

International Scientific Conference

‘HUMAN BEING, CULTURE AND SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALISATION’

25-27 November 2005, Moscow

‘BRAIN DRAIN – BRAIN GAIN; ROUND TABLE

26 November 2005

MEETING REPORT

The Round Table discussion dealt with questions of trans-border mobility and concerned particularly the fields of Science, Music and Theatre. The issue of “Brain Drain – Brain Gain” was analysed using the example of Russia and other CIS Republics and the former Yugoslavia. The intellectual and artistic migration and mobility and their impact on donor societies were at the very core of discussions. *Ms Ritva Mitchell*, Research Director of the Finnish Foundation for Cultural Policy Research and President BoG, ERICarts Institute (Helsinki), *Mr Andreas Wiesand*, Executive Director of the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research – ERICarts (Bonn), and *Ms Tatiana Fedorova*, the Russian Institute for Cultural Research (Moscow) chaired the session.

In her welcoming speech *Ms Tatiana Fedorova* underlined the importance of the issues concerned with migration and mobility in the arts both at national and European levels. Each country has national features and history of mobility and of the professional or intellectual mobility in particular. In Russia those questions have also very deep and sensible historic connotations.

Ms Ritva Mitchell stated that mobility, immigration and emigration, multicultural societies and intercultural dialog in which artists play an important role all those topics were on the agenda in European societies during the last decade. Russia is among the main donor countries today. One can meet Russian artists almost all over Europe and e.g. in Finland the Russian language is actually the third one (after Finnish and Swedish). The paradox is that you should better go to London to see a staging of the renowned Russian director or to Baden-Baden for the Russian opera night, as *Mr Andreas Wiesand* remarked, than to St.-Petersburg where they are originated from. All that makes the Russian case interesting for analysing both on European and national levels.

In his opening words *Mr Domenico Ronconi*, Head of Cultural Action Division Directorate General IV - Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe stressed the importance of the mobility issue for the European integration and co-operation. He underlined that his Department is looking beyond the established institutional structures in order to have both synergies and comparisons, to see what could be done on the base of political governance and legal frameworking. The practical problem here is how to go from research into practice using new, monitoring approaches, the research as evaluating tool, good actions, good practices and good governance. As a consequence the Council of Europe policies would be a real tool for citizens, for professionals and students.

Discussions were opened with the presentation of *Mr Dimitrije Vujadinovic* from the BalkanKult Foundation (Belgrade) “Brain Drain in the Western Balkans”. In his opinion, brain drain is the key issue of the future, but phenomena of permanent or temporary departure of artists

from the Balkans have not been analysed at all, neither there are some relevant data about it. The most dramatic problem in the Western Balkans is a pronounced departure from creative capital, which is the best social resource at the disposal of nations today. Problems in getting visas make artists to seek longer stay. Experts estimate losses in *creative potential* during the period from 1990 to 2000 up to 12 billion dollars in Serbia. One can also mention the impoverishment of cultural environment and influence made on economic situation and cultural politics of countries in transition. *Mr Dimitrije Vujadinovic* underlined that the size of particular society influenced by mobility should be also taken into account.

Mr Andreas Wiesand drew attention to the title of the Round Table and invited participants also to address 'gains' of mobility. Not only the actual situation is of interest for the MEAC project but also elaboration of descriptors for mobile people and mobility processes including very short professional or tourist stays, 'institutionalised' mobility e.g. of theatre companies, immigration patterns, etc.

The methodological approaches were further developed in the intervention of *Mr Ilkka Heiskanen* from the Finnish Academy of Sciences (Helsinki). During the plenary sessions of the Conference he presented the international project MEAC dedicated to the "Dynamics, Causes and Consequences of the Transborder Mobility in the European Arts and Culture". He addressed motives, consequences and context of intellectual mobility and listed some issues that are to be analysed. Those are situations of artists who failed abroad, gains of a donor society, volume of losses and their evaluation, questions of artistic quality and its evaluation. There could be several levels of evaluation: personal, donor country, recipient country, etc. *Mr Ilkka Heiskanen* underlined the importance of money, deprivation and rational choice to advance as motives for mobility.

Ms Carla Bodo, Vice-President of the Associazione per l'Economia della Cultura (Rome) presented a situation of Russian classic musicians in Italy which appears to be quite problematic. Nevertheless one can witness the constant, if intermittent, flow of Russian musicians, and in particular of Russian singers, temporary working in Italy, notwithstanding the many fiscal and social security strings attached to the related contracts. There are many obstacles of bureaucratic and corporative nature to overcome for those who want to settle down in Italy with a permanent job in orchestras or as teachers in conservatories. That is why they do not speak about migration but about artistic mobility to 'Fortress Italy'.

Mr Dmitri Vdovin, Voice Teacher from the Moscow International School of Vocal Art continued discussion of both mobility policies in Russia and towards Russians abroad and the artistic quality and exchanges. He addressed two blocks of problems. In his opinion, the first one concerned degrading artistic quality of Russian classic art and of professionals moving abroad. The second one is due to indistinct state policies toward t young artists and in this connection he also pointed out importance of particular visa policies for artists and cultural workers.

Ms Margarita Strepetova, Leading Researcher from the Department for International Economic and Political Research of the Economy Institute of the RAS (Moscow) in her presentation addressed problems of brain drain in Russia of the 1990es and lately. She underlined that globalisation produces asymmetry of flows because intellectual capital goes to the richer and advanced countries. In that situation in donor countries gains are produced by those coming back home. That means national policy makers are to provide them with proper terms and conditions. Those planning to move also should be well informed on living conditions, social and cultural patterns abroad. The latest national policies towards scientists and intellectuals tend to change attitudes for more concerned and to provide for mobility prevails over emigration.

Ms Marina Demetradze, Leading Researcher from the Russian Institute for Cultural Research (Moscow) underlined importance of dealing with mobility issues within the context of general transition problems in Russia and other CIS countries. *Ms Oksana Borisova*, Vice-president of

the 'Russian Reading Association' (Moscow) proposed to address governance structures in order to solve visa problems, and to use civil society institutions for that purpose. *Ms Ritva Mitchell* proposed to address those issues also to intergovernmental structures, the Council of Europe in order to consider the labour market for scientists and artists.

Mr Cas Smithuijsen, Director of the Boekman Foundation (Amsterdam) sketched the Dutch policies towards immigrant flows (e.g. in Amsterdam 60 % of youth are non-Europeans) – of artists and scientists in particular. In his opinion, migration also has different layers and those belonging to the upper ones are much more comfortably off. He stressed importance of distinguishing between cultural autonomy and integration of immigrants on civic and legal base. Another problem is evaluating mobility output and artistic quality, while some approaches in football players' price estimations could be applied for the latter. *Mr Cas Smithuijsen* believes that labour market for artists should be analysed with due regard for its filling up. There are also differences in-between the arts, and to find own place in professions less standardised than e.g. music is difficult. *Mr Ilkka Heiskanen* added that one needs to consider diverse Europe in which there are dotting points where people flock together. *Ms Ritva Mitchell* noted that many European countries are plenty with youth of non-European origin and today in Finland 25 % of students are not Finns.

Mr Dimitrije Vujadinovic marked that mobility problems inside European Union, between EU and other European countries, between European countries and other world differ. He outlined that the case of the Russian opera company participating in Baden-Baden festival which was presented by *Mr Andreas Wiesand* provides good example of gains received by recipient party that gets high quality performance without investing in professional education, social security, staging, etc.

Ms Anna Vislova, Senior Researcher from the Russian Institute for Cultural Research (Moscow) presented an intervention name "Migration of Russian Theatre" and concerned with evaluation of modern theatre process in Russia. According to *Ms Anna Vislova*, the direct dialogue with foreign theater, possibilities to present the Russian art abroad, renowned foreign directors staging in Russia, lively festivals and free exchange are among the national gains. But those phenomena have a seamy side, that is to say the cultural disorientations, unification, crisis of identity and break with the great national tradition, commercialization, 'musicalisation', staking on technical facilities, etc. *Ms Anna Vislova* believes that list of gains and losses fill with apprehension while drastic movements of Russian theatre art in breadth have not yet stimulated in-depth developments.

Mr Andreas Wiesand commented on qualitative evaluation of cultural exchanges and their feed back. *Ms Olga Sevan*, Head of department in the Russian Institute for Cultural Research (Moscow) marked that there were very important periods of European influence in Russian history and in Russian arts history the main actors of which were artists and intellectuals immigrating to Russia (in the XVIII and XIX centuries).

Ms Natalya Nazarova, Senior Researcher from the Russian Institute for Cultural Research (Moscow) recurred to the tragic history of intellectual and artistic emigration of the 1920es from Russia. At that time losses seemed to be critical for Russian culture but the country has recovered and the modern situation shows the maintenance of its intellectual and creative potential.

Ms Barno Turgunova from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Tashkent) noted that issues of mobility and migration discussed at the meeting are valid for all former Soviet Republics and foreign observers sometimes do not distinguish between Russia citizens and the others from the CIS states. That is why there is a need to develop CIS dimension of the international mobility study.

Mr Ilkka Heiskanen reminded of the 'realistic' approaches revealing money- and market-backed migration and mobility. Indicators and measurement of mutual contribution in cultural and artistic exchange, economy effects, brain drain feed back, evaluation of quality, all that remain the essential questions. Citizenship and corporative consciousness, scouting systems, diasporas' problems are also relevant issues.

In his closing speech *Mr Domenico Ronconi* underlined that Russia is a genuine part of Europe and mobility is a part of diversity and a chance for the future. It could not be regarded only as a problem, but we have to appreciate it as a value, a tool and a model for changing everyday life. A special policy analysis is to find out good experiences and possibilities of dialogue and exchange among the artists, among the young, etc. Issues of mobility and migration are to be seen also in a framework of political will, and must be approached in a practical way by the Council of Europe in which Russia will take the presidency in May 2006.

Ms Ritva Mitchell noted that at the level of European Union or at the Council of Europe the issues of European mobility are very high on the agenda. Basically it is not seen in the negative light at all but in a very positive way. Analysing mobility we look at the obstacles to it, at difficulties, at social security and taxation, at visa and language barriers, etc. We have to understand which structures are to be created providing both educational and cultural space where artists and cultural workers, goods and services can move. Given that mobility of people, goods and services will perform as precondition and basis for Creative Europe.

Ms Tatiana Fedorova closed the meeting recalling the importance of the migration and mobility issues in Russia. She expressed hope that after that meeting Russian researchers will find a stronger position in analysing transborder mobility in arts and culture. According to *Ms Tatiana Fedorova*, more effort should be made to produce data and balanced analysis of mobility issues that will help both to change general public attitudes towards it in Russia and to support policy making for transition from migration to mobility. She expressed her warm and personal thanks to all the organizers and participants of the event and expectations to continue international co-operation on those matters.