

Does an Open Port widen people's minds?

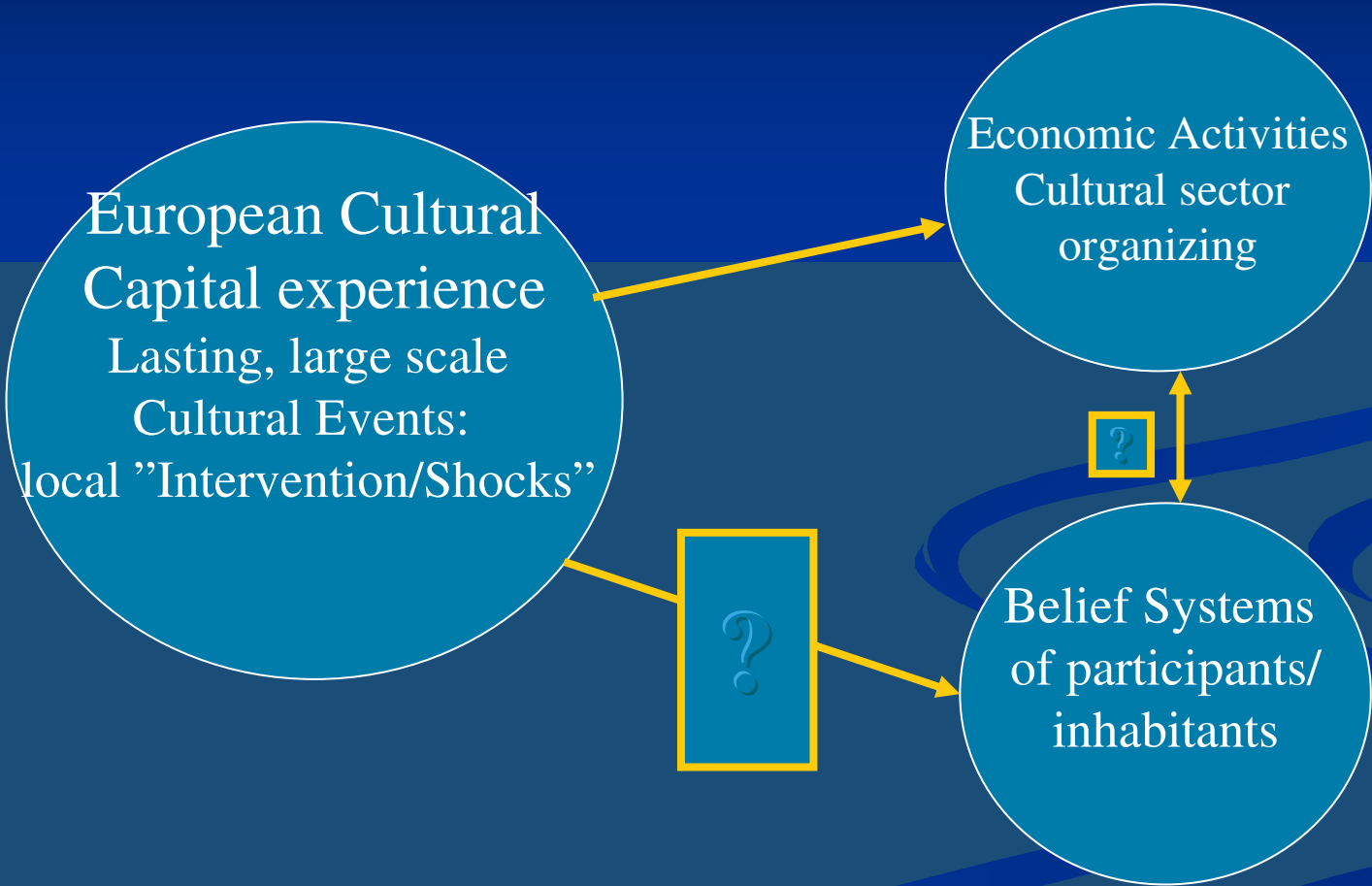
Possible effects of **European Cultural
Capital** activities on inhabitants'
Cultural Openness

The Case of Stavanger as European Cultural Capital in 2008
(SCC2008)

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Basic idea



Previous Research

- Main focus has been on economic consequences for the region
Visitors, Tourism, Branding, etc
- Also: Local Cultural Sector; Size shape, Sustainability, Cultural Access, Identity and Self Image of Artists and local groups/ensembles
- Less on: Participants'/Inhabitants' views or attitudes/beliefs, Image of themselves in relation to others
Cultural Openness; Tolerance for new and different expressions, Acceptance of foreign ideas, customs and peoples ..

Research Question:

Do massive Large Scale Cultural Events affect citizens' Cultural Openness?

(will inhabitants become more broad (or narrow) minded ?)

- Anecdotal evidence; Stories from spectators, participants, exposed, involved, audiences
- Accounts from artists, performers and authors
- Claims from organizers of cultural events (pronounced in SCC2008: Open Port concept)
- Less scientific investigations, though some, e.g. Winter Olympics 1994

Prior findings ambiguous (Kolstad et al on effects of Winter Olympics 94 in Lillehammer)

- Effects : No clear cut empirical pattern
- Reactions in unexpected directions
- Those more exposed or close to events more affected, others less

Consequences for expectations regarding Cultural Capital massive events:

1. Potential Cultural Capital effects not obvious
2. Possible unintended (negative) consequences, latent functions
3. Relevant to distinguish between closer and distant involvement

The Setting

- City of Stavanger in Rogaland County, at the West Coast of Southern Norway
- Inside Central urban Axis: 200 thousand
Outside: Another 200 thousand
- "Oil Capital"; Long period of economic growth, affluent population, attractive region, influx of people also from abroad
- Relatively young, well educated population
- Local politicians: Increasing ambitions for the region
- Stavanger historically Gate to Europe and North America



Stavanger European Cultural Capital 2008 (SCC2008)

- After 10 years of concerted, comprehensive efforts
- Signal of new ambitions: Future national "Cultural Capital"
- Motto: 'Open Port', suggesting a wish for broader cultural diversity, the welcoming new ideas and different customs, alternative ways of thinking
- SCC2008: More than 1100 performances and projects, many underlining cultural diversity, tolerance, openness, solidarity
- Events concentrated mainly Inside Central urban Axis (ICA), those within ICA more exposed/involved

METHOD/DESIGN

- Broad methodological approach, including qualitative as well as quantitative oriented studies. Quantitative analyses mainly based on representative surveys and standardized questionnaires
- Central **dependent variable** for the present study: Factor based measure intended to reflect the concept of **Cultural Openness**, based on five indicators
- Survey before and after SCC08 (Fall 2007, Spring 2009)
- Quasi-experimental approach
- "Treated" (Inside Central Axis, ICA) and "Non treated" (outside, OCA): Difference in differences logic
- Multivariate analysis: Multiple regression
- Control for a number of individual background variables as well as structural characteristics

RESULTS I: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

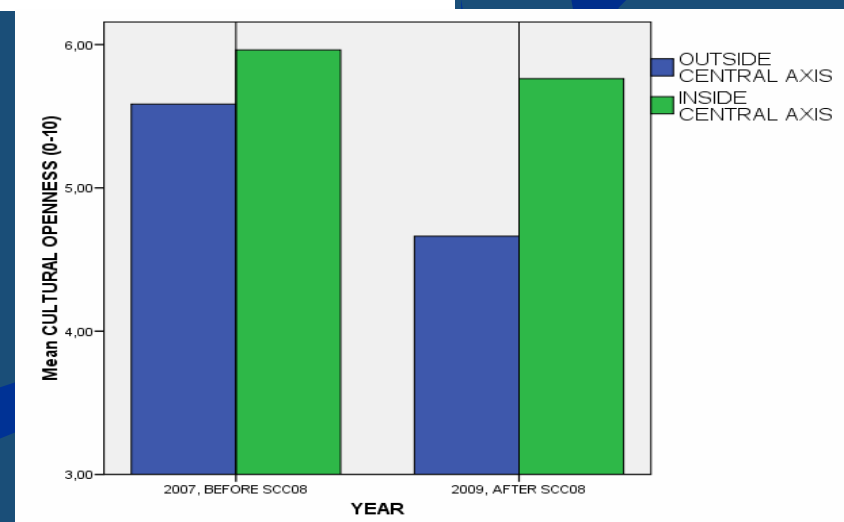
- Characteristics: Inside (ICA) and outside Central Axis (OCA)

| AREA (0=OUTSIDE CA, 1=INSIDE CA) | | GENDER (M=0, F=1) | AGE IN YEARS | EDUCATION (0-3) | RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION (0-6) |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Outside CA | Mean | ,52 | 47,95 | 1,40 | 1,61 |
| | Std. Deviation | ,50 | 16,37 | ,92 | 1,73 |
| Inside CA | Mean | ,51 | 47,18 | 1,74 | 1,28 |
| | Std. Deviation | ,50 | 16,03 | ,92 | 1,57 |
| Total | Mean | ,52 | 47,53 | 1,59 | 1,43 |
| | Std. Deviation | ,50 | 16,18 | ,94 | 1,65 |

RESULTS II: DIFFERENCE, BEFORE/AFTER STAVANGER CULTURAL CAPITAL 2008?

- Multiple regression results. Dependent variable: Cultural Openness
- Basically NO/LITTLE difference for those Inside Central urban Axis (i.e. for those more exposed), DECREASE for those outside (those less

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | |
| (Constant) | 4,90 | ,17 | | 28,87 |
| AREA (0=OUTSIDE CA, 1=INSIDE CA) | ,15 | ,14 | ,03 | 1,07 |
| YEAR (0=2007, 1=2009) | -,87 | ,15 | -,17 | -5,92 |
| AREA*YEAR | ,64 | ,20 | ,11 | 3,27 |
| GENDER (M=0, F=1) | ,50 | ,10 | ,10 | 5,10 |
| AGE IN YEARS | -,01 | ,00 | -,09 | -4,35 |
| EDUCATION (0-3) | ,69 | ,05 | ,26 | 12,94 |
| RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION (0-6) | -,08 | ,03 | -,05 | -2,72 |



Competing Interpretations I

- We observe a) A **Decrease** in the score on Cultural Openness for those Outside the Central Axis (less exposed), and b) basically **No Change** for those inside, i.e. for those assumed to be most exposed to - and likely to be affected by SCC2008 events.
- This observed "No Change" may still be understood as an "effect" of Cultural Capital events (SCC2008) on inhabitants' Cultural Openness, in the sense that those close to events (inside urban axis) have developed more galvanized or robust beliefs; Their cultural openness appears less sensitive to external developments on the national/international scene. The credibility of such interpretations depends on future national data (available early next year).
- A possible decrease in Cultural Openness at the national level (for Norwegians in general) will support such an interpretation.

Competing Interpretations II

- However, If (upcoming data should indicate) no change in cultural openness nationally, then an explanation for the locally observed decrease (Outside Central Axis) asks for an explanation. Why a decrease in cultural openness outside central axis, i.e. among those less exposed/involved?
- Could it be that this decrease reflects a reaction against the Cultural Capital idea of the Urban Centres; Scape goating after feeling left out, etc?
- Also: Potential methodological problems need to be examined (Sampling procedures, robustness tests for possible biases in sampling frames, etc. So far, preliminar tests indicate no serious problems)

CONCLUSION

- No obvious or clear cut effect of SCC2008 activities on inhabitants' Cultural Openness
- One interpretation suggests that Large Scale and lasting events (like SCC2008) could make those exposed less sensitive (more robust) to external developments
- We will know more (which of possible alternative interpretations is more credible) when (in February 2010) data for the national population for central variables are available