Art as cultural diplomacy: the politicization of Europe (Vienna 8-10 Dec 2011)

Vienna, Austria, Dec 8–10, 2011
Deadline: Sep 25, 2011

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Art as cultural diplomacy : the EU, the politicization of Europe, and the use of art to promote social cohesion, understanding, and strengthen intercultural relations

Panel Organizer: Cassandra Sciortino, PhD Candidate, University of California, Santa Barbara in conjunction with the Euroacademia, The Euroacademia International Conference 'The European Union and the Politicization of Europe' 8-10 December 2011, Vienna, Austria

The European Union was described by Jacques Delors as an unidentified political object and by Jose Manuel Barroso as the first non-Imperial empire. The descriptors assigned to the European Union are creative and diverse yet the agreement on what is the actual shape that the EU is taking is by no means an easy one to be achieved. Historical choices shaped and reshaped the size and functioning of the EU while the goal of an emerging 'ever closer union' is still in search for the paths of real and not ideal accomplishment. The Euroacademia International Conference 'The European Union and the Politicization of Europe' aims to survey some of these current debates and addresses once more the challenges of the EU polity in a context of multiple crises that confronted Europe in recent years.

The panel "Art as cultural diplomacy" seeks papers that explore art (in its broadest definition) as an instrument of cultural diplomacy. In the context of multiple crises confronting Europe in recent years, how have the arts contributed to the politicization of Europe? The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) was founded in Berlin in 1999. The dynamic, non-profit organization casts the arts in an optimistic light, "as instrumental in shaping the tone and nature of intercultural relations." But its potential "to raise awareness of different cultures, promote social cohesion, and strengthen intercultural relations, is the subject of little research and analysis, and is consistently undervalued." To bridge this gap ICD created the program Art as Cultural Diplomacy (ACD).

The panel intends to assess the viability of programs such as ACD and other similar efforts and the EU's goal of unification. It seeks to combine a wide interdisciplinary spectrum of perspectives and questions in order to discuss the different ways art can be used to establish, develop, and sustain productive relations between EU countries, potential EU candidate countries, and other stakeholders in international relations. Some examples of topics include:

• How can art serve as a neutral platform for exchange to promote dialogue and understanding between foreign states?

• How has/can it be employed as a vehicle for facilitating EU cohesion that is at once inter-culturally flexible and cohesive enough to project a unifying identity?
• How has/can public policy and other stakeholders craft a framework to measure the degrees of difference between art as instrument of cultural diplomacy or propaganda?
• Is it relevant to consider the concept of E-Diplomacy—that is the digital revolution and the emergence of social media as platforms for art to communicate across social, cultural, and national boundaries?
• How can growing international perspectives/methodologies in the field of art history be mobilized toward cultural diplomacy?
• Analysis of the debates surrounding the role of art as a tool in the field of public or cultural diplomacy. Is art only viable when it is free of dominant powers, such as government control? If so, how can free, independent art be identified and in what ways can it have a diplomatic impact?
• Consideration of European "culture" and "identity" and how these terms are used and understood currently.
• Assessment of the role that culture plays in current international relations and the process of globalization.
• Challenges of the complex relationship between culture, international relations, and globalization in the coming decades.

Please submit abstracts of less than 300 words by September 25, 2011 to cassandra.sciortino@berkeley.edu

URL:
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