

CULTURAL ECONOMICS 88: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Edited By

C. RICHARD WAITS

WILLIAM S. HENDON

J. MARK DAVIDSON SCHUSTER

Association for Cultural Economics

Akron OH, 489

In: Waits, C. Richard; Hendon, William S.; Davidson Schuster
J. Mark (Eds.): Cultural Economics 88: A European
Perspective, Akron OH: Association for Cultural
Economics, 1989

International Comparison of Culture Consumption Data: An Elementary Model

Harry B.G. Ganzeboom

Culture is one of the most unequally distributed goods in society. According to empirical evidence from the Netherlands (Bakker, 1986; Ganzeboom, 1982, 1987, 1988), participation in culture, as measured by a general cultural consumption index (including visits to theater and concert, museum and cinema and reading of serious literature), correlates strongly with all measures of social background, such as income, occupational status, education and the social status of the family. Yet, among the indicators of social background, there is a clear and unambiguous order of importance in predicting culture consumption.

Summarizing the results of the studies in the Netherlands differences in educational background explain much of the difference in culture consumption. Cultural audiences tend to have more formal education.

The second determinant in order of importance is the set of characteristics of the parental family. Some studies (e.g. Bakker, 1986) have only included education of parents in their design and show this of moderate importance for the determination of culture consumption. However, other studies (Ganzeboom, 1982, 1988) have also included more direct measures of the cultural climate in the parental family as indicated by culture consumption of the parents and the stimulation of culture consumption they gave to the respondents in their early childhood (cfr. Bamossey, 1983). Such direct measures of cultural socialization in the parental family turn out to be an important predictor of culture consumption nearly matching the effect of education of respondents. In addition, it has been shown that the extent of cultural socialization persons received in the parental family serves as a complete explanation of all effects of the parental family. If cultural socialization is controlled for, parents' status has no direct effect on culture consumption.

Occupational status as measured by its usual indicators does not matter very much for culture consumption as long as education and cultural socialization are taken into account. However, it can be shown (De Graaf, Ganzeboom & Kalmijn, 1985; Ganzeboom, De Graaf & Kalmijn, 1987) that there are differences in culture consumption between occupational categories of the same status level, but with different amounts of "cultural" and "economic" capital (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]). That is, culture consumption is more prevalent in occupational categories such as teachers, professors, artists and journalists as compared to more businesslike occupations (cfr. Porter, 1967).

Other determinants of culture consumption such as income, age, life cycle position and regional and other forms of geographical background have generally been shown to be much less important than education and socialization in the parental family. There is often not very much difference in size of these effects, and they are frequently not substantial in size. This is striking, since common sense reasoning and policy justification

assume that major differences exist between geographically and economically defined groups.

These relationships between social background and culture consumption are what I refer to as an elementary model of determinants of culture consumption.

Cross-National Differences in Culture Consumption Patterns

It is my objective, first, to establish whether these relationships between culture consumption and social background, as observed in the Netherlands, hold in other countries as well. Second, I wish to find the extent to which country specific circumstances (among them cultural policies) influence the relationship between social background and culture consumption. The present paper deals with data from the Netherlands, Hungary and the United States. (1)

Cross-national differences in determination of culture consumption depend on a great number of conditions. The spatial distribution of the population, the economic development of a country, educational curricula, the position of culture in the media, tradition, and the distribution of social inequality (income, education) may all be called upon to add to the explanation. As a consequence, one needs a multivariate mode of analysis to draw conclusions about the sources of cross-national differences. Given a limited number of countries in the analysis, one cannot expect any more than preliminary results on the sources of cross-national differences. Therefore, this paper aims only at measuring the extent to which there are similarities in the ways that culture consumption is brought about in three countries. Any theoretical considerations about differences among the countries in the analysis necessarily remains preliminary.

The number of countries examined in this paper may not be large but the selection is a fortunate one since they represent extremely interesting cases for the analysis of culture in society. On the one hand, there is Hungary that represents in many respects current socialist societies. Whereas the naïve theorist would perhaps presume that socialism contrasts with the traditional bourgeois forms of culture, it turns out that the actual state of affairs is exactly the reverse. Culture in general, and the traditional "bourgeois" forms in particular are held in high regard in the East European socialist countries (cfr. Robert, 1984; Wnuk-Lipinski & Kolosi, 1984). But although the supply of culture goods has in many respects remained unchanged through the introduction of socialism, other important factors have felt its impact.

First, socialist policies have taken financial support for the culture consumer with one of its concerns being that culture consumption is generally low priced under socialism. Second, socialist governments have made the active distribution of culture among the population one of their prime concerns and have used educational and media channels to promote the consumption of culture. What goes for the position of culture in the Eastern European countries in general is all the more true for Hungary where socialist turnover followed a bourgeois period in which the arts had a strong position especially in Budapest.

Other considerations relate to Hungary alone. One circumstance to take into account is that its economic development as compared to the other two countries in the comparison is at a low level. Another factor to take into account is that Hungary is very centralized around its capital city, Budapest, where approximately 20 percent of the population lives. Traditionally, there have always been strong boundaries between Budapest and the rest of the country. For this reason, one would expect a relatively large regional difference in culture consumption pattern in Hungary.

¶

The United States seems to be at the other extreme of many of the variables. The United States is economically highly developed, the cultural system is largely run by private foundations, and cultural information is much less conspicuous in everyday life (e.g. in television). American society seems to be less pervaded with culture than most European countries, Eastern or Western. Other features of the American cultural system are to be mentioned as well. The price level seems to be generally higher than in the other two countries, even when compared to the higher income of the American people. On the other hand, prices are still not insurmountable and there are exceptions to the rule. Books, for example, tend to be much more expensive in the United States than in the Netherlands. Too, the United States has a strong cultural capital (New York) but its position is not as important as that of Budapest in Hungary. Relatively fewer people live in New York than in Budapest and the United States is more urbanized than Hungary. As a consequence, one would expect that differences between regions and between different levels of urbanization are smaller than in Hungary but that differences between income groups would be larger.

Finally, the Netherlands takes an in between position. The conditions under which culture are produced and financed is more similar to conditions in Hungary than to conditions in the United States, with a large share of government initiative and funding in all cultural sectors. The subsidizing of culture is responsible for a rather low price level that may be even lower than the Hungarian one given the average income in the Netherlands. As I see it, regional variation is rather small as compared to the other two countries and the short distances make it possible for a large part of the population to profit from cultural goods elsewhere in the country. In addition, government cultural policies have been favorable for establishing an active cultural climate to a point where in some sectors supply surpasses demand.

Apart from supplying cultural goods at a low price, one of the main concerns of cultural policy in the Netherlands has been the spatial distribution of culture (cfr. Verhoeff, 1988). Combined with the small regional variation and the short distances in this small country, this should account for the small variation in cultural consumption between regions and urbanization levels whereas differences in culture consumption between socio-economic groups can be expected to fall between those in Hungary and in the United States.

The Data Sets

The data come from three sources. These three data sets have been selected because all three have detailed measures of educational attainment of parents and respondents, several measures of cultural socialization in the parental family, detailed (four or three digit coded) information on occupational positions, several indicators of culture consumption, and, in addition, demographic variables such as household income, age and urbanization. Since these data sources were not assembled within a framework of cross national research, there is only a functional equivalence of concepts and measurements. Therefore, I will refrain from making any strict comparison of distributions and metric coefficients and restrict myself to comparison of standardized coefficients.

The American data come from the "Survey of Public Participation in the Arts", gathered in 1982 by the U.S. Bureau of Census on behalf of the National Endowment of the Arts. This survey concerns a probability sample and is particularly addressed to sizes and distributions of cultural audiences. Although the total sample size is fairly large (N= 17,254), questions on cultural socialization have only been asked to a random sub-

sample of $N=1,770$. Earlier analyses of these data are given in Robinson (1983) and Horowitz (1986).

The Hungarian data come from the Kolosi Survey of Social Stratification held by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in 1982. This is also a national, multi-stage random sample. Earlier analyses of parts of this large data set ($N=8,358$) have been published by Kolosi (1984), Robert (1984) and Wnuk-Lipinski & Kolosi (1984).

The Netherlands' data are from a rather small ($N=349$) area-sample survey, conducted by myself in 1984-1985 that was restricted to the town of Utrecht. Unfortunately, no national sample with information on cultural socialization was available. Utrecht is a middle sized city and a center of commercial, industrial, educational, and administrative activities. Although it is always risky to generalize a local sample like this to the national level, there is no reason to think that there are many biasing peculiarities involved. The main difference from a sample of the Dutch population at large lies in the complete absence of people with farm occupations. Being a university city, people with higher levels of education will be over-represented. To enhance the comparability between the data sets, I will make comparisons with subsamples of the Hungarian and American data that are restricted in the same kind of towns in these countries.

Urbanization is classified in five categories in the Hungarian data and in seven categories in the US (and a constant in the Netherlands' data). This variable will also be used to select the urban sub-samples that are directly comparable with the data from Utrecht. I will then delete from the US data set units who come from metropolitan areas (500,000) and from smaller towns and rural areas. In Hungary I will delete Budapest, and the smaller towns and villages.

Age is the only variable in the analysis that is strictly comparable. The analysis will be restricted to sub-samples aged 25-64 who have a occupational code. There are hardly any differences in age distributions across the samples.

The only indicator of parental status that the three surveys have in common is their education. The Hungarian data also have information on financial and occupational background and the Utrecht data have occupations as well. However, the American data lack both. Fortunately, detailed analysis of the Hungarian and the Utrecht data show that parents' education is the best predictor of cultural socialization and educational attainment.

All three data sets contain several indicators of cultural socialization. Although they roughly refer to the same domains, there are differences in wordings and in the length of the instruments. In all three countries these items show strong intercorrelations, indicating that they measure a general cultural climate in that the respondent grew up.

All three surveys contain one measure on educational attainment. For Hungary and the U.S. the particular scale is not strictly comparable with the educational measure for the parents.

Occupations in the United States survey are coded in the three digit Classification of Occupations of the Census Bureau. Hungarian occupations are coded in the three digit International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO; see Treiman, 1977) and the Netherlands data in CBS four digit codings that is very closely related to ISCO. As a first step the American and Netherlands' codes were converted into ISCO.

To produce tests of hypotheses on differences between cultural and economic status of occupations, I apply two scales that were devised in earlier tests of Bourdieu's theory (De Graaf, Ganzeboom & Kalmijn, 1985; Ganzeboom, De Graaf & Kalmijn, 1987).

¶

These two scales make explicit the suggestions by Bourdieu (1984[1979]) on differences between occupations in cultural and economic domains.

The income measure in all three surveys refers to household income. It has been used in the analysis in log-form.

Culture consumption was ascertained via a considerable number of questions covering all sorts of cultural areas. The information on the Netherlands is the most extensive with seven indices covering over fifty items, in Hungary with 11 items, and in the US data with eight items. Since the items differ between countries in the precise forms of culture they refer to, I have refrained from comparing singular forms of culture consumption. The intercorrelation between the several forms of consumption within each of the countries is high (Cronbach's alpha over .65), that indicates that respondents can be scaled according to their general tendency to participate in culture consumption.

Analysis

Table 1 lists the correlations and regression equations between the indicators of social background and the index of culture consumption. The column of zero-order correlations represents the observed differences in cultural consumption between social categories as defined by the background variables. The column of regression coefficients informs how much of this correlation is attributable to the background variable itself, after controlling for the influence of the other. Since the regression equations are standardized, the coefficients can be compared to determine the relative weight. For the United States and Hungary, results are given both for the full sample and for the urban sample that is supposed to be more nearly comparable to the data from Utrecht.

The regression equations in Table 1 are striking for their similarity. The conclusions that are valid for all three countries can best be summarized in order of the independent variables:

a. The most important determinant of cultural participation in all three countries is formal EDUCATION although the CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION in the parental family is a good runner up in all of the cases and it surpasses the influence of education in the case of Utrecht town.

b. PARENT'S EDUCATION, that is on the zero order level only slightly less well correlated with culture consumption than respondent's own education, disappears in these regression equations in which cultural socialization in the parental family and respondent's education are partialled out. That is, the influence of parent's education is mostly indirect and is transmitted by socialization and respondent's education.

c. Of striking contrast is the difference in effect between the CULTURAL STATUS and ECONOMIC STATUS of the respondent's occupation. It turns out that the effect of occupational status is entirely due to the dimension of cultural status. The differences in culture consumption along the economic status axis are even slightly negative in some of the equations.

d. The effect of INCOME on culture consumption is statistically insignificant in the Netherlands and small (although significant) in the Hungarian case and in the United States. As compared to the other indicators of social background the influence of income is slight.

e. More or less the same is true for the effects of URBANIZATION that are estimated for Hungary and the United States only. Although the differences between urban and rural areas in culture consumption are statistically significant in both

Table 1

Regression equations for the determination of
culture consumption in three countries

	Full Samples		Urban Samples			
	USA	HUN	USA	NL	HUN	
	r	b	r	b	r	b
N =	1770	8358	508	349	2128	
Urbanization	.13	.04 [~]	.36	.10	-	-
Age	.02	.06 [~]	-.15	.08	-.08	-.05 [~]
Parents' Education	.22	.02	.44	.13	.21	-.02 [~]
Cultural Socialization	.30	.18	.47	.16	.42	.07 [~]
Education	.38	.24	.58	.29	.38	.16
Cultural Status	.30	.14	.47	.16	.25	.14
Economic Status	.23	-.02	.43	.03 [~]	.46	.25
Income	.18	.07	.30	.08	.54	.24
					.37	.23
					.32	.14
					.49	.27
					.24	-.01 [~]
					.36	-.12 [~]
					.07	.05 [~]
R =	.44	.65	.60	.61	.31	.12

(~) Not significant ($P > .05$). (r) Correlation. (b) Standardized regression coefficient.

countries, they are unimportant as compared to the differences caused by the other variables in the model (with the exception of income).

These conclusions are valid for all three countries. However, there are some slight, but interesting, differences between the countries to be noted.

f. Whereas in the United States and the Netherlands cultural socialization intermediates the influence of parents on culture consumption, this is much less true in Hungary where cultural socialization is less important but parent's education is more important than in the other two countries. The most obvious interpretation for this is technical. The Hungarian measure refer less clearly to experiences in the parental home and respondents may have referred to experiences in education as well.

g. Other differences between Hungary and the other two countries cannot be explained from artifacts and are striking facts about culture consumption in this country. Income differences and regional difference are in Hungary somewhat more important for culture consumption than in the other two countries. It is striking that in the three countries in the set where probably the distribution of culture among disadvantaged groups (defined in regional and financial terms) is most promoted, the strongest contrasts remain. My explanation for this is that it is due to the lower economic development of Hungary as compared to the other two nations. If Hungary develops in the same extent as the United States and the Netherlands, these differences will tend to disappear.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper reports a comparative analysis of determinants of culture consumption in three countries, Hungary, the Netherlands and the United States. The results are more striking for their similarities than for their differences between countries. In all three countries, differences in culture consumption are primarily determined by (a) education (b) cultural socialization and (c) a high cultural status of the occupation (as opposed to a high economic status). Age, income and urbanization contribute much less to the explanation of variation in culture consumption.

Utrecht State University

* Harry B.G. Ganzeboom holds a Huygens Fellowship, awarded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research NWO (#H50.283). Thanks are due to the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington D.C., Tamas Kolosi and Peter Robert (both Institute for Social Sciences in Budapest) for providing information and data.

References

- Bakker, B.F.M. 1986. "Social Background and culture consumption"; *Netherlands Journal of Sociology*; (22-2), 1986, pp. 162-179.
- Bamossey, G. 1983. "Socializing Experiences As Predictors Of Performing Arts Patronage Behavior"; in Hendon, W.S., J.L. Shanahan, I.Th. Hilhorst & J. van Straalen (Eds.). *Economic Research In The Performing Arts*; Akron. Association for Cultural Economics, 119-124.
- Bourdieu P. 1984 (1979). *Distinction*; London, Routledge.
- Ganzeboom, H. "Explaining differential participation in high-cultural activities"; in W. Raub (Ed.). *Theoretical Models And Empirical Analyses*; ES-Publication, Utrecht, 186-205.

- De Graaf P., Ganzeboom H., Kalmijn M. 1985. "Cultural And Economic Dimensions Of Occupational Status", paper, ISA RC on Stratification and Mobility, Utrecht/Boston.
- Ganzeboom H. 1987. "Cultural Audience Formation In The Netherlands Between 1962 And 1983"; in Shaw D.V., Hendon W.S., Waits C.R. (Eds.). *Artists And Cultural Consumers*; Association for Cultural Economics, Akron, 179-191.
- Ganzeboom H., De Graaf P., Kalmijn M. 1987. "De culturele en de economische dimensie van beroepsposities"; *Mens en Maatschappij*; 62, pp. 153-175.
- Ganzeboom, H. 1988. "Cultuurdeelname in Nederland"; manuscript, University of Utrecht.
- Horowitz H. 1987. "Cultural Participation And Geographic/population Schema: From New York City To The Rural Farm"; in Shaw, D.V., Hendon, W.S. and Waits, C.R. (eds.) *Artists And Cultural Consumers*. Akron: Association for Cultural Economics.
- Kolosi T. 1984. "Status And Stratification"; in Andorka R., Kolosi T. (Eds.). *Stratification and Inequality*; Institute for Social Sciences, Budapest, pp. 51-104.
- Porter, J.N. 1967. "Consumption Patterns Of Professors And Businessmen: A Pilot Study Of Conspicuous Consumption"; *Sociological Inquiry*; 37, pp. 255-265.
- Robert, P. "A Multidimensional Approach To Social Mobility"; in Andorka R., Kolosi T. (Eds.). *Stratification and Inequality*; Institute for Social Sciences, Budapest, pp. 223-244.
- Treiman, D.J. 1977. *Occupational Prestige In Comparative Perspective*; Academic Press, New York.
- Robinson J.P. 1983. "Culture indicators from the Leisure Activity Survey"; *American Behavioral Scientist*; 26, pp. 543-552.
- Verhoeff, R. 1988. "The Spatial Distribution Of Performing Arts In The Netherlands"; paper, prepared for presentation at the Fifth International Conference on Cultural Economics, Ottawa, Canada.
- Wnuk-Lipinski, E. & T. Kolosi. 1984. *Leisure In Socialist Societies*; Sage, London.