, narratives, and autopoiesis. Iervese’s paper is based on two general epistemological premises: How can a film festival be observed as a system? How can this system ensure its own survival and preserve itself over time? This text shows the distance Festival dei Popoli, one of the oldest documentary film festivals in the world, has travelled from its origins and how it has adapted to changing circumstances.

In the aftermath of what happened in Paris in 2015 it is impossible to talk about globalisation and internationalisation in cultural manage-

ment without focusing on what is at the very heart of it, and what is, at the same time, put at risk: freedom of expression.

Without this freedom cultural management is impossible. Cultural management becomes senseless if we do not put a spotlight on those numerous but mostly unknown artists that are censored, threatened, intimidated or sent to prison. International cultural management has many different facets as this volume proves. An important one has also been mentioned by Caroline Robertson-von Trotha in her speech in January 2015 when she referred to the conference title of *Cultural Management without borders* saying:

certainly borders remain, they are elusive and they are complex and in developing yet unknown states of the global we may see ourselves confronted with the necessity to create new borders and demarcation lines. So, perhaps we can accordingly rephrase: Cultural management to overcome borders.

Finding and drawing this line in different international contexts is as complex and difficult as necessary if we want to overcome borders and live in societies that need the profession of cultural management. International cultural management is not only full of challenges it is a highly rewarding field to work and do research in.

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