

Introductory word

After five years the Ministry of Culture initiated the creation of a memorial volume of essays on culture covering the period between years 2003 ó 2009. The form we decided to choose is similar to the previous 2003 volume. The current one consists of four parts. The first part covers the activities of the ministry itself and the other three consist of the regions, towns, professional and other specialized organizations active in the field of culture, giving opinions and answering questions regarding their cultural environment.

If we are to compare the current volume with the previous one we get quite a comprehensive summary on the direction Czech culture has been heading in the past ten years. While five years ago the activities towards raising the funds from the European Union and so called Norwegian funds were only gradually starting, now we have already successfully realized many projects. While five years ago following the decentralization of the state administration, a new system where the regions and towns could directly influence political issues was only being implemented, today the regions can already provide details on its practical functioning. There are more tasks that result from extraordinary events such as activities with respect to the Czech presidency of the EU Council. Some of the issues that have been perceived as failures in 2003 have unfortunately not yet been corrected ó the sphere of culture has not yet reached a state support of 1 % GNP; despite the fact that the amount of financial means in the cultural area was rising in past years in relation to the total amount of the state budget and in absolute numbers as well, the new Act on cultural heritage has not yet been passed and the churches and religious organizations have not been rehabilitated.

The past five years also brought more frequent changes in the high posts at the ministry. I am well aware of the fact that since 2003, when the introductory word of the previous volume was written by Pavel Dostál, I became already the fifth minister to occupy the role. The following list of successes and failures obviously results from my working efforts and those of my predecessors. And I am glad that most of what have done in the past five years stems back to the ambitions of people that worked here before me; it provides proof that any discussion on culture ought to be pragmatical and not ideological.

During 2003ó2009 the Ministry of Culture succeeded in completing the following issues:

- To accept and implement basic conceptual materials. Next to the State cultural policy for 2009ó2014, that the government accepted at the end of 2008, there are departmental Concept of effective care for movable cultural heritage in the Czech Republic from 2003ó2008, Concept of development and research at the Ministry of Culture from 2004ó2008, Concept of effective support of art from 2007ó2013, Library development concept in the Czech Republic from 2004ó2010, Concept of effective care for traditional folk culture in the Czech Republic from 2003-2010, Concept of effective care for heritage fund, Concept of the Czech cinematography and film industry from 2010ó2016 and the National strategy for digitization of the cultural content material.
- To raise funds from EEA funds and Norway. In three appeals almost 60 cultural projects have been supported by a total amount of over one billion Czech crowns.
- To prepare an Integrated operational program (IOP) in the area of exemplary renewal of national cultural heritage and the monuments listed on the world cultural and natural heritage UNESCO list and to build methodical centres (IOP 5.1.a) and b) the

ministry received thirty four applications in the total amount of requested grants of 12 343 176 954 CZK. Under the priority axis IOP 1.1 Smart administration there are applications aimed at the heritage fund, creation of the digital library and information cultural portal and others.

- To continue cooperation in international programs. The Ministry of Culture and its allowance organizations are engaged in international programs such as amongst others: ENRICH, ATHENA, MICHAEL, MICHAEL PLUS, EDL Net, MEDIA, CULTURE 2000, and CULTURE 200762013.
- Activities related to the Czech presidency of the Council of the European Union. During the presidency several closely publicly observed events took place, for example an international conference šForum for Creative Europeš.
- UNESCO cooperation. In 2009 the Czech Republic acceded to a Convention for Protection of Non-material Cultural Heritage and as a result a folk male dance called šverbu kö was enlisted to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- To improve the state administration performance in the area of monumental care. The existence of regional expert workplaces of the National monumental institute in all regions facilitates performing the duties leading towards effective protection of the monumental funds. The upper level of sanctions was raised and new instruments called protection plans for monumental preservations and zones were implemented. A renewal of identification of intangible heritage fund in the Czech Republic was realized. The number of national cultural monuments rose up to the current total of 236.
- To prepare and pass relevant legal Acts and other legislation, amongst others Act No. 203/2006 Coll., on certain kinds of cultural subsidies, amendment of the Museum Act No. 483/2004 Coll., amendment of the Copyright Act No. 81/2005 Coll., resp. 168/2008 Coll., amendment of Act on state monumental care No. 307/2008 Coll., governmental regulation No. 98/2006 Coll., on awards in the cultural area presented by the Ministry of Culture, regulation No. 413/2004 Coll., Regulation on establishment of historical areas in selected municipalities as historical zones and definition of preservation condition and others.
- Extraordinary cultural events. To name a few, there were for example a project Czech music 2004, exhibition of the Satan's bible (Codex Gigas) in the National library of the Czech Republic in 2008 and an exhibition Skála in Rudolfinum (the best exhibition of 2004), establishing a tradition of museum nights, tetra logy performance Ring of Nibelungs in the National theatre or the opera Death in Venice in the Estates theatre in Prague, project Mozart's Prague 2006, project Prague premiers organized by the Prague Philharmonic and many others.
- To provide solution for space issues of the national museums and galleries. There was for example a reconstruction of the Museum of Czech music building, Vítkov's memorial and National technical museum building. Moreover the National museum became an administrator of the former Federal Assembly building.
- To run a support program for the Czech film industry. The government agreed to pass a draft of the support program of the film industry that deals with the decrease of realized film production in the Czech Republic primarily due to implementation of similar regulations in the neighbouring countries. The program aims at motivating foreign and home production encouraging them to realize their projects in the Czech territory.

- To repatriate illegally exported cultural goods. In 2004 the Act no.101/2001 Coll., on repatriation of illegally exported cultural goods was passed. Tens of objects mainly of a sacral nature were identified abroad.
- To develop central collection evidence (CCE). The database of collections of a museum character is gradually becoming a unique virtual exhibition of the Czech museums.
- To liven up a cooperation in the framework of V4. Together with the Visegrad4 countries the Czech Republic realized several projects such as Visegrad library and Visegrad anthology.
- To re-establish cooperation with certain countries of Latin America after many years.
- To establish the List of Intangible goods of traditional and folk culture of the Czech Republic in 2008. The first four items on the list became the following: Slovak dance ōverbu kö, village carnivals called ōmasopustö and mask parades in Hlinecko, the Rides of the Kings in Slovácko area and hawking ó the art of keeping predatory birds, their protection, training and hunting with them.

The Ministry of Culture did not succeed in the following issues:

- The amount of financial means for cultural area has not yet reached 1% GNP. Despite the fact that the issue has been part of a program statement of every Czech government, it has failed to be realized.
- The Act on monumental heritage has not been passed yet. A draft bill was prepared and its submission to the government was postponed in the end.
- There was not material rehabilitation in regard to the churches and religious organizations.
- The program šSupport of acquisition of museum and galleries activities granted by the Ministry of Culture in period 2004-2008ö, agreed by the governmental regulation No. 1069/2004. Despite the efforts of the Ministry of Culture to gain its support, the government did not provide financial means for the program.
- Permanent source of financial means for State Fund for Support and Development of Czech Cinematography were not established. The same problem persists with the State Cultural Fund of the Czech Republic.

Dear readers, I believe that this memorial volume will provide plenty of useful information proving that, despite the unexpected events that we are experiencing our culture remains a unique phenomenon and issue that we all care about.

Yours sincerely

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Minister of Culture