



HAL
open science

New cultural policies in Europe: toward a social fonction of culture and arts

Olivier Moeschler

► **To cite this version:**

Olivier Moeschler. New cultural policies in Europe: toward a social fonction of culture and arts. European Sociological Association (ESA) 10th Conference, “Social Relations in Turbulent Times”, Sep 2011, Genève, Switzerland. hal-01314466

HAL Id: hal-01314466

<https://hal.science/hal-01314466>

Submitted on 19 May 2016

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

New Cultural Policies in Europe : Towards a “Social” Function of Culture and Arts?

Olivier Moeschler (University of Lausanne) and Olivier Thévenin (University of Haute Alsace)

RN: RN02 – Sociology of the Arts

Introduction

Public policy makers in local communities in Europe have become decisive political actors in Europe, whether it happened following decentralization efforts as in the case of France or by federalist tradition as it exists in Switzerland.

In this context, intervening in cultural spheres like cultural equipment, arts education or big cultural events, with the specific objectives to develop the economy, tourism or communication, or even transborder cooperation, has become important and multi-faceted.

Culture as such becomes a tool and an element of strategic importance for positioning and developing territories. This all is happening in a time of considerable changes in European cultural policies – affecting the social fabric - since de agenda 21 meetings for culture in Barcelona in 2004.

The aim of our contribution is to explore the way in which this issue is relevant to a case study in transborder context. Cultural cooperation between the Republic and Canton of Jura (Switzerland) and the Belfort Territory (France) is in fact sufficiently specific to render their collaboration instructive and to illustrate the general idea of scales, which gains more and more importance in cultural policy in Europe.

Scales : Cultural Policy at the dawn of territorial policy

One aim of public action in the realm of culture both in the RCJ and the TB has been since 2006 political cooperation between the two territories.

The emancipatory ambition of the type of cultural policy that the two regions share is of course based on the will to support creation and cultural action. But is also based on the will to link those priorities to local development (specifically of transport), be it economic, touristic, social or « intercultural ».

By furthering access to culture and the practice of culture, by aiming to develop a diverse cultural agenda and offer, by working with the local shareholders, by furthering networking between the actors in the framework of urban, education and social policies, the cultural dimension becomes an essential component of territorial policy in those two regions.

At the same time, linked to the emergence of the territorial question, new issues around the topics of identity, image, memory and citizenship are at stake.

As far as methodology goes, our contribution is based on an ongoing cross-analysis of reports, decisions, studies, programs, laws, press articles produced or sponsored by the two regional entities in questions. These discursive and programmatic elements are studied taking into account the profile and the history of those territories in their respective national context.

It is there, in the frame of the debates, the programs and the political measures that derive from them, that negotiation takes place around the definition of the categories of cultural cooperation (works, actors, institutions, « dispositifs », equipment, events, training...) and through which becomes defined what Pierre Muller (1995) calls the “reference base” of cultural policy in a local community.

The working together of these two transborder terrains is also part and parcel of an effort to promote networking between researchers (sociologists, political scientists, ethnologists, statisticians...) and the professionals from the cultural fields on both sides of the French-Swiss border, actively pursued by the authors for some years now¹.

In the following few minutes we would like to present the main characteristics of our case study. We would also like to develop a reflexive dimension concerning these experiences of governance of transborder cultural policies, on the level of the territory and the local community where the factors of recomposition and decomposition of cultural policies are not only evaluated on the basis of exclusively artistic criteria but also by taking into account historical, geographical and societal elements.

¹ Un colloque international co-organisé en octobre 2007 par les auteurs de cette communication, qui a donné lieu à des actes (Moeschler et Thévenin, 2009), a été l'élément fondateur de ce partenariat transfrontalier.

Cultural policy in the RCJ : developping exchanges with the outside

Born out of an autonomist movement after the second world war, the Canton of Jura is created and being granted its autonomy from the Canton of Bern in 1979. Bordering the urban areas of Bale, Bern and the Leman, the Canton of Jura is particular by its small size (830 km²) and its 25 km border with France.

It is also very rural : Delémont, the regional capital, has 11.500 inhabitants and the population density is very low – 70 000 inhabitants total = 84,3 inhabitants per km².

Being a geographical enclave and heavily relying on agriculture and a few industrial sectors in recomposition (watchmaking and small mechanics), the Canton of Jura nevertheless acts on the potential of its territory and disposes of non-negligible resources.

Cultural development has begun to be structured recently (in the nineties) following a study of the Institute for the sociology of mass communication of Lausanne University, which had been solicited by the Jura government. The requirements for this evaluation were twofold: the organization first of all of several general meetings to gather the divers viewpoints of the actors in the cultural field and to write up, secondly, an expert report containing recommendations for the main threads of public cultural policy.

As a result, this dense document² presents four scenarios for cultural policy and underlines organizational problems concerning the principles of government action rather than proposing its own cultural aims.

The authors of the report advocated amongst other things a more active involvement³ of the Canton by way of a cultural delegate⁴ more imposing and not only reactive, and geared towards professional and more modern cultural producers.

² Jean-Yves Pidoux, Muriel Surdez, *Politique culturelle jurassienne : bilan et propositions*, ISCM-UNIL, avril-décembre 2000.

³ Jean-Yves Pidoux, Muriel Surdez, « L'expérience de l'expertise. Ou : comment la politique et la science contaminent une politique culturelle », *Carnets de Bord* n°4, 2002, 38-48, p 43.

⁴ *Le Temps*, vendredi 30 aout 2002.

The project of governance globally aims at a more attractive Canton of Jura in the economic, demographic and social fields. It is mainly oriented towards the more consensual aspects of the artistic options and at the same time it defends the subsidiarity principle.

This principle clearly organizes the responsibility of intervention from first and foremost the local community, to the Canton and finally to the Swiss confederation.

This stance, even though it is coherent with the Swiss federal context, does however not restrain the choice – even if modest – of the Jura government in the matters of cultural policy. The Jura government retains first and foremost the scenario of the Pidoux/Surdez report that proposes the development of exchanges across the border.

One of the advantages of this process of reflection and analysis in the Jura Parliament and the cultural sphere will probably produce a process leading to the creation (or rather re-creation) in 2012 of a full time cultural delegate at the level of the Canton.

The Belfort territory and the fund for transborder cooperation

In the vein of the option chosen by the Jura Parliament⁵, and following the signing of a convention, a fund for transborder cultural cooperation was established in 2006 between the Belfort Territory and the Republic of the Canton of Jura. Contrary to the Canton of Jura, the Belfort territory already has a large infrastructure for public readings and live shows and is nationally and internationally known for its support for well known artists specifically in the context of renowned festivals (Eurockéennes and Entrevues for example).

⁵ « Il est toutefois intéressant de souligner que le « Rapport Pidoux » ne faisait pas état de l'absence de référence à la France dans le discours des différents interlocuteurs. L'aspect favorable du contexte politique d'ouverture vers l'extérieur est donc tempéré par cet état de fait, et force est de constater qu'ouverture n'est pas synonyme d'ouverture vers la France, la tendance « naturelle » ou historique des Jurassiens à se tourner vers les grosses métropoles francophones voisines que sont celles de Neuchâtel, Genève, Lausanne pouvant constituer un élément d'explication. » Nathalie Naili

Thanks to its large potential for cultural development, the Belfort territory is a precursor for cultural affairs on the national French scene. This dynamic stance is the result of a long process and the voluntarism is still manifest locally, nationally⁶, across the border and internationally.

The capacity to project itself on a larger scale is a necessity for the RCJ and a priority for the BT. Each collectivity envisions this cooperation as an opportunity to « practice territorial government aiming to assure the presence of the territory and to construct more satisfactory forms of solidarity ».

Emmanuel Négrier and Phillippe Teillet characterize this approach as « developing facets of the territory that had been hidden so far : their singular cultural policy, their appeal, their genius in the matter of governance by example⁷ ».

The least visible aspect but the most salient one in the light of the actions pursued in these two territories in the context of their convention is the professionalization of Swiss and French public territorial action. It is embodied by the creation of efficient instruments of public action, which allow developing the potential for cultural action in mutual partnership.

This cooperation contains all the ingredients necessary to assure success since the collectivities share a common mindset of territorial solidarity (the French neighbor sharing his equipment without ostensibly claiming leadership). The RCJ and the BT also open up substantial financial resources in the context of the fund and succeed in motivating the cultural actors to launch projects and to conceive of their role in the long term.

⁶ Yves Akermann le Président du Conseil Général est également Président de la commission culture de l'association des Départements de France.

⁷ Emmanuel Négrier et Philippe Teillet p 94

Transborder cooperation through territorialization

The logic of public action concerning the arts and the territorial character of “cultural democratization” form a complex issue which needs to take into account a number of parameters, one of which is the national context of cultural policy.

Switzerland is thinking the territorial dimension in its expertise of cultural policy on the scale of cities and cantons, sovereign in cultural matters. The Swiss context of cultural policy must be understood in the light of the subsidiarity principle and its specificities:

A federalist system, direct democracy and a form of multiculturalism based on the respect for difference (of language, culture and traditions), but also on the recognition and the preservation of its heritage and acquired position, aiming to constantly update the values to be shared.

Combining the two traditions makes for decentration from institutional habits (centralized for France and polycentric or local in Switzerland) and allows new questions to emerge concerning public action in arts and culture.

Territorialization is one of the possible meeting points, since in France the territorial collectivities have an ever-growing role that brings together the actors on both sides of the border as well as the cultural policy of the elected representatives.

To integrate a territorial logic in the cultural policy of the collectivities does not mean to radically change public action. Public action continues to act mainly in favor of equal access to culture and the arts and adheres to the objectives more or less explicitly stated in national standards, and represent thus a vertical model. .

As underlined by Emmanuel Négrier and Philippe Teillet, professional cultural actors are often reluctant to the idea of a transverse logic of cultural policy. They often perceive this as being in opposition to their professional autonomy in their respective fields (in the sociological sense) and as an extrinsic, heteronomous logic, which, from the outside, imposes on cultural and artistic activities different objectives⁸.

⁸ Emmanuel Négrier et Philippe Teillet P 102

Territorialisation can thus provoke fear in those who see in this change of rules a withdrawal of support to creation in favor of social policy, or worse, like a misuse of their work for demagogical ends.

Conclusion

The interest of this example of transborder cooperation is to point out the ambivalence of cultural policy of the public collectivities. In this study they maintain the support for professional actors while at the same time trying to develop the rich diversity in the territory by looking at culture also in the anthropological sense and by integrating notions concerning the education and participation of citizens as well as the transverse character of the artistic and cultural sectors.

The comparison of these two different political contexts and the analysis of a process of cooperation in transborder cultural policy of two neighboring entities in Europe call our attention to the fact, be it necessary, that public cultural policies are to be considered in the larger context of territorial policy.

Just as culture is no longer the protected and tacitly valued domain it used to be, cultural policy can no longer stay away from the demands that characterize other public policies.

Culture does, so to say, get off its pedestal and accept to become, partially, a policy like any other. Local issues then become just as important as those called central or artistic and cultural, which brings about a profound transformation of the types of cultural policy which are put in place in France, in Switzerland, and more generally, in Europe⁹.

The most important thing is maybe, more precisely “peripheral” : art and culture are less important by themselves than they are for reinforcing or even creating social ties in line with the larger preoccupations of public collectivities.

The artistic and cultural development is imagined, at different levels and at different territorial scales, in order to drive communities of creation, enabling the sharing of collective practice, of categories of thought, of representations of common values, every element of which culture and creativity are at the same time part and parcel and on which they depend.

⁹ « L'union européenne en adoptant en 2007 l'agenda pour la culture proposé par la commission a aussi fait le choix de renforcer, via un forum culturel européen, son dialogue avec les organisations de la société civile concernées par ces enjeux ». Emmanuel Négrier et Philippe Teillet p 107.

Références

CHAUDOIR Philippe et DE MAILLARD Jacques (2005), *Culture et politique de la ville : une évaluation*, La Tour d'Aigues, Ed. de l'Aube.

FAURE Alain et NÉGRIER Emmanuel (2007), *Les politiques publiques à l'épreuve de l'action locale : critiques de la territorialisation*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

GREFFE Xavier (2007), *Artistes et marchés*, Paris, La Documentation française.

MOESCHLER Olivier (2001), *Publics de la culture à Lausanne*, Lausanne, Service des affaires culturelles et Bureau lausannois de statistique.

MOESCHLER Olivier et THÉVENIN Olivier (2009), *Les Territoires de la démocratisation culturelle*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

MULLER Pierre (1995), Les politiques publiques comme construction d'un rapport au monde », in A. FAURE, G. POLLET et Ph. WARIN (dir.), *La construction du sens dans les politiques publiques. Débats autour de la notion de référentiel*, Paris, L'Harmattan, p. 153-179.

NEGRIER Emmanuel (2005), *La question métropolitaine. Les politiques à l'épreuve des changements d'échelle territoriale*, Grenoble, Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, collection Symposium.

NEGRIER Emmanuel et TEILLET Philippe « La montée en puissance des terioires facteur de recomposition ou de décomposition des politiques culturelles ? », in SAEZ Jean-Pierre et collectif (2008), *Culture and Société : un lien à recomposer*, Toulouse, Ed. de l'Attribut.

NAILI Nathalie, « La coopération culturelle transfrontalière : de la réciprocité comme principe dominant », Master 2, Développement culturel et direction de projet, sous la direction de Jean-Damine Collin, Université de Lyon 2, 2008.

Observatoire des politiques culturelles de Grenoble, *L'évaluation au service des politiques culturelles locales*, Paris, la documentation française, 1994.

PERRET Bernard, *L'évaluation des politiques publiques*, Paris la Découverte, 2001.

PIDOUX Jean-Yves (1994), *Langhoff à Lausanne. L'ouragan lent*, Bâle et Lausanne, Ed. Theaterkultur et Ed. d'En bas.

PIDOUX Jean-Yves, MOESCHLER Olivier, *Sources de la statistique de la culture et indicateurs statistiques culturels prioritaires*, Neuchâtel, Office fédéral de la statistique, (16 Culture médias, emploi du temps), 2001.

PIDOUX Jean-Yves et SURDEZ Muriel (2002), « L'expérience de l'expertise. Ou : comment la politique et la science contaminent une politique culturelle », *Carnets de Bord* n°4, 38-48.

PRONGUÉ Bernard, *Politique culturelle jurassienne 1979-1991. Rapport pour une évaluation*, Porrentruy, Office du Patrimoine, 1991.

Rapport sur la législature 2007-2010, *Le Jura sur la voie d'une nouvelle dynamique*, www.jura.ch

SAEZ Jean-Pierre et collectif (2008), *Culture and Société : un lien à recomposer*, Toulouse, Ed. de l'Attribut.

Les sources de première main utilisées (documents officiels, sites internet, etc.) sont citées en note.

Olivier Moeschler, sociologue, est chercheur associé à l'Observatoire Science, Politique et Société (OSPS) de l'Université de Lausanne (UNIL). Ses travaux portent sur la sociologie des arts et de la culture, la sociologie des pratiques culturelles et des publics, les questions de démocratisation culturelle et de territoires, les politiques culturelles, les comparaisons inter- et intra-nationales. Actuellement, il prépare un ouvrage sur la genèse et le devenir de la politique du cinéma en Suisse et, en co-direction, un recueil de textes intitulé *Nouveaux regards sur les pratiques culturelles* (à paraître en 2011 chez L'Harmattan).

Olivier Thévenin est Professeur de Sciences de l'information et de la communication et membre du CRESAT de l'Université de Haute Alsace. Il consacre ses recherches à la sociologie des publics, des institutions et des pratiques culturelles. Il est l'auteur de *La S.R.F. et la Quinzaine des Réalisateurs : une construction d'identité collective* (Aux lieux d'être, 2008) et a récemment dirigé un ouvrage avec Olivier Moeschler, *Les Territoires de la démocratisation culturelle, perspectives franco-suisse* (L'Harmattan, 2009).

Dr. Olivier Moeschler, sociologist, is Associate researcher at the Observatory Science, Politics and Society (OSPS) - University of Lausanne (UNIL). His work concerns the sociology of art and culture, the sociology of cultural practices and audiences, issues relating to cultural democratization and territories, cultural policies, inter- and intra-national comparisons. He is currently preparing a work on the genesis and future of a federal policy on cinema in Switzerland and co-editing a text volume on new approaches to the study of cultural practices (*Nouveaux regards sur les pratiques culturelles*, L'Harmattan, to be published in 2011).

Dr. Olivier Thévenin is Professor in information and communication sciences, member of the CRESAT – University of Haute Alsace. He has dedicated his research to the sociology of audiences, institutions and cultural practices. He is the author of *La S.R.F. et la Quinzaine des Réalisateurs : une construction d'identité collective* (Aux lieux d'être, 2008) and recently edited with Olivier Moeschler *Les Territoires de la démocratisation culturelle, perspectives franco-suisse* (L'Harmattan, 2009).

Olivier Thévenin

Professeur de Sciences de l'information et de la communication

Université de Haute Alsace

Centre de recherche sur les économies, les sociétés, les arts et les techniques

Département Sciences de l'Information et Métiers de la Culture

16 rue de la Fonderie - 68093 MULHOUSE CEDEX

olivier.thevenin@uha.fr

Olivier Moeschler

Sociologue, responsable de recherche

Université de Lausanne

Observatoire Science, Politique et Société (OSPS)

Bâtiment Vidy, CH-1015 Lausanne, Suisse

Olivier.Moeschler@unil.ch