

# Foreword

We have finished putting together one more yearbook. While on the one hand, the KPY Yearbook does not limit itself to the Western or Northern canon of cultural policy and management in terms of its research, evaluation or experimentation, and seeks to present contributions from all around the globe, on the other, it also attempts to question the borders of these young disciplines. To this end, an effort has been made to form a groundwork for Turkish-language contributions to the literature, which is presently almost all found in English (also a little in French, Spanish and German).

When talking about the “Focus” topic of this issue, “An Independent Republic of Culture?” I will note that the Editorial Board discussed the importance and relevance of this issue long and hard. After the pieces had all been finished, two recent contributions demonstrated that this topic would retain its place on the agenda for a long time with an increasing importance. The first of these was Athens Biennial Program Director Massimiliano Mollona summarizing the Laboratory for the Urban Commons project carried out as part of the Biennial as “[turning] what is traditionally a neoliberal art institution into a cooperative, democratic, and sustainable one” in an interview following his talk at SALT in Istanbul.<sup>1</sup> As suggested by the title of the interview, he underlines how the aim is shifting from “institutions to instituting”. In another piece dealing with the same topic,<sup>2</sup> the author, Bojana Kunst, talks about instituting again, stating that the important thing is “the wet foam of the imagination”. Thus, in the author’s words, a “poetic” element is added to an institution known to be systematic and objectively unproblematic in its internal functioning. By generalizing “precarity” from the artist and laborer to the human species, the author considers “the precarity of the human being” from the perspective of institutionalization. It then appears that the “art and culture” formula (however possible it is to talk of culture without art) which has remained an apparently inseparable pairing up to now, will at this rate soon be considered a triad: “art–culture–politics”. Does Mollona not already say in his interview, “without the necessarily being commercial... decommodified, non-competitive, and participatory... (art and culture)... have a massive potential in countering the uneven development of late capitalism”? As we can see, ‘precarity’, which we consider in this issue (with its inseparable dialectic infant ‘resilience’), will conceptually continue to be operative, and we will continue to debate its applications within the “question mark” of this issue.

The “Focus” contains research considering different aspects of this theme. Praznik and Woolard focus on the difficulties in working conditions for artists that have emerged with political and institutional changes relating to the valuation of artistic labor. In MTL Collective’s piece, supported by examples of their research activities, which have created a global impact, we can see how precarity has not only become an objective situation deeply affecting those working in the artistic field, but also one affecting laborers working with their hands throughout all the investments made by artistic institutions, schools and museums. Landau’s piece is an analysis looking at a cultural policy based on alternative practices developed in Berlin. Farhat and Benslimane debate the leading role that can be played by civil society and its representatives in the formation and implementation of cultural policy through examples taken from Palestine and Morocco respectively. Tonga Uriarte focuses on the change that independent (and private) theatres in Turkey have gone through in recent years and their problems in terms of institutional sustainability. Paul’s piece on the Guantanamo Camp Museum

1 <http://blog.saltonline.org/post/158506279579/from-institutions-to-instituting>

2 <http://www.kunsten.be/dossiers/perspective-institution/4450-the-institutionalisation-precarity-and-the-rhythm-of-work>

presents us with the theoretical premises of a new conceptionally distinct understanding of the museum based on the concepts of in/justice. Mahdavi, meanwhile, questions the present position of art through the artistic-environmental activism project Nafas in Tehran.

There are also many pieces on very different topics in the “Open Space”. Ramadan and Batycka look at Middle Eastern art, and especially visual art, from the perspective of the timing and forms of post-colonial developments and debates on the world artistic stage. Maseda considers changes in the cinematic arts and industry in Spain during the Franco era and afterwards from a critical perspective. Graf evaluates present-day art criticism, while Zeytinoglu scrutinizes Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* as a “case study” of discrimination.

In the “Reviews” section, we find Gordon’s important critique of the dangers posed by the policies of the Conservative government in its latest “White Paper” published in Britain. Lena draws our attention to the essentials of a collective book published on the tenth anniversary of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005). L’Internationale’s text is a comment on Turkey’s withdrawal from the EU Creative Europe Program. Erden, Karakuş and Foggo’s pieces are contributions on subjects of identity and minorities in Turkey through perspectives stretching from art history to current politics. Özer and Töre’s evaluations are on cinema. Özer makes deductions about an urban problem/project in Istanbul after carrying out a reading of a monographic film, while Töre draws attention to recent consolidation in the direction of a monopoly of distribution in the Turkish film sector and to the negative effects this could have upon cultural diversity. Finally Ozar considers the serious threat to cultural and historical heritage areas through status changes leading to construction through recent examples.

Finally, let me finish with a piece of news. The KPY website has been revamped with a periodical approach to publication.

For those interested, the address is: [kpy.bilgi.edu.tr](http://kpy.bilgi.edu.tr)

(Translated by *John Angliss*)