

het Teffera: *Taboos and Exceptions Concerning Female Musicians in East Africa with a Special Focus on Ethiopia*; Gisa Jäh-nichen: *Child Musicians in Class–Race–Gender Conflicts*; Adriana Helbig: *Music,*

Migrations, and Transnational Articulations of Racialized Class Identities in Post-Orange Revolution Ukraine

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CONFERENCE: *THE CITY – A CHANGEABLE (UN)CERTAINTY*

Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies, Brno, Czech Republic, November 30 – December 1, 2007

The Faculty of Social Sciences of Masaryk University in Brno organized a multidisciplinary conference, *The City – a Changeable (Un)Certainty* (Nov. 30 – Dec. 1, 2007). The goal of the conference was to open a forum for discussion on the meaning of the contemporary city and its various definitions. What is the city? How is it reflected by various disciplines? What impact does the (post-socialist, post-modernist) transformation of the city have on (in)equality, solidarity, social cohesion, inclusion/exclusion, and local/urban identities? How are the boundaries, public and private spaces, physical and social structure of the city created? These questions were in the core of the conference discussions.

The conference attracted the attention of sociologists, human geographers and environmentalists, social anthropologists and ethnologists, philosophers, architects, social psychologists, and also several representatives of municipalities and non-governmental organizations. The diverse structure of the participants created a very good basis for a fruitful interdisciplinary dialogue, but also a dialogue between academics and practitioners. It seems that it is easier to present and publish nice academic ideas and perspectives on how urban problems can be solved than to implement them into prac-

tice. For this reason, without a dialogue of both parties no progress in the cities can be made. That is an important lesson from the conference. Urban scientists should work closely with local actors at all levels of governance. It is useful for both sides, and in the end it is useful for the citizens of each city.

The program of the conference was thematically structured. It was opened by introductory words of Prof. H. Librová of the Department of Environmental Studies, followed by blocs of lectures focused on different aspects of urban development and change. The first day was dedicated mostly to the topics of urban spaces and their integration and/or differentiation as seen from the angle of different disciplines (L. Galčanová, S. Poláková, L. Sýkora, D. Luther, J. Pospíšilová – A. Steinhübel, J. Janto, J. Sládek); urban diversity (A. Bitušiková); and psychological reflections and effects of the city (T. Řiháček, M. Kořová). Sustainability of city development in its broader perspective was stressed several times. This concept is still understood more in its environmental meaning in the Central-European region. The conference brought a wider view of the sustainable city, emphasizing the importance of an urban environment that creates conditions for friendly cohabitation of diverse cultural and social groups and encourages social integration leading to better life for all urban citizens.

The second day was opened by an inspiring keynote address given by Prof. M. Marcelli on the philosophic topic of urbanophobia. Marcelli built his presentation on numerous writings of philosophers (both urbanophiles and

urbanophobes) dealing with the city, with the main focus on Rousseau. Rousseau was probably the most famous critic of the city, describing it as a place of moral decadence. Marcelli pointed out some paradoxes of this approach and talked about an open city and even about the “urban” universal fluid which is neither the city nor the countryside, but the countryside within the city and the main channel of communication processes. Marcelli’s presentation was followed by blocs of lectures given by architects and art historians (T. Vích, M. Topolčanská and M. Horáček); and human geographers, environmentalists and sociologists (J. Novák, A. Burjanek, O. Muliček, P. Pospěch, B. Vacková and L. Šolcová). Urban space, locality and society were the key words linking most of the presentations of the Saturday program.

The City – a Changeable (Un)Certainty conference brought fresh air to the debates about the city, mainly because it made various disciplines talk to each other. It is obvious that interdisciplinary dialogue is a challenge. We often tend to see “our” disciplinary view or methodology as a better one or more appropriate, but only by listening to other disciplines can we learn, broaden our understanding of the topic and overcome our “discipline-centrism.” The conference was organized by young scientists and it was very encouraging to see many young researchers in the audience, too. The future of urban research is in good hands.

Alexandra Bitušíková

5TH MEETING OF THE “MUSIC AND MINORITIES” STUDY GROUP.

Prague, Czech Republic,
May 24 – July 1, 2008.

Organizers: Faculty of Humanities of Charles University, Prague, Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic, Slovo 21.

The *International Council for Traditional Music* (ICTM, originally the *International Folk Music Council*) was founded in 1947 as the first major international ethnomusicological organization. In contrast to the *Society for Ethnomusicology*, which was founded eight years later and combines mainly American ethnomusicology with relatively closely-related scientific paradigms, ICTM is extremely diversified not only regarding scientific paradigms, but also in other directions. Its biennial world conferences are comprised of hundreds of participants who present in many parallel sessions (e.g., last year in Vienna there were usually six). They represent an exemplary fair of field resources rather than what the word itself refers to, i.e., discussions or exchange of knowledge of scholars in the same field.

The real bases for scientific cooperation in ICTM are the so-called Study Groups. One of the newest (and today the second most numerous) – “Music and Minorities” – held its fifth meeting in May in Prague. Sixty scholars from 23 lands actively participated.

The conference topics, which had been chosen at last year’s world conference, were *Music and Dance of the Roma;*

Cultural Policy, Representation of Minority Music. The first of these, which had been requested by the local organizers (the conference took place in the context of the Khamoro World Festival of Romani Music) was represented by the greatest number of participants. In this group, the strong tradition of Romani music research was clear from the beginning: among its founders were three scholars in the field (Petan, Hemetek, and Jurková). During its ten-year existence, there has clearly been a thematic shift of papers from traditional “ethnographic” and historical research of European Romani groups, in part toward less known Romani groups (Ankica Petrović: *Music Practices of Machwaya Gypsies in America*) and in part toward new topics (Katalin Kovalcsik: *A Hungarian Romani Star Singer as “Antimusician”*) or new points of view (Adriane Helbig: *Sonic Aesthetic of Poverty Among Romani Musicians in Transcarpathia, Ukraine*).

The two other themes of the conference are closely related and thus it was not always easy for the program committee to place them in appropriate groups. Both themes shared a broad methodological, theoretical and paradigmatic spectrum.

Besides a few “ethnographic reports,” usually concerning little known minorities (Olya Kolomyets: *Little Armenia in Western Ukraine*, Piotr Dahlig: *The Czech Brothers in Poland – The Community of Zelov and its Contemporary Musical Image*, Nona Lomidze: *The Georgian Jewish Community – Their Life and Integration in Vienna*) the papers were usually concerned with the self-representation of majorities (Essica Marks: *Representation*

of Arab Music in Israel’s Popular Culture Arena), and with how this representation is influenced by (majority) cultural politics (Dorit Klebe: *From “Gastarbeiter-sendung” to “Radiomultikulti” – Music of Minorities in Radio Programs under Public Law in Germany*, Gerda Lechleitner: *The Phonogrammarchiv, cultural policy, and the safeguarding of the audiovisual heritage: past and present case studies*).

As for minority problematics, the involvement of researchers’ empathy or sympathy is not at all surprising (characteristically, many members of this group are also active in the newest study group – “Applied Ethnomusicology,” and that application entails great involvement). Expression of these emotions that is too strong and without solid theoretical anchorage (and clarity of this anchorage) tends to weaken the scientific character of the work.

Alongside classical format, some contributions were presented as panels, which are usually recommended for world conferences. From my own experience, I know that preparation for a panel is demanding – and useful for the participants. With the growing number of participants, however, there is a growing risk of chaos, which is of little use to the audience. The Prague panelists succeeded in avoiding that risk. Each of the panels made brilliant use of some of the possibilities for this sort of presentation, from the “Southeast Asia” panel, *Listening to the Unheard: Music, Minorities and the State in Southeast Asia* (Org. Jan Mrázek), which presented three case studies in a theoretical-philosophical framework, to an open-dialogue form *National Heritage and the Norwegian*