

# Arts management in turbulent times - Adaptable Quality Management

Published by European Cultural Foundation and Boekmanstudies, 210 p., paper back

Order form: Boekman Foundation

The book written by Milena Dragicevic Sestic and Sanjin Dragojevic fulfills important gap between Western cultural management ideas and the reality of South-East European cultural life. As its subtitle "Navigating the arts through the winds of change" indicates, the times were extremely changeable in this region during the 1990's, even after 2000 too. It is a question of high importance how arts can survive hard times and how can its reinstatement be managed.

There are many example how well built up East-European theatre networks, museums, art centres lost its importance, while others came into the picture despite of the difficulties. The authors worked out a method called Adaptable Quality Management (AQM) in order to find a way what makes arts organisations more resistant to changeable social and political circumstances. This method refers to recent quality management challenges (quality insurance), what is quite unusual in the field of culture, even in the Western part of Europe. Although non profit organizations are facing to establish some quality management process in order to receive EU structural funds, cultural services are quite far from being easily quality managed. Well, the readers should not imagine that arts can be quality insured, but quality management can absolutely be useful for arts organisations. In the field of health and social work many non profit organisations already have their quality standards (ISO or esle), which proved that it is defenetely not unreal for a non profit organisation. However, culture cannot be handled like any other goods or services. Luckily, the book also provides wide range of innovative cultural policy ideas and practices such as cultural policy models; organisational orientation models and new ways of strategic planning. These are the tools of cultural managers to effect society leadres, decision makers and even consumers to be able to think of cultural goods and services more especially.

Besides the extremely useful case studies, my favourite part was the 5th one on developmental philosophies of art organisations. Which arts organisation has a clear philosophy for arts services or clear organisational culture in East Europe? It is high time to learn how to form an adequate one! Above all, I liked the horizontal view of the book. Human Resource development (HR), Public Relations (PR), strategic planning, quality management and the long list of marketing tools seemed to be described as parts of a reasonable, well build structure. Who can live without that in the 21st century Europe?