

Synaxis Baltica Sweden 2005

Final report

Central Issues of Culture Management in a Baltic Context 7th –21st of August 2005

Background

Cultural policy has undergone changes during the last years and cultural institutions are facing increasing challenges concerning financing and accounting for budgets, aims, activities and performance/results. New public management has also reached the world of the arts and culture. This means that cultural managers have to adapt themselves to accounting habits of business and market economy. The trend can be seen both in the Nordic, Baltic and European countries. In this respect the Baltic countries and Russia are able to learn a great deal from each other. But arts and culture are also the main forces in society that challenge power structures, and conceptions, ask unpleasant questions and create new possible perspectives and thoughts. Bringing the ideas of standardized management implementations and the free creative artists together can put the leaders of culture into dilemmas or give them new possibilities of working, these are some of the challenges the arts managers have to cope with.

The Aims of Synaxis Baltica Sweden 2005

Synaxis Baltica Sweden 2005 was the fourth summer academy of the network and took place at *Södertörn University College in the Stockholm region 7th –21st of August 2005. The overall theme for the academy was “Central Issues of Culture Management in a Baltic Context”.*

One aim of this project was to exchange experiences and ideas about how art and culture should be lead and managed in the Baltic Sea region in order to create a cultural life and climate that is characterized by a creative diversity, equality and international collaboration. In lectures and workshops the students focused on these topics and this work resulted in a *written report/book on cultural management* concerning: creativity, teamwork, financing and cultural policy.

In order to exchange experiences the participants of the academy brought with them the results of two interviews with interesting cultural leaders in their home countries – one interview with a leader of a state institution and the other with a leader of an independent group. These interviews were presented at the academy and constituted the raw material for the report, together with the students own experiences and the excursions to a theatre, a dance company and a museum for graphic arts. The report thus presents the Central Issues of Cultural Management in a Baltic Context, based on interviews, the participants’ own experiences and knowledge of the research in the field of culture management and is a result of work-shops, seminars and lectures. The central issues of culture management, for the workshops and seminars were:

- Teamwork
- Cultural Policy
- Creativity
- Marketing Communications

The report can be downloaded from the Synaxis Baltica homepage (www.synaxisbaltica.com).

The second aim of this years project was to develop the Synaxis Baltica homepage. It now functions as a virtual platform where students, teachers and practitioners can exchange information and ideas about trans-national cultural projects, scholarships and exchange programs between the educational programs. The homepage is also designed to create opportunities for international co-operations for future cultural managers and producers.

This is how we worked

Twenty-one students from the Baltic Sea countries (plus five Swedish students from the Swedish Synaxis Baltica team, two tutors and one project leader) gathered the 7th of August on the island Nåtårö in the archipelago south of Stockholm. For one week – under very simple conditions (two showers for 29 persons!), an electricity cut for twenty hours, and with lots of good food and really good spirit – the participants of this years summer academy spent their time discussing experiences, similarities and differences from and in: cultural policy, marketing, teamwork and creativity between the countries. We also had an inspiring lecture by the Swedish art management professor Pierre Guillet de Monthoux. This work, together with some practical cultural exchange, e.g. food evening, singing, Swedish base-ball (all these activities are carefully documented on the web: www.synaxisbaltica.com), constituted the found for the report writing that took place in week two. After the first week we moved back to civilization to Södertörn University College, to computers, library, commuter trains and the pulsating city of Stockholm. Here the serious work of writing the report “Central Issues of Culture Management in a Baltic Context” took place. But we also managed to make three excursions during the second week, namely; Stockholm City Theatre, The Cullberg Ballet and Mariefred Centre for Fine Arts Printmaking. The hard work of the participants finally lead to a very interesting report that is available on the homepage. In the evaluation the students stressed that they had liked the academy (especially the food and the organization) but it was maybe a little bit too tightly planned?! Too much work in too little time. But on the other hand it would have been worse the opposite way – too little work in too much time... The results of the evaluation is also available on the webpage.

Proposed Effects

The proposed effects of Synaxis Baltica Sweden 2005 are the following:

- The produced report on the “Central issues of Cultural Management in a Baltic Context” can be used in the different educations of the network
- The report will be distributed on the web-page and made available to other agents of the cultural field and thereby spread the Nordic and Baltic experiences and models of culture management
- Exchange of experiences and knowledge among students, teachers and guests concerning the topic of arts and cultural management
- Building of individual working networks for students who also are becoming cultural managers/producers promoting future collaborations within the Nordic, Baltic and other countries around the Baltic Sea.
- The project can help Nordic-Baltic co-operations to prosper and create a positive image of the Nordic-Baltic cooperation in an international context.
- The project continued the thus far successful collaboration of the Synaxis Baltica network participants and will aid in the fulfilment of future projects within and beyond the network.

Participants of Synaxis Baltica

The participants of the Synaxis Baltica network, who send two-three students each to the summer academy, are:

The Estonian Music Academy, Estonia
Fachhochschule Potsdam (University of Applied Sciences) Kulturarbeit, Germany
Institut für Kulturelle Infrastruktur Sachsen, Germany
Interstudio, St Petersburg Russia
The Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia
Sydväst Polytechnics, Finland
Södertörn University College, Art Culture and Management, Sweden
Telemark University College, Norway
University Jagiellonska, Poland
University of Copenhagen, Teatervidenskab, Denmark
Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Lithuania

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Attachments:

Program
Report