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Shared Policies: Future of Democratic Cultural Development. New models of partnership between the public, private and civil sector (position paper)

Introduction

The main aim of the paper is to show that only "shared policies" are legitimate one in contemporary world, and that mutual complementary enrichment of researchers and policy makers coming from all three sectors will be beneficiary for the creation of new, more democratic standards in policy making.

This is especially important for the newest democracies in Southeast Europe, Caucasus, as well in Ukraine and Moldavia. Those countries have to reorganize their public policies using all existing capacities in their environment, and trying to make the most synergetic and multiplying effects as possible in shortest possible delay.

Synergy of the *elected power* (government and its main ideology), *expert power* (public and private cultural institutions) and *socially responsible forces* (NGO sector) who approach process of policy making from different standpoints will definitely contribute that "territorially driven cultural policy" ¹ will prevail instead of "constructed community driven cultural policy" (nation building or "dreaming")².

Cultural policy was for a long time an activity done within narrow circles of cultural administrators of public sector, under patronage of the Minister of culture and the ideology of the political party s/he represents.

Depending of the level of democracy, more or less meritocratic principle has been applied, as well as arms length principle. It means that more and more expert bodies and professional opinion has been taken in account, and less and less power has stayed within ministries and public authorities themselves, but also, less and less participation from citizens in policy making has been expected. It has very positive consequences regarding introduction of the diversity of policy measures and instruments, evaluations, etc., but

¹ Word: territory here does not mean spatial aspects of Cultural Policy, but taking responsibility to raise quality of cultural life and practices in the whole country, region, city... for all communities, groups and individuals on it. So it can not be the one and the same policy – "one" culture (usually of the main ethnic group) for all – but support to all forms of expressions and participation in cultural life. It is exactly opposite to traditional concept of cultural policy which aimed toward reinforcement of so-called national cultural identity, national values and artistic traditions.

² V. Milena Dragicevic Sestic and Sanjin Dragojevic "Imagined divides" in: *Transcultural Europe*, ed. Ulrike H. Meinhof, Palgrave publisher London 2006.

bringing in the same time certain level of alienation and bureaucratization.

But, time of “Malraux” or “Lang” (great individual driven) cultural policy has passed, as well as of cultural policy making within circles of anonymous bureaucracies. The necessity now is to create a new model of policy making where all actors within one society will have a possibility to contribute³.

Maybe Chris Smith, as a British Minister for Culture had represented a new kind of leader in policy making – somebody who wanted Creative industries to take over cultural field – meaning, that cultural field and all its actors should take responsibility for their own development.

But now – more coherent and balanced approach should be invented in countries where markets do not have potential for easy sustainability of the creative sector, and countries where language spoken is not advantage for future commercialization or use of artistic (creative industry) verbal products.

Principal approach in policy making

If we can define the method of creating cultural policy within the EU as *territory driven cultural policies* (based on facts and present research, situation and needs of diverse population) within the borders of one country⁴, in the same time the method which prevailed in Eastern World was method based on *ethnically driven, identity-driven cultural policy*. (It can be said also that *constructed community around ethnical principle was ultimate goal of cultural policies of new democracies*).

The first approach emphasizes the territory and citizenship. It is inclusive approach, because all cultural models (social, generational, elitist, popular, traditional), major and minority cultures are taking in account not only within instruments of cultural policy, but also in a way of conceiving and developing cultural practices. Motto would be: celebrating cultural diversity on our territory!⁵ The main issue became: “How are the

³ French “NO” to European constitution is significant as a “mark”, symbol of the end of political leadership era, although it has produced such a huge shock among European cultural and political elites. It has shown that administrative elites can not debate among themselves and create platform for themselves. Although Constitution might be excellent instrument – that was not felt by social actors as SHARED achievement, but as an invention from Brussels which will further eloignate policy making from citizen

⁴ The only exception is Belgium. “Since the 1970s, Belgium has undergone a step by step process towards building a federal state made up of territorial regions and linguistic communities. The history of cultural policies since the 1970s can therefore be looked at by examining the activities of the three independent linguistic communities (Flemish, French and German speaking communities) and that of the Federal state; each with their own independent institutions, traditions and political influences” (Compendium, 6th edition).

⁵ Theory and the texts of French cultural policy documents are significant in this respect. While since the 1980` the word “territory” could hardly be found in cultural policy documents, since 2000 it is the key word to describe the concepts and priorities. See for example texts of Jean-Pierre Saez.

cultural institutions linked up with their territories?” and not anymore with their (national) community⁶.

The second approach emphasizes the “ethnicity” as the key element of self-identification, trying to conceive and conceptualize the cultural policy for the imagined (constructed) community. The word “Diaspora” is emphasized, as well as all key “national identifiers”, in the majority of cases language, alphabet, religion, traditional art forms... The document “Armenia 2020” represents clearly this approach. As special characteristics of Armenian culture are cited: “unique language, unique alphabet”, “the place of culture in Armenian identity”, “church vs. state as keeper of culture”, while “bi and multiculturalism of Armenians is seen as the most negative component of present day culture. It seems that another document, National Report of Armenian Cultural Policy, done within the Council of Europe program of evaluation of cultural policies, is unacceptable for Council of Europe (the National debate and acceptance of the National report to be exposed in Compendium of Cultural Policies of Europe – web site, has been postponed for two years after the reports of national and foreign experts had been finished - in 2003). It means that exists mutual non-understanding of those two concepts in policy-making and that dialogue between the two is hardly established.

Still, in many countries rationale of territorially driven cultural policies has not yet been accepted. They are still obsessed with ethnic (constructed community) based cultural policies. In this case – there are no SHARED cultural policies. Cultural policy is centralized in hands of so-called “national” institutions (Academy of sciences, Nat. museum, libraries...). It is even not a question of transferring, delegating responsibilities, (deconcentration) which is a new challenge of modern democratic cultural policies.

Analysis of the cultural policies of many transition countries, and even of the countries who joined EU in 2005 is showing that citizen is still less important than compatriot whenever he lives, and that the imaginary “national” territories (sometimes politically lost territories like Kosovo for Serbia, or parts of Turkey for Armenians) are still more present in cultural discourse than the territory on whom the contemporary state is developed and for whom is really responsible.

On the other side, territorially driven cultural policy is policy usually created through dialogue, involving many different groups and cultural sectors and different fields (from urban planning to social development, tourism and entrepreneurship, etc.)... As traditionally cultural sector did not identify with territories, but with "nation" and then later with cultural urban elites, it imposed necessity for new public policies to explicitly address the territory in its totality. So, it was the reason that when public policy decides to go toward territory, they had to address not only “their” institutions and artists (majority

⁶ Citation from the symposium: The opening up of cultural institutions to a new public in Europe; towards new territorial cultural policies, Banlieues d`Europe, Rheims, 21-22. November 2004.

in urban centres), but all the “actors” (operators) on the territory (social workers, educators...)

This new models of partnership in creating (conceptualizing and designing) cultural policy priorities, strategies and instruments started slowly to be developed through different models of "para-state" bodies (art councils, etc.), but also of civil society initiated "forums", and associations of private sector.

Now we are speaking more and more about Public - Private Partnership (3P), but not only two – but all three sectors has to be in permanent dialogue and interaction. There will be no real, balanced, sustainable cultural development if all the three sectors are not engaged in both creating and implementing cultural policy. Why?

Balanced approach and complementarities of interest and possibilities are guaranteeing the realistic, down-to-earth selection of priorities and instruments. Shared aims are the only aims to be achieved, and intersectorial approach is contributing toward widening of the policy perspectives and alternatives. Also, joining private and civil sectors to public sector in policy making is bringing another sort of knowledge and operational methods in public administration management, giving to policy planning more certainty in its viability and legitimacy.

What are the interest and the values of the three sectors which are crucial for their involvement in policy making, and priority selection?

Of course, their contributions can be both positive and negative, but I will focus here mostly on positive contributions, because negative will be rejected in policy dialogue and selection of alternatives from other two sectors (and if there is real dialogue in policy making, because there are three partners – two can always find a way to prevent possible predominance of the risky elements - for the state of the arts and cultural policy - in each of them).

Risking oversimplifying, we can see the following scheme:

PUBLIC	PRIVATE	CIVIL
Traditional values	Modern values	Social values
Identity building	Risk orientation	Inclusivity
Appreciations of old elites	Elitism and leadership	Equality
Institution building	Organization building	Movements
Museums and libraries	enterprises	Circles, clubs, NGOs
Past	Future	Present

High standard routine	Innovation	Social experiment
Oeuvre	Product	process

Negative elements, among others, could be:

Sclerotisation	Commercialization Consumerism	propagandas
bureaucratization	oversimplification	Amateurism (diminishing of professional standards)
Culture as value per se	Culture as economic investment & job provider	Culture as a tool of a social change

It is clear that without *civil society* participation in cultural practices and its influences on public policies, when would cultural POLICY of any country integrate instruments and measures for the people and groups with special needs?

If *private sector* had not forced “product approach” in arts, how small would have been accessibility to work of arts? “Spectacularization” of museums and projects like Museum nights, might be insignificant from the standpoint of museology and sometimes kitschy from the esthetical standpoint – but they have brought new audiences, especially those who for different reasons do not want to be part of associative movements, and in the same time are lacking cultural capital by their birth and education.

Analysis of cultural policies in the countries with underdeveloped civil society has shown that many instruments are lacking, and even if those instruments are recommended by the evaluation experts of Council of Europe, they can not be implemented solely by public policies. (Bosnia and Herzegovina can be excellent example).

Or on the other side it is clear why Great Britain had developed the concept of creative industry. Obviously, it was not just the wish of public sector, but its strong private sector in culture wanted development and business success, which is part of culture of entrepreneurship of neo-liberal state (there is no wish for “growing” within cultural sector in other European countries yet).

But, it means in the same time that it is impossible to suggest this same approach as main policy priority for the countries where private sector has just re-started, like Albania. In those countries public policies for support development of creative industries are not realistic and not viable, even they can be counterproductive in the implementation.

However its content and instruments might look important, even as panacea for the country problems, policy transfer is practically impossible. Policy should be created in dialogue with existent sectors, not imposed from above, or from outside, because it needs active implementors outside of public administration, in all three sectors. Also, strategy has to come through interactive dialogue on the already consensual policy.

Cultural policy and cultural strategy today have to be “agreed”, shared. It is not about consensus – it is more about PARTICIPATIVE process of making... -

Shared policy is:

- Transparent, (naturally as publicly debated and agreed)
- Pro-active, fostering innovation, stimulating non-existent areas
- Catalytic, initiating new programs, projects and ideas
- Cross-fertilizing, involving different sectors, and ideas from artistic, scientific and other fields
- Coordinated within government and within different level of public policies
- Inclusive, for all marginal and minority groups

So, SHARED POLICY is a future of cultural development within each country, region and city. Cultural policy has to be integral part of the public responsibility; it means responsibility of all main vectors of cultural life, done through precise procedures and in dialogue.

But policy making dialogue has to be installed on European and world level too (through Council of Europe and UNESCO) - as only shared policies on large scale can be effective and achieve the willing impact.

Using parameters for evaluation of level of democracy of cultural policy it is evident that shared policy will help in achieving the highest democratic standards:

- model of cultural policy which implies systemic measures and existence of long term planning
- mechanism of decision making – detached from political bodies
- public dialogue (consensus around major policy issues)
- all actors included (government, parliament, professional organizations, creative industries, media, public participation in a widest sense)
- publicly known priorities and criteria of evaluation
- transparency of the whole model (from declared priorities to budget distribution)
- evaluation as starting and final point of operation.

So is shared policy necessity (or trendy tool)? It is not just rhetorical question, but real one, if we have to achieve the shared policy with the initiative coming from above? On the other side, if it is grass-root initiative, it has great probability that it will not be heard by public bodies. It shows the real limits of public-private-civil partnership – whose success will always depend on the will of public sector⁷.

⁷ Since 1997 many (un)successful moves in this respect had happened in Serbia – all of them initiated from civil sector... Education for cultural policy (Magna agenda, PALGO centre, YUSTAT) and finally big conference Cultural Policy and Cultural Production, organized by Centre for Contemporary Arts in autumn 2000. But, however successfully organized, their impact had been limited and effectiveness nearly none. One “small” project *Open road E – 761* is trying to show the path again toward new public policies of decentralization and intersectorial approach through partnership of four towns (Kraljevo, Cacak, Uzice and Pozega), uniting NGO sector in those cities and trying to raise awareness and sensitivity of politicians and

In spite of that, the shared policy is the future of democratic transformation. Developed with strong commitment of civil and private sector, it demands the professional and highly responsible public sector, accountable for its achievements.

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Key words:

Cultural policy: territorially-driven and ethnically, identity-driven; civil sector, public-private-civil partnership

Summary:

The author is introducing new terms to nominate and analyze two dominant systems in cultural policy making: "territorially driven cultural policy" (policy thinking cultural development and quality of life within one country, taking in account all of its diversities)

public sector of the necessity for the new policy approach. (Once again, it is only money of foreign donors' involved, local economy and local politics, as well as Ministry of culture, had not yet recognized the importance of the project).

and "ethnically, constructed community- driven cultural policy" (nation building cultural policy, focusing identity construction through arts as its main goal).

This text tries to show that only "shared policies", focusing on the establishment of diversified cultural systems on one territory, are legitimate one in contemporary world, and that mutual complementary enrichment of researchers and policy makers coming from all three sectors will be beneficiary for the creation of new, more democratic standards in policy making.

This is especially important for the newest democracies in Southeast Europe, Caucasus, as well in Ukraine. Those countries have to reorganize their public policies using all existing capacities, trying to make the most synergetic and multiplying effects as possible in shortest possible delay.

Synergy of the *elected power* (government and its main ideology), *expert power* (public and private cultural institutions) and *socially responsible forces* (NGO sector) who approach process of policy making from different standpoints might contribute to substantial change of cultural policy and cultural system.