

Mary Ann DeVlieg

Citizenship and Culture

“We can say without exaggeration that never has civilization been menaced so seriously as today.today we see world civilization, united in its historic destiny, reeling under the blows of reactionary forces armed with the entire arsenal of modern technology.”²⁷

The notion of ‘citizenship’ and especially ‘active citizenship’ has been developed in the EU for over ten years. The concept is linked to various areas of EU policy, from the need to create a deeper sense of personal belonging to the EU space and political project, to certain EU educational and learning goals aiming at combating racism and supporting acceptance of cultural diversity. However, the term citizenship is problematic, especially when related to political borders such those of an autonomous region, nation or indeed the EU. It is exclusive rather than inclusive; it disenfranchises any person who does not hold the citizenship of the place.²⁸ Thus even a ‘good’ person, actively involved in positive behaviour in their community has no claim to associated rights if s/he does not happen to have a legal document granting them citizenship of the territory in question. In a world marked by massive migrations, the lack of a passport should not deny rights. As Simon Mundy used to say, “We should speak of ‘all the people in Europe’ rather than ‘all of the European peoples’.” Of course, the term citizenship can be used metaphorically to refer to a social contract of rights and responsibilities, but we are surrounded by its legal use on a day to day basis, all the more so in an EU marked by different legal treatment between ‘ressortissants’ (those for whom the territorial law will decide) and those who are merely residing in a place for whatever reason. And let’s not forget that the term itself historically refers to the exclusive Greek so-called direct democratic system that only gave the right to vote to males who had undertaken military service, excluding women, slaves and foreigners. Today there are increasing calls by social and human rights organisations for non-citizen immigrants to take part in the polity of their communities – it was only in the late 19th and early 20th century

²⁷ Manifesto for an Independent Revolutionary Art, Andre Breton and Diego Rivera, 1938

²⁸ Wikipedia definition - Citizenship denotes the link between a person and a state or an association of states. ...Possession of citizenship is normally associated with the right to work and live in a country and to participate in political life....Nationality is often used as a synonym for citizenship – notably in international law...<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizenship>

that the vote was actually taken away from immigrants in the USA²⁹ - and the controversy still rages in the UK whether citizen-prisoners should be allowed to vote, in defiance of the European Court of Human Rights' decision that it should be allowed in the EU.

Citizenship thus implies that a State confers rights offering various protections and freedoms and in return citizens have consequent responsibilities to that State. It's not so easy today. In many parts of the world, including the EU, residents as well as citizens are forced to insist, to demand, to fight for internationally acknowledged rights from governments who avoid giving them due to a variety of reasons ranging from political or economic ideology to election promises or financial affiliations.

'Global citizenship' perhaps sounds more like a reflection of current reality as well as implying shared responsibilities amongst members of the human race, but it seems that by 'active citizenship' we are really talking here about a desire to encourage people who share interests and values to undertake actions in order to influence their communities, and thus by inference wider society, in positive directions.

But what interests and values, and whose definition of 'positive'? Isaiah Berlin coined the phrase 'value pluralism' to describe his belief that there are differing and even seemingly contradictory values though it is possible for these each to have an inner logic or truth and thus to be respected as such.³⁰ Examples are found in the differences between East and West - the legacy of Confucianism (collective society) and Aristotle (individualistic society).³¹ Things become more complicated when comparing the values of a community who honour the right to free expression (the so-called 'right to offend or shock'³²)

²⁹ <http://www.immigrantvoting.org/material/misconceptions.html>

³⁰ "I came to the conclusion that there is a plurality of ideals, as there is a plurality of cultures and of temperaments. I am not a relativist; I do not say "I like my coffee with milk and you like it without; I am in favor of kindness and you prefer concentration camps" - each of us with his own values, which cannot be overcome or integrated. This I believe to be false. But I do believe that there is a plurality of values which men can and do seek, and that these values differ." New York Review of Books, Vol. XLV, Number 8 (1998)

³¹ Richard Nisbett, *The Geography of Thought*, The Free Press (Simon and Schuster) NY, 2003

³² The UN Human Rights Committee (the body that oversees implementation of the ICCPR) has stressed this point: Article 19, paragraph 2, must be interpreted as encompassing every form of subjective ideas and opinions capable of transmission to others, which are compatible with article 20 of the Covenant, of news and information, of commercial expression and advertising, of works of art, etc.; it should not be confined to means of political, cultural or artistic expression. Moreover the mere fact that an idea is disliked or thought to be incorrect cannot justify preventing a person from expressing it. <http://www.article19.org/pages/en/key-aspects.html>

and those of a community who honour the dignity of their religious founders above all.

Can participation in culture make us more positive participants in our communities? Jewish Romanian writer, Norman Manea reminds us, "I have a friend at Yale and he told me the university had bought Stalin's personal library after the fall of Communism. And he comes to me one day and says: 'Norman, this is astonishing, these books speak of an extremely cultivated man, his side notes are those of a remarkably intelligent man.' And let's not forget that this is the same man who used to deliver those idiotic speeches and give some awfully foolish, even imbecile instructions for his people..."³³ We don't even have to go back to any of history's numerous book-burnings to demonstrate that 'cultured' people can act in an 'uncivilised' manner.' Nationalistic movements induce citizens to great activity, and involve cultural and artistic elements to a large degree. The very recent return to nationalist culture policies in Hungary and Romania are yet another reminder of how culture can be used to support any political ideology. Participation in, knowledge of, appreciation of and creation of the arts do not automatically make a person a more active member of their society and 'more active' does not necessarily mean "a better person'.

However, in order to narrow our discussion, let's look at the contemporary arts instead of culture at large or the arts in general. The contemporary arts sector today holds no consensus on how far art is valid solely for its own sake, or how much 'all art is political' or even what is real art.³⁴ Ai Weiwei has asked, "How can you have a show of "contemporary Chinese art" that doesn't address a single one of the country's most pressing contemporary issues?"³⁵ but others beg to differ, "Actually, we wish this tedious term (political art) would go away. These days it usually operates to obscure competing notions of the 'political', replacing potential antagonisms with the self-congratulatory

³³ Norman Manea, interview with Christian Visan, in the Buenos Aires Herald 15 May 2012 <http://www.buenosairesherald.com/article/100836/'language-is-home-and-homeland-for-a-writer'>

³⁴ Associate curators of the 7th Berlin Biennale, the Russian art collective Voina (War), told the following anecdote in one of the show's accompanying publications: 'Kazimir Malevich, after the revolution in Petrograd, armed with a pistol, passed through artists' studios asking who was still painting birches and demanded real art. Armed with a weapon. That is real art.'Right-wing rhetoric disguised as activism – for this is what Voina is spouting – is always bizarrely simplistic: it implies that the world isn't large enough to accommodate a multitude of responses to its many problems. I prefer to ask: How can change be manifested if it can't first be imagined? And who would ever assume that imaginations run along straight lines? Jennifer Higgie, Editorial to Frieze magazine, Issue 149, Sept 2012. <http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/shouts-murmurs/>

³⁵ Ai Weiwei: 'China's art world does not exist' <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2012/sep/10/ai-weiwei-china-art-world>

assumption that all ‘political’ art shares a liberal/progressive and ultimately compatible perspective.”³⁶

Yet observers to the scene readily admit that certain contemporary practices in all the artistic disciplines are concerned overtly with the profound belief that art can stimulate productive reflection on the social, economic or political issues currently affecting our societies. Increasing numbers of artists are choosing to exercise their artistic practice by taking a stance as much as possible ‘outside of society’ (in itself impossible, but understandable as an aim) and criticising what they see as aberrant, unwanted, deviant. These tendencies might include EU policy, global capitalism or the failure of governments to reduce CO2 emissions. And artists not only reject, but also explore: ‘artistic’ initiatives such as The Blackmarket for Useful Knowledge and Non-Knowledge brings experts and audiences to examine contemporary themes and issues and ‘to learn and unlearn’ together. American visual and performance artist Susanne Lacy, whose artistic interests cover violence, poverty, sexism and racism, explains her work in this way, “the best I can hope for is to relate a set of experiences that move us in a direction of understanding each other better, understanding social systems better, thinking about new ways to make art.”³⁷

The 2003 book “Reading Lolita in Tehran” by Iranian writer Azar Nafisi is premised on the experience that literature can teach empathy: whether or not we agree with the behaviour of the characters, we understand why they act as they do. And philosopher Martha Nussbaum argues convincingly that participation in the arts and humanities carries values and habits of thinking that can indeed raise the sensitivity and awareness of individuals and groups (thus of communities), by exercising and practicing critical interrogation of dominant narratives, empathy for others and so on. All of these are fundamental to be able to engage with a certain kind of Western humanistic consciousness, of which democratic principles are a major part.³⁸

Participation in arts processes can also raise awareness of identities and support the development of sufficient individual or group confidence necessary to occupy one’s place in wider society or to demand one’s legal rights. Greek-Ukrainian curator Victoria Ivanova explains, “...wide gaps in

³⁶ Anja Kirschner and David Panos, in Frieze magazine http://blog.frieze.com/art-and-politics-a-survey-part-2/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%253A+FriezeBlog+%2528Frieze+Blog%2529

³⁷ <http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/shouts-murmurs/>

³⁸ Skills for Life, in The Times Literary Supplement, April 30, 2010, edited extract of “Not For Profit: Why democracy needs the humanities” publ by Princeton Univ Press, NJ, 2010

social equality hinder mutual recognition of integrated members in the same social body. This is where art can make a significant contribution. Spaces where art coincides with the promotion of human rights and the interests of social justice can support vulnerable communities. In this context, work on recognition of human rights violations which these communities suffer is the first step. Artistic expression can provide the necessary framework or platform for the second stage: the reclaiming of their rights.”³⁹

With their work, artists protest - against thoughtlessness, against hypocrisy, against one-track mentalities, against assumptions. Because of their critical voices, artists (and also cultural operators who support them) are highly vulnerable targets for those who disagree with their views. And because this is a major artistic tendency in our time, artists are hitting sensitive spots and facing censorship, threat, physical and mental danger at worst, and withdrawal of support or the means of creation and diffusion at best. For this reason, a fresh impetus has arisen in several quarters to promote and defend artists’ human rights, including but not limited to that of free expression. ICARJ (international coalition for arts, human rights and social justice) is an informal group of arts networks and human rights NGO’s initiated by freeDimensional in 2010⁴⁰; the EU Working Group ARJ (arts-rights-justice) was initiated as part of the EU’s social dialogue ‘Access to Culture’ platform in 2012 and the ITI (International Theatre Institute/UNESCO) has also in 2012 formalised their Action Committee on Artists’ Rights.⁴¹ Theatre Without Borders is a global, volunteer network of theatre artists who work on collaboration and reconciliation and are frequently called upon to support artists in danger. Pioneers such as Freemuse (since 1998), International PEN (since 1921) and Index on Censorship (since 1972) are currently collaborating with a range of ‘new’ European and international partners such as Africa’s Arterial Network, India’s Jaya Natya Manch, Russia’s May Congress and the US’s National Alliance Against Censorship in order to launch Artsfex⁴², an initiative intended to become a supportive global network and monitoring system for violations of artistic freedom of expression.

The World Conference on Artistic Freedom of Expression organised by Freemuse and the Frit Ord Foundation in Oslo November 25-27 2012 will bring together censored artists, journalists, scholar and support organisations to explore the phenomenon - “Cultural artefacts carry with them the power to influence the minds and motivations of the masses and with it, the power to

³⁹ Victoria Ivanova, co-Founder and curator, IZOLYATSIA. Platform for Cultural Initiatives.

⁴⁰ www.artsrightsjustice.org

⁴¹ <http://www.iti-artistsrights.iti-germany.de//pages/about-us.php>

⁴² www.artsfex.org

divert people from an awareness of and compliance with the normative behaviours of a society, as dictated by religious and political ideologies.”⁴³ Those who wish to repress such opinions fight back with repression of their rights, for example the right to freedom of expression, to public assembly, to collective representation or a fair trial. There is a body of thought that even argues that repression of arts and artists ought to be used by the EU or other international observers as a major indicator of the degree of democratic freedoms and principles in a country.

This artistic practice of protesting - against a one-dimensional world - by increasing people’s sensitivity, awareness, critical analysis and stimulus for imagining alternatives, could be labelled as ‘active community-ship’ or active engagement in the world, and it could be an encouragement to the general public (or at least their own community of interest) to be itself more critical and discerning, interrogating dominant narratives and questioning the received wisdom they take for granted. It can lead to more sensitive, empathetic, inclusive community members, especially when coupled with community- or team-building processes. It can lead to the development of a confident voice for an individual or group, hitherto marginalised. Respect and implementation of the established human rights of artists and cultural operators may lead to raised awareness and critical discernment amongst a public who will consequently have access to a divergence of opinions. But as we can see in the Pussy Riot case, it can also lead to the hardening of exclusionist attitudes and ideologies - in this case amongst Orthodox believers and others who feel personally wounded by what they see as a desecration of their holy place.

Where does this lead us? World view matters, context matters, and so does education - and that means... arts and culture. Norman Manea (and others) have argued that, “we are not only the product of a family, a place and a community. We are also the result of our reading, the product of our bibliography as well as our biography.”⁴⁴

So if our participation in arts or culture, reading, empathising, criticising, highlighting, crying in the wilderness, protesting... spurs us to action with others in our communities - be they citizens, residents or mere passers-through, we can look for reasons from artist and art critic, John Berger, as he first desperately questions, “What one is warning and protesting against continues unchecked and remorselessly. Continues irresistibly. Continues as if in a permissive unbroken silence. Continues as if nobody had written a single

⁴³ www.artsfreedom.org

⁴⁴ Norman Manea, “La nostra vita è nei libri”, p 84, *Internazionale* 964, 31 August 2012

the cultural component of citizenship : an inventory of challenges

word. So one asks oneself: Do words count?", ...and then concludes, "To protest is to refuse being reduced to a zero and to an enforced silence...one protests in order to save the present moment, whatever the future holds."⁴⁵

Mary Ann DeVlieg

Secretary General, IETM (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts)

Chair: ARJ (Arts, Rights, Justice) Working Group of the Access to Culture Platform

⁴⁵ John Berger, *Bento's Sketchbook*, Pantheon Books (Random House), USA 2011

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
<i>The Cultural Component of Citizenship: an Inventory of Challenges.....</i>	6
Steve Austen	
<i>European Citizenship and the Role of Art and Culture</i>	10
Mary Ann DeVlieg	
<i>Citizenship and Culture</i>	28
DEFINING THE CULTURAL COMPONENT OF CITIZENSHIP	37
Mathieu Kroon Gutiérrez	
<i>Europe and the Challenge of Virtuous Citizenship. What is the Role of Culture?</i> <i>.....</i>	38
HOW IS CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP PRACTICED?	53
Matina Magkou	
<i>Geographies of Artistic Mobility for the Formation and Confirmation of</i> <i>European Cultural Citizenship.</i>	54
Natalia Grincheva	
<i>“Canada’s Got Treasures” Constructing National Identity through Cultural</i> <i>Participation</i>	79
Patricia Adkins Chiti	
<i>Women in Music Uniting Strategies for Talent: Working to Change the</i> <i>Landscape Women in Music.</i>	100
Ana Tomás Hernández	
<i>The Museum in Your Hands: Bringing Together Conversation and Social</i> <i>Inclusion.</i>	113
Chaitas Charalampos & Anastasia Kalou	
<i>Cultural Hutching Nests of Citizenship: a New Role for Contemporary</i> <i>Museums.</i>	143
Goran Tomka	
<i>Do We Need Audience at All? Analyzing Narratives about Audience.</i>	164
Mathieu Rousselin	
<i>Virtual Arts as Martial Arts: le Tunisian Exhibition in La Marsa</i>	181

Pier Luigi Sacco, Guido Ferilli, and Giorgio Tavano Blessi <i>Culture 3.0: A New Perspective for the EU Active Citizenship and Social and Economic Cohesion Policy</i>	198
WHAT ARE THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP?	219
Izabela Henning <i>The Right to Culture vs the Access to Culture: the Critical View on the Chosen Examples of Law Provisions Concerning the Material Side of Culture</i>	220
A CULTURAL COALITION FOR A CITIZENS' EUROPE	231
Patrice Meyer-Bisch <i>Cultural Rights, Ends and Means of Democracies? The Protection and the Creation of Cultural Rights, Condition of any Citizenship</i>	232
Raymond Weber <i>Culture and Citizenship: which Issues for Europe?</i>	243
Cristina Ortega & Roberto San Salvador del Valle <i>Key Co-creation and Co-Responsibility in the Governance of Culture</i>	256
<i>A Cultural Coalition for a Citizens' Europe</i>	260
ACCESS TO CULTURE PLATFORM	263
<i>Colophon</i>	268