

MAPPING THE SOCIAL VALUES OF CULTURE

Emmanuel Négrier, Félix Dupin Meynard, Claire Dedieu
CEPEL – CNRS/University of Montpellier (F)

Cultural values in the cultural sphere: a European perspective

1st UNCHARTED Workshop

Faculty of Arts and Humanities of University of Porto

16-17 September 2021

Questions :

- Why questioning the social value of culture ?
- How cultural goods, services or practices are essential ?
- How to solve the paradox : « Priceless » is a common way to state a high value
- Three main points :
 - Value or valuation ?
 - From value to values
 - Eppure si muove...

Value or Valuation ? Value...

- Nathalie Heinich : value is the principle from which acts, ideas, tangible and intangible goods can be measured.
- Luc Boltanski & Eve Chiapello : value = common superior principle
- Aristotle : value is « autothelic » : only refers to itself, other notions refer to it.
- Pierre Muller : policy referential analysis : value : the highest degree of the desirable, inducing norms, algorithms, images
- This « autoreferential » dimension of value : does it imply an « autoreferential » or independant value of culture ?

Value or Valuation ? Valuation

- Far from essentialism, the essentiality of culture is itself a social construction
- Valuation means the contingent nature of cultural value according to a certain context (of time, space and social condition i.e. of a configuration)
- For analysing the policy discourse of cultural value, the contingent approach is quite more pertinent
- Then how to combine an absolute (autothelism) and an relative ? By an empirical research... looking for valuation...

2. From value to values

Empirical research : policy discourse about cultural value in

- 20 years of Int Journal of Cultural Policy
- 20 years of Cultural Trends
- 47 country profiles of Compendium of Cultural Policy
- 50 books dealing with comparative or national cultural policy

Brut result : 104 notions related to valuation of culture

Dilemma : reducing but integrating ; classifying without simplifying too much ?

Attempt n°1 : Boltanski and Thévenot's cities

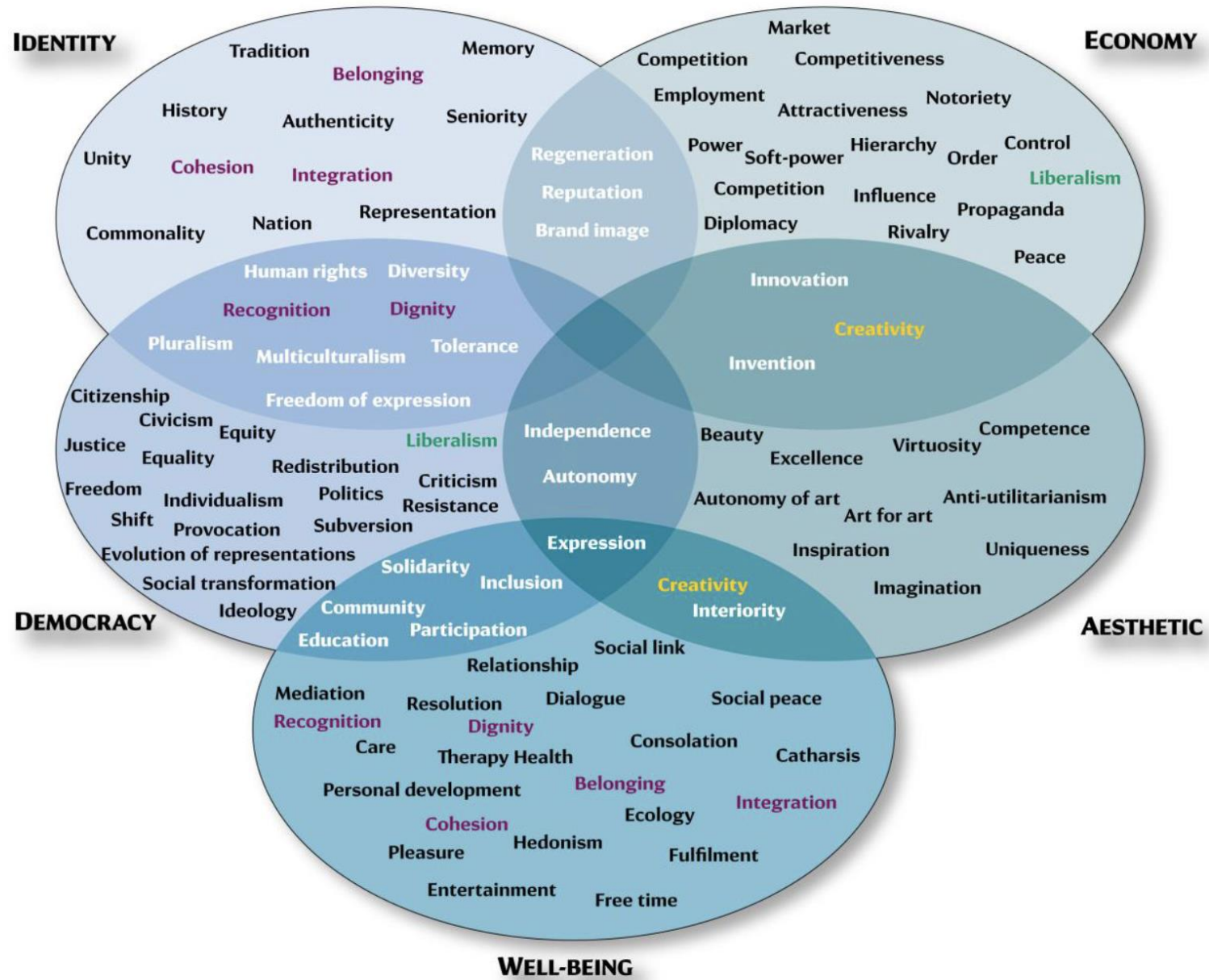
Cities	Cultural reference values
Inspired city	<i>Creativity, interiority, aesthetics, innovation, excellence</i>
Domestic city	<i>Tradition, identity, memory, authenticity, seniority</i>
Opinion City	<i>Community, participation, expressiveness, recognition</i>
Civic city	<i>Justice, equality, tolerance, dignity, plurality, interculturality</i>
Market city	<i>Market, attractiveness, promotion, media coverage,</i>
Industrial city	<i>professionalism, sector development, outreach</i>
Project Cited	<i>transformation, empowerment, emancipation, autonomy</i>

Result : really not bad...

But not integrative enough for notions as : well-being, personal development, care, ...

Attempt n°2 : Back to the dichotomy : intrinsic vs extrinsic

- Presentation :
 - Yesterday : intrinsic (art for art ; culture for culture, self (even « pure » reference)
 - Today : extrinsic (value provided by external legitimacy, i.e. from an other policy domain : education, social, environment, politics)
- Refutation :
 - From be early period of our study, extrinsic value already exists
 - Nowadays : persistence of intrinsic value of culture
- Proposition : thematic groups consisting in 5 main Value poles
 - Aesthetics ; Economy ; Well-being ; Identity ; Democracy



3. Eppure si muove...

- Conciliation : refutation of the substitution of intrinsic by extrinsic but rise of some extrinsic values (i.e. environment... transitional culture, etc.)
- Cultural policy peculiarity : permanent conflict and compromise between policy paradigms (and not substitution, like for Agriculture policy : the farmer and his polycultural land ; then the agricultural entrepreneur ; then perhaps a new sustainable farmer) : cultural paradigms coexist, albeit controversial
- The 5 fingers model of valuation is anything but stable
 - Controversial definitions of cultural democracy, of well-being, of economy...
 - All related to specific configurations of cultural policy

Final Challenge

- Perhaps these findings are related too much to institutional domain of cultural policies and practices... and too little to other kinds of non-institutional or even anti-institutional sides of the cultural life
- That's why in WP2, we opened the window to new empirical research on these contrasted practices ; to see how distinct configurations may affect cultural valuation...