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Space for Governing Culture. Cultural Policy and State Intervention in France, the United Kingdom, and the United States

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the relationship between cultural policy and state intervention in France, the United Kingdom and the United States during the second half of the twentieth century. It examines the limits, challenges and conflicts in this dynamic, using a segmented analysis of each country to show how different contexts shaped different patterns of change. Through the methods of historical and comparative analysis, the article also highlights the main developments in response to significant political cycles and socio-cultural transformations in each nation.

KEYWORDS

Cultural policy; France; space for governing culture; state intervention; United Kingdom; United States

1. Introduction

Cultural policy involves the deliberate actions, strategies and measures taken by governments to shape and manage the cultural landscape of a society. It aims to preserve, promote and regulate cultural expressions, with government intervention being crucial. Governments play a central role in promoting cultural activities, preserving heritage and supporting contemporary expressions through resource allocation, funding and institutional support.

This article chooses to examine cultural policy and state intervention in France, the UK and the USA in the late 20th century for several important reasons. France prioritizes state-led funding for cultural equity, the UK focuses on decentralization and public–private collaboration for inclusivity, and the USA relies on market incentives and philanthropy to promote a creative economy and freedom of expression. These approaches reflect different historical and societal contexts, balancing heritage preservation with modern cultural development. The article explores the limits, challenges and opportunities for state intervention in this complex relationship.

The use of historical and comparative analysis reveals the complex dynamics of cultural policy, tracing the evolution of political systems and examining similarities and differences between countries (Mahoney and Dietrich 2003). The segmented analysis of each country consolidates the historical perspective and shows that different contexts have led to different dynamics of change. The article identifies changes in

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the light of significant political cycles and socio-cultural transformations within each political community.¹

1.1. Approaching cultural policy

Kevin Mulcahy (1945–2023), to whom this article is dedicated, emphasizes the critical link between cultural policy and state intervention, locating it within the realms of governance and cultural development. He defines cultural policy as the government strategies, regulations and initiatives that shape the cultural landscape of a society (Mulcahy 2017, 2006).

State intervention in cultural policy acts as a dynamic force for the preservation, promotion and development of national cultural identity. Through deliberate action, the state creates frameworks that guide the creation, dissemination and preservation of cultural expressions, fostering diverse cultural practices and contributing to a nation's rich heritage. This intervention ensures cultural sustainability, encourages creativity and balances tradition with innovation (Rosenstein 2010).

In the late 20th and 21st centuries, Western democracies have seen a gradual but steady strengthening of public culture and cultural policies, with varying degrees of success (Dubois 1999; Urfalino 2004; Mulcahy 2006; Paquette and Beauregard 2018; Rosenstein 2018). Cultural policies must be understood in their historical and political contexts, specific to each community or nation-state (Almond and Verba 1965; Meisel 1974; Poirrier 2011). These policies should be analyzed not only in their normative and administrative dimensions but also as a reflection of the social values and worldviews that define society and how its citizens perceive themselves (Mulcahy 2006).

The exercise of power and the construction of public policy have evolved significantly, moving from democratic normative legitimacy to a cost-benefit approach

“who gets what, when, how?” (Lasswell 2018) – through mechanisms of persuasion that appeal to shared political cultures, to deliberative and participatory practices that perhaps value rhetoric over reason (Goodin, Rein, and Moran 2006).

The constitution of modern states, their transition from aristocratic to bourgeois and financial elite models of government, and the gradual affirmation of mass democracies have contributed to the development of specific strategies for constructing and consolidating a Space for Governing Culture (Vargas 2022). At the same time, the tradition of Western metropolises has for centuries contributed to a matrix of heritage and identity, both through learned cultural practices and dynamic, festive popular culture.

2. The scope of state intervention

The establishment of the Space for Governing Culture reflects an ongoing negotiation process, involving the accumulation and revision of decisions over time. This has resulted in a complex organizational structure encompassing cultivated, popular, and mass cultural practices.

This proposal includes fields such as language, media, the press, and the multimedia industry (including video games), but excludes tourism, sport, and urban planning

linked to the creative city and metropolitan mobility. Variants of this proposal have been validated by political authorities in different regions.

The distinction between cultivated and mass culture within this space has increasingly blurred. Initially focused on cultivated culture, the space now integrates elements of mass culture, highlighting their growing prominence (Yúdice 2003; Coulangeon 2021; Rosenberg 2021; Vargas 2024) (Figure 1).

This shift has led to growing specialization across various fields, resulting in the creation of organizations dedicated to artistic, heritage, or technical-administrative activities. Consequently, professional bodies have become more sophisticated, with career management essential for the sector’s stability and growth (Galligan and Alper 2000; Dubois 2013; Brini and Vergès 2021), impacting new professional subjectivities and identities (Paquette 2012).

Although some areas remain outside the Space for Governing Culture, they still influence its dynamics, contributing to its cyclical expansion and contraction. The interdependence between this space and other governmental areas like Education,

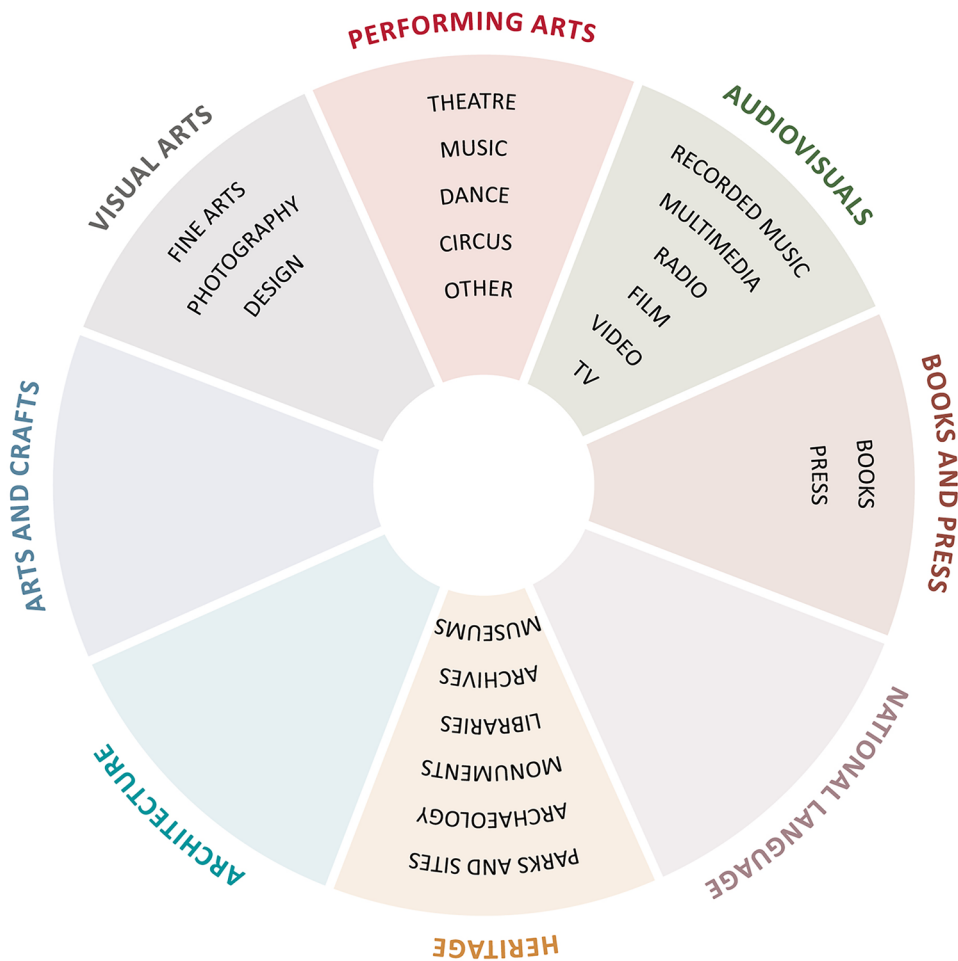


Figure 1. Space for governing culture. Vargas (2022, 38) (After Chantepie 2011, 20). Design: José Dias, 2024, 2020.

Science and Technology, and Employment creates meta-domains, enabling governments to leverage their potential while addressing challenges.

The Space for Governing Culture encompasses organizations, their specializations, and the domains in which they intersect with other governmental areas. Despite being peripheral compared to other priorities, the state's need to manage cultural activities led to a sectoral system of organizations, institutions, and actors. This system is dynamic over time but appears structured and integrative when viewed at a single moment.

The development of this space often involved separating organizations from the Space for Governing Education and creating new ones. The central role of Education in state administration led to decentralizing the Space for Governing Culture, paradoxically consolidating it. This separation was crucial to establishing a distinct space, affirming its necessity and relevance.

However, this process posed challenges, often weakening organizations, hindering the consolidation of values and norms, and fostering mistrust among stakeholders. These issues are linked to the relatively recent establishment and consolidation of the Space for Governing Culture as an autonomous entity within the State framework (Figure 2).

The Space for Governing Culture experiences cycles of contraction, expansion, and redistribution, leading to inherent instability. This instability, often hidden during periods of excitement, defines the space. Despite this, there is a perception of disorder attributed to cultural areas rather than the governing system itself, shaping the domains and organizations within the space.

The system includes various sectoral domains, creating potentially unstable meta-domains governed by multiple ministerial structures. Consequently, many cultural meta-domains are overseen by dynamic ministerial combinations, increasing the model's entropy and complicating administrative processes. This complexity can lead to isolated administration and challenges in addressing emerging issues within these domains and meta-domains (Figure 3).

The Space for Governing Culture is further complicated by the diverse legal statuses of organizations within each specialized domain, including public, mixed, or private entities, industries, and nonprofit associations, registered at national, regional, or local levels. This diversity contributes to a highly complex governing space, necessitating ongoing dialogue and negotiation among stakeholders to resolve deadlocks, imbalances, and tensions within and between domains. Additionally, the Space for Governing Culture must account for numerous external factors influencing societal dynamics at any given historical moment (McGuigan 2004; Rosenstein 2018).

3. The path of three Western countries

Throughout the 20th century, Western Europe and North America experienced significant state intervention due to major wars and prolonged economic crises. These changes facilitated the establishment of arts programs that encouraged cultural practices and professionalized artistic agents. Post-World War II, the rise of cinema, radio, magazines, advertising, and television introduced new forms of cultural production and consumption, which coincided with increased well-being, purchasing power, leisure time, and a more sophisticated cultural industry (Susca 2021; O'Connor 2024).

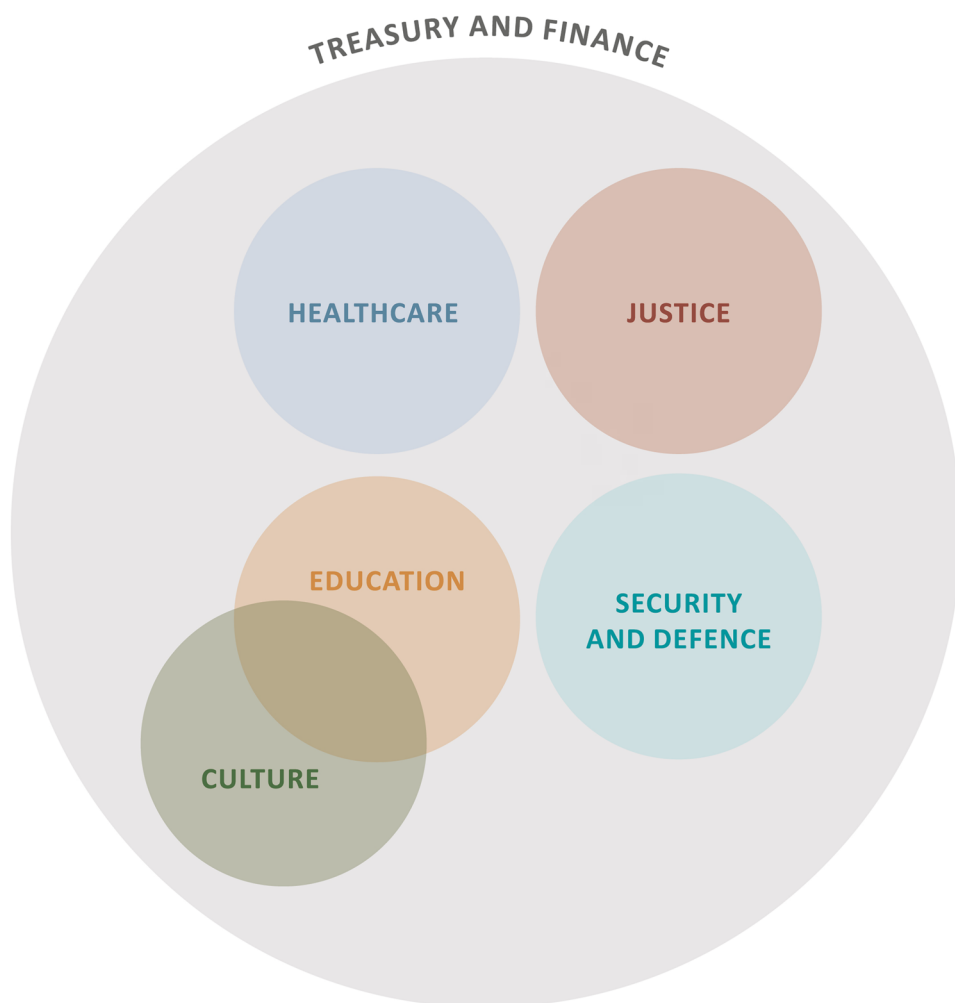
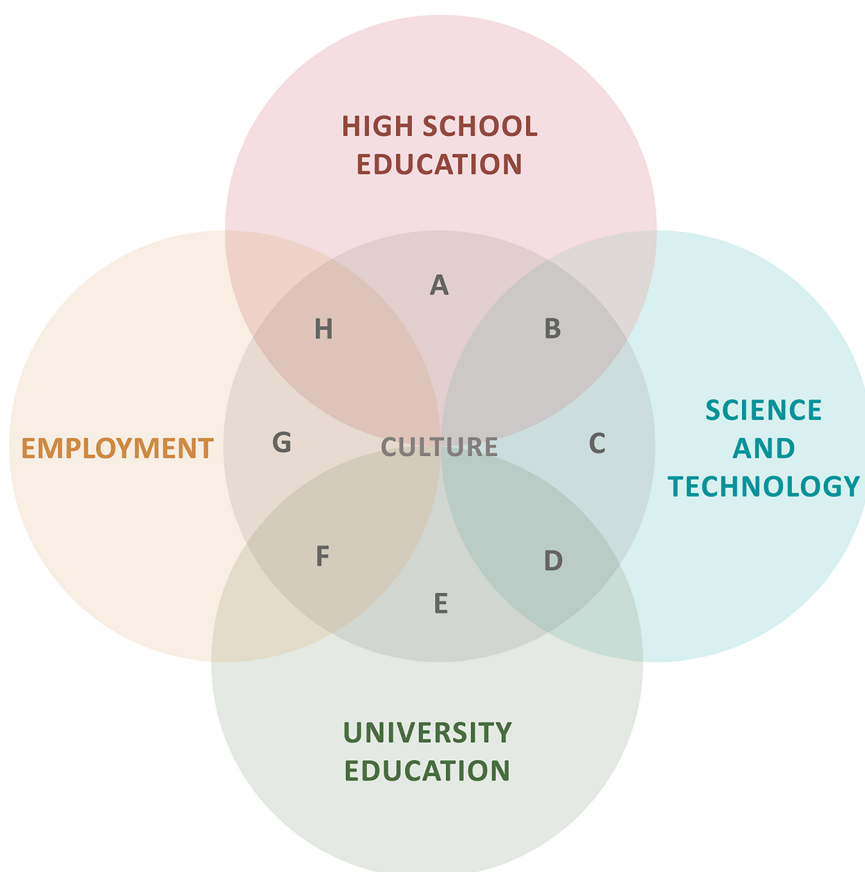


Figure 2. Founding decentralization of space for governing culture. Vargas (2022, 42). Design: José Dias, 2024, 2020.

In the postwar period, industrial democracies in Western Europe, Canada, and the United States developed and stabilized new governance models for cultural intervention. These models varied according to each nation's political culture. The United Kingdom implemented a distanced model with the creation of the Arts Council. The United States developed a federal policy through the National Endowment for the Arts, which aimed to complement rather than replace market dynamics. France took a centralized approach, establishing the Ministry of Culture with a seat on the Council of Ministers.

3.1. France and the cultural state

In 1959, André Malraux (1901–1976) began leading the newly created Ministry of Culture in France under General Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970). During his tenure from 1959 to 1969, Malraux innovatively balanced political and cultural practices by democratizing culture and expanding state intervention while defending a conservative



A – CULTURE + HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

B – CULTURE + HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION + SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

C – CULTURE + SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

D – CULTURE + SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY + UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

E – CULTURE + UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

F – CULTURE + UNIVERSITY EDUCATION + EMPLOYMENT

G – CULTURE + EMPLOYMENT

H – CULTURE + EMPLOYMENT + HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Figure 3. Governing spaces and meta-domains. Vargas (2022, 41). Design: José Dias, 2024, 2020.

cultural canon. He also promoted France internationally through significant cultural actions, successfully elevating French culture both nationally and globally in the post-war context (Gammal, El, and Francfort 2018, 78).

The Houses of Culture (Maisons de Culture) were Malraux's most emblematic project, reviving a 1935 Popular Front initiative. He inaugurated the first new-generation House in Le Havre in 1961, followed by others in Bourges (1963), Amiens (1966), Grenoble, Reims, Rennes, Saint-Étienne (1968), and Nevers (1969). These Houses aimed

to democratize cultural dissemination across France, promoting an erudite cultural canon accessible to all citizens.

In 1966, during the inauguration of the House of Culture in Amiens, Malraux articulated the humanist mission of these Houses within the Cold War context (Malraux 1996, 324). Although the initiative did not extend to all Departments as initially planned, it became the defining symbol of Malraux's tenure, sparking debates and evaluations of that era of French cultural policy (Urfalino 2004, 24).

The French state's cultural intervention, deeply rooted in the Ancien Régime, intensified in the 1930s, influenced by the Popular Front, the Vichy government, and postwar democratization and decentralization efforts (Gammal, El, and Francfort 2018, 79). Theater, extensively present across France, notably benefited from these strategies. The creation of the Ministry of Culture in 1959 complemented the cultural decentralization policy for theater previously implemented by Jeanne Laurent (1902–1989).

The establishment of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959 marked a departure from the Ministry of National Education's role in cultural governance. This new ministry aimed to promote French and universal cultural values, democratize cultural access, and support contemporary art, rejecting the previous pedagogism, academicism, and amateur voluntarism. It sought to foster emotional engagement with art, reflecting a desire for cultural sophistication and cosmopolitanism (Poirrier 2002; Urfalino 2004).

The ministry developed a nationwide cultural administration to affirm and disseminate an "État esthétique" (Urfalino 2004, 39). However, it faced resistance from municipalities, associations, trade unions, and left-wing parties, wary of official art (Gammal, El, and Francfort 2018, 81).

After André Malraux left the ministry in 1969, French cultural policy liberalized, embracing modernity with the Pompidou Center's opening (1976–1977) and returning to classical museums with the Musée d'Orsay and Musée Picasso, supported by Presidents Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (1926–2020) and François Mitterrand (1916–1996).

The growth of local authorities, the focus on cultural practices, festival expansions, and heritage renovations necessitated sophisticated policies and financial resources. The ministry sought private participation and introduced attractive tax incentives to engage patrons.

In 1981, with François Mitterrand became President of France, the focus shifted to cultural democracy, encapsulated by the idea that everything, or almost everything, is culture (Finkelkraut 1987). Jack Lang (b.1939), as Minister of Culture and Communication, significantly increased the ministry's budget, expanding its scope and influence (Martigny, Martin, and Wallon 2021; Gammal, El, and Francfort 2018). This marked a departure from traditional public support for high culture, embracing a vision attentive to visual communication, consumer culture, cultural industries, and the private sector.

Simultaneously, Mitterrand's ambitious architectural and urban projects for Paris, known as the Grands travaux, sparked controversy. These initiatives aimed to reaffirm French cultural greatness and enhance its cosmopolitan centrality (Poirrier 2002; Pulgent 1999; Looseley 1997).

Mitterrand and Lang's cultural policies sought to affirm traditional state intervention in leading cultural organizations while expanding support to diverse cultural creations previously overlooked by the state (Donnat 1994). Cultural democracy was promoted

through the valorization of various practices, safeguarding heritage, emphasizing community importance, and promoting broad-spectrum artistic training.

The Ministry of Culture developed three key dimensions: supporting artists and major organizations, intersecting with the economy through cultural industries and the private sector, and fostering new relationships with national territories via the 1992 administrative decentralization. This included regional cultural affairs directorates, local plan contracts, and decentralized libraries and archives.

An expansionist cultural policy, supported by substantial state budget investments, homogenized cultural offerings across France. However, it did not eliminate Paris's centralizing influence; initiatives like the Grands Travaux of 1989 potentially increased centralization.

The growing municipalization of culture introduced new dynamics for addressing local audiences' needs, complicating cultural policy with diverse players involved (Moulinier 2002, 2008; Poirrier 2010; Ferré 2018). Consequently, state intervention's scope became diluted, prompting criticism of the cultural state's objectives, actions, and limits (Martin 2011).

The focus on contemporary creation across various fields led to increased professionalization and stronger corporate mobilization, aligning with trade unions to demand state-provided rights and guarantees. This challenged the ideology of cultural democracy, highlighting the state's failure to expand access to cultural offerings effectively and sustainably, prompting a reassessment of strategies.

From 1993, the Ministry of Culture aimed to reform and consolidate services to enhance state efficiency, initiating territorial decentralization (Teillet and Négrier 2019). Agreements with local authorities and popular front federations sought to address cultural access inequalities and reinforce the state's role in cultural pluralism (Poirrier 2002, 482).

During the 1998 OECD negotiations on the Multilateral Investment Agreement, France advocated for cultural exception rights to protect diversity and creative pluralism (Benhamou 2006). Domestically, National Front municipalities sought to eliminate cultural practices they deemed anti-national, leading to a strong media defence led by Catherine Trautmann's Ministry of Culture (1997–2000) against racism and xenophobia (Pulgent 1999, 94–95).

Over time, concerns emerged about France's cultural government, questioning the roles of the state and Ministry of Culture amid growing stakeholder demands and globalization. This led to perceptions of the Ministry's declining relevance and the diminishing significance of French culture internationally (Dubois 2013, Martin 2011).

In 2007, President Nicolas Sarkozy, in a letter to Minister Christine Albanel (2007–2009), reaffirmed French cultural policy's focus on heritage, creation, and education, emphasizing arts education, media involvement, and digital engagement (Grefe and Pflieger 2009). Sarkozy aimed to align public cultural support with measurable outcomes, marking a shift from contemporary creation to economically supporting cultural production based on consumption patterns. This shift underscored the increasing importance of cultural industries and the linkage of cultural democratization strategies with promoting citizens' consumption habits.

The economization of cultural policy discourse (Throsby 2010), the scarcity of public financial resources (Martin 2011), persistent socio-geographical inequalities, and the

broad definition of culture as leisure have led some to declare the end of cultural policy as a contemporary myth (Djian 2005).

This perspective sees cultural policy as an intellectual construct serving public affairs (Urfalino 2004), marking the decline of the cultural state as a modern belief system (Fumaroli 1992). However, some advocate for an informed and responsive state capable of addressing new social dynamics in a multicultural and globalized society, with regions and municipalities playing crucial roles in defining and implementing public cultural policies (Poirrier 2002; Saez 2021).

The digital age, the communicational landscape of social networks, the dynamics of the on-demand cultural industry, and advancements in artificial intelligence highlight the limitations of the Space for Governing Culture (Miller and Yúdice 2002). These developments require an adaptable and swift government approach (O'Brien 2014; Hupe and Hill 2006), within an inclusive space that embraces cultural diversity, popular culture, and mass culture dynamics (Coulangeon 2021).

3.2. United Kingdom and the government agencies

The establishment of the Arts Council of Great Britain in 1946, following World War II, emerged from a consensus among the British political elite to continue the work of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA). CEMA had supported cultural practices in Britain during the war (Ridley 1987, 228). Formed by royal charter with discreet parliamentary consensus, the Arts Council marked the beginning of formal, permanent state financial support for the arts, museums, and libraries. Initially, this support was modest until the appointment of a Minister for Culture in 1964 (Sinclair 1995; Webber 2021).

Until 1948, British local authorities were legally restricted from funding cultural or recreational activities without special permission from Parliament. Consequently, the development of galleries, museums, and theaters was limited, relying on private patrons. Postwar societal changes enabled local authorities to promote cultural practices more broadly and consistently among local populations, assuming a role previously reserved for the local elite upper class.

Several historical reasons explain the UK's persistent distance from state-defined cultural policies, often associated with upper-class tastes and habits. The UK's political culture (Almond and Verba 1965) was influenced by 19th century warnings from Matthew Arnold against non-conformist provincialism and puritanical narrowness (Arnold 1869), John Stuart Mill's utilitarian vision and fear of mass power transfer (Mill 1963), and twentieth century defenses of the great canon by Frank R. Leavis (Leavis 1972). This tradition was challenged by neo-Marxist revisions from Raymond Williams (Williams 1963) and Richard Hoggart (Hoggart 2009), who advocated for popular and mass culture appreciation (Bell and Oakley 2015, 20). However, schools, academia, and the Arts Council largely neglected these perspectives (Looseley 2011b, 398).

The responsibilities of the government minister for arts and culture, and related areas such as heritage, creative industries, digital economy, tourism, and sport, remained limited and dispersed across various central administration structures (Henry 2001). This particularly diminished the focus on contemporary creation. Despite

transformations over the decades, the Arts Minister led the Office of Arts and Libraries, reporting to either the Lord President of the Council or the Department of Education and Science. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office managed the British Council and the promotion of British culture abroad, the Department of Environment oversaw historical buildings and parks, the Home Office managed radio and television, and the Department of Trade and Industry was responsible for cinema.

For many, this organization of state intervention fragmented the ability to define, implement, and stabilize a coherent cultural policy nationwide. Others argue that this fragmentation ensured a diversity of perspectives, enriching state responses to specific realities, externalizing strategy definitions for each activity domain, and preventing the consolidation of a technocratic bureaucracy that might impose a unilateral vision for arts and culture from the central administration.

The autonomy of the Arts Council, established by the royal charter of 1946, allowed it to operate independently from political power, adhering to the arm's-length principle. This enabled the Arts Council to distribute funding to intermediary cultural organizations, or quangos (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations), through the contractualization of generic objectives (Ridley 1987, 236).

However, the economic and financial crises of the 1980s and Margaret Thatcher's governments (1979–1990) exposed the fragility of this funding system. The crises highlighted the limitations in broadening the Arts Council's intervention scope, which had begun to focus more on local, popular, and mass cultures.

During a period of declining box office revenues and patronage, the Arts Council prioritized maintaining support for major organizations like Covent Garden, the Royal Opera House, the Royal Ballet, the English National Opera, the National Theater, and the Royal Shakespeare Company. Consequently, smaller, less visible organizations, particularly those outside London, faced significant funding cuts. This led to a compromised arm's length policy and a gradual politicization of the Arts Council, marked by political appointments and interference, altering its operations and public perception.

The economization of the Space for Governing Culture and the shift to objective-based funding introduced a competitive dynamic, resulting in significant cuts for flagship organizations. Political authorities began to view arts and culture as tools for economic recovery, urban regeneration, and combating social exclusion (Looseley 2011a). During Tony Blair's Labor government (1997–2007), there was an effort to modernize the concept of culture, prioritizing access to the arts and valuing popular and mass culture (Henry 2001) and the cultural industry (Garnham 1987), often referred to as commercial culture (Bell and Oakley 2015).

In the mid-1990s, Cool Britannia symbolized a revitalization of the British artistic scene, marked by its Europeanization, the rediscovery of cultural industries, and the appreciation of cultural practices and flagship organizations that bolstered tourism. The Millennium Dome, designed by Richard Rogers and inaugurated in 2000, epitomized this euphoria, despite initial controversies. It leveraged the pride and vibrancy of a cosmopolitan cultural scene, contributing to urban regeneration. (Campbell and Cox 2018).

In 2000, the Labor government published "Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years," outlining an agenda focused on creativity, education, access, excellence, and the strategic importance of cultural industries. This period saw a significant shift in

the UK's cultural policy landscape, with increased emphasis on economic utility, popular engagement, and the commercial aspects of culture, reflecting broader socio-political and economic changes.²

Throughout the 2000s, debates over the Arts Council's objectives of excellence and access intensified, shaping its actions. In 2008, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport published "Supporting Excellence in the Arts: From Measurement to Judgment," emphasizing excellence, risk-taking in innovation, cultural diversity, internationalization, better governance, stronger interactions between cultural organizations and schools, professionalization of cultural organizations and their staff, and the reformulation of funding mechanisms.

Early twenty-first century political rhetoric promoted a notion of cultural democratization that paradoxically echoed the ideals of Arnold and Leavis rather than the cultural democracy advocated by Williams and Hoggart. This rhetoric reflected a tension between funding excellence as an intrinsic value, independent of audience size, and investing in market-driven excellence validated by audience success.

Currently, the British cultural system operates under a model where the Culture Minister is represented in the Cabinet, leading to the politicization of the Arts Council and reducing its original arm's-length operational distance. This shift aligns with a gradual Europeanization, particularly resembling the French model (Looseley 2011b).

In "Let's Create," Arts Council England's strategic report for 2020–2030, three key objectives are outlined to be achieved by 2030:

1. **Consolidation of Individual Creativity:** Emphasizing that everyone has the potential to develop their creativity through activities such as singing, photography, or writing, which bring joy, fulfillment, and a deeper understanding of the world;³
2. **Establishment of a Creative Community:** Highlighting the significant and lasting impact culture and its experiences can have on communities. Investment in cultural activities, arts organizations, museums, and libraries is aimed at improving lives, regenerating neighborhoods, supporting local economies, attracting visitors, and fostering social cohesion;⁴
3. **Consolidation of a Creative and Cultural Nation:** To support individual and community creativity, a professional cultural sector is necessary. This sector should generate new ideas, collaborate effectively, and nurture diverse talent from all communities, aspiring to be world-leading in art creation, imaginative use of collections, library development, and cultural creation and sharing.⁵

The erosion of message quality and idealization of a utopian future in political marketing has influenced the discourse in England's Space for Governing Culture. Despite this, Arts Council England's recognized performance quality is likely to resist superficial communication strategies, maintaining a focus on cultural diversity and complexity. Brexit has profoundly impacted the UK's cultural landscape, prompting a reevaluation of cultural identity and relationships (Riotte 2022). The UK must now craft a distinct narrative that balances national pride with cultural diversity. This shift is driving government efforts to recalibrate funding, regulations, and international collaborations in the arts to remain competitive in a changing geopolitical context.

3.3. United States between philanthropy and market

The creation of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 1965 marked the culmination of a three-decade process initiated during the Great Depression, evolving through World War II, and adapting to the socio-political realities of the postwar period and the Cold War. This process led the USA federal government to recognize, for the first time in a sustained manner, the instrumental importance of the arts and humanities (Swain 1982; Binkiewicz 2004; Bauerlein 2009; Rosenstein 2018).

In 1935, Congress approved the creation of the American National Theater and Academy (ANTA) to support private theaters during the Depression. Additionally, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Federal Theater Project were established as part of the New Deal programs to help recover the U.S. economy (Mankin 1982).

During World War II and the Cold War, ANTA functioned as an agency for international cultural exchange programs. It was responsible for programming events such as the Berliner Festwochen and the Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, both established in 1951 and promoted by the Allied High Commission in the Federal Republic of Germany (Mankin 1982; Mulcahy 1987; Rosenstein 2018).

The federal structure of the USA has historically limited central administration's political intervention in the arts and humanities. Consequently, the protection and promotion of these fields were primarily reserved for financially well-off individuals, citizens' associations, or private foundations. Through various donations, these entities ensured public access to nonprofit cultural institutions. The existence and quality of universities, libraries, museums, as well as hospitals, gardens, and parks, depended significantly on private benefactions and the associative and persuasive abilities of community members. This capacity to garner private resources also enabled negotiations with political authorities at the local, state, or federal level to secure advantages such as tax exemptions, land grants, or special financial allocations.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the substantial fortunes amassed in the United States facilitated the creation of national programs, marking a state-driven philanthropy that transformed the landscape of arts and humanities in the USA during the first half of the century. Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919), one of the foremost philanthropists of this era, established the operational model for large fortunes, identifying key areas and methods of intervention.

The Carnegie, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations, among others, have supported schools, universities, libraries, museums, orchestras, dance companies, educational broadcasting, scholarships for artists, and major cultural organizations like Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Ballet, and The Kennedy Center (Cummings 1982, 141; Mulcahy 2006, 267; Rosenstein 2018, 27).

These foundations have stabilized programs supporting artistic creation, cultural practices, and the professionalization of cultural networks and organizations across the U.S., independent of federal or state intervention. This autonomy and the private resource management model continue to define the USA nonprofit cultural sector, utilizing modern forms of philanthropy (Martel 2011; Soskis and Katz 2016).

In a context emphasizing private initiative, the federal administration, through the NEA and other agencies (Tobelem 2011, 205), developed a strategy of funding and

indirect support for the arts, known as the public leveraging arts policy (PLA) (Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012; Cherbo and Wyszomirski 2000).

The NEA, avoiding the role of a Ministry of Culture as seen in Europe (Martel 2011, 21; Tobelem 2011, 197), works with state agencies to fund programs promoting cultural pluralism (Mulcahy 1987, 312), balancing the interests of various stakeholders. However, some authors argue that the PLA and NEA strategies are becoming outdated. They advocate for a new public action paradigm in culture that values all cultural practices, includes popular culture, and acknowledges cultural industries (Henderson 2005; Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012; Wilbur 2021).

With the broadening of public policy intervention in cultural governance, it became crucial to develop cultural objectives that align with a modern understanding of a dynamic cultural system. This includes acknowledging the importance of interactions between renowned national and international organizations, emerging and local projects, and the influential cultural industry (Cherbo and Wyszomirski 2000, 20).

Philanthropy is increasingly interested in new forms of entrepreneurship, supported by venture capital. Concurrently, recent studies indicate market limitations, showing that audience demand is not endlessly elastic. These studies highlight some fatigue, rigidities, and shifts in consumption habits, particularly a move toward on-demand consumption at home rather than attending live performances (Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012; Tobelem 2011; Levine 2010).

In recent years, extreme political rhetoric in the United States has fostered distrust and promoted disrespect for human dignity, placing cultural policies under significant tension. Federal agencies like the National Endowment for the Arts have found themselves navigating a treacherous political landscape, where their funding and mandates are under constant threat due to the escalating ideological divides.

This complex context is forcing actors to make choices that are heavily conditioned by contexts in the global culture and media wars, as well as domestic culture wars, and may threaten the survival of many cultural projects and organizations. Paradoxically, it may also give unprecedented visibility to other artistic endeavors.

4. Discussion

The relationship between power and the arts is longstanding, with historical patronage in Western Europe linking artistic expression to both spiritual and temporal authority. The shift from aristocratic to bourgeois governance, alongside the rise of mass democracies, has influenced strategies of cultural governance. Major Western cities have enriched cultural heritage through both scholarly and popular practices.

The twentieth century, marked by wars and economic crises, changed state intervention, the promotion of the arts and the professionalization of artists. After the Second World War, the expansion of cinema, radio, magazines, advertising and television introduced new forms of cultural production and consumption, coinciding with increased affluence and leisure.

Postwar Western Europe, Canada (Saint-Pierre and Gattinger 2021) and the USA developed models of cultural intervention appropriate to their political cultures. The UK's Arts Council maintained a detached approach, the USA's National Endowment for the Arts supported the arts without overriding market dynamics, and France's

centralized approach led to the creation of the Ministry of Culture. These models reflect the adaptation of cultural policy within different political frameworks.

In Europe, four primary forms of organization can be identified in the relationship between states and their central administrations regarding cultural governance:

1. The concentrated ministerial solution: Common in European countries, this model assigns responsibility for public cultural policy to a government minister or secretary of state with a seat in the Council of Ministers and symbolic representation among other government departments (e.g. France, Portugal, Spain) (Ulldemolins and Juan 2016; Bonet and Négrier 2007);
2. Shared ministerial solution: This model distributes responsibilities for cultural governance among different members of the government. Several European countries have adopted this collegial approach, often without the public being aware of it (e.g. France, Portugal, Spain);
3. Foundational solution: This involves the creation of flagship organizations that receive state funding through programme contracts that outline intervention strategies nationwide. This approach allows political power to maintain a theoretical distance from specific policies and funded cultural projects (e.g. Portugal, UK);
4. Entrepreneurial solution: In this model, states fully own key cultural organizations such as national theaters, operas, orchestras, ballet companies, museums, radio and television. These organizations operate in the marketplace alongside other entities, whether state-funded or not (e.g. France, Italy, Portugal, Spain)⁶.

Examining cultural governance models reveals a shift toward hybrid solutions, with regional and municipal administrations increasingly taking responsibility for governing culture. These bodies develop autonomous programs addressing culture-education interactions, participatory cultural practices, cultural diversity, social inequalities, and minority cultures. Examples include Canada, the USA, Brazil (Rubim 2016; Rubim and Barbalho 2007), and regional cultures in Portugal, the UK, Spain, and France. Many municipalities mimic central administrations by establishing local cultural institutions like theaters, museums, libraries, and archives, positioning municipal governments as key cultural agents and employers.

In Europe, cultural policy and financing have evolved into centralized, decentralized, or shared systems. Regional consolidation and cultural municipalization have created a diverse cultural landscape. However, the European Union's push for a common cultural policy is sometimes criticized for excessive homogenization.

The United States adopts a different approach, with federal and state agencies significantly supporting culture and the arts. State and local governments are increasingly responsible for cultural governance, establishing programs that address culture-education interplay, cultural diversity, social inequalities, and minority cultures.

France's historical centrality, the UK's ideological distance, and the USA's neoliberal solutions represent three paradigms of nation-state action in cultural policy in the Western world. Simultaneously, state bureaucracy in cultural government focuses on preserving historical heritage, encouraging cultural practices, and commissioning artistic creations.

The growth of cultural industries, professionalization within traditional cultural sectors, and the rise of leisure and tourism as major industries have made cultural policies an essential economic asset, supported by a specialized labor market. Therefore, policy measures often prioritize instrumental aspects of culture and the arts, creating challenges for professional organizations seeking state recognition and status.

As the Space for Governing Culture has expanded, its importance among voters has led to increased intervention, often without corresponding growth in funding. The rising visibility and influence of corporate clienteles advocating for their rights have politicized this governing space, transforming it into a political debate arena and diminishing its aura of exceptionality.

Notes

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