

# THE NEW MINERVA

## from Cultural WARfare to Cultural WELfare

Gaia Rasoni – Istituto Europeo di Design

### Introduction

The ancient Romans - and the Greeks before them - saw Minerva/Athena as both the goddess of war and of culture and the arts. This dichotomy may be difficult to understand, but it involves the first principle of starting a war: imposing one's culture on others. In the first decades of this century, wars and aggressions were the order of the day. Instead of promoting more inclusive approaches to relations between different peoples, the reaction has been to separate and fight.

### Key Concept

Culture has become, on one hand, the most valuable source of advantage. On the other, the first spending cuts in public budgets concern culture. Without bending culture to a substitute role for social policies, Cultural Welfare can have a leading role in designing a structured system of services that, in alliance with local communities, multiply the extent of health-promoting factors and make them accessible. Cultural Welfare, mainly experimented in the Scandinavian countries, is recognized among the emerging forms of welfare.

### Methodology and Main Results

In the small cities, a systematic collaboration between professionals of different disciplines and an integration of objectives between the institutional systems of health and social policies and those of arts and culture have to be enhanced. The paper will explore how design (thinking) can develop the Cultural Welfare approach.

The worktables in municipality management need an update. Policy makers have to take up target groups as people at 360° considering that culture is strictly connected to people's well-being. The first step is to actively include people from different backgrounds also on topics far from their fields. The second one is to provide policy makers with new competences. To reach this, policy makers need a continuous training made by health, culture and socio-economics areas.

2800  
initiatives

Italy: the **Compagnia di San Paolo** implemented projects referred to medical humanities and wellbeing in the cultural institutions.

10  
years of work

389  
projects

### Conclusions

Cultural Welfare can lighten the burden of care with more sustainable, more just, more effective solutions.

#### Sources:

Annalisa Cicerchia, Alessandra Rossi Ghiglione, Catterina Seia, *Welfare Culturale*, 2020, [treccani.it/magazine/atlanter/cultura/Welfare.html](http://treccani.it/magazine/atlanter/cultura/Welfare.html)  
*Well Impact, Cultura e Salute. Verso un nuovo Welfare Culturale*, 2020, [compagniadisanpaolo.it/wp-content/uploads/CSP\\_Well-Impact\\_nuovowelfare-22.03.pdf](http://compagniadisanpaolo.it/wp-content/uploads/CSP_Well-Impact_nuovowelfare-22.03.pdf)