

**Report of the International Conference “Philanthropy, Development and the Arts: Histories and Theories,” July 23-25, 2018; Gautam Chakrabarti, Dr.phil., LMU Munich, gchakrabarti@zedat.fu-berlin.de**

The international conference “Philanthropy, Development and the Arts: Histories and Theories,” organised by NIC LEONHARDT (LMU Munich), took place at Carl Friedrich von Siemens-Stiftung, Munich, from 23<sup>rd</sup>-25 July, 2018. The conference emerged from ERC funded project “Developing Theatre” that aims at exploring institutional imbrications in the study of theatrical development after 1945, the intersection of different institutional and organizational theatrical networks (*viz.*, among others, the International Theatre Institute (ITI)), private philanthropic foundations, Eastern Bloc cultural policy, *et al.* The goal of the conference was to critically reflect the concept of philanthropy and to investigate the role of philanthropic foundations in the framework of theatre and the arts. The conference was divided into X sections, “Policies of Sponsoring and Sponsors”, “Grants in Aid for Theatre in Asia”, “Cultural Philanthropy,” “Patronage,” “Displaying Philanthropy: Museums and Visual Arts”, “Development Matters”.

In his opening lecture, CHRISTOPHER BALME, Principal Investigator of the ERC project, “The Rockefeller Foundation and the Rise of Theatre Studies in Nigeria,” shed light on the RF’s investment in the field of the arts and their institutionalization in Africa in the 1950s and 1960s by applying Inderjeet Parmar’s concept of knowledge flows and Mark Granovetter’s formulations of homophilic and heterophilic networks.

Historian VOLKER BERGHAHN, (Columbia University, New York) delivered the first of two keynote addresses, titled “American Foundations, the Arts, and High Politics, 1898-2018”. He proposed six broad periods. It was noted that the Division of Cultural Relations was added to the State Department in 1938; and fear of Soviet expansionism led to the approval of the Marshall Plan, Care food-aid- and the Quaker school-aid-programmes. The Ford Foundation acquired assets of 69 million USD and became the wealthiest such institution in the world. BERGHAHN concluded by looking at the questions of shifting loci of prestige imbued in the philanthropic families’ self-images from their late 19<sup>th</sup>-century image as being “robber barons”. While the New Deal was a period in which the Public Sector dominated, the so-called American ideology of rugged individualism flourished in the post-Cold-War era. Today, in the case of the Koch Brothers and the New Citizens cause, philanthropy can be seen as a payback for political patronage.

On the second day, the First Panel, “Policies of Sponsoring and Sponsors” was chaired by ANDREAS BACKOEFER. The first speaker, ANTHONY CUYLER (Florida State University), spoke on “Re-Considering Cultural Funding in the U.S. through the Lens of Culture.” He **began with** the definition and key terms of the concept of “cultural equity”. He **spoke about** his experience in teaching grant-writing in the arts, especially for minority-origin artists. In a nutshell people give money to people who look like them. Before moving towards the question of the project of cultural equity and its funding, CUYLER’s presentation focused on the difference between “Legacy Cultural Organizations”, like the MOMA, and more unassuming philanthropic organizations, in terms of their self-images and strategies of raising and spending funds. Despite his apparent scepticism about “the master’s tools [...] dismantl[ing] the master’s house,” he mentioned the Bloomberg Philanthropies Arts Grant Program and the issue of improving funding models.

LOUIS PAHLOW’s (University of Frankfurt) talk on ‘Philanthropy between Law and Business: The Way from “Städel” (1815) to “Krupp” (1967)’ served to conceptualise the German philanthropic culture *vis-à-vis* the State. Integration of entrepreneurial questions in legal processes was mentioned as a key feature of the German philanthropic ecosystem. The

paper focused on three case-studies and their individual statutes – of the Carl Zeiss Foundation, of Alfred Krupp (1967) and of the Carl Zeiss reforms 1996-2004. Mentioning Robert James's idea of non-profit capitalism and the traditional dualism between ecclesiastical and state sponsors, he explored the early liberal doctrine of law and state. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the supervision of legal foundations by the State was an almost unchanged standard. The second keynote address, delivered by INDERJEET PARMAR (City University of London), “Foundations of the US-led Liberal International Order: From the ‘Rise to Globalism’ to ‘America First’,” revolved around divergent conceptual strands of Anglo-American sociology and Euro-American politics in war and peace. He critiqued what he called “the four fictions of philanthropy”, that it is “non-state, non-political, non-business and non-ideological”. One of the central points of his presentation was the role of war in the making and unmaking of the liberal international order. He made the broad claim that the American foundations have played a big role in the configuration of American foreign policy. The foundations and their operatives are enmeshed with the US State. In foreign policy terms, American foundations rarely did things that went against the dictates of the State Department. Parmar noted the heavy political agenda behind the setting up of different Area Studies Programs, mentioning, among others, the concept of “Middle class global south powers”.

In the second panel, “Grants in Aid for Theatre in Asia” chaired by RASHNA NICHOLSON, JAN CREUTZENBERG's (Ewha Womans University, Seoul) paper, titled “Contemporary Korean Theatre, Courtesy of Uncle Sam?”, focused on the Rockefeller field officer Charles B. Fah's trips to Korea between 1948 and 1956. The Rockefeller Foundation's aim was to establish professional theatre in Korea, for which local transmitters had to be groomed and US culture had to be promoted proactively. The paper mentioned the Rockefeller grant for the establishment of the Korean National Theatre, the establishment of the Korean Research Institute for Dramatic Arts, the and the opening of the Drama Centre and School.

NIC LEONHARDT's (LMU-Munich) paper, titled “Grants in Aid for Theatre in the 1950s: Severino Montano's Initiatives at the Philippine Normal College, Manila” focused on the Philippine playwright and director Severino Montano who received individual grants by the Rockefeller foundation in the 1950s and 1960s; first for studying abroad, and then for establishing a theatre programme at the Philippine Normal College in Manila. Montano left the Philippines in 1939 for studying in Britain and the United States. After obtaining an MFA from the Yale Drama Department, he worked for the Philippines' Government-in-Exile during WW2. Another figure in this context was the aforementioned Charles Fahs, a sort of Rockefeller plenipotentiary-at-large in East Asia; he facilitated the grant-in-aid for the Philippines Drama Theatre. One of his achievements was institutionalizing “legitimate theatre” at The Arena Theatre (Manila), which was said to be “the original theatre form of all Southeast Asia.”

MALSHANI DELGAHAPITIYA's (Colombo) paper, titled “Experiences of Theatre” concerned itself with funding-lines from various Development Agencies in Sri Lanka. The author emphasized the importance of the caste system in Sri Lanka as well as the Buddhist cultural background. She spoke about drama as a problematic genre. In the recent decades, the EU's allocation of funds has been considerably bigger than that of the local Department of Culture. Thus, it is clear that the institutionalised backing is insignificant, also given that the majority of theatre-officials had no prior experience in theatre-work. In conclusion, it was pointed out that the Sinhala population is generally against foreign development agencies.

The Third Panel “Cultural Philanthropy,” chaired by GAUTAM CHAKRABARTI, began with KAROLINA PRYKOSKA-MICHALAK's (University of Lodź) paper on “Private and corporate philanthropy in culture sector during economic and political Transformation in

Poland.” She discussed private and corporate philanthropy in the Polish cultural sector after 1989. The Solidarnosc movement aimed at shifting power from the Communist Party to the citizens after 1989. At the turn of the 21st century, state-owned companies and foundations funded public institutions such as National Theatres or National Museums. Today, there is a multi-dimensional increase in philanthropic projects of foundations, which are connected to private businesses, e.g. Kulczyk Foundation, and financial institutions, e.g., Kronenberg Foundation.

AJEET SINGH (Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Khanpur Kalan, Haryana), in his paper on “Ingenuity in Indian Cultural Philanthropy: A Case Study of Komal Kothari’s Rupayan Sansthan,” suggested that philanthropy be understood according to its literal / etymological meaning as “love of all mankind”, as an action without seeking any reward. According to Singh, philanthropy in India is characterized by a specific dynamism of the relationship between social welfare, community and folk art forms, and this dynamic has survived from pre-colonial to postcolonial times. In conclusion, Singh briefly presented a case study on the Indian folklorist and ethnomusicologist Komal Kothari and Rupayan Sansthan.

GUSTAVO GUENZBURGER (Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro), in his paper “Fuel of the Arts: the Public and the Private within the Petrobrás Cultural Program,” presented a case study on the politics of cultural sponsorship by the Petrobrás oil company in Brazil. Between 1996 and 2013, Petrobrás, the eighth largest oil company in the world, funded 5444 cultural projects in the country. Since the 1980s, the company has been making use of the Federal Law for Cultural Incentives (Lei de Incentivo A Cultura), commonly known as the Rouanet Law, which allows Brazilian enterprises to sponsor cultural activities and discount all the money invested from their income taxes. The creation of this law has resulted in a situation where the richest companies in the country choose the artistic projects to receive sponsorship, while the invested money comes almost completely from the government. GUENZBURGER clarified that other forms of funding in Brazil come through international organizations and NGOs, with the cultural and artistic underground doing crowdfunding.

The third and final day began with the fourth panel, on “Patronage,” chaired by REBECCA STURM. DANIJELA WEBER-KAPUSTA (LMU-Munich) explored, in her paper on “Philanthropy, Bourgeois Society and Cultural Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century,” new forms of theatre patronage developed in modern bourgeois society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, focusing on the promotion of German theatre companies in the Habsburg Monarchy during that time. Civil associations as well as individual patrons supported private city theatres, travelling companies and guest performances. Between German cultural transfer and cultural colonialism, WEBER-KAPUSTA discussed the role of German theatre in the development of national theatre landscapes in theatres in Prague, Lviv and Zagreb. The speaker also discussed how stock and shareholder companies were involved with theatre, which fulfilled educational, commercial, and entertainment functions and contributed immensely to the public sphere.

Through archival material which can be found today at the *Fondazione Marianne Werefkin* in Ascona, NADEZHDA VORONINA (LMU-Munich) retraced, in her paper “Marianne von Werefkin: Patron of Russian Art in Munich,” the latter’s important contribution to the formation and promotion of those Russian artists who became crucial in the development of avant-garde artistic expressions in Munich in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Von Werefkin, initially trained as a painter herself, moved to Munich in 1896, together with Alexej von Jawlensky, and became a patron of Russian art, according extensive financial support not only to Jawlensky but also to friends such as the dancer Alexander Sakharov or the painters Wassily Kandinsky and Anton Azbe, who benefited significantly from this private philanthropy. She established and promoted a salon in the city centre where they would meet.

HELLEKE VAN DEN BRABER (Radboud University Nijmegen) took, in her paper “Negotiating Patronage Exchange in early 20th Century Theatre: The Case of Edward Gordon Craig,” the latter as a case study and, through an analysis of 450 letters between Craig and his patrons, discussed the shifting / changing relationship between artists and private patrons in early twentieth century European theatre. In the focus of van den Braber’s paper were Count Harry Kessler and Marguerite Caetano, who supported Craig from 1903 to 1930, as well as Frans Mijnsen who supported Craig from 1913 to 1932. Stating that a tension between self-interest and disinterest, between instrumentality and altruism is at the heart of all artistic patronage, this paper explored how exactly this tension plays out in Craig’s case.

The fifth Panel, “Displaying Philanthropy: Museums and Visual Arts” (chaired by JUDITH ROTTENBURG, LMU Munich), began with MORGAN ARENSON’s (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York) paper, titled “Redeveloping Manhattan's Meatpacking District: A Case Study on the Whitney Museum of American Art's New Building Project.” ARENSON, who oversees foundation and government relations, presented a case study on the museum’s move in 2015 to the gentrifying area of the Meatpacking District. Supported by \$760 million of public and private funding, the new museum building project was part of an effort to develop a West Side cultural corridor in New York and directly connected to the city’s High Line Park project. Social justice, community engagement, “creative place-making” were the philanthropic priorities of the public and private funders of the new building project.

ANDREAS BACKOEFER’s (epodium, Munich, New York) paper on “Cultural Philanthropy and Art Museums” explored performances of giving in the domain of art museum philanthropy in Europe and North America from a comparative perspective. While an entrepreneurial attitude to art collection was specific to the USA, German philanthropists who rendered public aristocratic collections understood them rather as administrative entities. Backoefer, using the example of the New York based art and technology incubator "New INC" elaborated on the future of art and museum sponsoring. Taking Marcel Mauss’ reflections on the gift as a starting point, he questioned three key terms in relation to art museum philanthropy.: ‘Debt’ of return, ‘Giving’ and ‘Gift’.

NIZAN SHAKED’s (California State University Long Beach) paper, titled “Art Museums and Economic Inequality,” took the reopening of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMa) and its adoption of the Fisher collection as the main case study. SHAKED presented a critical reflection on social justice in the American museum in the 21st century. Against the background of the shifting concept of the public versus the private under common law since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, she analysed uses of the terms “private” and “public” today, revealing strategic manipulations of its definitions. The paper, further, focused on the case of the Fisher family, issues of public museum collections, questioned the idea of the “enriching” roles of private and public collections and brand-making.

The sixth Panel, titled “Development Matters” (chaired by CHRISTOPHER BALME), began with RASHNA D. NICHOLSON’s (LMU Munich) paper “On the (Im)Possibilities of a Free Theatre.” She traced the impact of non-governmental and governmental funding on theatre (with additional examples from the visual arts and music) in the Palestinian Territories from 1983 till today. Foreign aid has played a key role in determining the ways in which the Palestinian cultural sector has developed over the last two decades. The paper sought to delineate how the inflow of international aid has come at the expense of not only longer term, sustainable strategies that promote the arts for the sake of the arts but also the economic stability and social acceptance of this sector.

CLARA De ANDRADE (Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro), in her paper “Cultural Policies and the Theatre of the Oppressed in France: from institutionalization to transnational expansion,” discussed the transnational expansion of the Theatre of the

Oppressed and the role the cultural policy of the socialist government of François Mitterrand in the 1980s in France played in it. A “Centre d’étude et de diffusion des techniques actives d’expression” promoting and for the first time institutionalizing Boal’s theatrical methodology was founded in Paris in 1979 while Augusto Boal was exiled in Paris. In the context of the policy of decentralisation initiated in France in 1982, the Theatre of the Oppressed became a tool of theatrical decentralization, serving as a tool for social mediation and development in social centres all over France, working with multiple social groups and excluded groups.

MAËLINE LE LAY (CNRS / LAM Bordeaux), in her paper “Performing (for) social change in Africa of the Great Lakes region,” presented a case study on NGO-funded performance-art in the Great Lakes region in Africa (DR Congo, Rwanda and Burundi). She drew on her field study in projects by ‘La Benevolencija’, an NGO from Amsterdam that promotes “edutainment”, ‘DigiTales across Borders’, and/or Goethe Institute and Institut Français which are often important places for experimentation and free thought. The performances often deal with social issues and trauma, and are understood as tools for change and healing. Looking at the peace and development rhetoric of the numerous philanthropic organizations active in the region, Le Lay noted the emergence of an aesthetic pattern or genre that is disseminated as a unified style in these three countries and can be exported to any post-conflict society.

KENNEDY CHINYOWA (Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria), in his paper “Removing the Log in the Other's Eye: Contradictions Affecting Philanthropy based HIV/Aids Applied Theatre Interventions,” presented a case study conducted together with Sharifa Abdulla on the Make Art/Stop Aids project recently realized in Malawi and funded by the Art and Global Health Centre. He showed how the externally-driven intervention-models tend to lose the focus on the people and to become more oppressive than liberating. He also discussed the contradictions and constraints of philanthropy, mentioning “gifts that become poison”; in this context, he quoted [Julius] Nyerere: “People cannot be developed, they develop themselves.” (1978). He also quoted Eade (2007): “If NGOs want to take capacity building seriously, they must be prepared to change their structures and practices, (in favour of) partnership, reciprocity, shared risk-taking and interdependence”. He concluded by discussing the paradox of folk media, the UNESCO cultural dimension of development 1995, and saw “participation as repressive myth, tyranny.”