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Un-mind the gap: questioning the division between artistic instrumentalism and autonomy from an ethnomusicological perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to contribute to on-going cultural policy debates on artistic instrumentalism vs. autonomy, striving to undermine this apparent dichotomy by drawing from ethnomusicology and related fields. Ethnomusicology, although frequently ignored by cultural policy studies, has an established tradition of exploring the functionality of music. As such, it not only provides profound insight into social effects of music, but also helps reveal that the division between instrumental art and "art for art's sake" is largely a historical and culture-specific invention of the Western (musical) world. Moreover, the article will show that Western music has always been functional, paradoxically partly due to its ideational separation from instrumental (especially economic) pressures. Hence, this article argues both in favour of a recognition of music's powerful functionality and the need to keep the musical sphere at least partially separate from too straight-forward monetary and quantitative impact concerns.

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Autonomy of the arts

Music

Introduction

Within the field of cultural policy studies – especially, but not exclusively within a European context – there has been an ongoing debate as to whether the arts are to be valued intrinsically, or rather for their potential socio-political and monetary contributions. This debate seems particularly heated because “the culture lobby has to confront a political reality in which resources are scarce and where economics provides a basis for determining how those scarce resources be divided up” (Street, 2013: 283). In other words, a lack of resources is often coupled with a cultural faith that numbers – mainly in the form of economic benefits and qualitative research data – provide the best illustration of value and justification for the allocation of funds.

Many voices have been raised on both sides of the instrumentality “battle front”. O’Brien, for instance, in his report for the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport “Measuring the Value of Culture”, stresses the need for cultural organisations to make their case for funding in terms of a cost-benefit analysis compatible with the “Treasury’s Green Book on policy appraisal and evaluation” (2010: 8). This emphasis is partly a reaction to advocates of intrinsic artistic value, such as the often-quoted statement by the Barbican’s ex-managing director Tusa that:

Mozart is Mozart because of his music and not because he created a tourist industry in Salzburg or gave his name to decadent chocolate and marzipan Saltzburger kugel. Picasso is important because he taught a century new way of looking at objects (...) Van Gogh is valued because of the pain or intensity of his images and colours (...) Absolute quality is paramount in attempting a valuation of the arts; all other factors are interesting, useful but secondary (Tusa, cited in O’Brien, 2010: 12).

Hence, there is a seemingly irreconcilable gap between those urging to articulate the value of the arts in economic terms and those claiming that the arts cannot be reduced to such monetary – or indeed any functional (“absolute quality is paramount”) – aspects.

Both arguments are problematic. Tusa’s statement verges on the discriminatory, as he cites examples of male, white, European artists only. In fact, the defense of the arts’ “absolute value” has often helped to uphold oppressive power structures such as colonialism and patriarchy, defending the intrinsic value of white men’s work (Chibici-Revneanu, 2016).

However, O’Brien’s (ibid.) emphasis on economical evaluation of culture appears at least as dangerous, in part because – as will be discussed in this article – it risks losing many of the manifold and often crucial socio-political (among others) functions the arts are able to fulfil, including its provision of aesthetic experiences which form the key focus of Tusa’s notion.

Of course, the debate has also been shaped by works which occupy a “middle-ground” of arguing for the multi-functionality of the arts, yet typically understood in non-monetary terms. Examples are Belfiore and Bennett’s *The Social Impact of the Arts* (2008) and, with an emphasis on humanities-oriented approaches to arts’ evaluation, “Beyond the ‘Toolkit Approach’: Arts Impact Evaluation Research and the Realities of Cultural Policy-Making” (2010). With particular reference to music, it is also worth mentioning Behr, Brennan and Cloonan’s “Cultural value and cultural policy: some evidence from the world of live music” (2014), as well Street’s previously quoted “Music, markets and manifestos” (2013).

This article is ideologically placed within this “middle way”. While influenced by the aforementioned writings, it also tries to respond to a perceived lack of engagement with some of the rich and relevant literature of ethnomusicology and related fields. Furthermore, it aims to illustrate that the debate surrounding the instrumentality vs. the intrinsic value of the arts is in itself based on a historical and culture-specific division which differentiates the Western art world from many other traditions. In many cultures, music is appreciated for its multiple functions, including those of aesthetic concern. In fact, multiple physical, mental, as well as social and spiritual effects of music have been well-documented by ethnomusicologists (e. g. Merriam, 1964; Blacking, 2000[1973]; Martí, 2000; Nettle, 2015) and others interested in musical functionality (e.g. Frith, 1996a [1987] & 1996b) for decades. What is more, this article will claim that even Western, “autonomous” music has always been highly functional. Paradoxically, even its ideational separation from instrumental (especially economic) concerns can be seen as enabling some of its social and spiritual operations. Hence, this article argues both in favour of a recognition and celebration of music’s powerful functionality and the need to keep the musical sphere at least partially separate from straight-forward monetary and quantitative impact concerns.

The article is theoretical and interdisciplinary in approach, referring chiefly to the fields of cultural policy studies and ethnomusicology, here broadly defined as

“THE NOTION OF ARTISTIC AUTONOMY IS A CULTURALLY SPECIFIC IDEA WHOSE HISTORICAL ORIGINS HAVE BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED. ALTHOUGH ELEMENTS OF AN IDEOLOGY OF ART CAN BE TRACED TO THE RENAISSANCE, IT ARISES LARGELY DURING ROMANTICISM TOWARDS THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY”

“the study of music in its social and cultural contexts” (The Society of Ethnomusicology, 2019). Other fields such as the sociology, psychology and religious studies of music will be alluded to, in order to complete this approach to the functionality of structured sound.

There are evidently limitations to the present work. Its focus is deliberately broad – a fact caused by the decision to provide a general overview rather than specific insight into one of the many issues related to questions of artistic instrumentality vs. autonomy. Thus, it relies on somewhat problematic generalisations regarding “Western” and “non-Western” music and in relation to most of the specific musical traditions and genres from around the globe mentioned. It is important to bear in mind at all points that overall trends will be highlighted, with many exceptions to the presented “rules”.

The article also pays little heed to distinctions such as popular vs. classical music, classical versus folk music and making vs. listening to music etc. This is motivated by lack of space, but also by the notion, already outlined by Blacking, that some of these distinctions (especially those attempting to classify and/or hierarchise) are “neither meaningful nor accurate as indices of musical differences” (2000 [1973]: 4). Also, they have often been implicated in divisions to be explored. The fact that this article will discuss on music as a general phenomenon is not to say that all types and genres perform all musical functions explored. Music may be universal in its world-wide existence, probably even its functionality, but not its specific effects and meanings (ibid). The type of music and the way it can unfold its cultural “work” is sensitive to socio-cultural contexts that cannot presently be analysed.

The discussion is divided into two sections, followed by a brief conclusion. The first section, “On the multiple functionality (and ideas of non-functionality) of music”, aims to provide a theoretical basis, defining key terms and further illustrating the instrumentalism vs. artistic autonomy debate. It will also show how

some important ethnomusicological texts on the functionality of music can actually help to “un-mind” the gap between both “extremes”. The second section, “On two crucial functions: Social cohesion and spirituality”, then focuses in more detail on two particular functions, which are considered relevant to matters of cultural policy, namely social cohesion and spirituality.

I hope this article will help to counter-act the fact that, according to Jowell, “We lack convincing language (...) for how culture lies at the heart of a healthy society” (cited in Belfiore & Bennett, 2008: 9).

On the multiple functionality (and ideas of non-functionality) of music

Defining – the link between instrumentalism and functionality

In the introduction, two crucial concepts for this article have been mentioned, namely instrumentalism and functionality. Starting with the former, Vestheim defines instrumentalism as using “cultural ventures and cultural investments as a means or instrument to attain goals in other areas” (1994: 65). While this definition has had an important influence on questions surrounding instrumentalism within a cultural policy context, it has recently come under scrutiny by authors such as Nisbett, who argues that it “falls short through its inability to recognise the complexity and nuance” of the issue (2013: 569). She thus proposes a broader reconceptualisation of instrumentalism, suggesting that it could simply yet significantly be viewed as “‘a means to something else’ or ‘helpful in bringing something about’” (2013: 570).

With regard to functionality – and even though its related ethnomusicological meaning will be explored in more detail – the term is commonly deployed in fields such as sociology and anthropology to indicate an element doing “work” of some kind, fulfilling a socio/cultural (or other) purpose (see, for instance, Durkheim,

1912 [among others]; Malinowski, 1974). Both can thus be broadly regarded as referring to phenomena "bringing something about".

The gap: Instrumentality vs. the autonomy of the arts.

Turning to a more detailed overview of the instrumentalism vs. autonomy debate, Nisbett argues that it is usually "a polarised discussion, simplifying instrumentalism as inherently 'good' or 'bad', and largely focusing on the harmful impact of instrumental policies" (2013: 558).

The position focused on instrumentalism as "bad" for the arts (as briefly exposed with regard to Tusa's statement) tends to defend the autonomy of the arts, considering, for instance, that "criteria from the ethical realm should not be imported to evaluate the aesthetic realm" (Carroll, 2000: 351). This idea of artistic separateness has been particularly strong within the field of music, because structured sound often "seems to be generated by its own self-contained, abstract principles" (McClary, 1996: 16). With a certain homonymic irony, "instrumental" (i.e. using instruments but no voice) music has often been regarded as the least instrumental (i.e. functional) type, because of "having no purpose beyond its intrinsic pleasures" (Shiner, 2001: 196).

As will be shown, beliefs in the independence of the arts and their need to be "useless" form part of a Romantic tradition of thought. Many of the more recent outcries in favour of this position seem inspired by developments within the arts and cultural policy sector speeding into the opposite direction. As stated, increasing pressure is being put on the arts to justify their existence and claim for monetary support in terms of their ideally quantifiable and economic usefulness (e.g. Thetford, 2013). As briefly explored, there has been a need for the arts to prove their functionality (e.g. Arts Council England, 2019), and "notions of 'instrumentalism' (...) are often couched in stark economic terms" (Behr et al, 2014: 406).

It may be added that this tendency can also be observed in other contexts, such as the USA. A report on the arts in the USA economy proudly claims that "we are now able to quantify the impact of arts and culture on GDP for the very first time" (Pritzker, cited in National Endowment for the Arts, 2013, par. 2). Also, it is explained how in "2011, the value added from arts and cultural production (ACP) accounted for nearly 3.2 percent, or \$504 billion, of GDP" and goes on to

list which "arts commodities, from advertising to arts education" have been the most "valuable" financially (National Endowment for the Arts, 2013, par. 7).

If this example clarifies how matters of the arts have indeed often become "couched in stark economic terms" (Behr et al, 2014: 406) of "added value" and "commodities", it is interesting to observe that the so-called emphasis on the autonomy of the arts has also frequently displayed arguments of functionality. It seems that this side has not so much argued for an actual "uselessness" of the arts, but for their operations in "higher" realms, yet "'helpful in bringing something about'" (Nisbett, 2013: 570). According to Shiner, the (fine) arts were "given a transcendent spiritual role of revealing higher truth or healing the soul" (2001: 6). More specifically with regard to music, Bowie discusses how Romantics regarded it as capable of expressing the inexpressible (2009: 244) and "unsayable" (2009: 245), which was "understood in religious and mystical terms, as a realm only accessible by means which resist rational analysis" (ibid.). The ability to move into this realm has been seen as "an essential means of responding to the world (...) fulfilling needs which philosophy (and religion) cannot, or can no longer, fulfil" (ibid.: 246).

Although the citations of Bowie are taken from a section entitled "Absolute music", it is fairly self-evident that the notions expressed never really focus on the uselessness of music, but rather its elevated functionality. Hence, the debate between musical or general artistic autonomy vs. instrumentality has rarely been framed in opposing terms, but rather hovered around different nuances. This has done little to clarify the issue, often leading to a lack of consensus of which elements may in fact be considered instrumental (e.g. Gibson, 2008: 250-251). Being aware of these overlaps, however, can potentially help "un-mind" the gap between two seemingly irreconcilable "poles".

In fact, the notion of artistic autonomy is a culturally specific idea whose historical origins have been well documented. Although elements of an ideology of Art can be traced to the Renaissance, it arises largely during Romanticism towards the end of the 18th century. Romanticism was in itself a cultural response towards many important occurrences and changes, including the increasing "rationalisation" of life associated with Enlightenment thought and a growing connection between the arts and an emergent market for literature and music (Shiner, 2001). Many ideas typically associated with Romanticism, such as the celebration of nature, the irrational, fantasy, emotional

intensity etc. can be seen as forms of rebellion, as creating a space sheltered from an increasingly rationalised and industrialised world.

Also, and arguably in part as a reaction to these elements (Chibici-Revneanu, 2011), Romanticism gave rise to many divisions within the artistic field, promoting ideologies that have had an impact on our conception of creativity to this day. As Shiner explains in a section of *The Invention of Art*, notably entitled "The Great Division":

in the eighteenth century a fateful division occurred in the traditional concept of art. After over two thousand years of signifying any human activity performed with skill and grace, the concept of art was split apart, generating the new category fine arts (...) as opposed to crafts and popular arts (...). The fine arts, it was now said, are a matter of inspiration and genius and meant to be enjoyed for themselves in moments of refined pleasure, whereas the crafts and popular arts require only skill and rules and are meant for mere use or entertainment (Shiner, 2001: 5).

Here, a division of "higher" vs. "lower" arts goes hand in hand with a conception of autonomy vs. instrumentality, or really – as indicated – of "higher" and "lower" functionality. Moreover, as Shiner explores (e.g. *ibid.*: 7), this separation indirectly yet powerfully helped to create an artistic hierarchy, where those who emerged as the "great" were "incidentally" also those in cultural power; it strongly affirmed the artistic dominance of white, upper-middle class, mainly European, men (Chibici-Revneanu, 2011). However, one must not overlook that the "great division" also indicates a need for "shelter", an ideological wariness caused partly by an increasing assignation of market-value to the output of human creativity.

Un-minding... Ethnomusicology and the functionality of music

Moving specifically onto the field of music, it has been regarded and praised for its functionality in and by many cultures where arguably this split did not occur. According to Hunt, in the Hindustani musical tradition, there is a well-established notion of the functionality of music, regarding it – for instance – as a "house with four rooms (...) catering to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual" (2000: 70). Also, Olson explains how "most South American Indians traditionally view their music as

having supernatural qualities. (...) In many instances they themselves have described the function, symbolism, and meaning of their music and musical instruments" (1980: 363). In his analysis of the Venda of Southern Africa, Blacking emphasises how they "generally classify their music according to its social function, and the name for the function and its music is often the same" (2000 [1973]: 41).

These examples have not been mentioned in order to lead to the erroneous conclusion that all non-Western cultures tend to be socially inclusive and musically homogeneous. The musical variety of the world is almost beyond our grasp, and there is not even a universal consensus of what is understood as music (see, for instance, Olson's further observation that among many South American indigenous groups, "no word expresses the concept of music as Westerners employ it" (*ibid.*: 365)). However, as Nettl puts it in *The Study of Ethnomusicology: 33 Discussions*: "in many cultures – dare I say most – music is thought to have power to accomplish something for humans; humans use music to 'do' things. It's an idea that has been of interest to colleagues in my field from the very beginning" (2015: pos. 5531). Moreover, as the Hindustani house image implies, many seem to have perceived less of a contradiction between music's often "elevated" spiritual and more direct physical functions.

Indeed, the field of ethnomusicology, originally preoccupied with "non-Western" music – and of course far more heterogeneous than the present inquiry can pay homage to – has a long scholarly tradition of listing, exploring and classifying the many uses and functions of music. To illustrate this, two classics and one more contemporary work have been selected, namely Merriam's *The Anthropology of Music* (1964), Blacking's *How Musical is Man?* ([1973], 2000), and Martí's *Más allá dell' arte* (2000) (*Beyond art*).

Starting with the latter, Martí – for instance – regards music both as a means of affirming power and its subversion, partly because music is so closely linked to "the social construction of reality" (2000: 10)¹. He explores the way music assists in the process of identity formation, expression and affirmation, helping not only to create "the spirit of an epoch" (2000: 11), but also regional, national, ethical, general gender and generational conceptions of groups and individual selves (*ibid.*). In this way, he sees music as a crucial ally when it comes to "satisfy[ing] our need for difference" (*ibid.*: 14).

¹ All quotes whose original reference is in Spanish have been translated by the author.

As to Blacking, he explores the profound impact of music on our (social) lives and of our (social) lives on music. Two of the four chapters of his book are called "Music in Society and Culture" and "Culture and Society in Music", respectively, in order to show how musical sound and society/culture are involved in an extremely close, dynamic relationship, coming to mirror, inform and shape each other in many complex and significant ways (2000 [1973]).

With regard to music's more specific functionality, Blacking isolates different effects such as (in relation to the Nsenga tribe) "the power to bring together people in brotherhood" (ibid.: 12) or "the essential quality of music (...) to create another world of virtual time" (ibid.: 27), of helping to access an alternative world. Also, according to Blacking, some forms of music act as "tonal expressions of human experience in the context of different kinds of social and cultural organization" (ibid.: 31).

More specifically for the Venda (but with the implication that this can be generalised) he shows how some of their music actively expresses "concepts of individuality in community, and of social, temporal and spatial balance" (ibid.: 30) and is considered "essential for the very survival of man's humanity" (ibid.: 54). These are only a few of the most central and significant "functions" of music Blacking writes about.

Turning towards Merriam, the latter arguably enables much of Blacking's writing, providing a lengthy and detailed list of the manifold "uses" and "functions" of music. For the ethnomusicologist, the distinction is a fairly complex one, where music's "'use' (...) refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action" whereas a "'function' concerns the reasons for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves" (1964: pos. 4169). In many ways, "functions" thus refer to "deeper" (ibid.: pos. 4162) operations, such as music's correlation with the survival

of a group (ibid.: pos. 4166). According to Merriam, a group tends to be aware of the use of music, but a function may only become evident through the analysis of an observer (ibid.: pos. 4160-1). While this distinction is interesting, I do not believe it contributes significantly to the matter at hand – except perhaps to show that "higher" and more "practical" effects of music can be

cognitively separated (perhaps highlighting Merriam's own Western tendency to distinguish between "higher" from "lower" operations) but, in practice, tend to co-exist, co-operate and merge.

Even though Merriam admits he could not possibly explore all uses of music, he strives to illustrate "the enormous range of activity in which music plays a part, sometimes tangentially but often centrally" (ibid.: pos. 4331). To name some examples, he presents music as an "accompaniment to or part of almost every human activity" (ibid.: pos. 4291) which is virtually omnipresent in the shape of different songs for different occasions (ibid.: pos. 4307) and thus deeply woven into the fabric of social organisations. On a more spiritual plane, he also explores how religious beliefs are constantly given shape through sounds, becoming "expressed through musical prayer, myth

and legend set to music, divination songs, cult songs, songs of religious functionaries" (ibid.: pos. 4315). Music is often seen as a way of establishing contact with the divine, and therefore used as a form of invocation or to acquire "supernatural assistance" (ibid.: pos. 4315). Moving onto Merriam's category of "functions", he lists a variety, including emotional expression, music's contribution to the continuity and stability of culture, the integration of society, and – importantly – both entertainment and aesthetic enjoyment (1964: pos. 4142-4522). Rather than separating aesthetic concerns from other "instrumental" aspects, they are all seen as part of the multiple functions of music, granting a

"ALTHOUGH THERE ARE, OF COURSE, NUMEROUS COMPLEXITIES TO THE NOTION OF SOCIAL COHESION, ITS ENHANCEMENT CAN BE CONSIDERED AN IMPORTANT CULTURAL POLICY OBJECTIVE, RELIANT ON BOTH 'AESTHETIC' AND 'INSTRUMENTAL' OPERATIONS OF THE ARTS IN GENERAL AND MUSIC IN PARTICULAR"

different perspective which clearly helps to underline the potential falseness of the "instrumental/ intrinsic dichotomy" (Gibson, 2008: 247) within cultural policy discussions.

On two crucial functions: social cohesion and spirituality

Music and social cohesion

Ethnomusicological scholars have thus provided an interesting overview of the multiple functions of music, highlighting its involvement in a vast variety of human activities and needs in a way that could significantly enrich the "increasingly sterile debate" (Hadley & Gray, 2017: 95) surrounding the intrinsic value of culture vs. instrumentalism. Indeed, music arises as a kind of panacea, beneficial for individuals and society on many different levels. In order to narrow down the discussion, now, two functions of music that have been chosen for their arguable relevance for matters of cultural policy studies will be explored, namely music's implication in promoting social cohesion and spirituality.

Starting with a definition of the former, Jeannotte defines "social cohesion" as "essentially why social systems hold together as opposed to falling apart" (2003: 37). In comparable terms, the work *Social Cohesion in the Western World: What Holds Societies Together* states that "Studying social cohesion essentially boils down to the question as to what encourages a group of people to act as one" (Dragolov et al, 2016: xxv). In the latter, it is also explained how social cohesion is not only increasingly understood as a significant policy aim in its own right, but also "a contribution to maintain long-term economic growth" (ibid.: xxvi). Although there are, of course, numerous complexities to the notion of social cohesion (see, for instance, Baeker, 2002), its enhancement can be considered an important cultural policy objective, reliant on both "aesthetic" and "instrumental" operations of the arts in general and music in particular.

As it has been shown with regard to Marti and his writings on the connection between music and group identity, with Blacking and his exploration of the Venda's use of music to express a concept of individuality in community music, as well as Merriam's emphasis on the function of music to contribute to the stability of culture and the integration of society, many musical expressions seem ideally placed to collaborate in the creation and affirmation of social coherence.

Even though this is a complicated matter in its own right, one can already draw from existent knowledge

as to why music may operate in this manner. It seems that one of the keys to music's contribution to social cohesion is its strong link to matters of selfhood and its somewhat paradoxical capacity to mediate between a highly individual and a communal sense of identity. Arguably because of its interpretative openness (the very reason it has, again paradoxically, been most closely associated with non-functionality), it lends itself to a myriad of individual interpretations, which can (as in the case of national anthems or emblematic songs) be brought together in the same song/musical piece. As Frith explains:

Because of its qualities of abstractness, music is, by nature, an individualizing form. We absorb songs into our own lives and rhythm into our own bodies; they have a looseness of reference that makes them immediately accessible. At the same time, and equally significantly, music is obviously collective (1996a: 121).

In somewhat simplistic terms, someone may thus be at a concert listening to a song she associates with a very personal childhood memory, while someone else can hear the same song and start dreaming of his last holiday. Still, they are united by the shared moment, possibly a vaguely shared emotion, a shared musical reference/preference and now a shared memory. Or, again in the words of Frith: "This interplay between personal absorption into music and the sense that it is, nevertheless, something out there, something public, is what makes music so important in the cultural placing of the individual in the social" (Frith, 1996b [1987]: 129).

This leads to two further points that seem to be essential to music's capacity to increase social cohesion: its ability to enhance both individual and collective memory and the possibility of calling forth strong (shared) feelings. As to the latter, it has been noted that Merriam considers the ability of music to convey and evoke emotions as one of its core functions (e.g. 1964: pos. 4336-4432), but precisely because the experience of music is often shared, it can also strengthen social cohesion through a (vaguely) common emotionality.

Albeit I will have to resort to a kind of cultural approximation/translation, it is – according to the World music scholars Miller and Shahriari – the creation of (shared) emotion that is part of a transformative power attributed to some music in the Arabic world (2012: pos. 5035-5044). In the Indian classical raga tradition, the emotion or mood (known as "rasa") associated with a particular raga, "creates in performer and listener alike a state of mind, such as love, heroism, or anger" that "can become so pervasive that listeners begin to

“THERE SEEMS TO BE QUITE SOLID PROOF FOR THE FACT THAT MUSIC CAN, WHEN USED WITH THE RIGHT SENSITIVITY TO SPECIFIC CONTEXTS AND NEEDS, BE USED TO SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE SOCIAL COHESION IN SEVERAL COMPLEX – AND OFTEN AESTHETICALLY HIGHLY MEANINGFUL – WAYS”

conceive of the rasa as a person” (ibid.: pos. 2497-2504). Whichever other effects these musical experiences may have (and a well-performed raga has been associated with magical powers (ibid.)), one needs to look no further than Durkheim to find theories on how shared emotions tie people together, strengthening social bonds (1912). The social ties created by (musically induced) group feelings have also been more recently explored by sociologists of music, with reference to the Heavy Metal concerts, in the West (see, for instance Meij et al, 2013: 69).

What is more – and possibly also because of its emotional intensity – music appears to have a privileged relationship to memory. Firstly, music contains many mnemotechnical elements. Among aboriginal groups in Australia, some of which still “maintain cultural practices that have existed for roughly 40,000 years” (Miller & Shahriari, 2012: pos. 1837), traditionally: “Myths and belief systems, along with practical knowledge and oral histories, pass from generation to generation through song and dance” (ibid., pos. 1817-1819). In a Western context, it is also common to resort to the mnemotechnical elements of music when trying to learn, for instance, the alphabet or multiplication tables through songs. Still, the musical relationship to memory goes beyond this. As it has been implied with regard to Blacking’s idea of music providing access to “an alternative world”, music can act as something close to a time-machine, powerfully evoking memories, especially of youth (e.g. Suttie, 2015). This can operate both on an individual, and on a collective basis, evoking both a sense of personal remembrances and a return to “the spirit” of an epoch or generation (e.g. Martí, 2000: 11). Hence, it can strengthen both an individual’s notion of his or her personal story and a group’s experience of a shared history, which may – again – be regarded as strengthening both their collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992) and a related sense of individual and group identity.

Evidently, this has only been a general introduction to a highly complex matter. Interestingly,

however, recent psychological studies of music strongly corroborate the claim that music is good for social cohesion. In his article “From Social Contact to Social Cohesion—The 7 Cs”, Koelsch explains that, especially

When playing music in a group, individuals (...) engage in social cognition, participate in co-pathology (the social function of empathy), communicate, coordinate their actions, and cooperate with each other, leading to increased social cohesion. Music making is special in that it can engage all of these social functions effortlessly and simultaneously. (...) The ability of music to increase social cohesion and strengthen interindividual attachments was probably an important function of music in human evolution (Koelsch, 2013: 204).

There seems to be quite solid proof for the fact that music can, when used with the right sensitivity to specific contexts and needs, be used to significantly enhance social cohesion in several complex – and often aesthetically highly meaningful – ways. In fact, Frith observes in a statement that both sums up much of the present section and emphasises the compatibility of aesthetic and “instrumental” elements of music:

Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers of the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives. Such a fusion of imaginative fantasy and bodily practice marks also the integration of aesthetics and ethics (...) among African musicians an aesthetic judgment (this sounds good) is necessarily also an ethical judgment (this is good) (1996a: 124).

Perhaps Western cultural policy can learn from this idea that art can indeed “be good” both aesthetically and through its impact on society at large. For, as Jeannotte argues, it is often our engagement with music and other cultural activities that leads to “a transformative experience and one of the key elements of a sustainable community” (2003: 48).

Music and spirituality

While there may be some consensus regarding the value of social cohesion and its relevancy to (cultural) policy measures, a more contentious claim will be made now; namely that there is an increased need for meaning and (inter-cultural) spirituality that cultural policy studies should more thoroughly address. The "spiritual value" of culture has already been highlighted by scholars such as Throsby (2001: 84) and Rowson, in texts such as "The brains behind spirituality" (2013) and "Can spirituality inform public policy? Yes, no, and maybe" (2014), taking the idea of a need to re-connect policy and spirituality further. For the latter, spirituality may be defined as:

the lifelong challenge to embody one's vision of human existence and purpose (...) safeguarding our sense of the sacred, valuing the feeling of belonging or savouring the rapture of intense absorption (...) the quintessential gratitude we feel when we periodically notice, as gift and revelation, that we are alive (Rowson, 2013, par. 10-11).

Even though the scholar recognises that many Western intellectuals get embarrassed around ideas of spirituality, he emphasises that an increased sense of spirituality, possibly addressed by public policy, may – among other important aspects – help us "become less vulnerable to terrorism, care for an ageing population, address the rise in obesity or face up to climate change" (ibid, par. 8). Comparable ideas have also been put forward by the Commission of Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, especially with regard to its thematic focus Culture, Spirituality and Conservation (CSC), with its interest in the complex "relationships between culture, biocultural heritage, spirituality and equitable governance in conservation, sustainable development, and environmental and cultural policy" (Commission of Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, 2019, par. 1).

Now, for many cultures around the world – including the "Western" musical tradition - music appears to have been one of spirituality's great allies; and recognising this may take one another step further to perceiving the profound functionality of music which, in fact, unites arguments of instrumentality and autonomy, thus arguably further "un-minding" the gap.

As already implied with regard to Blacking's insistence on music being able to "create another world of virtual time" ([1973] 2000: 27), or Merriam's notion that

it helps establish a relationship with the divine - music's connection to spirituality has long been established by ethnomusicologist and scholars of related fields. The fact that this link is maintained in many different religions and "non-religions" is highlighted by Beck in his introduction to *Sacred Sound: Experiencing music in World Religions* (2006), in which he explains how "the seemingly intrinsic connection between religious ritual and musical activity" can be found across "often radical differences in theological orientation", including "monotheism, polytheism, pantheism, monism, goddess worship, atheism" (ibid.: 1).

There is ample evidence for this. For many Australian aborigines, for instance, music represents a direct "link to the spiritual plane" (Miller & Shahriari, 2012: pos. 1819), a way of connection to the culturally central, spiritual sphere known as dreaming or dream time. In some musical traditions of the Arabic world (albeit generalising), music is – as briefly mentioned - often ascribed a transformative effect through an intense emotional commotion known as "tarab" (ibid.: pos. 5035-5044). Also, in Sufism, music and dance are used to enter a trance-like state and connect directly to god (ibid.: pos.4736-4741). Among many inhabitants of Sumatra, Java and Bali:

religious beliefs are expressed in myth, legend, and prayer set to music. Music is an indispensable part of family and community rituals, a form of instruction, and a means of entertainment. Music, dance, and theatre not only serve to express and share thought and emotion but also are important in rituals requesting supernatural assistance (Kartomi, 1980: 129).

This statement not only illustrates the implication of music in many aspects associated with religion and spirituality, but also how there is no apparent contradiction between music being used for entertainment as well as "sublime" spiritual purposes.

Of course, as noted, music has also operated as a great ally to spirituality within the Western musical tradition, including but also beyond a directly religious context and even after the great divisions of Romanticism took place. In order to underpin this claim, it is paradoxically sufficient to return to previously outlined notions regarding music's non-instrumentalism and inherent autonomy. Returning to Shiner and Bowie, it has been shown how (instrumental) music was "given a transcendent spiritual role of revealing higher truth or healing the soul" (Shiner 2001, p. 6), came to express the "unsayable" (Bowie, 2009: 245) and helps to fulfill

(spiritual) needs that could no longer be catered for by other means (ibid.: 246). Hence, after music's apparent separation from its "utility", it actually seems to have been considered a form of accentuating spirituality, in a way not far removed from its definition by Rowson previously provided.

This is not precisely news. It has often been recognised that in Romanticism, the arts start to act as an ersatz religion (Shiner, 2001: 194-5) and the ideology of Art comes to counter-act an increasing sense of cultural alienation (Curie, 1974: 108). What has been less evident, is that the implication of arts and music in spirituality (apart from probably contributing to the music's ability to strengthen social coherence) are also an indication of their inherent functionality, not incompatible with, but often reliant on its aesthetic features.

Expanding on the relationship of the Romantic ideology of Art and its ability to help counter-act a sense of alienation, it seems that for many, music has acted as "spiritual" in the sense of providing access to "another world" ([1973] 2000: 27), one that is sheltered from immediate economic concerns. As Behr et al outline at the end of their detailed study of the cultural value of live music, as expressed by "different kinds of people who are pulled into the orbit of a concert venue" (2014: 416), in this case Queen's Hall in Edinburgh:

Our respondents were clear that they went to music to forget about monetary concerns and to have a transcendent experience (...). There was a clear sense from our research that engaging with art was part of what it is to be truly human insofar as it gives meaning to a wider range of often more quotidian experiences. Any policy which fails to recognise this is unlikely to assist the Queen's Hall or, indeed, anyone else (ibid).

"EVEN THE IDEA THAT MUSIC CAN PROVIDE A PROFOUND AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE NEEDS IN NO WAYS CONTRAST WITH ITS ABILITY TO OPERATE IN OTHER SOCIALLY OR INDIVIDUALLY MEANINGFUL WAYS. IN FACT, THE AESTHETIC VALUE OF MUSIC OFTEN ENABLES ITS OTHER CULTURAL WORK"

This is a powerful claim of relevance to those involved in matters of cultural management as well as cultural policy. I only disagree with Behr et al in their implication that this is a statement that moves policy away from questions of instrumentality (ibid.). Rather, it moves arts policy and cultural policy more firmly towards it. The "only" issue is that instrumentality should not be understood in clearly quantifiable or direct monetary terms, because this might end up "counting culture to death" (Phiddian, Meyrick, Barnett & Maltby, 2017: 174). Of course, we have implied that even long-term economic growth might result from an engagement with social cohesion, which music may partially supply. However, it seems to be part of the many paradoxes which music can help to unite, that this function – as many others here mentioned – may actually become undermined if monetary (and arguably other, easily quantifiable) results become the key focus of music policy.

Conclusion

The present article has thus shown that it seems fairly easy to cognitively undo the split between the idea of artistic autonomy vs. the instrumentality, especially with regard to music and some important writings focused on predominantly ethnomusicological inquiries. It has been manifested that many musical traditions around the world regard music as essentially instrumental, in the sense that it is expected to fulfil a number of crucial physical, mental, social and spiritual functions. In fact, it seems that in the West, the notion of (hierarchically) separating functional from autonomous music (as indeed in the arts in general) is also "simply" part of the socio-cultural changes occurring during Romanticism. However, it has been argued that even the notion that "lower" music is instrumental and "higher" music is simply valuable in its own right is inconsistent, as arguments in favour

of the latter were also instrumental but addressing "higher needs". Thus, it is not even really an argument between instrumental and non-instrumental music, but between the kinds of functions which music – and the arts in general – is/are expected to fulfil. Indeed, as manifested, even the idea that music can provide a profound aesthetic experience needs in no ways contrast with its ability to operate in other socially or individually meaningful ways. In fact, the aesthetic value of music often enables its other cultural work.

The article has thus presented an argument in favour of instrumentalism but understood not in the narrow sense of making music supply easily quantifiable (economic) benefits. On the contrary. Even though I do not believe it possible, or even desirable to keep the musical sphere strictly apart from the economic, it seems necessary to at least partially safeguard music as "another space", one that can – in many physical, mental, social and spiritual ways – help to make "this" space a more livable one. Nevertheless, caution should nevertheless be taken by cultural policies to (further) explore the full, functional potential of music, without, however, supporting the functions of (gender, social, "racial" etc.) exclusion, which are also inherent in many musical traditions around the world, including the West.

Finally, even though the present article has not been able to offer more than a glimpse of many complex issues, it hopes to have served to underpin the value that a culturally diverse perspective may grant debates on cultural policy. For, in our ever increasing age of diversity, I believe – with Shiner – that: "Instead of simply assimilating the arts of traditional African or Native American cultures" – one may add here, "and others" – "to European norms in the patronizing belief that we pay them a compliment, we need to learn from their very different understanding of the arts and their place in society" (2001: 7).

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Creative entrepreneurs' perception of entrepreneurial motivation: a valuable insight for creative business incubators when supporting creative entrepreneurs' cooperation with other industries

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ABSTRACT

The paper introduces a valuable insight for creative business incubators when it comes to supporting creative entrepreneurs' cooperation with other industries and investigates the research question: "What role does the creative entrepreneur's perception of entrepreneurial motivation play in creative entrepreneurs' cooperation with other industries?" The paper finds that creative entrepreneurs may be more motivated by intrinsic motivation and entrepreneurs in other industries by extrinsic motivation and this may lead to a communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs, which affects their cooperation.

Keywords:

Creative Entrepreneur

Entrepreneurial motivation

Communication gap

Creative Industries

Introduction

The creative industries sector is a dynamic and influential field that has a substantial impact across its own sector. The previous research suggests that creative industries hold the key to economic evolution and stimulate innovation in the economy in general (Potts & Cunningham, 2008; Bakhshi et al, 2008). Florida (2014) goes one step further and suggests that economy nowadays is fundamentally a creative economy, which has been resonated by the idea of creative industries being a new source of Schumpeterian creative destruction, which in essence means destroying old economic structures and creating new ones (Potts & Cunningham 2008; Shane 2003).

Also, creativity itself has gained more and more attention and is being increasingly valued in the economic environment. Florida (2008 & 2014) sees human creativity as the main resource of the new creative economy, which, among other things, also impacts personal decision-making when people choose where to work and live in. Hence, it can be said that creativity influences the development of the cities. Similar findings have been provided by Audretsch and Belitski (2013), who emphasize the value of creativity through positively testing their hypothesis that creativity is a source for entrepreneurial opportunities and also agree that the diverse cultural and creative environment it creates in cities impacts their development and growth in a positive manner. Therefore, creativity and creative industries influence and impact our lives in various ways.

However, since the field is relatively young important contributions are needed in order to help the field to develop. According to the UNCTAD Creative Economy Report (2010), the creative economy is not precisely the same as the rest of the economy, and according to the Mapping of Nordic Creative and Cultural Industries: Financial Environment report (2015), creative industries are not as monolithic as capacity oriented industries, but have a multitude of dimensions because they also create social, cultural and sustainable development value in addition to economic value. Also, the field stimulates to combine different resources of technology, arts, business, and culture (ibid.) and therefore, *it is crucial that creative companies are able to communicate with other industries outside of the creative domain as well.*

Hence, the paper introduces an important insight for creative business incubators when it comes to supporting creative entrepreneurs' cooperation with

other industries and investigates the following research question: What role does creative entrepreneurs' perception of the entrepreneurial motivation play when it comes to their cooperation with businesses operating outside the creative industries?

In order to answer this research question, (1) the relevant literature to look deeper into the motivation of the creative entrepreneur will be analyzed, aiming at determining if and how it differs from entrepreneurs operating outside the creative industries field, (2) the conditions that have to be met for a creative person to be motivated in order to carry out entrepreneurial activities will be researched, and (3) the questions of how entrepreneurial motivation may be contributing to the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs, and how this may hinder creative entrepreneurs cooperation with entrepreneurs from other industries, will be further discussed.

The paper is divided into five sections. After the introduction, the first section analyses the literature related to the research topic. The second section explains the research design. The third section presents the results of the empirical analysis divided into five subsections: (1) motivation to execute entrepreneurial opportunity; (2) communication between creative entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs from other industries – the communication gap; (3) creative business incubators perception of the communication gap; (4) challenges for creative entrepreneurs, and (5) creative business incubators support for creative entrepreneurs. The fourth section discusses the research findings and the last one provides concluding remarks related to the research question and the potential implications of the findings for academic debate as well as for creative business incubators.

Theoretical perspective: creatives' entrepreneurial motivation and communication gap

UK Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) defines creative industries as "those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property" (2001: 4). An entrepreneur is an alert individual who discovers an opportunity in which resources can be recombined with the aim of gaining potential profit. After discovering such opportunity, the entrepreneur starts to develop ideas on how to pursue it, which includes product or service development

“WHEN IT COMES TO CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS, THE QUESTION OF WHAT MOTIVATES A PERSON TO ENGAGE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY AND EXPLOIT THE ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES IS INTRINSICALLY RELATED TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT MOTIVATES A PERSON'S CREATIVITY BECAUSE WITHOUT THE LAST ONE ALSO THE FIRST ONE CANNOT EXIST”

for offering it to customers (Shane, 2003: 10). In this paper, the creative entrepreneur is considered one who uses the *scarce resources of individual creativity, skills, and talent to develop and produce goods and services* (Chaston & Sadler-Smith, 2012). Entrepreneurs operating within other than creative industries (e.g. agriculture, energy, finance, etc.) are in this paper referred to as other entrepreneurs. The paper does not restrict which industries other entrepreneurs are operating in, as long as by definition it is not creative industries.

The paper aims to contribute to enhancing the field of creative entrepreneurship by creating a deeper understanding of creative entrepreneurs and research deeper into the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs to give an important insight for creative business incubators when it comes to supporting creative entrepreneurs' cooperation with other industries. In the term communication gap, communication represents various communication processes between creative and other entrepreneurs, taking place in everyday working situations, generally with an aim to cooperate together. Therefore, the paper analyzes possible motivational differences for becoming an entrepreneur between creative and other entrepreneurs through intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Collins and Amabile, 1999) and shows how these two topics – entrepreneurship and motivation – are connected with the gap between “art and business” (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006) and how it may contribute to the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs, hence, affecting cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs.

Creative entrepreneur's entrepreneurial motivation

Psychological factors that influence the decision to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities include personality and motives (Shane 2003: 97), meaning that people with certain aspects of personality and

motivation tend to act differently from others who find themselves to be in the exact same situation. They may have exactly the same skills, information, and opportunity cost but people with certain motivations will exploit entrepreneurial opportunities that others will not. This puts great emphasis on the relevance of motivation. Furthermore, intrinsic motivation is also closely linked to one's perceived self-efficacy, which also plays a role in making the decision of whether to engage in entrepreneurship or not (Wadeson, 2006).

As defined earlier, the distinctive character for the creative entrepreneur, which separates her from other entrepreneurs, is that the scarce resources used to develop and produce goods and services are individual creativity, skills, and talent (Chaston and Sadler-Smith, 2012). Furthermore, the person possessing and executing these scarce resources is the entrepreneur herself or is a relevant part of the main managing force of the enterprise. Therefore, creativity and creative activity are some of the most crucial factors for the creative business to operate successfully. This allows concluding that *the motivation for exploiting the entrepreneurial opportunity as well as the motivation for creativity are interchangeable crucial factors for the creative business to be successful.*

Therefore, a distinction between creative entrepreneurs and other businesses emerges. When it comes to creative entrepreneurs, the question of what motivates a person to engage in entrepreneurial activity and exploit the entrepreneurial opportunities is intrinsically related to and intertwined with *the question of what motivates a person's creativity because without the last one also the first one cannot exist.* Therefore, to create a deeper understanding of a creative entrepreneur it is important to also focus on the question of what motivates a person's creativity and review the literature about motivation and creativity, especially about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

According to Collins and Amabile (1999), there is a vast amount of empirical evidence that creative production requires a high level of motivation because

the process is rather demanding and therefore needs good stamina. But the important question regarding this paper is what kind of motivation drives creativity? Through different research periods in time, scholars have suggested various answers to this question.

First, theories about the nature of the motivation that enhances creativity derived from psychodynamic tradition and suggested, for example, that creative behavior is a way to reduce tension created by other unacceptable desires (Collins and Amabile, 1999). Here Freud (1908 & 1915, cited in Collins & Amabile 1999) suggested that creative activity allows a person to work through some conflict, which was echoed by some other researchers (Fairbairn, 1938; Sharpe 1930 & 1950; Stokes 1963; all cited in Collins & Amabile 1999), suggesting that creativity may be motivated by the needs to channel and resolve aggressive and destructive impulses.

In contrast, other researchers have suggested that creativity gives means to fulfill more positive needs. For example, it may be driven by a healthy desire to master various aspects of a person's life. According to Gedo (1983, cited in Collins & Amabile 1999), the aspect that a person desires to master in her life might be the environment she finds herself to be in. Furthermore, according to Cangelosi and Schaefer (1992), creativity may be driven by the need to master one's own self-understanding, personal control and emotional regulation, meaning working with oneself.

In 1962, Crutchfield drew a greater distinction between ego-involved and task-involved motives (Collins and Amabile, 1999) and researched them

further. His theory suggests that ego-involved or extrinsic motivation is rather driven by the wish to achieve the end result for receiving the possible reward for it. On the contrary, task-involved or intrinsic motivation is about engaging in the creative process and enjoying it without thinking about the possible rewards waiting when one finds a creative solution for the task.

In 1983, Collins and Amabile proposed definitions for intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, also building on Crutchfield's findings. They defined intrinsic motivation as the "motivation to engage in an activity primarily for its own sake, because the individual perceives the activity as interesting, involving, satisfying or personally challenging; it is marked by a focus on the challenge and the enjoyment of the work itself" (Collins & Amabile, 1999 : 299). In contrast, the extrinsic motivation is the one "to engage in activity primarily in order to meet some goal external to the work itself, such as attaining an expected reward, winning a competition or meeting some requirement; it is marked by a focus on external reward, external recognition and external direction of one's work" (ibid. : 299-300).

Therefore, intrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something for its own sake, to engage in an activity purely for the activity itself, because it is interesting and enjoyable (Wadeson, 2006; Abuhamdeh and Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation represents a motivation to engage in an activity in pursuit of a reward one desires (Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009) (figure 1).



FIGURE 1. INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Source: Author's own elaboration, based on Collins & Amabile (1999).

Communication gap and cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs

Based on the literature, it can be assumed that creative entrepreneurs are more motivated by intrinsic motives when engaging in entrepreneurial activities because it enables them to enjoy the process of producing new creative solutions instead of doing something merely to gain an external reward. They are motivated by the satisfaction of their pursuits (Collins & Amabile, 1999; Florida, 2011) and creative persons are more motivated by the creation process itself than engaging in it merely due to monetary rewards (HKU, 2010; Carsrud & Brännback, 2011; Küttim et al, 2011). According to Hernandez-Acosta (2012 : 32) "creating and sharing arts is the artist's main factor motivating their ventures".

Moreover, it is also suggested that other entrepreneurs are rather motivated by external motives when creating a company because their engagement is rather motivated by external rewards, for example earning profit (Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009; Carsrud & Brännback, 2011).

Based on these assumptions, the model that will be proposed now proves the fact that, because creative entrepreneurs tend to be more motivated by intrinsic motives and other entrepreneurs by external ones, this may lead to a communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs (figure 2).

Based on this proposed model, it can be assumed that creative people see the contradiction between what motivates them and what they believe should motivate them as entrepreneurs, and they believe this makes them not as good and valid entrepreneurs as others are (Küttim et al, 2011). According to Schumpeter (1934 through Shane, 2003) the traditional reason for starting a company – the entrepreneurial goal – is considered to be economic and that the entrepreneur does things for economic gain (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). But if creative entrepreneurs are intrinsically motivated, they do not praise the extrinsic reward – the economic gain – but rather focus on the challenge and the enjoyment of the work itself (Collins & Amabile 1999; Florida, 2011).

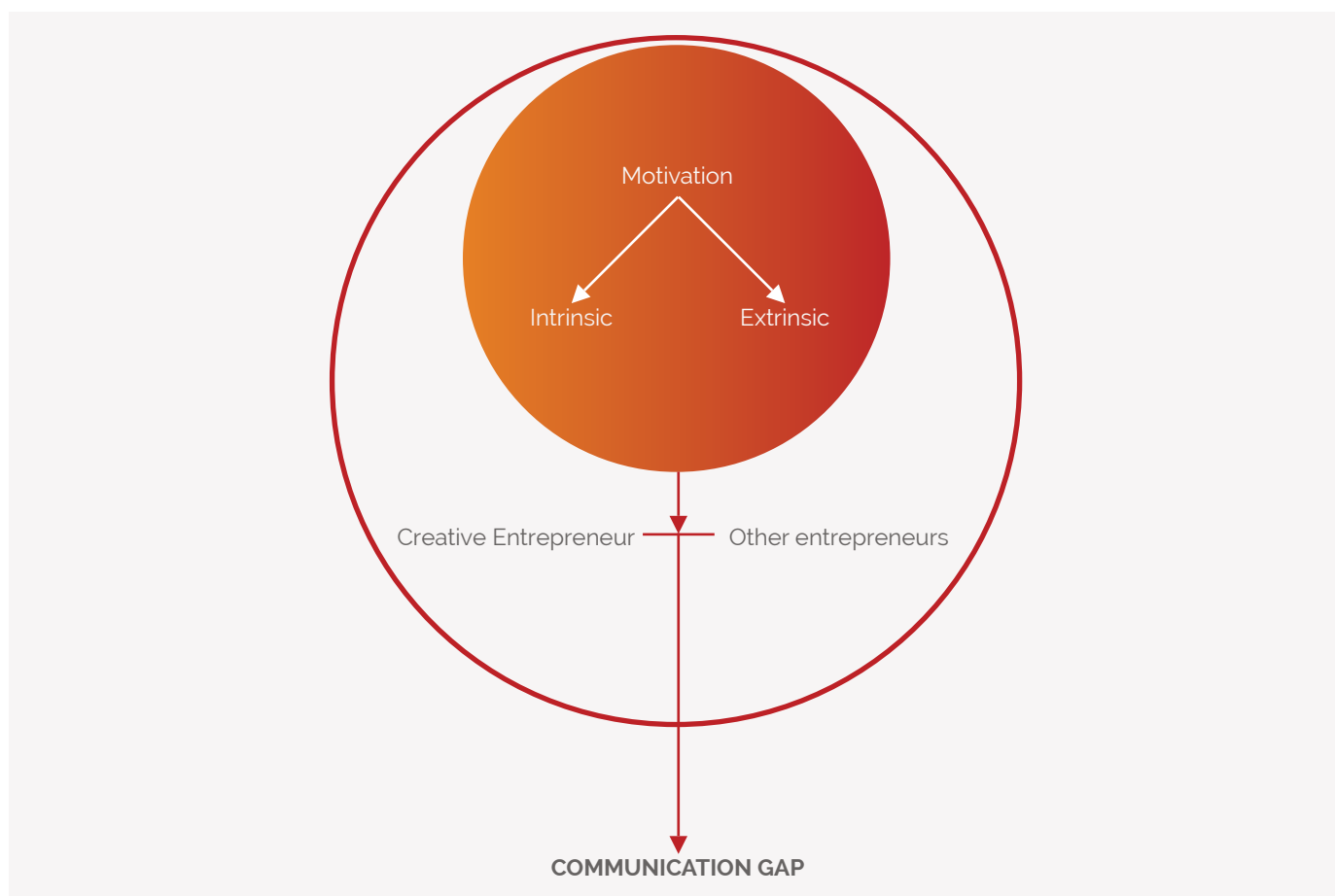


FIGURE 2. A MODEL FOR COMMUNICATION GAP BETWEEN CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS AND OTHER ENTREPRENEURS

Source: Author's own elaboration.

This contradiction may lead creative entrepreneurs to believe that they are not fully part of the traditional entrepreneurial domain (figure 3), which often tends to value extrinsic rewards. Furthermore, the issue of potential differences in motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) may also influence other entrepreneurs to believe that they and creative entrepreneurs are not part of the same traditional entrepreneurial domain. This may happen due to the fact that to other entrepreneurs, the creative ones may seem to be ignited by other drivers than obtaining the economic gain and this creates confusion, which feeds to disturbing smooth cooperation between the two. This all contributes to generating communication gaps between creative and other entrepreneurs, which may hinder their cooperation. Hernandez-Acosta (2012) agrees that some creative entrepreneurs may feel dissatisfaction with other industries, which is caused by bad previous experiences.

It may be argued that it does not really matter whether the difference between the motivation of creative and other entrepreneurs is truly in existence or is only perceived by the involved parties. In both cases, nevertheless, it still influences the perception of them not being part of the one and the same entrepreneurial domain. It affects building relationships between creative and other entrepreneurs and to some extent, it prevents them from networking with each other, which can be harmful to their cooperation.

Both creative and other entrepreneurs are actually part of the same entrepreneurial domain and should cooperate. For example, enhanced cooperation between the two would give creative enterprises an opportunity to raise their capital through investments from other sectors or exploit competences in technology or manufacturing for developing their products and services. On the other hand, other enterprises will get a chance to enrich their competitive advantages through creative solutions provided by creative entrepreneurs. There are gains for both parties when they engage in frequent cooperation (Tscherning & Boxenbaum, 2011).

The role of creative business incubators

The perception of belonging to the same entrepreneurial domain can be influenced by creative business incubators because their aim is to support creative entrepreneurs. One way of contributing to achieving this goal is to facilitate the cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs. They can help creatives to build connections that lead to beneficial cooperation with other industries.

Firstly, creative business incubators can operate as a mentor or coach for creative entrepreneurs and help them see that other entrepreneurs belong to the same entrepreneurial domain with them. Secondly, they can provide common ground for creative and other entrepreneurs to meet and exchange experience

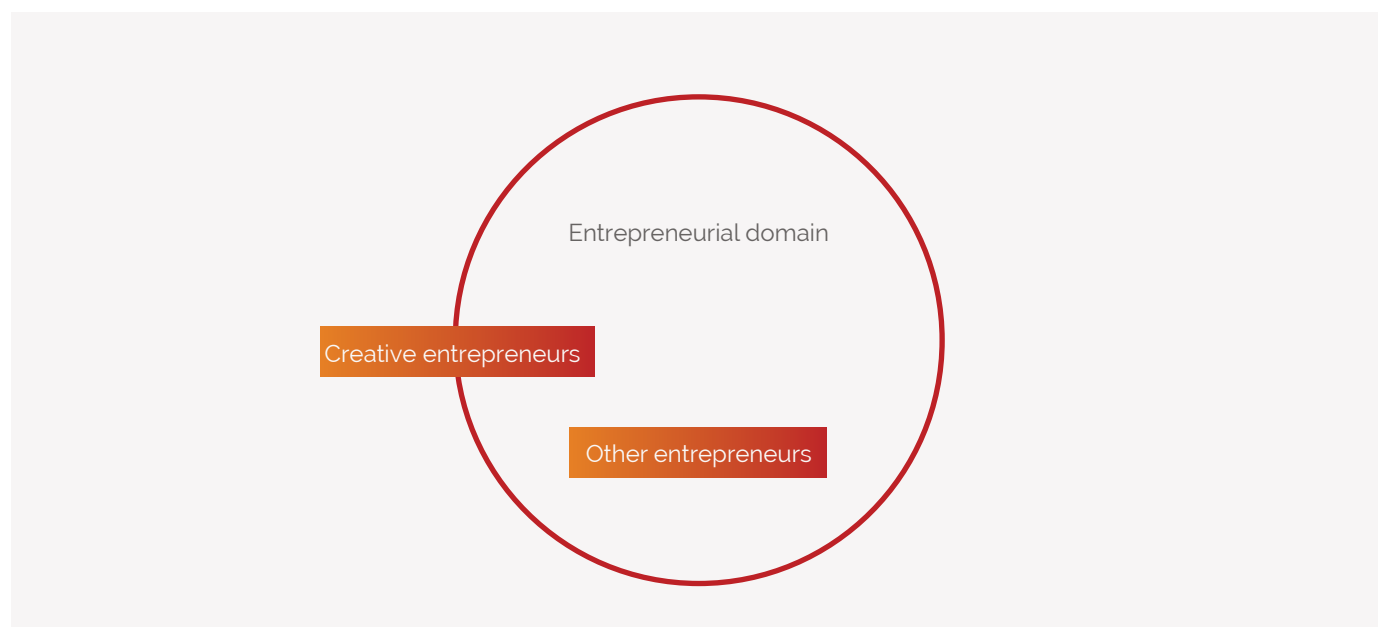


FIGURE 3. ENTREPRENEURS' POSSIBLE PERCEPTION ABOUT BELONGING TO THE SAME TRADITIONAL ENTREPRENEURIAL DOMAIN

Source: Author's own elaboration.

and knowledge to learn more about the other party.

To be successful in this facilitator role, it is crucial that the creative business incubators understand both parties really well and provide the most effective solutions for creative entrepreneurs. Therefore, understanding the possible difference in entrepreneurial motivation is very important to avoid unnecessary conflicts in the process.

In the following sections, the paper presents the findings of how creative entrepreneurs perceive the issue of the communication gap and its relation to the difference in motivation. The paper also presents findings of how creative business incubators perceive the same topic and what are their suggestions regarding the communication gap.

Research design and methodology

The paper uses a qualitative research methodology to research and analyze the topic. Data were collected about two different research objects (1) creative entrepreneurs, and (2) creative business incubators to provide a deeper understanding about the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs, as well as to understand how creative business incubators can support creative entrepreneurs better. Creative business incubators often support creative entrepreneurs in finding partners, customers, and investors, who may often be from industries other than creative ones. Therefore, creative business incubators have the means to observe and furthermore enhance the cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs.

The aim of this paper is not to make any statistical conclusions, but to focus on creating a

new understanding of the phenomenon. Therefore, the purposive sampling technique was chosen to select creative entrepreneurs and creative business incubators to perform in-depth semi-structured interviews with them.

The sample of creative entrepreneurs consists of six creative entrepreneurs located in Estonia and four creative business incubators located in Estonia, Finland, and Sweden. Altogether, ten separate interviews were conducted with four different creative business incubators (2 interviews in Finland, 2 in Sweden, 6 in Estonia) and six interviews with creative entrepreneurs from different fields (table 1).

The topics with creative entrepreneurs included (1) the similarities and differences between creative and other entrepreneurs, according to the respondent's own experience; (2) what motivated the respondent to become a creative entrepreneur and according to respondent's experience, what the differences in motivation between creative and other entrepreneurs are to become and operate as entrepreneurs; (3) addressing the issue of communication gap from various angles – through communication between creative and other entrepreneurs and also through how creative and other entrepreneurs perceive each other (are they part of the same entrepreneurial domain?) – based on respondent's experience; (4) challenges when it comes to being a creative entrepreneur.

The topics with creative business incubators included (1) general differences between creative and other entrepreneurs; (2) what motivates creative entrepreneurs to become and operate as an entrepreneur as well as what are the differences in motivation between creative and other entrepreneurs to become and operate as entrepreneurs – and

Creative Entrepreneurs
Handmade and designed wooden spectacles
Handmade and designed leather bags and accessories
Event marketing
Fashion design brand
Design agency
Graphic design

TABLE 1. CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY ACCORDING TO THEIR FIELD

Source: Author's own elaboration.

respondents perception of it; (3) addressing the issue of communication gap from various angles – through communication between creative and other entrepreneurs and also through how creative and other entrepreneurs perceive each other (are they part of the same entrepreneurial domain); (4) challenges when it comes to working and supporting creative entrepreneurs.

There were differences in the quality of answers received through interviews but still, all of them had valuable information and gave tools to analyze the phenomenon. The data collected was organized and then categorized. The paper uses a deductive approach and therefore the categories for analyzing the data derived from the theoretical framework. Exact categories with labels and explanations can be found in table 2.

After labeling the categories, in this paper, the organized data have been worked through, and

relevant information has been grouped, according to the categories into meaningful units of data, which consist of coherent phrases and sentences from interviews delivering understanding and explanations about the research topic. For example:

Of course, it's also about doing your own thing independently. You can have your own view and create and live your dream. That's the thing that motivates (Creative business incubator 1, Finland).

Finally, these meaningful units of data were distributed under five formed categories. Some categories received more units of data and some others, less. Because the focus was mainly on the communication gap and motivation for executing the entrepreneurial opportunity, categories dealing with these topics got the biggest number of units of data (Table 3).

Category	Explanation
(1) Motivation	The motivation for entrepreneurs to execute entrepreneurial opportunity (to become and be an entrepreneur).
(2) Communication gap	Creative entrepreneur's perception of the communication between creative and other entrepreneurs.
(3) Creative business incubators perception of the communication gap	How evident is the communication gap when supporting creative entrepreneurs?
(4) Challenges for creative entrepreneurs	The challenges creative entrepreneurs face.
(5) Creative business incubators support for creative entrepreneurs	The challenges they face when working with creative entrepreneurs.

TABLE 2. CATEGORIES FOR ANALYZING COLLECTED DATA

Source: Author's own elaboration.

Category	Number of meaningful units of data under the category
(1) Motivation	46
(2) Communication gap	12
(3) Creative business incubators perception of the communication gap	22
(4) Challenges for creative entrepreneurs	17
(5) Creative business incubators support for creative entrepreneurs	15

TABLE 3. CATEGORIES AND THE NUMBER OF MEANINGFUL UNITS OF DATA

Source: Author's own elaboration.

Empirical analysis

Motivation to execute entrepreneurial opportunity

When it comes to motivation to execute entrepreneurial opportunity, respondents overwhelmingly reported that creative entrepreneurs are driven by intrinsic motives – passion for the creative field they are operating in and wish to execute their creative drive to produce what they adore and at the same time earn money with it.

Trying to do what they [creative entrepreneurs] love and earn some money with that (Creative business incubator 1, Finland).

For creative entrepreneurs, the charm of entrepreneurship lies in the fact that they can do what they love and do it the way they like it and if this also brings profits and etc. then it is merely an added bonus (Entrepreneur 6, Estonia).

The thing that motivated the most was to be able to do something that is directly connected to my specialty (Entrepreneur 4, Estonia).

It was also discussed by most respondents that often the motivation for other entrepreneurs is external, meaning the profits and other monetary rewards. Other entrepreneurs often want to be certain before executing entrepreneurial opportunity, how fast they will earn a profit or they can sell their company for a big amount of money. It was also stressed by some respondents that creative entrepreneurs are not eager to sell their companies and do not give up despite involving a slower growth pace and smaller numbers in turnover.

Creative entrepreneur is often focused on her creation, other entrepreneurs on profit (Creative business incubator 2, Estonia).

Other entrepreneurs aim towards economic success and profit more than creative entrepreneurs (Entrepreneur 6, Estonia).

Self-fulfillment is cherished but the field is more important [to creative entrepreneurs] (Entrepreneur 5, Estonia).

Cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs and the communication gap

When it comes to creative entrepreneurs' perception of the communication between creative and other entrepreneurs, the discussion is dependent on the creative entrepreneur's experience, which always varies.

Nevertheless, almost every creative entrepreneur mentioned that even if they had not experienced communication gaps themselves, they had heard of it from others' experience or perceived that there is a certain prejudice about creative entrepreneurs.

Creative entrepreneurs may feel the same way that they don't have much in common with other entrepreneurs (Entrepreneur 6, Estonia).

It's possible that creative entrepreneurs are not always taken seriously – the attitude "what this artistic soul knows about doing business?", "let him potter around alone there, we here are doing business" (Entrepreneur 6, Estonia).

The main difference is that some do something real and others are selling so to say air (Entrepreneur 3, Estonia).

Some perceived prejudice about other entrepreneurs was also mentioned, mainly connected to their perhaps disproportional wish to earn money and profits. Also, when describing other entrepreneurs, there were indications from respondents that they are not as creative as them, and this was seen as something rather negative.

Creative entrepreneurs are more hippie-like and other entrepreneurs do whatever it takes to earn the profit (Entrepreneur 2, Estonia).

One entrepreneur argued that other entrepreneurs respect creative entrepreneurs when the latter ones are successful – well established creative entrepreneurs are seen as equal partners, but when the creative company is not particularly successful, then other entrepreneurs may perceive themselves as more superior and be critically minded when it comes to creative entrepreneurs.

It was also discussed that the quality of every communication situation depends on the people engaged in it and whether they manage to find a common language, meaning it is subjective. In addition, it seems that, when the cooperation between creative

and other entrepreneurs increases, then also both parties start to see the one another as an equal partner.

The more other entrepreneurs have cooperated with creative entrepreneurs, the more they take each other as equal partners (Entrepreneur 3, Estonia).

I don't believe that whether the communication works or not is dependent on the field. I believe that everything comes down to how well people click with each other (Entrepreneur 5, Estonia).

Creative business incubators perception of the communication gap

Respondents argued that creative and other entrepreneurs see themselves as different and that the communication between the two could be better.

It depends on the person but usually they speak a bit different language. Cooperation usually is possible (Creative business incubator 1, Estonia).

Creative entrepreneurs see themselves a bit different from other entrepreneurs. Creative entrepreneurs see themselves as entrepreneurs, but other entrepreneurs have prejudice about them (Creative business incubator 5 and 6, Estonia).

According to respondents' experience, the reasons for this are:

- Difference in motivation
Many other entrepreneurs are much more motivated by the money, turnovers and the beauty of the deal than creative entrepreneurs are. For a creative entrepreneur, the idea and the company are much more important – when the idea and the company are not suitable, then

there is no real passion to do things only for the money, or it has to be a huge amount of money (Creative business incubator 1, Estonia).

I believe that they [creative and other entrepreneurs] see each other as different. The reason is a different purpose for engaging in entrepreneurship (Creative business incubator 4, Estonia).

- Perception of the other party
Other entrepreneurs may see creative entrepreneurs a bit bohemians, perhaps not sticking to the schedule, not so serious entrepreneurs. And, the other way around, creative entrepreneurs may see other entrepreneurs rather as people who only do it for the money (Creative business incubator 2, Estonia).

Other entrepreneurs often think that cooperation with creative entrepreneurs is very time-consuming ("creative entrepreneurs can't follow the schedule") and it costs a lot (but creative entrepreneurs' work shouldn't cost very little) (Creative business incubator 2, Estonia).

Two respondents also argued that sometimes creative entrepreneurs see or want to see themselves different from other entrepreneurs, even when this is not really the case.

Many times, creative entrepreneurs would like to see themselves different (not that business-oriented, more about passion, personal view, etc.) but for me, as a coach/trainer, there are not so many differences (Creative business incubator 1, Finland).

"THE MAIN CHALLENGES FOR CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS DISCUSSED BY RESPONDENTS INCLUDE CONCERNS ABOUT ACQUIRING AND MANAGING FINANCES, FINDING THE RIGHT EMPLOYEES, THE COMPANY'S GROWTH, RISK MANAGEMENT, SELF-DISCIPLINE AND DELEGATING TASKS TO OTHER TEAM MEMBERS"

My feeling is that the creative people want to see more differences between the mentioned groups than what there really are in the practice (Creative business incubator 2, Finland).

It was also mentioned that cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs is getting better and that the entrepreneurs themselves are finding ways for communication. Though the prejudices among creative and other entrepreneurs about each other may be present, there are also signs that other entrepreneurs start to appreciate creative entrepreneurs.

It's getting better [communication and cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs] (Creative business incubator 4, Estonia).

It depends on the particular entrepreneur. If an entrepreneur can establish good contact with another entrepreneur (creative or other), is trustworthy, provides high-quality work and keeps his promises, then usually the cooperation should be good (Creative business incubator 3, Estonia).

Cooperation is rather intensifying, it's the time of transformation (Creative business incubator 5 and 6, Estonia).

Challenges for creative entrepreneurs

The main challenges for creative entrepreneurs discussed by respondents include concerns about acquiring and managing finances, finding the right employees, the company's growth, risk management, self-discipline and delegating tasks to other team members.

It was also argued how important it is to find good ideas and later to execute them because without the latter even a good idea loses its value. In this case, the importance of education and training to always keep developing creativity and skills was mentioned. In addition, the need for business education for being able to face and overcome challenges related to finances and numbers was mentioned as well.

Numbers can be challenging for creative people (Entrepreneur 1, Estonia).

Creative business incubators support for creative entrepreneurs

Many respondents mentioned that creative entrepreneurs might often be very resolute and decisive when it comes to their business idea. They are not very eager to compromise and also to create a business-oriented point of view. Therefore, the need for understanding what motivates them was mentioned.

Creative entrepreneurs might feel strongly that they know nothing about business, they are not doing their work for money or they are not willing to compromise (Creative business incubator 1, Finland).

How to get a creative entrepreneur to act more like a businessperson, where you have to document your business models and calculate the profitability of different strategies? (Creative business incubator 2, Finland).

Empathy, understanding their motivation (Creative business incubator 1, Sweden).

It was also mentioned that creative entrepreneurs may be more sensitive and therefore creative business incubators need to pay more attention when being critical or when encouraging creative entrepreneurs to proceed.

In addition, the financing, the company's growth and understanding the competition situation on the market were mentioned as issues that creative entrepreneurs may need support with.

Discussion

Findings from this empirical research show that differences in motivation between creative and other entrepreneurs to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities are perceived. Also, it is evident that creative and other entrepreneurs may see each other differently and this may lead to the communication gap between them that may hinder their cooperation. The findings allow assuming that creative entrepreneurs are more often motivated by intrinsic motives, like passion for the creative field and employment of one's creative skills. Also, it was often argued that other entrepreneurs are rather motivated by extrinsic motives, like profits and turnover. This links with the discussions in the paper's theory chapter.

Findings from this paper also align with previous studies arguing that creative persons are more motivated by the creation process itself than engaging in it, merely due to monetary rewards and that other entrepreneurs are rather motivated by external motives when creating a company because their engagement is rather motivated by external rewards, for example earning the profit (Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009; HKU, 2010; Carsrud & Brännback, 2011; Küttim et al, 2011).

Based on current findings, it is not possible to determine to what extent these differences – motivation, and perception of belonging to the same entrepreneurial domain – are really present in everyday life or only perceived to be present by the involved parties. Nevertheless, in both cases (present or perceived) these differences may affect the communication processes between creative and other entrepreneurs, because the perception of them not being part of the one and same entrepreneurial domain is present and therefore affects communication between them, hence creating a communication gap. This, however, affects their cooperation.

It is not possible to conclude that motivation to exploit the entrepreneurial opportunity is the only difference affecting the creative entrepreneurs' perception about other entrepreneurs and vice versa, nor their perception about not being fully part of the same entrepreneurial domain. Nevertheless, the links and alignment between the difference in motivations and reasons affecting the perceptions about the other party were often argued (figure 4).

It was discussed that the cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs could be better. The reason for the lack of cooperation may be due to not seeing each other as fully part of the same entrepreneurial domain because there are differences in entrepreneurial motivations. This enables to conclude that even if the difference in motivation for exploiting the entrepreneurial opportunity is not the only factor affecting the cooperation between creative and other entrepreneurs, it still affects it and is therefore important to be acknowledged creative business incubators.

It is also discussed that the situation regarding creative and other entrepreneurs' cooperation is changing and that the quality of it depends on people who engage in the cooperation process and whether or not they manage to find a common language. This shows that the cooperation process between creative and other entrepreneurs can be enhanced as well through the external support provided by creative business incubators that are supporting creative entrepreneurs.

In the next section, a suggestion for what to consider a starting point to bridge the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs is proposed, as well as how this can be implemented by the creative business incubators when supporting creative entrepreneurs' cooperation with other industries.

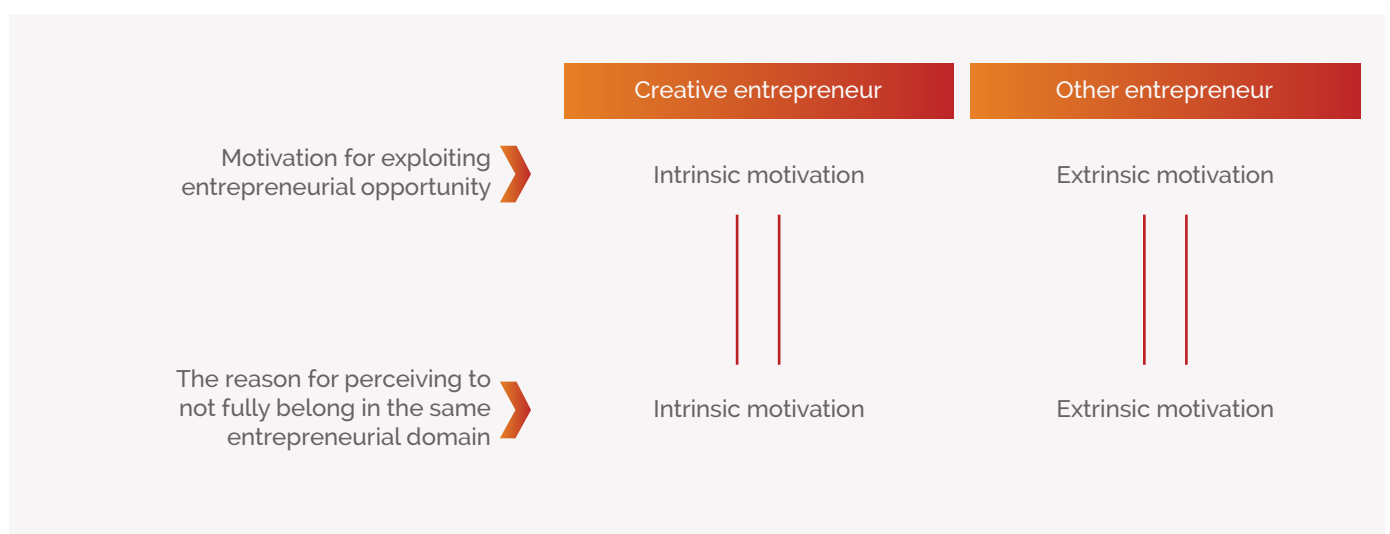


FIGURE 4. AN ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE DIFFERENCE IN MOTIVATION FOR EXPLOITING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITY AND THE REASON FOR PERCEIVING TO NOT FULLY BELONG IN THE SAME ENTREPRENEURIAL DOMAIN

Source: Author's own elaboration.

Conclusions

Findings from this paper show that for supporting creative entrepreneurs better, it is important to understand their entrepreneurial motivation, as this may differ from what motivates other entrepreneurs to execute the entrepreneurial opportunity. Creative entrepreneurs may be more motivated by intrinsic motivation, while others, by extrinsic motivation. This may lead to a communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs, which affects their cooperation. Understanding creative entrepreneurs' motivation better is important for creative business incubators, in order to be able to support them when it comes to cooperation with other industries.

Based on findings from this paper, future research could also gather empirical data from other entrepreneurs to determine how they perceive cooperation with creative entrepreneurs, which would help see whether it differs from creative entrepreneurs' perception or not. In addition, it would also be good to research further on what are the other aspects, besides possible motivational differences between creative and other entrepreneurs, when executing entrepreneurial opportunities, which may affect the cooperation between them.

Recommendations for creative business incubators

As the first step for creative business incubators – when it comes to bridging the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs and enhancing their cooperation – it would be important to start with the concept of “value creation”. For bridging unlike sides, it is firstly necessary to find a common denominator, accepted by both parties – creative and other entrepreneurs. This is proposed to be “value creation” since the concept is intrinsic for both parties. It is being used and understood, though with some alterations in everyday use, by creative as well as other entrepreneurs.

From one side, entrepreneurs identify opportunities that at first are not apparent and evident to other people and therefore, they often face the task of persuading others – especially customers and employees – that the opportunity they have discovered is valuable (Shane, 2003: 97). This creates the need to clearly explain the value the entrepreneur is creating to all relevant stakeholders. Moreover, value creation is used for measuring financial performance in addition

to using data offered by accounting (Trifan and Suciu, 2015). Therefore, the concepts of “value” and “value creation” are substantial parts in the entrepreneurial language.

Also providing some new value through their creations, no matter if it is critical towards society or some processes or targeted towards public or merely towards the creative person themselves (self-expression), the concept is known and important for the creative individuals and therefore also for the creative individuals who decide to exploit the entrepreneurial opportunity they have discovered due to their skills, talent, and creativity. For example, a necessary condition for artwork's existence is the artistic expression because it contributes to the setting of the value share of an artwork (Florian, 2015).

Therefore, beginning to bridge the communication gap between creative and other entrepreneurs by creating some common ground for both through the concept of “value creation” may prove to be vital. Researching this phenomenon through different theoretical perspectives, based on value creation approaches, could be a basis for future research.

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EU's civil society bias in the Neighbourhood: a case study on culture

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ABSTRACT

This article attempts to analyse the European Union's (EU) financial and technical support to cultural actors in EU Neighbourhood countries. In particular, it enquires *whether the boundaries of what cultural sector means for the EU are based on a Eurocentric understanding of civil society or rather on a more inclusive definition mediated with partner countries' societies*. The work hypothesises that the EU tends to support cultural civil society organisations on the basis of their closeness to European standards, norms and values. Findings highlight a mixed picture. On the one hand, a Eurocentric understanding of civil society tends to prevail in EU discourses and is enforced by technical means addressing the *status and capacity* of the organisations involved, with some exceptions. On the other hand, the EU does not seem to impose strong prerequisites concerning the *agenda* of organisations and aims to be as inclusive as possible.

Keywords:

EU international cultural relations

Cultural diplomacy

European Neighbourhood policy

Civil society

Culture

Introduction

In many neighbourhood countries ethnic, religious and cultural identities and traditions play a crucial role as regards the way society functions. During the public consultation, stakeholders referred to these factors and asked the EU to allow more co-ownership. The EU should therefore expand outreach to relevant members of civil society in its broadest sense as well as social partners (EC & HR, 2015: 7).

This reflection included in the 2015 Joint Communication on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) represents a rare and ambiguous reference to an issue that does not lie at the heart of policy debates in Brussels. This can be summarised by three questions. What constitutes 'civil society' (CS) in countries that do not share many of the fundamental political, social and cultural features of liberal Western societies? Does the European Union (EU) engage with societal actors that do not resemble its own idea of CS as either independent from political and religious ties or showing a clear liberal and democratic agenda? If not, does the EU have an interest in engaging with such actors? While an encompassing reflection on all these aspects is beyond the reach of this work, the following analysis seeks to provide a case study with a thematic focus. It looks at EU cultural relations with Neighbourhood countries and in particular at EU's financial and technical support to their cultural actors. Cultural relations have been an integral part of the ENP since its beginning, and the EU has developed a sound experience in supporting the cultural sector in the region. However, this study seeks to enquire whether the boundaries of what cultural sector means for the EU are mostly based on a Eurocentric understanding of CS or rather on a more inclusive definition mediated with the nature of societies in partner countries.

The concept of civil society is a contested one, subject to multiple definitions and often politicised. It is widely understood as a space between the individual and the state, where association and civic action take place to represent societal needs. As observed by Yom (2005) different scholars and actors stretch the definition of what is civil society and who is part of it based on their normative views. For example, seen with a western blueprint of CS in mind, the Arab world has in recent decades failed to develop a large number of secular associations successfully advocating for political and societal change. The public space of civic

activism, solidarity and political transformation has been more often occupied by Islamist associations, which have remained largely outside of the Western donors support to CS (ibid.: 20). Structural differences in the expressions of activism in the public sphere also exist between Western Europe and the post-Soviet space, where totalitarian rule and repression have affected the development of CS and participation in its organisational life (Bernhard & Karakoç, 2007). The purpose of this research is not primarily to analyse these differences, but to inquire if a Eurocentric definition of the boundaries of CS informs policies in support of the cultural sector. The work starts from a hypothesis that the EU tends to approach and support Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the field of culture on the basis of their closeness to European standards, norms and values. If we consider foreign policy as a process that traces boundaries (Campbell, 1998: 73), it becomes clear that this practice of selection and exclusion is not neutral, as it concerns the definition of a European identity in relation with (and potentially in opposition to) Others.

Methodology

In order to justify the hypothesis, the analysis starts by reviewing the broader academic debates over the role of international donors in supporting CS in developing countries. The major criticality arising from this review is the following: Western donors tend to adopt an exclusionary approach to CS in developing countries and target actors on the ground of their *status* (privileging formal/registered organisations), *agenda* (privileging organisations sharing liberal norms and values), and *capacity* (privileging organisations with pre-existing experience in aid techniques and vocabulary). Taken together, these factors can create or further exacerbate societal cleavages and lead to the creation of an artificial CS which, while suiting some Western donors' needs and ambitions, is not endogenous and legitimised.

After this framing, the hypothesis is tested against three types of empirical evidence. First, document analysis of the declaratory level of EU policies to enquire how the EU perceives and defines the boundaries of CS in ENP countries. Second, an analysis of some of the instruments designed by the EU to support the cultural sector in the Neighbourhood to see whether these concerns are reflected in practice. This will focus on recent multi-country and regional programmes: cross-border cooperation (CBC) programmes for the

“PROFESSIONALIZATION APPEARS AS A KEY FEATURE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR, WHICH IN TURN RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS LEGITIMACY AND CAPACITY TO PROMOTE LONG-TERM CHANGE. SIMILAR CONCERNS ARE VOICED ON ENP SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD”

period 2014-2018 in the East and 'Media and culture for development in the Southern Mediterranean region' (hereafter MaC) (2013-2017) in the South. Finally, a further case study will look at the selection of local beneficiaries under a project managing sub-granting for MaC.

The analysis of the selected EU programmes will be based on the operationalisation of the key issues identified in the literature review into the three indicators of *status*, *agenda*, and *capacity*. Indicators are then further disaggregated into a total of five sub-indicators: *status*, *support to organisations pursuing religious and political goals*, *proximity to EU values*, *previous experience on EU or international grants*, and *use of language*.

First, EU programmes will be analysed with regard to the *status* (1) of the organisations they support. If EU programmes only fund officially registered organisations, this can greatly limit the representativeness of CS in countries where informal groups are central or where governments use registration to control and repress independent actors. Also, whether applicants can be for profit or non-profit, governmental or non-governmental organisations expands or restricts the reach of EU activities.

Second, the analysis looks at the agenda of supported actors and identifies two sub-indicators that may define the boundaries of what CS does the EU support in the field of culture: explicit exclusion of organisations pursuing *religious and political goals* (2a) or support based on *proximity to EU values* (2b) on issues like gender, environment, minority or other horizontal issues.

Third, the article enquires on the expected capacity of the organisations applying for EU funding and identifies two sub-indicators. Targeting organisations without previous *experience on EU or international grants* (3a) can contribute to create a path dependency and target an artificial CS isolated to the real local needs. Also, the use of *language* (3b) will be taken into account by checking whether EU programmes give access to actors who only speak local

languages and do not master European languages like English or French. The research will rely on existing literature, official documents and websites from the EU and other organisations, as well as semi-structured interviews to managers of EU cultural programmes and projects.

International donors and support to civil society in developing countries: a literature review

Beginning in the late 1980s, the concept of CS stirred political aspirations in the international arena. As the Cold War was coming to an end with its winners and losers, CS raised in importance as a prerequisite to universalise Western liberal democracy as "the final form of human government" (Fukuyama, 1989: 4). Inspired by Eastern Europe's democracy movements of the 1980s, Western aid institutions added political objectives to their agendas, based on the idea that vibrant CS forces would play an active role in undermining authoritarian regimes and contributing to democratic consolidation. As such, the very expression 'civil society' has evoked prospects of change and liberation: in Diamond's view, for instance, it is "a vital instrument for containing the power of democratic governments, checking their potential abuses and violations of the law, and subjecting them to public scrutiny" (Diamond, 1994: 7). Against this background, in recent years a growing body of literature has nuanced celebratory assessments of CS and proposed a more careful look at the role and influence of international donors in developing countries.

As a first critical point, researchers have called into question conceptualisations of CS as the operational sphere of legally recognised organisations, as these provide only partial accounts of collective action in developing countries (Salamon & Anheier, 1997; Chazan, 1992; De Weijer & Kilnes, 2012; Benessaieh, 2011; Lorch, 2016; Malena & Finn Heinrich, 2007; Kelley, 2011). In other words, defining CS actors' on the basis of their legal status could already entail a process of

inclusion or exclusion. For instance, Banks and Hulme criticise the "simplistic view of CS as a collection of organisations rather than a space for interaction and negotiation around power" (2012: 21). Also, Malena and Finn Heinrich (2007) note that such an approach focuses largely on Western contexts, in which formal or registered organisations are prevalent. Thus, it neglects those areas where most CSOs are informal or not registered. Similarly, De Weijer and Kilnes observe that the inclusion of non-recognised groups is crucial in fragile states, as "civil society tends to be much less organised and formalised than in other low-income or middle-income countries" (2012: 2). In addition, in some cases legal registration is a necessary but not sufficient condition to be an aid recipient: scholars have found that many international donors equate CS with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and provide resources to support their sector, to the detriment of actors with a higher potential of social change, such as grassroots or social movements (Belloni, 2001; Seckinelgin, 2002; Banks & Hulme, 2012; De Weijer & Kilnes, 2012). Banks and Hulme point out that although NGOs are part of CS, "they are far from synonymous with CS, and do not automatically strengthen CS" (2012: 21).

Furthermore, literature has emphasised that donors' exclusionary approach is not only 'law-driven', following the focus on the organisational status, but also "value-driven", as donors tend to predominantly target those forces sharing a Western agenda and also exclude actors with explicit political or religious goals (Tvedt, 1998, 2002; Clark, Friedman & Hochstetler, 1998; Mercer, 2002; Clarke, 2006). In a case study on NGOs and international donors in Mexico, Benessaieh observes that, under donors' influence, global CS tend to speak Northern tongues, showing "a discursive predominance of the norms and values of Western-liberal societies" (2011: 74). As a result, local organisations tend either to conform to the objectives of the donors and downplay their own agendas, or translate "both for donors and for communities in order to match the latter's perceived needs with the former's preferred language" (2011: 77). Similarly, Tvedt (1998, 2002) notes that NGOs from developing countries have shown a worrying phenomenon of "institutional isomorphism" (2002: 370) in a short period of time. The aid industry thus operates as "a transmission belt of a dominant discourse tied to Western notions of development" (Ibid). However, isomorphism does not really apply to political or religious organisations: Clarke notes that donors face the challenge "of broadening

their conception of civil society, of embracing its more politically contentious and culturally exotic aspects so that it becomes more socially inclusive" (2006: 846).

Together with status and agenda, literature identifies capacity as another powerful indicator highlighting processes of inclusion or exclusion. Kelley (2011) observes that the techniques used by local NGOs hardly come from the grassroots of developing countries, as these organisations are often under the control of educated and western oriented individuals who, in spite of their weak CS connections, have higher capacity in managing international funding. Overall, professionalization appears as a key feature of the CS sector, which in turn raises questions about its legitimacy and capacity to promote long-term change. Similar concerns are voiced on ENP Southern neighbourhood: Cebeci and Schumacher raise the issue of co-optation of CSOs, which are often professionalised, supported by local elites and "detached from their own populations, having little or no understanding of their local needs" (2017: 19). Together with previous experience in aid management, language barriers may also exclude grassroots organisations from applying. In a study assessing EU assistance to CS in the South Caucasus, Aliyev (2016) observes that lack of fluency in the English language can challenge grassroots organisations' capacity to participate in European calls, as they are short of trained personnel or funds to request translation services.

Contrary to those insisting that CS is by no means progressive and pursuing the public good (Diamond, 1994 & 1997; Knight & Hartnell, 2001), some scholars have warned against exclusionary approaches. For instance, De Weijer and Kilnes (2012) stress that this may undermine participation, especially if they have a broad support in the public opinion and can bring social change. To Aliyev (2016), a major limit of EU support for CS in the South Caucasus lies in a substantial lack of representation of the civil actors the EU engages with.

While critical literature on international donors' support to CS is extensive, EU's actorness as a donor in developing countries, and particularly in ENP countries, has been so far largely neglected. Where possible, this section has attempted to include academic contributions on the subject (Belloni, 2001; Fischer, 2011; Aliyev, 2016; Schumacher, 2016; Cebeci & Schumacher, 2017). In this regard, by assessing EU cultural discourse in the ENP, the next sections of this article attempt to fill a void in the literature and contribute to the broader debate over CS support.

Tracing the boundaries of “civil society” in the ENP

Culture and cultural differences have a role in political and security discourses, dominating much of recent EU relations with the neighbourhood. ENP societies and cultures are often identified as ‘fragile’ and unprepared to absorb EU values (Cebeci & Schumacher, 2017: 15-16). Some issues like terrorism and oppression of women can be presented as problems inherently related to Muslim culture, thus defining the boundaries of an imagined European identity. Pointing at cultural differences as a causal explanation for social, political and security issues often neglects the presence of similar phenomena in Europe (Ibid: 13), where gender inequality is far from being resolved, ethno-nationalist terrorism has only recently been tamed (e.g. IRA, ETA), and extreme-wing political terrorism periodically resurfaces (e.g. 2011 Norway attacks).

While culture can be used to reinforce geographical divisions, ENP discourses also recognise the presence of elements of proximity to EU values in partner countries. In fact, EU neighbours are not presented as homogeneous cultural and political entities. Rather, in EU narratives traits of “non-Europeaness” like political and religious radicalism, patriarchal rule and anti-liberal identities mostly belong to old autocratic political classes and generally to systems of powers that have lost touch with the more progressive masses. The “civil society” in ENP countries is an ontologically good CS, trapped in political systems that restrain its quest for liberal transformation, which is a messianic realisation of the natural course of history. With these assumptions, the EU’s optimistic reaction and positive narratives vis-à-vis revolutions in the Neighbourhood should not come as a surprise. In these discourses, the Arab Spring was initially perceived as the exclusive manifestation of the democratic uprising of the secularised youth rather than that of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist

movements rising to power across the region, and a call for the EU “to support wholeheartedly the wish of the people in our neighbourhood to enjoy the same freedoms that we take as our right” (EC & HR, 2011a: 2). Similarly, Euromaidan protesters in Ukraine were only represented by the students brandishing EU flags, and EU statements made no relevant mention of the role of militants from Svoboda and Right Sector (see Ishchenko, 2016).

“CIVIL SOCIETY IN EU NARRATIVES IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH THE BEST-REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF ONE COUNTRY’S NON-GOVERNMENTAL FORCES, BUT RATHER A CHERRY-PICKED SELECTION OF THOSE FORCES THAT UPHOLD EUROPEAN VALUES”

Arguably, CS in EU narratives is not synonymous with the best-representative sample of one country’s non-governmental forces, but rather a cherry-picked selection of those forces that uphold European values. The extent to which this cherry-picking is also found in the practice of EU support to non-governmental actors in the region is open to discussion, and is one of the elements addressed in this contribution. At the declaratory level, this is the picture that emerges from the key documents defining the ENP after the beginning of the Arab Spring. According to the 2011 Joint Communication *A new response to a changing Neighbourhood*, in the area

“civil society plays a pivotal role in advancing women’s rights, greater social justice and respect for minorities as well as environmental protection and resource efficiency” and “empowers citizens to express their concerns, contribute to policymaking and hold governments to account” (EC & HR, 2011b: 4). But transformation towards liberal Western values is not just one among many paths that “civil society” might want to pursue, it is rather its natural course of action. When this willingness for change has not manifested itself yet, this is rather due to obstacles restraining this otherwise automatic evolution. Liberal change is already present at the heart of CS in neighbouring countries, but it might be sleeping or it might need the EU to act as a facilitator in a maieutic process where non-Western societies get to discover what they really want. For these reasons, “willingness to reform cannot be imposed from outside and the expectation for

reform must come from within societies. EU policy can act as a catalyst in this process" (EC & HR, 2014: 8). The 2015 ENP Review also promised stronger support to CS, *inter alia* as one of the tools to "uphold and promote *universal values*" (EC & HR, 2015: 5). This CS has a key role to play against government sector's corruption and in holding state power accountable (ibid.: 6) in a Manichean dichotomy where non-governmental and private actors, including "civil society professionals" (ibid), seem to belong to an ideal community moved by liberal democratic values, as opposed to established powers holding their countries back. In sum, 'civil society' in EU discourse is arguably an abstraction, a projection of EU's ideal Self into its neighbourhood.

EU discourses and implicit definitions are not insulated from EU external action, and can potentially affect it in a variety of ways. From a social constructivist point of view (Rosamond, 2001; Risse & Maier, 2003; Checkel, 2004) discourse represents a source of power that establishes hierarchies and roles in society and defines identities. In more practical terms, ignoring or excluding social actors that do not fit EU's ideal representation of CS can potentially affect the way the EU engages with ENP and other third countries. EU's vision of CS based on a Western liberal bias can influence its role as an international actor supporting CSOs based on their status, agenda and capacity.

EU support to the cultural sector in the ENP: a case study

The following section analyses some multi-country programmes funding the cultural sector in the ENP East and South.

Culture in the ENP East

Instruments and programmes

To analyse EU cultural action in the Eastern neighbourhood, this case study looks at cross-border cooperation (CBC) programmes in 2014-2020. CBC has been chosen over two other cultural initiatives: the EaP Culture and Creativity Programme and Creative Europe. The former, which ended in early 2018 and was designed to enhance cultural action in EaP countries, did not provide sub-granting to local organisations (Interview 4) and thus falls out of the scope of the article. As for Creative Europe, while Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine joined it in the past years, it remains a programme targeting mainly EU member states (MS) cultural sectors.

Under the European Neighbourhood Instrument, CBC aims at enhancing cooperation between EU MS and those neighbours sharing land or sea borders. Similarly to the European Territorial Cooperation programmes, CBC initiatives do not target MS or neighbouring countries but rather those Eligible Territorial Units (ETUs) along shared land borders and sea basins. Under Thematic Objective 3 (TO3), CBC aims explicitly at the promotion of local culture and the preservation of historical heritage.

Out of the seventeen CBC programmes included in the Programming Document 2014-2020, seven targeted Eastern neighbourhood countries. Two additional criteria were adopted in this case study. First, the publication of relevant call of proposals for the period 2014-2020, in order to analyse their Terms of References and annexed documents. Second, the possibility for Eastern neighbourhood partners to receive funds under the programme as main applicants. Based on this selection, which further excluded two programmes, this case study reviews four land-border and one sea basin programmes. Programmes are listed in table 1.

Most of the selected programmes funded cultural projects under TO3. As an exception, Black Sea Basin (BSB) stakeholders defined TO1 and TO6, focusing respectively on business and environment protection, as primary objectives of the programme. However, as consultations highlighted the need to reflect some cultural aspects under economic issues, it was recommended priority 1.1 of the programme to promote "business and entrepreneurship in the tourism and cultural sectors" (MDRAP, 2015c).

Furthermore, Joint Operational Programmes (JOPs) provided in some cases relevant analyses on culture and CS. For instance, within BSB, the document identified some weaknesses in local organisations' limited networking and poor anchoring in society. Perhaps most importantly, while informal involvement was positively valued, stronger professionalisation was a goal to reach.

Similar aspects were highlighted in other programmes. In the SWOT Analysis of RO-MD JOP (MDRAP 2015a), the two major weaknesses identified in Moldova were weak expertise and co-financing capacities. In more general terms, other JOPs stressed the untapped potential of cultural and historical heritage (LLB and PBU) and the role that communities could play to preserve local identities (PBU and RO-MD). In particular, under RO-MD and RO-UA, and contrary to the other programmes, religious/cult

Programme	ETUs in Neighbouring countries	Total Budget in EUR	Budget on culture
Black Sea Basin (BSB)	<u>Ukraine</u> : Odessa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Sevastopol, Zaporosh'ye and Donetsk Oblasts, Crimea Republic, Sevastopol <u>Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan</u> : the whole country	49,038,597.00	TO1 with cultural dimension 'Jointly promote business and entrepreneurship in the tourism and cultural sectors': 25.337.752.68.
Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus (LLB)	<u>Belarus</u> : Hrodna and Vitebsk Oblasts	74,000,000.00	TO3: 17,600,000.00
Poland-Belarus-Ukraine (PBU)	<u>Belarus</u> : Hrodna and Brest oblasts <u>Ukraine</u> : Volynska, Lvivska and Zakarpatska Oblasts	183,078,184.00	TO3: 32,272,159.47
Romania-Ukraine (RO-UA) (LLB)	<u>Ukraine</u> : Ivano-Frankivsk, Zakarpatska, Chernivtsi, Odessa Oblasts	60,000,000.00	TO3: 6,000,000.00
Romania-Republic of Moldova (RO-MD)	<u>Moldova</u> : the whole country	81,000,000.00	TO3: 22,024,402.00

TABLE 1. CBC PROGRAMMES ANALYSED IN THIS STUDY

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Programme	Call for Proposals analysed	Minimum amount	Maximum amount
BSB	1 st Call for Proposals (2017)	500,000.00	1,500,000.00
LLB	1 st Call for Proposals (2016)	100,000.00	1,500,000.00
LLB	2 nd Call for Proposals (2017)	100,000.00	1,200,000.00
PBU	1 st Call for Proposals (2016)	100,000.00	2,500,000.00
PBU	2 nd Call for Proposals (2018)	20,000.00	60,000.00
RO-MD	1 st Call for Proposals (Soft projects, 2018)	50,000.00	100,000.00
RO-UA	1 st Call for Proposals (Soft Projects, 2018)	50,000.00	1,000,000.00

TABLE 2. CALLS FOR PROPOSALS ANALYSED IN THE FIVE PROGRAMMES AND GRANT RANGE

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

institutions were mentioned as possible beneficiaries of actions, suggesting that religious heritage was somewhat part of the broader objective of preservation and valorisation of local culture and identity.

Financial support to cultural actors

To analyse the funding mechanisms supporting cultural actors in CBC, this section reviews publicly available documents under the 'Call for Proposals' sections, with a focus on the documents 'Guidelines for Applicants', explaining the requirements of the programmes, and

the Evaluation Grids, providing a framework for the assessment of proposals. Table 2 lists the seven Calls for Proposals reviewed.

Status

Generally speaking, all guidelines indicated that calls for proposals were open to regional, local or national public authorities, bodies governed by public law, and non-profit organisations, which include a wide range of CS forces. Also, annexes often provided examples of eligible organisations. With the notable exception

of LLB calls, in which bodies having partly industrial or commercial character could apply as partners of the projects, profit-making entities were not eligible. Overall, the legal status of the organisation was a necessary pre-requisite to apply for funding. Informal groups were therefore excluded from participating in the programs, as guidelines did not provide the possibility to 'formalise informal groups' or to partner with a formal applicant.

Agenda

Rules on eligibility gave some indications on potential exclusionary approaches related to the agenda of the organisations. As a first finding, guidelines seemed to provide little space for political groups. For instance, BSB included political parties as non-eligible actors, while other programs stressed that activities of a political or ideological nature were not funded. As an exception, PBU calls did not state any limitation but specified that those actions violating EU horizontal policy rules were not eligible.

When it comes to religious organisations, findings were more nuanced. On the one hand, in BSB organisations representing religious cults were clearly not eligible, while PBU Guidelines of the 1st call for Proposals specified that religious actions or activities were not funded. On the other hand, in RO-MD and RO-UA religious/cult institutions were listed as possible (co-)applicants. This also applied to PBU 2nd call, which included parishes as eligible for funding.

Finally, in four out of five programmes (PBU being the exception), evaluation grids marked the presence of one or more cross-cutting themes (environmental sustainability, gender equality, democracy and human rights). As an example, RO-MD evaluation grid assessed "positive influence on more than one cross cutting theme of the Programme, project's contribution during project lifetime and/or ex-post" (RO-MD, no date). Cross-cutting themes were marked out of five in the four programmes, although it should be specified that evaluation grids had different maximum scores (ranging from 95 within LLB to 125 in RO-MD and RO-UA).

Capacity

When it comes to the capacity requested by the Programmes, evaluation grids provided interesting insights. Three overall criteria were marked in all grids: previous experience on project management, proven financial capacity, and appropriate staff resources to run the projects. Previous implementation of EU or other

international projects was requested in all programmes, with the exception of PBU. Also, the grading scheme was stricter on the two bilateral programmes involving Romania on the one hand, and Ukraine/Moldova on the other hand. To get 2 points in the evaluation assessment, more than 50% of the project Partners should have already "participated in or managed at least 2 EU / other internationally funded projects" (RO-MD & RO-UA no date), while the applicant should have managed at least one EU or other international project. However, a 0 point evaluation did not prevent in principle an organisation from getting the grant.

Of course, any assessment on capacity should be carefully contrasted with the grant range of the calls, which are provided in table 2. On the one hand, it is undeniable that strict management and financial requirements were somewhat inevitable for larger projects. This is especially the case of the BSB, in which the minimum grant was 500,000 euros. However, these same rules also applied to smaller projects of other programs, and in particular to the PBU 2nd call and RO-MD, which funded relatively small cultural actions (see table 2). Overall, programmes did not look at the broader regional cultural sector, including both experienced and less experienced organisations. Rather, they tended to privilege the former for sub-granting and to exclude the latter not on the ground of eligibility rules, but rather of requested capabilities.

Last but not least, languages rules can assess the presence of exclusionary approaches. On this note, all the five analysed programmes did not reflect a concern of inclusion, as English was the only language that organisations could use to submit proposals. This applied even to RO-MD calls, in spite of the fact that participating countries shared the same official language. As an exception, in the case of LLB the call for proposals and video explanations were in four languages, while in some other cases technical documents (i.e. energetic audits) could be provided in local languages (i.e. Romanian for RO-MD calls).

Culture in the ENP South

Instruments and programmes

The following case study on the ENP South concerns the main post-Arab spring regional programme in the field of culture, MaC (2014-2017, 17 million euros), supporting media and culture for democratisation, development and stronger Euro-Mediterranean intercultural relations. MaC budget financed two

“IN TERMS OF CONTACTS WITH NON-SECULAR AND NON-WESTERNISED ACTORS, THERE WAS NOT A PRIMARY FOCUS ON INCLUDING ISLAMIC CIVIL SOCIETY, BUT CONTACTS ARE GENERALLY NOT HINDERED BY EU INSTRUMENTS THEMSELVES”

service contracts and one call for proposals to launch operational programmes and projects. The two service contracts established sub-programmes for cultural policy reform (Med Culture – 3 million euros) and capacity development of the media sector (MedMedia – 5 million euros). The remaining 9 million euros were assigned through a call for proposals for capacity building of cultural operators and enhancement of freedom of expression in the media sector (EC, 2017). Two projects specifically focused on culture were funded under this call for proposals, and successively managed sub-granting towards local CSOs: SouthMed CV¹ (2 million euros) and “Drama, Diversity and Development”² (DDD) (1.9 million euros).

In establishing MaC, attention was dedicated to the need to reach the cultural sector in an as large and representative way as possible, although no explicit mention was made of the risk of only targeting a minority of Western-minded and better-technically and financially endowed formal organisations (see EC, 2017). In the framework of the programme, the EC underlined its commitment to the promotion of cultural diversity (ibid.: 6), and the need to expand its reach to rural and remote areas, both to train cultural operators and to enlarge audiences for cultural activities. At the same time, a need to internationalise and globalise the capacity of local cultural operators was stated (ibid.: 7-9), which signals that target groups besides already ‘Westernised’ actors, were deemed important. A certain awareness of the non-European nature of the cultural sector in the ENP South was also demonstrated, by listing as potential risks the low absorption capacity of funds (high) and the fact that cultural operators might prefer support from Gulf Countries (moderate to high) (ibid.: 10). Most importantly, the EC put emphasis on community outreach and inclusion as well as cross-cultural contacts. Target groups for the programme included religious and national minorities, while

religious organisations constituted more generic “stakeholders” (ibid.: 10-11).

In terms of contacts with non-secular and non-Westernised actors, there was not a primary focus on including Islamic CS, but contacts are generally not hindered by EU instruments themselves. On the demand side, religious themes were hardly found in the discourse (e.g. in project proposals) of mostly independent and secular cultural organisations seeking for international funding (Interviews 1, 2, 3). Also, it is very rare that religious or political organizations try to apply for EU funding in culture (ibid.), and exchanges mostly happen at the policy level. For example, EU programmes have aimed to create dialogues, bringing together the independent cultural sector with governments and institutional actors, which are often more conservative and have closer ties to Islam. A region-wide reflection on how to bridge the independent cultural sector with the “Central Islamic discourse” started with the 2010 first Conference on Cultural Policies in the Arab World, organised by the *Al Mawred al Thaqafy* with the European Cultural Foundation, and including several European actors. At the EU level, dialogues are facilitated both in bilateral and regional fora. An example comes from Med Culture. The programme accompanied Jordan towards the drafting of a national strategy for culture, serving as a facilitator and mediator between government services and cultural stakeholders. Independent cultural actors were mostly reached by the programme, and the government brought to the table more conservative cultural actors running state programmes. When debating over the inclusion of a definition of “Jordanian culture” in the strategy, “institutional” cultural actors insisted to explicitly mention Islam, which independent cultural stakeholders and Med Culture mostly opposed. After animated discussion, the solution was found in acknowledging that this religious reference is already

¹ SouthMed CV aimed to “bring culture from the margins to the centre of the public sphere in the Southern Mediterranean, exploring its potential connections with economic, social and political development strategies” (SouthMed CV, 2018).

² DDD aimed to use culture “to promote diversity and challenge discrimination against minorities” (Med Culture, 2018).

present in the Jordanian constitution and therefore there was no need to restate it in the document (Interview 2).

The design and implementation of Med Culture and the two sub-granting projects also showed a certain attention to avoiding Euro-centric approaches by reaching local operators. Med Culture, SouthMed CV and DDD have websites in Arabic, French and English and have been managed by teams including mostly Arabic-speaking professionals, predominantly originating from Southern Mediterranean countries (See Med Culture 2018; DDD 2018; SouthMed CV 2018). Running these instruments in Arabic was fundamental in terms of outreach, allowing non-French and non-English speaking cultural actors to benefit from their activities and funding (Interviews 1, 2, 3).

Financial support to cultural actors

The analysis of the funding mechanisms put in place to support cultural actors also reflects a certain concern for inclusion, with some limitations. Table 3 takes into consideration some requirements and guidelines for applicants for DDD and SouthMed CV main calls for projects, based on the three indicators proposed in the methodology.

Status

In terms of status, requirements to be a registered organisation and absence of government constraints to receive foreign funding limit the reach of EU projects but are difficult to sidestep. However, to enhance inclusiveness and representativeness SouthMed

	DDD'	SouthMed CV**
Status		
Legal personality	YES	YES (main applicant)
Eligible	Registered arts or minority rights organisations. Lead applicant must be non-profit. If partners are for profit organisations, still no profit can be made from the project. Applicants embedded in or have excellent links with and the trust of the respective ethnic, religious or linguistic minority community.	<i>Main applicants</i> must be non-profit organisations. The participation of non-registered organisations as partners, with the exclusion of the main applicant, may be accepted in duly justified cases and insofar their existence can be proven (e.g. cultural and artistic groups or platforms of professionals having carried out activities).
Not eligible	Individual artists. Organisations non eligible to legally receive funding from abroad without constraint or requiring the permission of a Ministry or Government body for each grant.	
Geographical provenience	Organisations based and established (as demonstrated in the organisation's statutes) in ENP South programme countries. Even when part of a consortium.	Organisations legally registered in the eligible countries, and active in the cultural sector in the Southern Mediterranean region.
Agenda		
Not eligible		Events of religious or political character.
Reference to EU values	Only projects that challenge discrimination against minorities (e.g. land, identity, discrimination in the job market, physical attacks and hate speech, hate crime). Gender factoring is an evaluation criteria.	<i>Awareness-raising activities on issues such as cultural diversity, social inclusion, gender or environmental issues, among others.</i>
Aspects fostering inclusiveness	Selection criterion: strong links with minority organisations and communities.	For projects focusing on contributing to strengthening the role of culture at local, national and regional level, in cooperation with other stakeholders in the public sphere (e.g. organisations active in the social, educational or environmental fields, youth and cultural centres, schools, universities, libraries, local authorities, etc.).



	DDD ³	SouthMed CV ⁴
	<i>Capacity</i>	
(Co-)applicants' experience and professionalization	Strong emphasis on experience. Substantial experience of running relevant and similarly complex arts projects. Good project management skills including the ability to raise required match funding.	Medium emphasis on experience. Previous experience and quality of the team evaluated, accounting for 25% of evaluation criteria (30% second call). Links with international and Euro-Mediterranean networks considered as a positive factor insofar the added value of this type of networking is clearly established.
Language of the proposal	French, Arabic or English.	English or Arabic. Second call: translation in English or French needed if submission in Arabic).

* This table only refers to the main grant activity of the project: two calls issued in 2014 and 2015. These were complemented by smaller calls. One for a film, open to individuals. The other for small grants for advocacy activities.

** This table refers to the two calls issued in 2015 and 2016.

TABLE 3: RELEVANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES UNDER DDD AND SOUTHMED CV

Source: DDD³ and SouthMed CV⁴.

CV also opened to non-registered partners under some conditions. Strict principles of geographical provenience prevented organisations not rooted in the local context (e.g. European organisations) from competing for support. DDD and SouthMed CV predominantly worked with non-for profit organisations, even when this meant coaching local organisations to find co-funding opportunities (Interview 1, 3).

Agenda

Events of religious or political character were specifically non-eligible for funding under SouthMed CV. In fact, the project aimed at inclusion irrespective of religious credo and did not target specific religious groups (Interview 1). In the case of DDD, inclusiveness was mostly a matter of including minorities, be they religious (e.g. Christians), ethnic (e.g. Berber, Touareg, Black Africans etc.), linguistic (e.g. Tamazight speakers) or other fragile ones (refugees, migrants) – rather than getting in touch with non-secular and non-Westernised cultural actors per se (Interview 3). Also, exclusion of certain actors with political or religious affiliations that could be considered as part of broader CS, mostly did not depend on eligibility rules but on the nature of the target sector itself. On the one hand, the artistic sector is naturally more independent from political powers,

and mostly refuses to sing government-led tunes. On the other hand, although practice varies greatly, many forms of artistic expression are limited or prohibited under a strict interpretation of Islamic law and therefore the cultural and artistic sector is mostly detached from religious forces. In fact, it is very rare to find references to religious or politically sensitive factors in applications to programme initiatives (Interview 2). Therefore, the exclusion of religious and political actors in calls for proposals is rather a priori (Interview 3).

With reference to EU values, these are embedded in sub-granting projects, but the selection process itself was not focused on the presence of pro-EU language or EU cultural symbols, and rather prioritised local empowerment and capacity building (Interview 1).

Capacity

With reference to path dependency in funding, a small circle of internationally-funded organisations, experience and economic and administrative capacity to write and manage European projects were clearly valued. However, EU funding in culture has had a strong formal and informal capacity building dimension. For example, DDD aimed to target 'young' associations that had thus far only managed small grants, to give

³ So Various documents related to grants activities: Calls for proposals, guidelines and evaluation criteria of Street Theatre, Film and Advocacy grants; List of selected, rejected and non-eligible applicants and projects accompanied by selection committee's comments on each application. Documents requested by the authors and retrieved by e-mail on April 30th, 2018.

⁴ Various documents related to grants activities: Calls for proposals, guidelines and evaluation criteria of the two rounds of calls held by the project; List of selected, rejected and non-eligible applicants and projects. Documents requested by the authors and retrieved by e-mail on May 10th, 2018.

them the possibility to manage a bigger project for the first time. Also, DDD grants for street theatre activities required a 25% match funding from the applicants, who were however helped by DDD itself to find co-funders (Interview 3). The same support for co-funding was operated by SouthMed CV (Interview 1).

In terms of language requirements, calls for proposals and participation to the activities predominantly accepted applications in Arabic, which was perceived to be a key factor to reach social groups representative of the local cultural sector (Interviews 1, 2, 3). However, at times organisations applying in Arabic were still required to be able to work in English and French for following activities. This should not be seen as a pure Northern cultural predominance but rather as a necessary measure to ensure communication between Southern participants themselves, who may otherwise speak very different national dialects of Arabic, or Hebrew, or other regional languages and thus be unable to work together effectively without resorting to colonial ones (Interview 2).

Selection of applicants: a case study

To corroborate the findings of this article, the current section provides a case study based on the two main calls for proposals issued by DDD for street theatre projects. The choice is due to the availability of detailed data concerning the selection process, including marks assigned to projects and applicants' profiles based on the selection criteria and qualitative comments on each application by the reviewers (DDD, no date). Only some of the selection criteria used for each call are relevant to assess the inclusiveness of EU's support towards local society, namely in call 1 (see table 4).

The second call for proposals evaluated projects based on 5 criteria. Criteria 2, 3 and 4 remained the same as above, but here they had to be assigned up to 20/100 points each. Altogether, the example of DDD can provide a representative overview of how the indicators identified in this article can be found in EU support to cultural operators in the Neighbourhood.

First, status proved to be important for the selection of potential candidates, although it did not top the list. Exclusion of projects on the basis of little links between the applicants and the relevant minorities or their capacity to reach certain areas were often mentioned as reasons for rejection in both calls. However, criterion 2 seemed to come after other considerations (e.g. strength and relevance of the project concerning DDD's objectives of challenging racism and discrimination experienced by a minority community). In fact, criterion 2 appeared to be slightly less central than others in call 1, and only ranked 6th/10 in terms of average weight on the final mark (9.78% of *final project marks on average*). Similar relevance was given to the same criterion in call 2, where it ranked 3rd/5, weighting 20.15%.

In terms of *agenda*, religious and political aspects did not figure as reasons for the exclusion of applicants, apart from when targeting very sensitive areas in the Israeli-Palestinian case or when supporting a minority religious group without putting it in dialogue with the broader society. As stated, little to no applications to EU programmes in culture come from religious or political organisations, for different reasons. Among selected projects in call 1, the criterion that most contributed to the final mark assigned by the reviewers was number 3 (10.96%), which signals the importance to select projects addressing relevant minority issues. The same

Indicator	Criterion
Status	Criterion 2 – Strong and credible links between the applicant(s) and minority organisations and minority communities to be featured in the drama. (up to 10/100 points)
Agenda	Criterion 3 – Does the featured minority community suffer serious discrimination and disadvantage? How relevant is the project to their situation? I.e. how likely is a street theatre project to influence or change negative attitudes and discriminatory behaviour against them? (up to 10/100 points)
	Criterion 9 – How well has gender been factored into the programme? (up to 10/100 points)
Capacity	Criterion 4 – Track record and current capacity of the applicant(s) in successfully managing projects of a similar complexity, involving similar issues and of a similar size. (up to 10/100 points)
	Criterion 5 – Ability of the applicant(s) to raise match funding within a reasonable time frame. (up to 10/100 points)

TABLE 4. SELECTION CRITERIA USED TO ASSESS THE INCLUSIVENESS OF EU'S SUPPORT

Source: Author's own elaboration.

criterion ranked 1st/5 in call 2 (21.79%). Finally, criterion 9, based on how gender had been factored into the projects, did not appear to be the most central in the selection process, ranking 7th/10 place in call 1 (9.42%).

Capacity of the applicants with respect to previous management of EU or other international projects was very central in the selection process, which could at first suggest a risk for path dependency in funding organisations that are already part of a small western-minded circle of actors, not entirely representative of local CS. In call 1, reviewers' comments put a strong emphasis on the capacity and previous experience in the management of similar projects, particularly funded by international donors or organisations in DDD's network. In the same call, the 2nd and 3rd most relevant criteria out of ten were number 4 (10,85%) and 5 (10,81%). Similarly, criterion 4 came 2nd/5 in call 2 (20,82%) where, however, reviewers rarely mentioned it as a factor for rejection. Most importantly, a strong dimension of capacity building towards associations which had only managed smaller grants, as well as a predominant focus on their track record in managing projects that were relevant to DDD activities (rather than simply large and foreign-funded), were emphasised in both the comments accompanying the selection process and in Interview 3. Also, there did not seem to be a selection bias in terms of language: despite small changes which could be due to other factors, applications in Arabic had similar chances to be approved compared to those in English and French. For the first call of DDD street theatre, 33 projects out of 65 valid applications were selected. More than one third of the projects (25/65) were presented in Arabic, and this percentage was also roughly reflected among the selected projects (11/33). For call 2, 53 out of 82 applications were selected for funding. Applications in Arabic amounted to 38 out of 82 valid and 23 out of 53 of those selected.

Conclusions

This article sought to assess whether the boundaries of what the cultural sector means for the EU are mostly based on a Eurocentric understanding of CS or rather on a more inclusive definition mediated with the nature of societies in partner countries. It started from the hypothesis that the EU supports ENP CS in the field of culture on the basis of its closeness to European standards, norms and values. The findings of the article highlight a mixed picture.

On the one hand, a Eurocentric understanding of CS prevails in EU discourses and is enforced upon

CSOs by technical means. When it comes to the *status* of the organisations, in both Southern and Eastern neighbourhoods the legal status appeared to be a fundamental pre-requisite to apply, although in SouthMed CV non-formal groups could also participate and geographical requirements on status were used to ensure the genuinely local nature of applicants. Strict requirements on the capacities are in line with this approach. Previous experience in project management, and in particular EU or international projects, together with the presence of appropriate staff resources, were central in the selection process. As such, exclusion of less experienced and professionalised organisations on this ground could suggest a risk for path dependency, as the EU would fund in the long term only those western-minded groups of actors that do not represent the broader ENP CS. However, EU instruments are in some cases characterised by a strong dimension of capacity building towards less experienced associations, on the condition that their activities are strongly relevant to their focus and objectives. When it comes to the sub-indicator of language, contrasting results were found in the two regions. While in ENP East English was the only language that organisations could use to submit proposals, in the South, applications in Arabic were accepted in order to enhance inclusiveness and no language bias could be found.

On the other hand, the EU does not seem to impose strong requirements concerning the agenda of organisations and aims to be as inclusive as possible. While little space is provided to groups with political affiliation, this finding is more nuanced for religious groups as in some cases organisations, parishes, and other cult institutions are encouraged to apply for funding. Also, a structural factor should be taken into account, especially in the Southern neighbourhood: that is, the distance between the cultural sector and political or religious forces, with the former refusing to sing government-led tunes and the latter tending to limit heavily artistic expressions. This was also confirmed by a substantial absence of religious or politically sensitive references in applications to the programmes analysed.

In a comparative dimension of the two areas of the Neighbourhood, it appears that a concern of inclusion guided the EU especially in the South, as there was an attempt to (1) reach the cultural sector in an as large and representative way as possible and (2) provide more space to less formalised and skilled organisations. On the contrary, path dependency appeared to be more pronounced in the East, as calls for proposals did not include a dimension of capacity building,

neither open up opportunities to formalise informal groups. While it is impossible to infer from this case study an EU's overarching political strategy, a general EU approach to the role of CS in the Neighbourhood emerges from the broader analysis and cited literature: by projecting its understanding of CS as a force for liberal political change onto different socio-political contexts, the EU supports selected CSOs with the goal to support transformation towards more democratic and peaceful societies. The case study on the cultural sector presented here confirms this approach, while mitigating it with the finding of a clear effort made by the EU to reach organisations that genuinely represent local needs.

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Digital education as a catalyst for museum transformation: the case of the "Museums and New Digital Cultures" course

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ABSTRACT

To embrace digital transformation, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has become a strategic asset. In the cultural sector, new educational needs are emerging around the concept of "digital", but how to approach them in a way that supports the evolution of previous roles as well as the overall organisational change? This paper addresses the aforementioned issue through the case study of a training programme, promoted by the Veneto Region and aimed at updating the digital skills of the regional cultural workforce. A qualitative study was implemented to explore the impact of such training programme, "Museums and New Digital Cultures", which involved 120 professionals from 34 cultural organisations, at both individual and organisational levels. The research outcomes show how the introduction and implementation of new digital practices can be a key tool in transforming the individual evolution of different professional roles and trigger a broader organisational change.

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Keywords:

Museum digital transformation
Digital educational needs
Continuing professional development
Digital practices
Digital skills
Digital museum
Organisational change

Introduction

The need to develop digital skills and digital confidence in museums has been widely recognised (Parry et al, 2018; Silvaggi and Pesce, 2018) and several research projects have addressed the need to identify a digital framework that can help museum professionals to embrace the digital transformation. The emergence of new job profiles is one of the most visible signs of this revolution, but still more important is the need to rethink traditional practices and to reinterpret previous museum roles and "modes" (Davies et al, 2013). This implies the necessity to not only develop within the organisation an entire set of new tools, but to also undertake a reflection upon digital cultures as a whole ecosystem which, by changing our society, is also transforming the cultural institutions themselves. As a consequence, more than ever before, cultural institutions need to reflect and reshape their strategies in order to develop their own way to embrace the digital transformation, based on their specific context, resources and mission. This emerging need struggles with the traditional hierarchical structure of cultural organisations as well as the standardisation of museum job profiles that do not foster the dialogue between different functions, as well as the interchange - and embrace - of new competences.

Giving this context, Continuing Professional Development (henceforth CPD) addressing digital educational needs can have today a fundamental strategic role. However, CDP courses have to be designed not only with the aim of updating digital skills nor fostering the mere adoption of new technology, but to stimulate a broader reflection upon digital cultures, giving museum professionals the opportunity to develop their own strategy to embrace the digital revolution.

In this article, the impact of a specific training programme – "The Museum and New Digital Cultures" course – will be analysed, in order to evaluate its effects on both the individual participants and the overall museum organisation. The course – involving 120 professionals from 34 museums and cultural organisations – was one of the 15 training programmes funded by the Veneto Region between 2017 and 2018 within the initiative "Culture as investment", aimed at updating the digital skills of the cultural workforce.

The following two sessions are dedicated to an overview of the Digital transformation in museums, and

to a brief review of the main theories and dimensions of adult learning that inform CPD courses. Next, a detailed description of the "The Museum and New Digital Cultures" training programme will be offered. Thus, the mixed method design will be presented and both quantitative and qualitative data will be analysed and discussed. Finally, some conclusions about the implications of embracing the digital transformation at both individual and strategic level will be underlined.

Literature review

Digital transformation in museums: from digital skills to digital culture

The museum workforce finds itself in the midst of a cultural transformation, facing the impact of the digital revolution in different areas of the museum sector. As a consequence, new training needs are emerging around the concept of 'digital': from the introduction of digital skills to the development of a broader digital confidence and digital thinking within the organisation. In this context, a major project¹ was launched in the UK with the aim to develop a museum digital literacy framework for the cultural sector which could possibly be adapted across different nations. The 'One by One' project introduces an innovative approach to digital literacy, shifting the focus from digital skills to digital confidence:

This is about shifting from just thinking about the technology and how to use it, to thinking instead about how we value digital, how we manage it, how we think and create with it. It's about people in museums being informed, reflective, responsive and active around digital. In short: it's about moving from digital competency to digital confidence (One by One, 2018, par. 15).

This approach is in line with the definition provided by Jisc (Joint Information System Committee), which describes digital literacies as "capabilities which fit an individual for living, learning and working in a digital society. Digital literacy looks beyond functional IT skills to describe a richer set of digital behaviours, practices and identities" (Jisc, 2014, par. 1).

This perspective implies a sociocultural constructivist view of technology: whether technology is seen as cause of cultural change (technological determinism) or a way to adapt to a changing culture

¹ One by One, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), is led by the University of Leicester in partnership with Culture24, together with a range of museum and academic partners. The aim is to develop new organisational mindsets in museums to help support their digital transformation needs.

“WHAT IS LESS CLEAR IS TO WHAT EXTENT THE INDIVIDUAL EVOLUTION OF DIFFERENT ROLES IS CONNECTED TO THE BROADER ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION: HOW A PROFESSIONAL THAT INCREASES HIS/HER DIGITAL CONFIDENCE AND DEVELOP HIS/ HER OWN CULTURAL APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY CAN AFFECT THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE MUSEUM”

(technological culture), the concepts of technology and culture interact with each others. As a consequence, both the individual and the organisation need to develop a cultural approach to the usage of technology:

Museums continue to struggle with what it means to be culturally conscious and inclusive regards to their traditional roles and practices, but their speedy entry into the digital age is forcing them to resolve their position on the matter: what constitute their particular museum culture and how that culture determines their usage of technology (Bautista, 2013:29).

This reflection goes beyond the introduction of new skills in the organisation, covering an entire set of new mindsets that substitute previous approaches to audience, heritage and museums themselves²: “This means moving from museums considering their digital challenge as being simply about how they must react to changing hardware and software systems, to more strategically examining how they remain relevant to audiences who are operating within a changing digital culture” (One by One, 2018, par. 14)

Digital culture emerges therefore as a key concept that several authors have explored in a growing body of literature in museum studies, highlighting its different aspects and their related impact on various areas of museum practice: the participatory culture, which is changing the relationship between museums and visitors (Simon 2010; Jenkins et al, 2013; Giaccardi, 2012); the advent of a new audience, online users, who often become the main promoters of museums on the web (Russo et al, 2008; Proctor, 2010; Puhl & Mencarelli, 2015; Fois, 2015); the introduction of the concept of digital heritage, which has extended the curation into virtual spaces by introducing new cultural products

and new ways of fruition (Parry, 2007; Geismar, 2018); the new educational needs of digital natives, for whom online creativity and collaborative digital creations are an essential part of the learning experience as well as of self-expression (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008; Mihailidis P. & Cohen, 2013). Exploring the impact of digital culture on each area of museum practice is beyond the purpose of this section. What it should be highlighted is the evolution of previous museological roles in response to these challenges, and how they are connected to the overall organisational change. In this context, recent attention has focused on the identification of new job profiles in the museum sector (Confetto & Siano, 2017; Silvaggi & Pesce, 2018), and on the development of training programmes to update digital skills of individuals working in the organisation³. What is less clear is to what extent the individual evolution of different roles is connected to the broader organisational transformation: how a professional that increases his/her digital confidence and develop his/her own cultural approach to technology can affect the strategic direction of the museum.

This article aims at exploring this question by providing evidence that the introduction of new digital practices and ways of working can, in a long-term perspective, be a key tool in transforming the evolution of different professional roles and thus trigger a broader organisational change.

Continuing Professional Development within a lifelong learning perspective

In the proceedings of the conference “La valorizzazione dell’eredità culturale in Italia” (Valorisation of cultural heritage in Italy), Feliciati (2016) claims that, in the last few years, the public debate on the job profiles involved

² In this perspective, a fundamental contribution was provided by Davies that identified different ‘modes’ to express the mixture of organizational values: “while we may recognise examples of the kind of behaviours described in actual museums, the modes do not exist in their pure form. In reality, museums appear to combine these modes in various ways, and the combinations will change over time. The value of the abstract modes is in how they provide a framework to analyse behaviour and tensions in a museum context.

³ In a European context, Mu.SA – Museum Sector Alliance – was a three year project (2016-2019) aimed to investigate digital needs of museum professionals and develop a training programme to develop their digital competences, with a particular focus in Greece, Portugal and Italy.

in the Italian cultural sector has assumed heated tones. Central to the discussion is indeed the dramatic gap between the competences required by the sector and the lack of suitable professional training, at advanced level, for those either working or willing to work in museums⁴. As Macdonald (2011) points out, while museums have undergone major changes, it seems that universities and other educational providers have yet failed to recognise and/or to address them in their professional development courses.

This matter of how to foster professionals' learning in and beyond the work-place is indeed at the centre of an extensive body of research on the meaning and promotion of lifelong learning. According to the European Council Resolution on lifelong learning (2002): "lifelong learning must be understood as all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective".

Within this perspective, Continuing Professional Development (henceforth CPD) as a tool of empowerment at both individual and organisational level has received wide attention in the literature on both adult learning and organisational change. In particular, CPD can be defined as "a process of ongoing education and development of professionals, from initial qualifying education and for the duration of professional life, in order to maintain competence to practice and increase professional proficiency, and expertise" (Alsop, 2001: 1).

It is important to point out that there are different definitions and models of CPD, as they depend upon the theory of learning and, specifically, of adult learning, which they embrace. According to Pätzold (2011: 62), the term learning itself "is not so clear once we look at its meanings in different contexts", where by contexts he refers to the teaching approaches influenced by theories as different as Behaviourism, Cognitivism, Constructivism, and Neuroscience. Exploring these theories and their pedagogical implications for CPD is beyond the purpose of the current section. However, it should be highlighted that each one of them contributes to build a vision of learning as a holistic process, in which different dimensions – personal (cognitive and affective) and sociocultural – are deeply interrelated. Within this perspective, Pätzold (ibid.: 43) defines learning as the "change of the person in the

world", that is: (1) learning is change, "between a status quo ante and a status quo post in the experience of learning"; (2) at the core of learning is the person, which means that "emotions and cognitions are two sides of the same coin", as they are both affected regardless of the subject matter taught (Illeris, cited in Pätzold, 2011:94), and (3) learning is situated in the world, as "learning always has to do with a relationship between the person and the world" (Pätzold, 2011: 43). Moreover, in describing Illeris' model of learning, Pätzold (2011: 17) claims that "the process of learning consists of two simultaneous processes: a process of interaction, in which learning mediates between the individual and his or her social environment (...), and a process of acquiring knowledge and skills as an evolution of cognitive and emotional perspectives towards the subject matter".

In particular, in quoting Wenger (1998), MacLeod (2001: 54) highlights that there is a strong interrelationship between meaning making and social practice, as "we operate within the world and make meanings about the world through practice" and "all practice takes place within a range of communities of practice". On the one hand, experience and practice are two important components of adult professional learning, and only through reflecting on them one is able to develop new knowledge and change his/her mental habits (see Dewey,1938; Kolb, 1984). On the other hand, only when professionals reflect on experience together the real transformative power of learning within a community of practice takes place.

As Hargreaves (2003: 84) claims:

One of the most powerful resources that people in any organisation have for learning and improving is each other (...). Sharing ideas and expertise, providing moral support when dealing with new and difficult challenges, discussing complex individual cases together - this is the essence of strong collegiality and the basis for professional communities (Hargreaves, 2003: 84).

However, MacLeod (2001) notices that the concept of community of practice is not an utopist one, as being part of a community always requires to negotiate, form, and share meanings, as much as different agendas, which are intrinsic to the hierarchical nature of any organisation.

In this sense, a point that is made abundantly clear in the literature is that there is a strong link

⁴ In terms of digital economy, Italy has been assigned a low score in the Digital Economy and Society Index Report on Human Capital – Digital Inclusion and Skills (European Commission, 2019), and appears 25th in the index, only followed by Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Poland.

between corporate learning and organisational change (Deiser, 2009). However, the latter is only possible if the professionals working in the same organisation are able to tear down the system of asymmetric relationships and explore and reflect on new tools and/or actions in a cross-functional manner (Deiser, 2009:49). In fact, what is important to keep in mind for the purpose of the current article is that CPD can only trigger organisational change if it takes into consideration both the individual and socio-cultural dimensions of professional learning.

Museums and new digital cultures: the training programme

The "Museums and New Digital Cultures" training programme was devised in order to address the shortage of museum professional courses in the field of digital heritage and digital cultures. This programme was developed in response to a Directive of the Veneto Region (DGR 580, 28th April 2017), which aimed to update the digital skills of cultural professionals working in the region and to take full advantage of the new opportunities introduced by the digital revolution. Referring to the European Year of the Cultural Heritage, the Directive directly mentioned the digital transformation of the cultural sector at an European level⁵, "in a historical-economic phase in which there is less support for public budgets, a decrease in participation in traditional cultural activities, environmental pressures on cultural heritage sites and a substantial digital transformation". The text of the Regional Directive recognizes the new opportunities resulting from this change, which can be leveraged only by addressing the emerging educational needs. Indeed, the Directive states that:

“ACCORDING TO THE REGIONAL DIRECTIVE, THE TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS THAT ALREADY OPERATE IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR IS CONSIDERED THE STRATEGIC ASSET THAT CAN SUPPORT THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AS WELL AS ENHANCE THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE CULTURAL ACTORS WORKING IN THE VENETO REGION”

in order to take full advantage of these new opportunities and adapt to the transition to digital and globalization, the cultural and creative sectors must develop new skills and need wider access to credit in order to modernize assets, develop new production and distribution methods and adapt their business models (Veneto Region, 2017).

According to this Directive, the training of professionals that already operate in the cultural sector is considered the strategic asset that can support the digital transformation as well as enhance the institutional capacity⁶ of the cultural actors working in the Veneto Region. The Directive invited training agencies to develop training programmes around two main thematic areas: "Web and Digital" and "Multimedia". While the latter emphasised the innovation in the cultural production with the introduction of new technologies, such as 3D graphic and virtual reality, the former proposed a broader view on the sectors of digital transformation, focusing on the digitization process, the advent of open data, and the social media as new spaces to promote cultural heritage, as well as to understand and analyse audiences. The

"Museums and New Digital Cultures" course was designed within this area – "Web and Digital".

The course design

Promoted by the educational agency "Apindustria Servizi srl", the design of the 'Museums and New Digital Cultures' course was assigned to two different project partners who already operated in the Veneto Region

⁵ The Directive mentions the Regulation (UE) nr. 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 to 2020) and repealing Decisions No 1718/2006/EC, No 1855/2006/EC and No 1041/2009/EC.

⁶ The Route 4 of the POR FSE 2014-2020 includes the institutional capacity described as "an improvement of the capabilities of all the actors working in the education, lifelong learning and welfare and labour policies".

in the field of digital cultural innovation. This paper describes and analyses the impact of 230 training hours that were coordinated by the cultural association ISOIPSE and that involved, from December 2017 to December 2018, 93 participants (among the 120 of the overall course)⁷ across 33 cultural organisations of the Veneto Region.

The main objective of the programme was to raise participants' awareness as regards the "digital" phenomenon, not simply referring to digital tools, but to an entire ecosystem of new cultures, which requires the development of an active, and creative approach. This main objective consisted of the following sub-objectives:

- Update the digital skills of the cultural professionals in the Veneto Region and introduce digital thinking at all organisational levels (Top Management, Middle Management and Front-Line Staff).
- Introduce in the cultural sector new digital practices and cultures that could accompany the institutions in rethinking their heritage, offer, mission, and social role.
- Increase the competitiveness of cultural actors, from a network perspective, stimulating a participatory approach in the relationship with the public as well as with the tourist sector.

To achieve these objectives, and following the guidelines set in the Directive, the course adopted three different types of training intervention:

- **Training activities:** 24 hour training classes with the aim to develop, individually, both digital skills and digital thinking throughout the organisation. In the planning phase of the project, five different modules were designed, corresponding to five different areas of digital transformation.
- **Project work:** 12 hour training sessions, aimed at the development of digital products with the participants⁸. The project planned 5 different project works to be subsequently further defined throughout the course.

- **Consultancy:** individual or group sessions aimed at better understanding the needs of the partners involved (individual sessions) or at addressing the single needs of one of the partners or a common need shared by different partners (group sessions). The course designed 17 two-hours individual sessions, in form of semi-structured interviews, with the aim of mapping and further detailing the educational needs of the 33 partners involved; as well as 5 group sessions of 10 hours, to be designed during and after the single modules in collaboration with the participants⁹.

Course participants had to register for at least one of these interventions: out of 93 participants, 13 took part only in the initial consultancy. The actual number of participants in the training sessions was 80.

The project adopted an ongoing participatory, practice-based, and reflective approach (Flinn & Sexton, 2018) in order to adapt the training activities to the actual needs and context of the participants. To this aim, the following instruments were used:

- Semi-structured interviews, in order to explore partners' needs in relation to the five areas of digital transformation (design stage – from August 2017 to October 2017);
- Questionnaires, aimed at collecting participants' evaluation of the single modules (implementation stage – from January to September 2018)
- Final evaluation forms to evaluate the impact of the entire training programme on the participants (evaluation stage – December 2018).

The course participants

The training activities summarized in figure 2 involved 93 professionals from 33 cultural organisations of the Veneto Region. The organisations were selected during the planning phase, as requested by the

⁷ The course was designed in collaboration with the cultural association ISOIPSE and the SUMO cooperative. This paper considers the part of the course directly organized by ISOIPSE, that includes 230 training hours and 34 hours of preliminary consultation. This part of the course was designed and implemented by the two teacher coordinators Stefania Zardini Lacedelli and Giacomo Pompanin that involved other experts in each session.

⁸ This type of intervention was described in the Directive as "the definition and implementation of a professional project in which users act as operators, addressing existing problems and seeking solutions that are actually feasible and usable".

⁹ In addition to the training activities, an online learning platform was also developed, in order to allow participants to download teaching materials, review the videos of the lectures, and interact with the teachers. The learning platform was hosted by the virtual museum DOLOM. IT (www.museodolom.it/home/moodle), a participatory platform for the experimentation and creation of new digital heritage.

FSE funding programme¹⁰. The participation was widespread, at both geographical – including partners from the provinces of Belluno, Treviso and Vicenza – and organisational level – including top management, middle management and front-line staff¹¹. The training activities were attended by cultural professionals employed in the areas of communication, curatorship and museum education. Of the 93 participants, 20% (n=19) were top managers (museum directors or coordinators of museum networks), 48% (n=45) middle managers (Head of Educational Department, Social Media Manager, Members of the Scientific Committee), and 31% (n=29) were front-line staff (educational operators, volunteers, ticket office staff, civil service operators).

The cultural organizations participating in the course were museums, libraries, cultural associations, cooperative societies, and individual professionals (see Appendix 1). In this paper, the focus is mainly on museums (15 out of the 33 organizations), which all

share similar traits (regardless of their status – private, public, or association): a small or medium size; a geographical distribution far from the big city centres of the Veneto Region; a model of governance distributed across different actors (often cultural associations). In terms of their workforce, they are characterized by a limited number of resources, with staff members who tend to be responsible for a number of different tasks, a low workforce turnover, and the fact that apprentices and volunteers are often in charge of ticket office, educational activities and social media. So, in this type of organizations, managerial level roles and responsibility quite often are not clearly defined. These traits reflect the main challenges faced by small museums in embracing the digital transformation, and thus create a high demand for digital training across all different roles, including top managers (Barnes, Kispeter, Eikhof, Parry, 2018).

The geographical distribution of the organizations involved is summarized in the figure below.

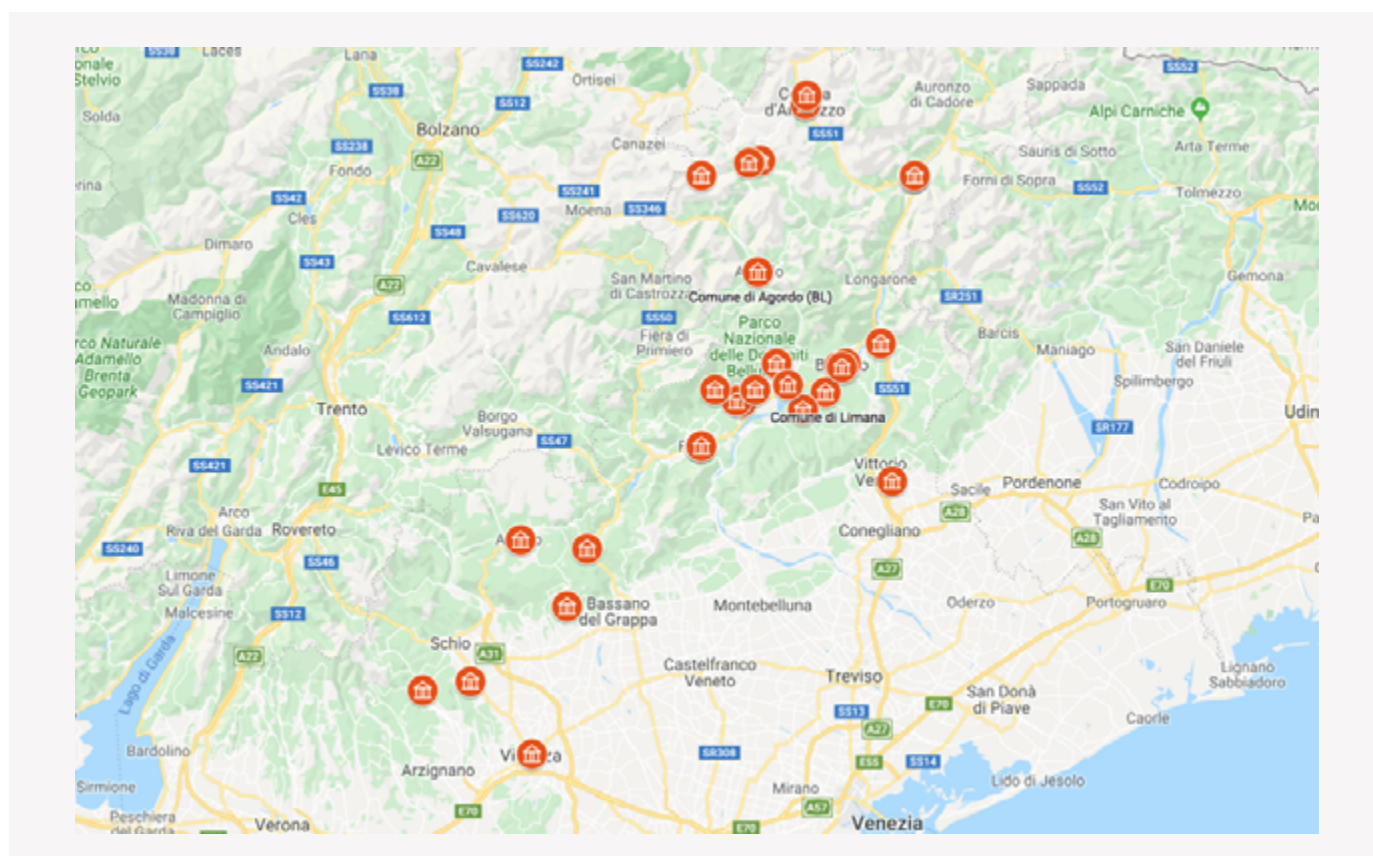


FIGURE 1. THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE "MUSEUMS AND NEW DIGITAL CULTURES" COURSE

Source: © Museums and New Digital Cultures project.

¹⁰ In the POR FESR funding programme, the actual beneficiaries of the training activities have to join the project in the planning phase. Once the project is started, an organisation can still request to participate but it needs to be approved by the Veneto Region (this was the case of 14 project partners).

¹¹ The classification of each participant was made considering his position and responsibility within the organisation. While Top Management and Middle Management have been widely described in the management studies, the Front-Line Staff category has been drawn upon a recent research in museum studies, aimed to assess the impact of the Transformers' programme (<https://www.museumsassociation.org/news/15012018-researcher-to-assess-transformers-impact>).

“THE TRAINING ACTIVITIES WERE DESIGNED IN TWO DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE PROJECT. IN THE FIRST STAGE, FIVE AREAS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WERE IDENTIFIED ON THE BASIS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW, WHEREAS IN THE SECOND STAGE, THESE WERE REVISED CONSIDERING THE RESULTS OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS”

The five modules

As explained in the previous section, the training activities were designed in two different stages of the project. In the first stage, five areas of digital transformation were identified on the basis of the literature review, whereas in the second stage, these areas were revised taking into consideration the results of the semi-structured interviews, which highlighted specific needs and context of the partners involved, connecting them to specific practical interventions. This allowed to develop both a theoretical reflection upon the main challenges introduced by the digital revolution in the cultural sector, as well as a practical application¹² of the knowledge acquired, by experimenting the new practices introduced by these areas of change.

The five areas and related practical interventions are explained in the figure below.

Museum education in the digital age

This module aimed to address the evolution of museum education with the emergence of new digital methodologies of collaborative content creation and curation. It was designed to help museum educators to employ digital tools in order to involve students in the collaborative creation of digital narratives: multimedia tours, virtual exhibitions, ebook, digital maps, podcast, soundscapes, anthropological video-interviews, blogs. The module benefited from the experience of DOLOM.IT, a digital born museum entirely composed by digital resources, co-created with different communities (Szabo et al, 2017). In the project work dedicated to this module, 10 new educational projects were designed and subsequently implemented, taking into consideration the educational needs and relationships with technology of different age groups: from preschools to primary and secondary students.

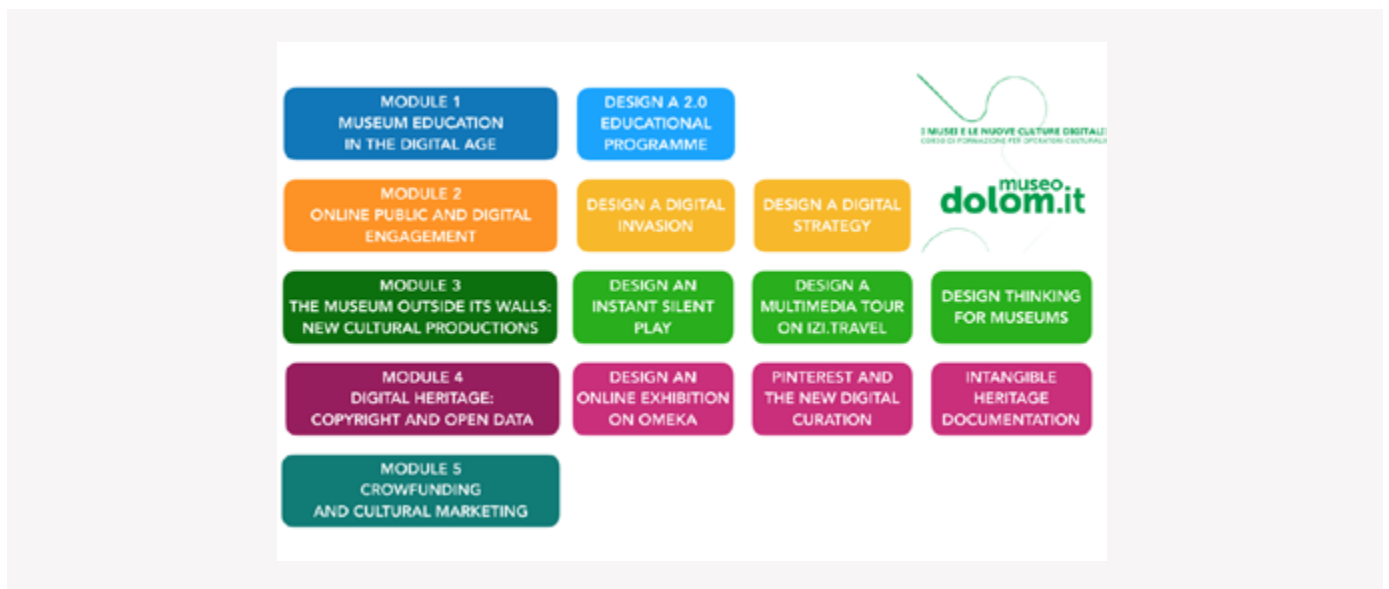


FIGURE 2. THE FIVE MODULES AND RELATED PRACTICAL INTERVENTIONS

Source: © Museums and New Digital Cultures project.

¹² According to Abenante (2016: 145), in any professional development course, there are two levels that are both necessary and irreplaceable. On the one hand, the theoretical-conceptual level, which aims to give professionals both the cultural background and the methodological instruments so as to allow them to apply an informed and competent practical approach. On the other hand, a practical level, in which professionals put in practice their knowledge. This second level is fundamental for people to successfully enter the job market.

Online public and digital engagement

The aim of this module was to address the revolution in the relationship with audience: from the introduction of a new public – online users – to the new participatory approaches to the museum communication. Professionals were guided to consider the strategic role of social media platforms, not only as spaces to communicate the different activities of the museum, but also to understand different publics and analyse the perception of their cultural experiences. Particular attention was given to specific tools to design a digital engagement strategy that can transform people in "ambassadors" of the institution and create heritage communities. In this module, museums have increased their ability to promote themselves in a network perspective, co-designing a series of digital initiatives on social networks and planning their participation to the MuseumWeek 2018. The project work of this module was dedicated to Digital Invasions, a cultural movement born in 2013 to promote a participatory approach to the promotion of cultural heritage using social media. During this Project Work, 4 digital invasions were planned by participants.

The museum outside the museum: new cultural productions

The aim of this module was to address the issue of evolution in cultural production, and explore new approaches as well as technology available to create narratives and involve public in emotional, interactive and participatory experiences. In this context, particular attention has been given to the evolution of museum conceptualization: how the extension of the museum presence on different platforms and virtual spaces has fostered the idea that the museum is not just the physical building, but it can extend its reach - and cultural offer – beyond its walls. Within this module, new cultural products were designed and created by the participants: a theatrical radioguide in collaboration with La Piccionaia of Vicenza and 5 new multimedia tours on the izi.TRAVEL App, dedicated to the discovery of 5 cultural sites of the Province of Belluno. In both cases, cultural professionals could experiment the interaction with new languages - theatre, digital - and new spatial dimensions that expanded the museum narrative outside its walls.

Digital heritage: copyright and open data

This module was dedicated to the emergence of Digital Heritage and new forms of digital curation. The aim was to introduce a reflection upon the conceptual

revolution of heritage as well as on the practical, museological and legal implications of creating and curating new digital resources. The Module involved teachers from the Digital Heritage School - the network for the promotion of 'digital heritage' in the Italian educational programmes - and the Wikipedia community. The project work as well as the group consultancy presented two different tools for digital curation: Omeka, a content management system for the creation of digital archives, and Pinterest, a social media platform that can be used by museums to develop thematic collection in collaboration with other institutions.

Crowdfunding and cultural marketing

The aim of this module was to explore the new possibilities of sustainment for cultural organisations in the digital age, taking advantage of new forms of community involvement. A series of funding programmes were analysed at both international and national level, with particular reference to the European guidelines to support the cultural and educational sectors – Europa Creativa and Erasmus Plus. The module also presented new cultural marketing strategies to involve communities to support cultural projects using digital platforms. In this particular regard, participants were guided in the design of a crowdfunding campaign.

Each module addressed different areas of museum practice, as shown in the figure below.



FIGURE 3. THE INTERSECTION OF DIFFERENT AREAS OF MUSEUM PRACTICE IN THE "MUSEUMS AND NEW DIGITAL CULTURES" COURSE

Source: © Museums and New Digital Cultures project.

The study

The methodology

With the literature review and the aims of the training programme in mind, the overarching question of the current study was: how can museums address the digital educational needs in a way that supports the evolution of previous roles as well as the overall organisational change? The three sub-questions were:

1. Has participation in the training programme promoted the introduction of new practices within the different areas of the museums involved?
2. What impact did participation in the training programme have on individual participants' conception of their roles?
3. What impact did participation in the training programme have on the overall museum strategy?

To answer these questions, a case study design (Yin, 2018), mixing both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), was employed, investigating the impact of participating in the training programme at three different levels: individual (on the single course participants), practical (new practices introduced), and strategic (on the museum strategy). Whilst the decision to focus on the first two levels was inspired by the Directive, the third and last level emerged from the ongoing and participatory process (Flinn & Sexton, 2018), which led to the design and implementation of the training course.

As regards the instrument used to collect the data, an evaluation form was designed. This consisted of three open-ended questions, each of which investigating one of the abovementioned three levels, followed by a five-point Likert scale (1=not at all and 5=very much), aimed at measuring the impact for each level. The aim of mixing quantitative and qualitative data was to

get a deeper understanding of participants' Likert scale scores by integrating them with the respective qualitative responses. Thus, the first question aimed at monitoring the new practices introduced and implemented, as well as at assessing the change on previous operational procedures. The second question aimed at exploring the impact on the individual participants' perception of their role, while the third question had the purpose of understanding the impact of the training activities on the overall museum strategy, with particular reference to the concept of heritage and museum. As regards the first question, apart from the Likert scale, participants were also asked to list the number of practices implemented.

The evaluation form was administered to all the course participants who attended at least one training (n=80), and 36 responded across Top Management (n=10), Middle Management (n=15), and Front-line Staff (n=11).

From these respondents, in particular, only 11 out of 36¹³ participated in one training intervention, while 25 of them

– considered as the more committed ones – took part in more than two interventions. Therefore, all the participants attending more than three interventions filled the evaluation form.

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¹³ It is interesting to notice that these respondents represent 19 out of 33 cultural organizations, of which 11 out of 14 from the museum sector (78%).

From the non-respondents (n=44), 37 participated in one training intervention and only 7 participated in two interventions. This can lead us to say that those who participated the least are also the ones that did not fill the form.

The evaluation forms were designed in Italian, and answers were later translated into English without changing the content and intent of participants' speech, or putting words in their mouth (Liamputtong, 2011). In so doing, the aim was not to homogenise participants' voice, but to let their geographical and cultural uniqueness to still be represented.

As regards the data analysis, the results of the Likert scales were analysed using descriptive statistics analysis procedures. In particular, the average number for each scale was calculated and results were presented through a bubble diagram.

On the other hand, the results of the open-ended questions were analysed through using Content analysis¹⁴. First, participants' responses were analysed to find repeated patterns of meaning (Liamputtong, 2011). Thus, both initial and axial coding were performed, working from a more descriptive to a more analytic perspective. During the initial coding, the data was grouped and labels were assigned, to be later

further categorised. In so doing, the most significant and frequent initial codes were defined. Finally, axial coding was conducted by making connections between major categories and their respective themes (Liamputtong, 2011). In reporting the qualitative results, participants' ID numbers were used combined with an abbreviation for each organisational role (TM= Top management, MM=Middle management, FLS= Front line management).

Results

Practical level

This level aimed to explore how many and which practices the course introduced, as well as to identify if they promoted a change in the ways in which these organisations work.

Regarding the quantitative results, the course fostered the introduction of a high number of new digital practices (50 implemented, 20 planned; see Table 1), creating the basis for a renewal of the cultural offer. The figure below shows the number of practices implemented and the respective module/area of the cultural offer¹⁵.

Module	Practice	Number	Status
Museum education in the digital age	New educational programmes	10	Implemented
Online public and digital engagement	Contest DidaMash DidaDolom	5	Implemented
	MuseumWeek	5	Implemented
	Digital Invasions	5	1 Implemented, 4 Planned
	New Pinterest profiles	2	Implemented
	New Instagram profiles	3	2 Implemented, 1 Planned
	New Google Profile	1	Implemented
	Analysis of online behaviour of users	2	Implemented
New cultural productions	Analysis of TripAdvisor reviews	5	Implemented
	Instant Silent Play	2	1 Implemented, 1 Planned
	Multimedia Tour on izi.TRAVEL	4	Implemented
	Museum app	1	Planned
Digital heritage: copyright and open data	Social media game	1	Implemented
	Digital archive	1	Planned (and subsequently implemented)
	Thematic collections on Pinterest	9	Implemented
	Virtual Eehibitions	2	Planned
Crowdfunding and cultural marketing	Anthropological video-interviews	10	Planned
	Crowdfunding campaign	3	1 Implemented, 2 Planned

TABLE 1. THE NEW PRACTICES INTRODUCED BY THE "MUSEUMS AND NEW DIGITAL CULTURES" COURSE

Source: Author's ownelaboration

¹⁴ According to Schreier (2012: 170), "content analysis is a method for systematically describing the meaning of qualitative data. This is done by assigning successive parts of the material to the categories of a coding frame. This frame is at the heart of the method, and it contains all those aspects that feature in the description and interpretation of the material. Three features characterize the method: qualitative content analysis reduces data, it is systematic, and it is flexible.

¹⁵ A further analysis has been planned to evaluate the resilience of the practices implemented, and will take place in a few months time to verify how effective their implementation has been. However, a first analysis seems to suggest that the practices are now fully part of the cultural offer of the different institutions.

In further investigating table 1, five participants mentioned the participation in the DidaMash DidaDolom contest, which invited museums to reinterpret the captions of some objects inspired by the Dolomites heritage. Other five participants described their participation in the Museum Week 2018, the international week dedicated to museums on Twitter that was planned during the module dedicated to the online public and digital engagement. In particular, between 23 and 29 April 2018, the museums published thematic insights on their social profiles (Facebook and Instagram), which were then collected and tweeted by Museo Dolom.it. Four participants mentioned the creation of new multimedia tours on the izi.TRAVEL app that were created during one of the group consultancies and another participant mentioned the participation in the creation of a new Instant Silent Play. Four participants described the implementation of new educational programmes that involved students in the digital creation of content, as shown in the module, as well as in the Project Work dedicated to the museum education in the digital age. Finally, a participant mentioned the new Pinterest profile set in a group consultancy dedicated to the theme of digital curation, as well as the design of a new digital participatory archive, which was subsequently implemented in a subsequent project¹⁶

As regards the Likert scale scores, the overall impact on the practical level was quite high (3.7) and similar across the levels: the highest score is for Middle management (3.9), while it is slightly lower for the Top management (3.5) and the Front line staff (3.6).

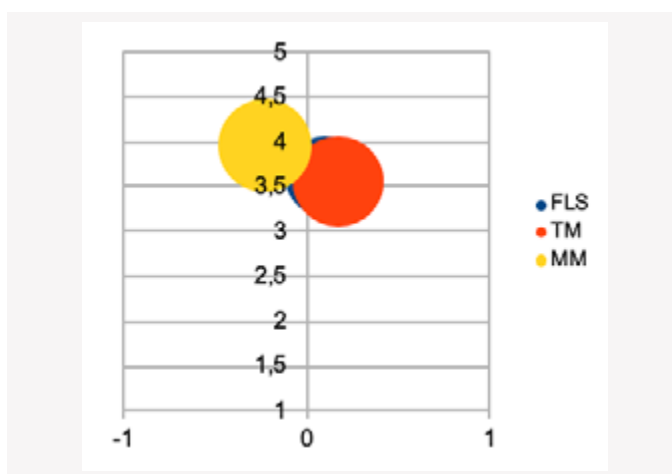


FIGURE 4. BUBBLE DIAGRAM OF THE PRACTICAL LEVEL SCORE RESULTS

Source: Author's ownelaboration

Beyond the average scores, the qualitative results well explained differences among the three professional roles in terms of implementation of new practices. In particular, the Front-line staff expressed difficulty to actually introduce new digital practices that were not part of a shared strategy.

FLS 06: *Unfortunately, many of the concepts explained are difficult to implement in my job context, due to a general mistrust about the new technologies, but I can still propose innovations "in small doses" that can foster a more modern environment for those who work inside the institution and at the same time more easily accessible for those who enjoy it from outside.*

This raised the need of having organizational conditions to introduce new digital practices, among which the involvement of all roles across the museum and a strong mandate to pursue digital practices, as highlighted in the One by One Phase Two Report (Parry et al, 2019).

On the other hand, when the practices were implemented, the results show that this allowed to undertake a reflection upon the conceptual revolutions brought by the digital age and practically experiment the implications for each specific institution/context. In particular, the practical use of specific platforms/channels raised a comprehensive reflective approach around different themes, and, above all, the need to develop a different "language" (Jones & Hafner, 2012):

TM 05: *The Omeka platform has opened a very stimulating and constructive debate on how we intend to communicate our heritage to the public, highlighting how digital culture needs a specific language, partly different from that used in traditional exhibitions.*

Indeed, participants often commented on the fact that the internet is characterized by specific discourse features (Crystal, 2001), which differ from the use made by other museums in other, non-digitally mediated contexts.

Interestingly, the use of platforms also fostered new collaborations in the digital domain, introducing a more collaborative approach to curation (Parry et al, 2018). This emerges strongly in the answers of the participants from the Top Management of the training activity dedicated to digital curation on Pinterest:

¹⁶ Once the course was concluded, the Altovicentino Museums applied for a private funding to implement the project of a participatory digital archive, that was subsequently launched in February 2019 (www.omeka.museialtovicentino.it).

TM 05: *The experimentation with Pinterest was an opportunity to raise the awareness that museums can use social media, not only to communicate and attract the public, but also to share ideas and projects among the museum professionals themselves, who can – in the case of Pinterest – use the boards to share ideas and create new interpretations.*

MM 05: *The stimulation of opening a Pinterest profile has opened a partnership with a school involved in the design and realization of sketches for the advertising campaign of educational projects.*

These answers show how the use of Pinterest not only stimulated collaboration across different museum departments, but also between museums and other local partners, suggesting that a platform can also inspire a participatory approach to the creation of heritage (Simon, 2010; Szabo et al, 2017; Zardini Lacedelli, 2018).

In terms of the resilience of the practices mentioned above, a number of participants from the Middle Management show a long-term perspective, describing how the new practices resulted in an enrichment of the overall cultural offer.

MM 05: *The launch of the izi.TRAVEL tour, always accessible, was done in October of this year, but other dates are already scheduled. In addition of being a game and a new cultural experience in itself, the tour is today used by museum educators to make the museum journey more interactive, during guided tours and workshops for schools.*

MM 01: *In the brochure of the educational offer of the museum - which is distributed in all the schools of the Province – we have introduced new educational programmes inspired by digital collaborative approaches, where the educator, following the museum activity, guides students to develop digital products based on the theme of their visit.*

MM 04: *The project for a virtual exhibition on tourism and cycling is currently being planned.*

This is a particularly interesting result. Overall, the number of practices introduced, the high average level of impact and the long-term perspective revealed in the answers show how the implementation of new practices can be a key dimension to connect the individual's change of attitude (see following section) to a broader organisational change.

Individual level

This level aimed at exploring the impact at the individual level (i.e. if the training activities introduced a change of attitude in the participants towards their professional role).

As regards the quantitative data, the Likert scale scores seem to be consistent across all three roles. As shown in the diagram below, the bubbles gather around the same values. This is confirmed also by the average score of Top Management (3.7), Middle Management (4) and Front Line Staff (3.8). These results indicate a very positive level of impact, confirmed also by the overall average score (3.8).

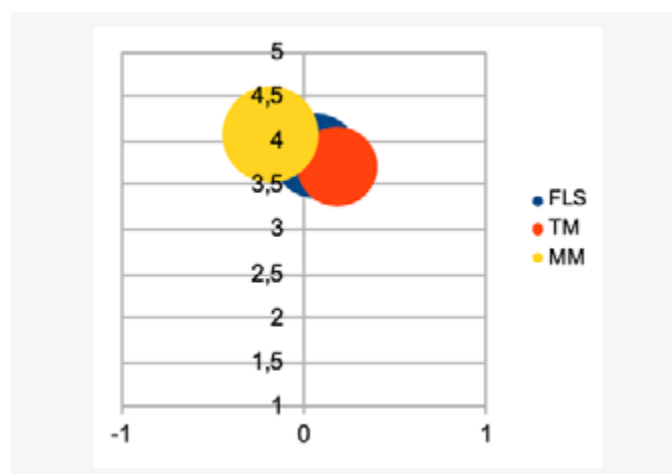


FIGURE 5. BUBBLE DIAGRAM OF THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL SCORE RESULTS

Source: Author's ownelaboration

The qualitative data tally with the quantitative data, giving a deeper insight into participants' positive responses. In particular, five themes emerge from the data analysis: *change of perspective, digital confidence, collaborative approaches, enjoyment and creativity, new horizons for the imagination.*

In reflecting upon the impact on their individual perceptions, participants across different organisational roles agree that the training course significantly contributed to a change of attitude towards their profession:

TM 05: *The course triggered numerous changes in the approach to my profession, qualifying my knowledge and skills in the field of digital heritage.*

The answers indicate also an increasing awareness of the evolution of the museum roles, one of the trends recently observed in literature (Silvaggi, Pesce, 2018):

FLS 07: *My profession is evolving, and an open mind on what are the new perspectives in my sector, can only stimulate a personal as well as professional growth.*

With regard to the relationship with technology, the answers show a change of perspective towards the digital world, connected with an increase of digital confidence, confirming the importance to understand the wealth of new cultures and languages of the Web (Parry et al, 2018):

TM 02: *The course opened our eyes to a world that we had underestimated especially in its potential.*

MM 08: *The course allowed us to learn how to use web programs and platforms competently and more naturally, to familiarize ourselves with the sharing of processes, to cross over and mix different languages and methodologies, giving rise to very stimulating experiences, such as the creation of a Silent Play.*

It is noteworthy that the increase of digital confidence is often accompanied by the introduction of new collaborative approaches, as noted above (practical level):

FLS 04: *The union and the group strength allow us to develop different ideas, obtaining a collective working. Each one contributes with his/her own capabilities and we collaborate all together to overcome the technical and operational difficulties of new technologies.*

Interestingly, the interaction and gradual integration of digital in the previous practices seems to leverage a positive creative atmosphere: enjoyment, creative freedom, satisfaction and excitement are frequently mentioned in the answers.

MM 01: *A common factor of all the experiences of working with digital tools is the fun and the satisfaction you receive in creating and*

reinventing heritage. There is an atmosphere of involvement and inclusion, enjoyment and creative freedom.

In particular, one of the major benefits of the introduction of digital technology seems to be the opening up of new possibilities: digital as a powerful imagination tool that can help to see previously unknown scenarios, as well as to imagine new shapes for the museum itself.

MM 13: *It has opened up new possibilities, created excitement for new ideas and new possible "edutainment" scenarios, to which I probably would not have had access without this opportunity.*

FLS 07: *It was fundamental to get a new perspective of the museum space, no longer confined to the physical walls, but facing outwards and increasingly looking for new ways to express itself.*

This creative perspective on digital is confirmed also by the model developed in the Phase Two Report of One by One (Parry et al, 2019), which includes the imaginative relationship as one of the four components of any active individual relationship with the digital.

Strategic level

This level aimed at understanding the impact of training activities on the overall strategic dimension, to see whether the course affected the future strategic direction. In particular, the aim was to identify changes in what Davies et al (2013) calls museum "modes", with particular reference to the meaning of heritage, the relationship with audience, and the concept of museum itself.

Taking into consideration the quantitative data, the overall average score (3.5) tends to confirm a certain level of impact on the organizations involved, even if slightly lower than in the other levels. The Likert scale data seems to show a relevant difference between the answers of participants according to their roles within their respective organisations. In fact, as shown in the bubble diagram, the average score decreases depending on the managerial level: it is quite high for the Top Management (3.8), slightly lower for the Middle Management (3.6), and even lower for the Front Line-staff (3.1). Nevertheless, with particular reference to the Front Line Staff and Middle Management, there was a significant number of non-responses or partial

responses (four people who answered only in the qualitative section ignoring the Likert scale and two people seem to have misinterpreted the strategic theme and the question proposed). This suggests to interpret carefully the data jointly considering the corresponding qualitative answers.

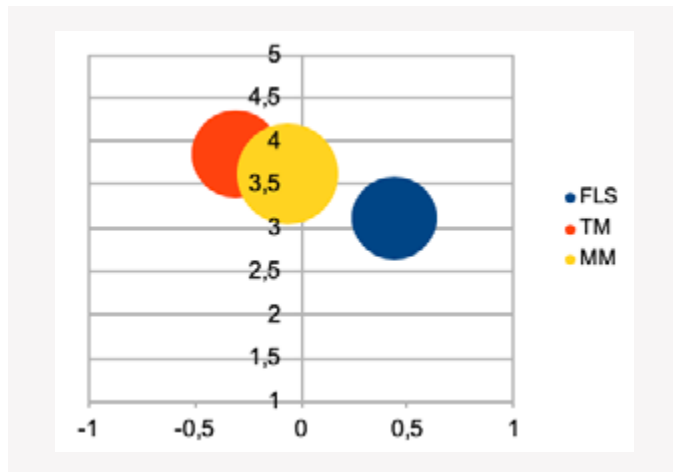


FIGURE 6. BUBBLE DIAGRAM OF THE STRATEGIC LEVEL SCORE RESULTS

Source: Author's ownelaboration

Specifically referring to the Front-Line Staff, the reason behind their non-response, as expressed by the respondents themselves in the open-ended section of the question, tells us that part of these people do not consider themselves to be in the position to influence the overall museum strategy.

FLS 02: *Since we are external collaborators, not structurally included in the managing body of the museum, our ability to influence the museum's strategy is almost close to zero.*

On the one hand, the Front-line staff is not commonly involved in the definition of the organisational strategy: this is an obstacle to an effective digital transformation, that requires an interdependence between individual and organizational change (Parry et al, 2019). On the other hand, the strategy is not always made explicit (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985), as specific actions can become part of the strategic direction, even if they are not planned and implemented as part of a deliberate plan. Considering this implicit dimension of the strategic process, the introduction of digital practices seems to have a significant ability in influencing the overall cultural offer and become part, in a long-term perspective, of the museum strategy.

This is confirmed by other evidence, which shows a strict connection between the practical and strategic

level, that is the strategic implication of the introduction of new practices:

TM 02: *Overall, the museum has become much more interactive also through the "high digitization" proposals that allow us to produce new digital heritage and to involve young people, different from our usual target.*

Considering the answers of the participants that assigned a high impact score (mostly Top management), a series of themes emerges: participatory approach to museum and heritage, re-thinking of audience, network approach, new ways of working, time for assimilation.

The training programme seems to have played a fundamental role in introducing a new approach to some of the key concepts that guide the mission of cultural institutions. In particular, the participatory nature of both heritage and museum was clearly recognised:

TM 10: *Heritage is no longer understood as the set of objects to be exhibited only inside the showcases and where the visitor is a passive spectator but, thanks to social platforms, also as an opportunity for in-depth learning, as a knowledge experience where the virtual visitor can become an active protagonist.*

TM 07: *A key point was the awareness that the museum should be a participatory institution that involves its visitors, that provides them experiences and emotions. This is probably the most complex challenge, but the collaboration among museums, cultural and social professionals can encourage this process of change.*

Connected to this, a change of attitude towards public is revealed across different answers, showing how opening up new digital opportunities naturally leads to rethink audience development in light of the different nature of online public, considering the different needs and expectations of the users and planning new engagement strategies accordingly:

FLS 07: *The course led us to look beyond the visitor who physically goes to the museum, and address those who, through digital tools, search for information, knowledge, and now increasingly requires an emotional connection with the collection.*

The reflection upon digital engagement strategies often led to a renewed attention to external stakeholders as potential partners in digital projects.

The introduction of a network approach emerges across different answers:

MM 15: *The simple fact of creating a network with other cultural institutions is useful to develop the digital presence of the museum.*

While in some cases these changes of attitude remain at a conceptual level (Tamma et al, 2019), in others they are accompanied by an evolution of previous ways of working. The awareness of the new museum 'digital presence', for example, often has practical implications:

TM 02: *The course encouraged us to review our communication channels that we previously underestimated and / or ignored: in these months we have rearranged and implemented them, with the aim to create a coordinated image of the museum at all levels and to firmly manage from the inside.*

These findings confirm how digital education in museums need to be purposeful and values-led (Parry et al, 2019): any reflection on digital transformation goes far beyond a change in technologies and ways of doing, because it embraces what it means to be a museum today.

The fact that some institutions assimilated the change of perception quicker seems to depend on a series of factors (among them the abovementioned role within the institution). The answers of Top management participants, in fact, show an overall higher impact and greater uniformity across different levels. However, as already noticed in the analysis of the practical level, time seems to be a key element for any digital transformation. As argued by participants, on the one hand, innovations require time to be assimilated, and, on the other hand, there needs to be ongoing experimentation of the new practices introduced and the progressive inclusion of all the other members of the organisation.

MM 13: *Above all, the course has laid the foundations for a new mental form which, it is hoped, over time will eventually become a way to modernize some obsolete practices of understanding communication, both outside and inside the museum.*

MM 13: *For now our intentions for the future are positive: there are many projects, many of them originated from this course. Their implementation will be the result of constancy and continuous involvement of the staff (as well as the willingness*

of the top management, which should not be underestimated).

Conclusions

As the analysis of the literature has shown, the urge of museums to adapt to a changing digital culture is widely recognised, and so is the necessity for previous roles to evolve. What is less clear is how to address the new educational needs of the individual professionals that work in the cultural organisations in a way that also supports a broader organisational change. This paper tried to address this issue by analysing the impact of a specific training programme, aimed to update the digital skills of the cultural workforce of the Veneto Region in order to support the digital transformation of the institutions involved.

The results show how the impact on the individual dimension was clearly positive and consistent across different roles, showing similar patterns: a change of perspective towards their profession, an increase in digital confidence, the introduction of new collaborative approaches, and how embracing the digital revolution fosters an atmosphere of enjoyment and creativity and opens up new horizons for the imagination, as suggested by other studies (e.g. One by One reports). Interestingly, the perception that the individual evolution and the introduction of new digital practices can contribute to a broader organisational change is not consistent across different organisational roles. This is due to the fact that while Top managers' change of attitude towards museum and heritage corresponds to new collaborative and networked ways of working and to a "digital" evolution of the museum cultural offer, Middle managers and Front line staff are more doubtful as regards the possibility they have to shape the future direction of their organisation.

As a result, two fundamental conclusions can be drawn.

First of all, the introduction and implementation of new digital practices can play a fundamental role in adapting the overall cultural offer and affect, in a long-term perspective, the museum strategic direction. As shown by the data analysis and discussion, the experimentation and adoption of new practices stimulated a rethinking of previous ways of working, laying the foundation for a broader organisational change.

Secondly, this practical level needs to be accompanied by a cross-sectoral reflection on the new practices introduced. As shown in this study, not all the

museum professionals thought that their professional evolution could trigger organisational change. The hierarchical and departmental structure of traditional museums minimised the transformative power of both individual evolution and the introduction of new practices. In fact, CDP can be a key tool to support the overall digital transformation if it is designed in a way that increases opportunities for interaction across different organisational roles, stimulates the inclusion of both Middle management and Front-line staff in the development of the cultural offer and, finally, introduces a new interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to the organisation itself. In this sense, from a managerial point of view, organizations would benefit from the adoption of tools that allow their members at different managerial levels to share strategic direction more effectively.

It must be noted that the study was exploratory in nature, small-scale, and context-bound. However, the responses are indicative of a trend, even if not unanimous at all managerial levels, that the training programme led to organisational change to some extent. Thus, the current research succeeds in showing how digital education can be a powerful catalyst for a transformation of the overall organization that goes far beyond the digital realm. Further research is needed to (i) investigate the long-term sustainability of the digital practices implemented, and (ii) extend the generalizability of the findings, by conducting other similar studies involving museums with a different digital experience.

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