



MASARYK UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS
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Defining Culture and Cultural Policy

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Today topics:

- Culture
- High culture
- Low culture
- Economics of the arts
- Cultural Economics
- Cultural policy
- Cultural goods
- Anthropology of arts
- Designing a cultural policy – presented by Daria and Thomas

Culture

- Definition – long time discussions about this topic
- An international debate centered in UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) since 1960s
- Synonym for the performing and visual arts
- Culture was a bulward against mass society



The Term „Cultural Economics“

- Is to some extent a misnomer
- It is hard to think of another term that easily covers the creative and performing arts and heritage as well as the cultural industries.
- The earlier name for the subject was „economics of the arts“ –a few books in the field still are published with that title.



The problem with „the arts“ is that:

- it is more specific and narrow than the subject matter included in cultural economics
- It tends to apply to „high culture“ and by similar parastatal organizations in other countries.
- HERITAGE – built heritage, museums and art galleries) often falls under a different administration and
- the CULTURAL INDUSTRIES (film, music, publishing, broadcasting and so on) – „low culture“ – mostly receive little public support.

- Ministries of Culture have responsibility for policy over the whole cultural sector and cultural economists follow suit.
- Cultural economics, therefore, is the application of economics to the production, distribution and consumption of all cultural goods and services.

Economic characteristics of cultural goods

- They contain a creative or artistic element
- Are tangible objects –
 - such as an artwork or a book
- Others are intangible services –
 - like a musical performance or a visit to a museum.
- Some are final goods that are supplied to consumers
- Other are intermediate goods and services that go into production of other cultural products or into non-cultural output - a CD may be sold to the consumer, played on the radio as an input to a broadcast or played in a shop or sports hall.



- Some cultural goods are capital or durable consumer goods – a picture in a museum, a video – and they yield a flow of services over their lifetime, others, especially the performing arts, exist only for a particular time span.
- Have cultural goods any common elements with all other goods and services???



- Yes – their production utilizes resources of land, labour and capital and other inputs, particularly human ingenuity.
- No – they are not all sold on the market, though many are, as are the labour services of artists and other creative workers.

- Some cultural products are supplied by the government and may be provided free of charge, being financed out of taxes.
- That is a policy decision, not an economic one – most cultural goods are not pure public goods.
- Cultural goods and services have an element of public goods characteristics about them that markets cannot fully take into account through prices.

Can the allocation of resources via the price mechanism produce the socially desirable output of cultural goods and services?

- No – there is a variety of reasons:
 - By their very nature cultural goods have some of the qualities of public goods.
 - The state will intervene in markets either to provide the good directly, to subsidize it, or to control its production or distributions by regulation.
 - The consumer demand does not reflect the full value of these goods because they are experience goods.
 - All consumers' tastes are not fully formed and they cannot have full information about cultural goods.



Cultural Policy

"Cultural policies reflect the fact than
[humanity] today is faced with the choice
between seeking a purblind and despairing
escape in nihilism,
or resolutely confronting the future.,,"

Augustin Girard with Genevieve Gentil
Cultural development: experiences and policies,
2nd ed. (Paris: Unesco, 1983), p. 186



- How the state organised the production of cultural goods...
- In cultural policy has been a changing balance between central, regional and local government, especially with respect to the finance of culture (will be next lessons)
- 4 main models of state behaviour in sommer:
 - Constructor – State is owner and decisionmaker (China)
 - Architect – Ministry of culture (CZ or France)
 - Patron – Art Councils (UK)
 - Easymaker – Tax reduces for donators (USA)

Antropology of art

■ Culture:

- Short definition – a specific cultural goods and services
- Long definition – all, what make people diferent from other people

■ Art –involves this behaviour:

- Artifacts of human creation
- Created through the exercise of exeptionall skills
- Produced in a public medium
- Intended to affect the senses
- Seen to share stylistic conventions with other works.