Topics for debates
European proposals
Workshop T12h – Cultural Policies in China and Europe

- 1. The governance of territorial cultural policies in Europe

There is a greater need in public policies for transversality and territorialization. If all european countries have experienced major decentralization reforms in the past decades, it is yet important to look how segmentation of the expression of social interests or public adminstrative modes of sectorial organization are disputed by new standards coming from the New Public Management. This is to do with understanding how the local authorities have become standard bearers of the challenges of cultural policies. They are engaged in a « multilevel governance » which originally involves bilateral agreements between the central states and the cities. These agreements are more and more becoming multilateral, implicating also the regions and the European Union. In this « contractual » way, a number of public (and private actors) seek to work together on common projects.

In many European countries, the past 20 years have been marked by profound and generalised transformations of political and administrative organisations. Decentralisation, de-concentration, devolution and autonomisation are terms that have been bandied about, illustrating the strengthened position of local authorities. In this framework, the urbanisation of the world has promoted the emergence of metropolitan structures. In parallel, progress made on European integration has been accompanied by the promotion of new ways of defining and implementing public policies. In particular, such policies favour the grouping of territorial authorities at the centre of the community interest, the participation of civil society in the definition of the common good and public-private partnerships. There is a greater need in public policies for transversality and territorialization. If all european countries have experienced major decentralization reforms in the past decades, it is yet important to look how segmentation of the expression of social interests or public adminstrative modes of sectorial organization are disputed by new standards coming from the New Public Management. Finally, the dissemination of standards for New Public Management has led to "red-tape removal" measures, externalisation, and a move towards the assessment of public policies. As a result of all these phenomena, we are seeing a major transformation in the conditions of political actions, which are increasingly subject to a multi-level governance approach. This is to do with understanding how the local authorities have become standard bearers of the challenges of cultural policies. They are engaged in a « multilevel governance » which originally involves bilateral agreements between the central states and the cities. These agreements are more and more becoming multilateral, implicating also the regions and the European Union. In this « contractual » way, a number of public (and private actors) seek to work together on common projects.

What critical analysis can we make today of territorial governance in the cultural field? What is the impact of these new forms of organisation of public action on the content and orientations of cultural policies?

- 2. Culture, society and local authorities in Europe: the challenges of sustainable cultural development?

New forms of artistic and cultural intervention have emerged in European towns (festivals, event-based operations, the presence of art and culture in public spaces…). How do they interact with societal issues? Are we witnessing a renewal of the role of culture in the construction of the social fabric and access to citizenship? The presence of the memoriel issue in the urban project, the interaction of ethnological, historical and citizenry dimensions and inhabitants' participation in these processes all lead us to question phenomena of exclusion and social cohesion. European

societies are experiencing an explosion in the supply of artistic activity and innovatory cultural expression, which raises the problem of assessing and governing cultural affairs. As a vehicle for "intercultural dialogue" between groups defined by their identity or their differences, cultural policies must invent new forms of territorial intervention; indeed, they need to satisfy demands for recognition, whilst ensuring exchanges and even the possibility of hybridation, between different cultural worlds. More generally, how can cultural policies combine with sustainable development, the reference set which has now been popularised by Agenda 21 projects in public policies? These issues, which will pervade the debate about the multicultural and pluralist Europe of the future, require us to think about the challenges linked to cultural democracy, citizenship and access to culture and works of art.

- 3. Culture, innovation and creative cities

The European Culture Agenda adopted in November 2007 sought to include the European Union's ambition within the general framework of the Lisbon strategy (which seeks to make the European economy the highest-performing knowledge economy in the world). The Agenda of the Union considers culture as a catalyst of creativity. Three avenues of investigation have been identified: supporting the role of cultural activity and education, promoting dynamic and innovatory management of cultural activities and enterprises, developing creative partnerships between the culture sector and other sectors (information and communications technologies, research, tourism, social partners, etc). This orientation of the Union's action in the cultural field tends to generalise a strategy already identified within infranational territories, which have chosen to make culture a key element of their development, in particular by promoting the grouping of creative industries and attracting "creative classes" to them. Beyond the controversy surrounding the notion of creative cities, what are the differences between the "types" of territory (urban and metropolitan centres, rural areas, intermediary areas, etc) in terms of innovatory capacity and action possibilities? On what evidence can we base our thinking to justify the real contribution of artistic and cultural activities to creativity and innovation? Is this to do with considering first and foremost their impact in terms of growth, employment and economic growth within territories? Does this approach run counter to cultural policies objectives? The economic impact of the arts is a strategy followed by the states and cities. The new concept of « creative city » is becoming more and more influential for public representatives in their search of attractivity, prestige and the fame of the city. Even if there is a sharp controversy about the creative city and the alleged « creative class », we can notice a set of institutional re-arrangements to adopt such strategies. How to manage the coexistence of a policy driven by the creative city concept and the sustainable approach of Agenda 21 ?

- 4. The cultural practices of inhabitants, artistic education and mediation

If most european countries have witnessed a spectacular increase of cultural goods ans services, it remains difficult to give a clear content to the notion of « democratization ». It seems always difficult to reach some social groups (children, young people, older people, migrants, etc.). The policy of Arts education and amateur arts are a complex whole, cross-cutting with others areas such sport, social policy and above all education. Major trends in Europe include special programs inside cultural institutions, cooperation between the school system and cultural institutions, free entrance … Arts and cultural education lead to develop a participatory attitude towards culture and the social life in general. But to enhance citizen particpation in the community, it is necessary to admit the growing cultural diversity of societies. How these culturall diversity now based upon Unesco and European Council formal declarations is put into political and administrative practice has to be questionned. Some countries and some cities provides good examples of the implementation of cultural diversity,. Others are just using the theme as a piece of political rhetoric.