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The cultural sector in the context of cultural change in local settings in Europe

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ABSTRACT

Social changes are not always instantly taken up or fully reflected in the cultural sector. This gap sparks tensions that can lead to a crisis. This paper builds a theoretical framework to grasp how the cultural sector can transform such change into cultural actions and policies. After analysing current models and paradigms of public policies in Europe, the author proposes a dynamic, four-vector model to address cultural change. The paper suggests avenues for future cultural action, stressing the local sphere as the most promising one for implementing new policies. The model provides a sound basis for evaluating arguments — a feature that is likely to foster its adoption at the local level.

Keywords: cultural change; cultural policy; cultural paradigm; cultural model; local sphere

SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

The cultural sector is one of those that has been hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic and its economic fall-out. Destructuring, loss of assets, and postponement if not outright cancellation of cultural events have left the sector gravely weakened. All of this has come just as the sector was beginning to make a slight recovery from the 2007-2008 Global Financial Crisis. One can therefore say that the cultural sector has been racked by a series of crises of one kind or another since the beginning of the 21st Century.

This state of affairs has spread pessimism among those working in the cultural industry. This despondency takes different forms, depending on the severity and length of the crisis in each case. Thus, sentiment is different in Nordic countries, where the cultural fabric and activity have held up much better than in Southern European nations (Rubio-Aróstegui and Rius-Ulldemolins, 2018, 2020).

Yet despite this apparent divergence between countries, it seems that the social, political and cultural challenges faced by the cultural sector may be com-

mon to all contexts and models. The greying of European populations, the consolidation of digital technologies in the mediation between culture and citizenship, resource acquisition, adaptation to/mitigation of climate change, and many other issues are all on cultural sector agendas in the early 2020s (KEA, 2021). Some challenges that should be added to this mix are of an internal nature and bear on the sector's ability to change and adapt its structure and operations. These challenges include fostering effective participation, and creating interesting, quality content that caters to broad layers of society. In short, one can draw up one's own definition of a culture that is both socially and financially viable (Eagleton, 2017).

These issues are particularly pertinent to European cultural sectors since they directly bear on the legitimacy of actions in this field. How cultural institutions respond to these challenges will shape their future legitimacy and mission (Gray, 2007).

This paper analyses the European cultural setting (which is characterised by clear public leadership), and comes up with a conceptual framework shedding light on the dynamics of change affecting the cultural sector and its ability to respond and act. This paper takes a cultural approach rather than an artistic or aesthetic one. These last two fields have their own special features and processes when it comes to explaining change dynamics (Rius-Ulldemolins, 2020) but they lie beyond the scope of this analysis. This cultural change makes us focus on all those processes contextualising and mediating Art and creativity.

One should also note that the perspective we have taken of the cultural sector is one clearly influenced by this public leadership of culture. Such leadership broadly covers public and private cultural institutions, organisations and programmes that are clearly aligned with the public/general interest in cultural matters. It is what we will call the 'cultural sector' or 'cultural action'. We thus take a holistic approach to the cultural sector' that lets us consider the non-political realities of culture. That is, we focus on those fields that are prone to cultural management or cultural policy, seeing these in policy terms. In so doing, we keep away from a field that belongs more to the political clash of ideas and *politics*[1].

Accordingly, in pursuing our analytical goal we first need to delimit the conceptual framework. We shall begin by reviewing the theoretical framework covering the notion of 'the public interest' in the cultural sector and its evolution over the last few years, We shall also see how it has panned out in different European cultural settings. We then go on to consider the various theories that have been floated about the cultural paradigms found in the sector. This will yield key insights on how things currently stand and give an inkling of what the future holds. The theoretical framework will also help us deploy our own systemic model to explain how changes in cultural systems occur in a European setting. Last but not least, the cultural change model is used to make a set of recommendations to meet the challenges and redress the shortcomings found in present theoretical analysis of the field. Said recommendations should greatly improve performance when it comes to cultural action.

MODELS OF CULTURE AND PUBLIC INTEREST

Our complex, advanced societies give culture a central role that is unlike that in any other historical period or civilisational model. This centrality does not stop modern societies spawning contradictions when it comes to supporting and fostering culture. If the public value were acknowledged, it would be logical to think that the public sector would take charge of its promotion. Yet in recent years we have seen a commodification and instrumentalisation of culture to serve private, not public purposes

1 This distinction between *policy* and *politics* is clear-cut in English but in other languages it can create a great deal of confusion, for example in Spanish where the word *política* can mean either, depending on the context.

(Gray, 2007). Our goal here is not to discuss the efficiency or public versus private management of culture. Rather, we seek to chart the relationship between culture and the public interest over recent years.

There is broad consensus when it comes to differentiating between two cultural policy models (and possibly two other intermediate ones in Europe) from a comparative and historical perspective: (1) the Continental European Model; (2) the Liberal-Anglo-Saxon Model (Zimmer and Toepler, 1996). The two intermediate models stem from the two main ones and are: (a) The Nordic Model, a variant of the Liberal Anglo-Saxon Model and (b) The Southern-European Model, a variant of The Continental European Model.

This range of models reveals a gradient in the role played by State intervention (or its inverse correlate, the role of the private sector and The Third Sector in cultural action). The Continental European Model is characterised by the State playing a leading role in the cultural sector. In the case of the Liberal Anglo-Saxon Model, the private sector and The Third Sector play the leading role. If one is to pin down the special features of the two sub-models (Nordic; Southern European), one first needs to bear in mind the inefficient or imperfect versions of the models from which they stem. Thus, The Nordic Model is indebted to both models and strikes a balance between State intervention and the role of the private sector, and is based on strong citizen cultural consumption and participation. By contrast, The Southern European Model owesmuch to The Continental Model but fails to deploy its full potential in terms of public intervention. As occurs with many other policies linked to The Welfare State, The Southern European Model makes up for many of the shortcomings of State intervention in the Liberal Anglo-Saxon Model. Here, let us recall that the latter model's defects stem from the inequalities of Anglo-Saxon societies and the inefficiencies of their schools and labour markets (Rubio-Arostegui and Rius-Ulldemolins, 2020).

However, since the end of the 1980s, there has been a gradual convergence between the Continental European and Anglo-Saxon Liberal models, with each increasingly taking on broad elements from the other. On the other hand, the gap between The Nordic and The Southern European sub-models has widened as a result of recent factors. This is how the convergence of European models stops — something of which we have just begun to get the first inklings (Rubio-Arostegui and Rius-Ulldemolins, 2018).

The models converge in some ways and diverge in others yet at the same time culture is based on broader consensus than in the past and is aligned with new *cleavages*[2] stemming from the evolution of European societies. We said that culture that pursues the public interest commands greater consensus. Here, it seems that a synthesis of opposites has been achieved. In the past, the tension between private and public sectors would have sparked heated debate yet today such argument is outmoded. A debate on the subject today would be framed in terms of the form of efficient management of culture, which would take us back to the issue of legitimisation and maybe revive other, more latent debates concerning cultural paradigms.

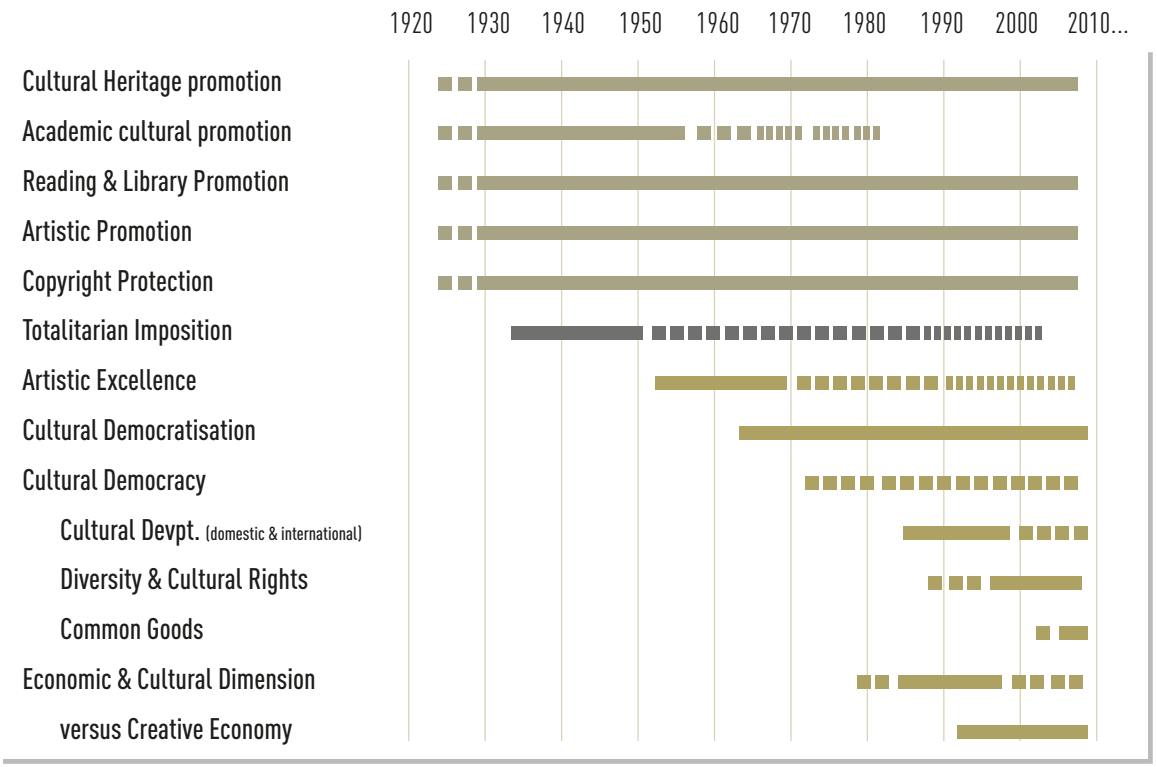
This means that attention is diverted to questions such as: Should we have more influence on cultural supply and demand? How should we foster or activate participation mechanisms in cultural life? What tools are most efficient in managing public interest in cultural matters? What macro and micro governance is best for the cultural sector? Should new aesthetics be incorporated into the public cultural space? How should we do it? and so on. Thus, many questions arise in seeking a useful, sound paradigm on which to base cultural action so that we can successfully grapple with societal change.

2 A term popularised in the Social Sciences by Lipset & Rokkan to define the 'fractures' or 'rifts' found in societies.

IN SEARCH OF THE (LOST) CULTURAL PARADIGM?

In modern societies, cultural policies have gone through various stages or paradigms over recent years. Politics shapes the cultural priorities set and models chosen. Here, politics dictates the fields in which culture plays a subsidiary role, be it in academies, schools, reading, the media, party ideology, and so on. In other words, politics determines where the cultural stress will be laid. Different political regimes (whether democracies or not) set their cultural policy priorities in keeping with their own conception of political action. Bonet and Negrier highlight the host of paradigms that have risen and fallen throughout the 20th Century, depending on the validity or obsolescence of the institution promoting them.

Figure 1 **Evolution of cultural policy paradigms.**



Source: Taken from Bonet and Negrier (2019).

Paradoxically, this succession of paradigms has not generally been one in which a new, emerging paradigm sweeps away the previous ones.[3] Instead, the paradigms have generally coexisted, with greater or

3 Unlike the Classical Theory on changes in paradigms that was drawn up by Thomas Kuhn to describe change processess in dominant scientific theories.

lesser intensity, save for those linked to totalitarian regimes in the second third of the 20th Century (Bonet and Negrier, 2019).

The coexistence of these paradigms has therefore been a constant. This fact sheds new light on both the dynamic character of cultural paradigms (when it comes to accepting new one) and their static nature (whereby old ones linger on).

We face complex and, to some extent, contradictory cultural systems, where 'fossilised' cultural policy schemes from the past co-exist with current ones.

This partly illustrates the complex nature of different cultural layers in our societies, as well as the difficulty of drawing up a cultural policy that squares goals, means, and tools. This complexity is further compounded by the postmodern trends that have taken hold since the 1970s, at the aesthetic level, in the creation of cultural expressions, and at the level of consumption and cultural practices (Rius-Ulldemolins, 2020; Fernández Rodríguez and Heikkila , 2011).

Some cultural paradigms remain fresh — something that is borne out by the heated debate they still spark today. This is the case with the 'cultural democratisation' and 'cultural democracy' paradigms. The first focuses on cultural supply while the second focuses on cultural demand. We can place many of today's cultural policy measures and tools in Western Europe between these two poles. The tension between the economic dimension of culture and creative culture is also noteworthy, and has led to polarisation over the last few years, for example over the notion of "cultural industries". The long-established 'artistic excellence' paradigm is also a polarising one in relation to others.

Here, it may be that paradigms thrive the more tension they create with other, co-existing paradigms. Such tension could evidence either a paradigm's validity or its decline. Thus, one can see a system of intertwined, interacting paradigms — something that lessens or waters down tensions by leading to cultural solutions. This system feature interests us in our analysis because it allows one to focus on how the cultural system interacts with other spheres of society, particularly social and aesthetic ones. The weight of a given paradigm and even the emergence of a new one directly depends on the demands these other spheres make on the cultural system. For example, public participation is one of the cultural sector's biggest concerns because it reflects social and political demands. As is the case with tensions between artistic impulse and its mediation through cultural action, tensions in cultural paradigms are much more evident when the cultural sphere fails to immediately incorporate the forms or aesthetics springing up in the artistic sphere (Menger, 2016).

So how does cultural change occur in our dynamic, complex societies? Given that it is highly dependent on today's public policy model, one can reasonably assume that it also depends on the way the media and the tools of that public policy operate. In such a context, how can we best act in grappling with disconcerting cultural change?

In seeking to answer these questions, maybe we need something more than this theoretical framework and should try to define a model that admits the dynamic, systemic nature of cultural change.

VECTORS OF CULTURAL CHANGE

The confluence of ideas, approaches and perspectives when analysing the cultural sector can lead to confusion, especially when trying to put theory into practice. To make the programmatic proposal set out in the next section both clearer and more structured, we shall outline a model that sheds light on the various vectors of cultural change. Each vector has its own dynamics and scope. These vectors are: (a) supply and demand schemes; (b) participation and governance schemes; (c) aesthetic and formal schemes; (d) economic and technological schemes.

Supply and Demand schemes

Our cultural systems are still indebted to the paradigm of 'cultural democratisation,' in which the priority was to supply what was then seen as 'High Culture'. Today, that term is outdated and one might more accurately describe it as 'legitimised culture.' Nevertheless, this paradigm is still relevant, even if more criticism is levelled today at those making the choices and shaping cultural supply (Bonet and Negrier, 2019). Although content programmers still play a big role, it is waning. The preference for (dear) facilities and (demanding) programmes has also been slated for hindering equitable application of cultural policy throughout the territory. Overproduction (via subsidies, in some cultural systems) spawns unresolvable tensions when the exhibition or mediation network cannot house all the cultural output. These are just a few of the many criticisms that limit the scope of any cultural initiative based on supply, opening the door to more nuanced, balanced proposals.

The same applies to the other paradigm of 'cultural democracy', which focuses more on demand and how to boost it. Maybe it is a little more relevant than the 'supply' approach, given that it articulates proposals that cater more to the qualitative concerns of democratic societies: cultural diversity, cultural rights, common goods, and so on. Yet it also has its critics. The shift from the vertical perspective of the programmer to a horizontal approach that acknowledges and welcomes citizen participation (Bonet and Negrier, 2019) led to uncritical adoption of participatory practices (Jancovich and Stevenson, 2021). It also led to poorly thought-out local initiatives with major shortcomings when it came to participation and cultural co-production (Lechelt and Cunningham, 2021).

Analysis and comparison of this cumulative empirical experience of the cultural policies shaping supply and demand force us to come up with measures for redressing the defects of each approach while harnessing the advantages and benefits of both. Hence the need to adopt a cultural position that is based on analysis, and on practical steps that together shape supply and demand.

Participation and governance schemes

Although we have analysed participation as a strategy typical of the "cultural democracy" paradigm, it is also a strategy adopted by many of the other current paradigms. Today, the commonest meaning given to 'cultural participation' is one that ascribes varying degrees of involvement in and attitude towards cultural events (consuming, practicing, being an agent, and so on). The dimension we shall consider here has to do with the governance of culture. Therefore, we are talking about finding new formulas for broadening the base of legitimacy of cultural action through citizens' participation in the various tiers of governance. Such participation needs to be understood in a broad, open-minded fashion if society's demands are to be met[4]. In this sense, the concept of 'sustainability' lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. This poses challenges on how the cultural sector should respond to this policy shift (Baltà and Dragićevic, 2017). One challenge is how various other social factors such as inequality (Bardieri, 2021) and diversity affect participation in and governance of the culture sector (Arts Council England, 2020).

Along these lines, many organisations have drawn up strategies over the last few years to enhance their activities in ethical terms, looking at the impact of issues such as inclusion, diversity, equality, accessibility, justice, (IETM, 2020). Progress has also been made in boosting participation in governance (Cultural Leadership Programme, 2009), for example through the patronage formula (Márquez Martín de la Leona, 2018) — one that is tried and tested in the Anglo-Saxon world but is seldom found elsewhere.

However, these participation and governance issues can lead to many other strategies (such as transpar-

4 For example: the Feminist Movement's demands for respect and space (#MeToo), the demand for diversity by LGTBI movements, and demands by anti-racist movements (#BlackLivesMatter).

ency or accountability) that have a direct bearing on practice. These are linked strategies that feedback on one another. Going deeper into issues of participation usually entails drawing up new governance models that, in turn, require greater transparency and accountability if they are to deliver greater corporate and social responsibility. Therein lies both the complexity and importance of this vector.

The aesthetic and formal schemes

History is littered with examples where aesthetic or formal changes occurring outside the cultural sphere have ended up passing into it. One such instance is provided by avant-gardes which revolutionised Art, or the imposition of the bourgeois canon in various artistic disciplines in the 19th Century (Figes, 2019).

There is every reason to think this vector still applies today. That is why it is worth identifying any pressures that non-institutionalised artistic or cultural forms may exert on the cultural system. One should also note those forms that are unfairly excluded or isolated.

The topic is thus one that touches on legitimacy, diversity, participation and governance, yet that also questions what is produced and who we want to consume/access it. Whether or not a given form of artistic expression is included may bring in or rule out a given population segment. Thus, legitimation and the earmarking of resources shape whether a given kind of culture is produced, shown, and consumed.

Here, we do not mean that the cultural system must undergo constant aesthetic and formal renewal for a system that relentlessly seeks novelty renders a cultural policy both inconsistent and inefficient (Menger, 2016). That said, there is a happy medium, a rich world that lies between the poles of immutability and innovative hysteresis.

The changes may be: (a) driven by the artistic field, and institutionalised in the cultural system; (b) explained from various sociological perspectives (Structuralism, Interactionism, Institutionalism) (Rius-Ulldemolins, 2020). Whatever the case may be, the link between society, art and culture is as current and as hard to unpick as ever it was when trying to understand cultural change.

The economic and technological schemes

This is the vector that exerts the greatest influence on cultural change today. The link between economy and culture, as we saw earlier, has built the various paradigms around which cultural action has developed. Thus, the shift from the "economic dimension of culture" to the more recent "creative economy" has swayed the design and implementation of many cultural policies, shaping cultural change over the last few years.

Economic forces have conquered much of the social sphere in recent years and culture has not escaped unscathed. In fact, culture itself has become an economic tool or resource (Yúdice, 2002) for legitimising urban development, economic restructuring, boosting jobs, and so on. We began this analysis by acknowledging the impact that economic and pandemic crises have had on cultural provision. Here, we acknowledge that resource-allocation decisions are decisive when it comes to either fostering or mitigating cultural change. Let us take the most recent example of digital information-processing technology. The impact and speed of this technological change on society is a given. This is so to the point that it forms a cultural paradigm all of its own. What we might call 'The Digital Paradigm' not only entails new ways of creating culture but also new ways of sharing and marketing, and generating value and —in the process— reallocating resources in which there are winners and losers. This digital paradigm lays the foundations for Open Innovation (González-Piñero, 2021), which places more stress on 'making culture' than on the cultural product itself.

Within this vector, one also needs to look at how subsidies shape the cultural system. The public sector, with its vast resources, can choose to favour or ignore

certain cultural sectors; foster public development of some areas and a market for others. This gives it the power to influence cultural change. This role sparks critiques, both positive (encouraging intervention to remedy cultural access issues) and negative. Among the negative ones, the Liberal ones are the commonest, with accusations that interventionism distorts 'the culture market', thus leading to greater costs and less efficiency. Yet there are also criticisms from ideologically opposed positions, such as those levelled against The European Commission of only showering subsidies on well-established cultural agents (Autissier, 2008) and by so doing, renouncing a bolder, more ambitious display of policy and community culture.

We have explored the likely main vectors on which cultural change pivots in a European setting. We have also seen the models and paradigms through which various cultural policies or actions are articulated. This leads us to pose the programmatic questions inherent in such analysis. How then should we act and what use can we put this information to?

Before ending with some recommendations to answer these questions, we shall put forth a hypothesis to focus the approach, namely:

Consistent, efficient cultural actions are most likely to be achieved if they are carried out at the local scale.

THE LOCAL SCALE

The fact that we are talking about a crisis of cultural policies (Mangset, 2020) does not mean that we foresee their demise. Rather, what this crisis betokens is a host of challenges/scenarios when it comes to funding public cultural action. Many of the challenges mentioned in the previous chapter are not new and have always plagued cultural policy and the sector itself. Newer developments are the waning of The State when it comes to formulating efficient cultural policies (Dubois, 2017), and the waxing of the local scale (given its better funding and cultural specialisation) (Dubois, 2016). Central Administrations are losing whatever leadership role they once had to Local Administrations. This begs many questions about the role of the former in the near future. Against this background, where are the middle-tier Administrations (regions) in federally-structured nations such as Spain? In any case, Local Administrations are doing well out of the shift, which favours culture at the local scale.

To round off the foregoing analysis of change vectors, we propose placing this vector scheme at the local scale. That is because we see empirical reasons for considering it as the best one for meeting the challenges posed by cultural change and the crises arising therefrom. We shall now list some of the reasons and arguments underpinning cultural action at the local scale, analysing each of the aforementioned vectors in turn.

a) In supply and demand schemes

- Allows for more efficient adaptation of cultural offerings to the public. Here, a great deal of progress has been made in audience management techniques, where the local scale is best suited to microdata work.

- Linked to the above, pinning down specific communities, audiences and population segments allows managers to focus offerings on specific targets.

- It is easier to collaborate with other cultural bodies to boost the impact of practices (through local art schools, cultural associations, etc.) rather than limiting them to institutionalised cultural practices.

- In short, making changes in cultural policy to shape supply and demand at the local level lets us deepen both the concept of public service (by identifying and catering to the greatest number of citizens) and the concept of cultural rights.

- Expanding social support and strengthening ties lends legitimacy to cultural policies. The more cultural recipients there are and the broader the social cross-section from which they are drawn, the more the cultural policy will achieve.

b) *In participation and governance schemes*

- The most direct action at this level helps change the social perception of culture, to create settings for co-production and co-responsibility, and to bring not only culture closer to citizens but also to artists themselves.

- At this level, cultural management involves implementing more horizontal practices with fewer opportunity costs, while also culturally enriching the area and taking root in it.

- Collaboration at this level can broaden the scope of local cultural action, facilitating more accurate identification with whom one should work, on what, and how (management and governance).

- Closeness to and identification of individuals and collectives also helps broaden the legitimacy base by including ever more people from more diverse backgrounds, enshrining equality and public accessibility. This confers social and collective benefits such as greater social and individual well-being, and (self) acceptance of more people, and greater social cohesion.

c) *In aesthetic and formal schemes*

- The local scale is a lab where one can experiment with aesthetic and formal approaches that lie outside the system. Thus, the political and artistic cost of their integration is easier to delimit and assume.

- It is a propitious setting to draw up more open, inclusive ideas of institutional culture that incorporate popular culture and even popularise institutional culture.

- Not only is this scale optimal for identifying people, communities and groups to culturally integrate them, it can also be useful for identifying and approaching the specific cultural forms of those people or groups. This makes it possible to actively respond to society's cultural diversity.

- Closeness to citizens at the local level also entails commitment to basic cultural action that is underpinned by transparency and accountability. At this level, greater knowledge of and information on the local setting makes citizens more demanding but also ensures more rewards and support for such initiatives.

d) *In economic and technological schemes*

- We said before that management can take a more cross-cutting approach, which helps foster more collaboration. This occurs specifically at this scale because the costs of adapting management a horizontal approach are lower.

- In short, local management can achieve greater efficiency through better control of costs and adaptability and flexibility of projects to changes.

- Planning at the local scale is more efficient and easier since there is less scope for uncertainty and fewer conditioning factors. That is why it is an area in which more management elements linked to planning and strategic development can be deployed. This boosts the scope for planning evaluation, and improvements in transparency and accountability.

- Although this (micro) scale is good for addressing technological changes (since these tend to occur at macro scales) it gives ample scope for experimenting with exploiting the use made of technological changes in the cultural system. Knowledge of audiences from digital technology (in what we would call microdata aggregation) offers a more empirical approach to cultural practices and actions, both of which can be very useful at a local scale.

CONCLUSIONS

There is usually a difference between talking about cultural change and change in the cultural sector. While the first occurs in the social fabric, the cultural sector is not always capable of catalysing it. That is why we sought to better understand the context in which the cultural sector sees changes in society and takes them on board in a systemic, dynamic way. Once the cultural changes have been assimilated, the system can turn them into actions, public policies, and cultural management responses.

The goal is to use this conceptual and analytical framework to grasp how cultural change is turned into cultural action. Yet we also need to make sure that cultural actions are sound, useful, evaluable, and properly managed. This is only possible if clear goals are set for guiding cultural actions. After analysing various models and paradigms used in the European setting, we drew up a proposal on points of interest, which we termed *vectors*. These vectors were then used to define the goals of cultural actions. The chosen vectors were supply and demand, participation and governance, aesthetics and forms, and economics and technology. Any detailed analysis of this proposal would add many other vectors for guiding cultural action and aligning them with cultural change. In our case, we used the aforementioned four vectors to focus on some of the key cleavages found in today's cultural sector.

To broaden the scope of our proposal, we considered the territorial and administrative level at which it would be most likely to succeed, concluding that it was the local one. We combine these academic and empirical strands to highlight the recent 'golden age' for local policies yet we also warn of the pitfalls. The local scale is not a panacea for culture but it can boost it. Here are several mistakes that one should avoid:

(1) fostering localism that whittles cultural experience down to something confined to the local community;

(2) allowing the public interest or general interest to be hijacked by given cultural sectors (Bonet, 2016);

(3) diverting local cultural policies towards goals of a non-cultural nature (Rius-Ulldemolins, 2016) such as tourism and real estate speculation;

(4) letting new gaps (and even new forms of cultural illiteracy) to spring up, often in the name of policies for fostering digital culture (Rius-Ulldemolins, Pecourty Rubio-Arostegui 2019).

The success of this change management at the local level can bring other levels of administrative management into play, freeing them from the pressures they are usually under (audiences, impact, etc.), letting them concentrate better on funding, planning, and strategic management, as the case may be.

We outline the scenario for taking action to reflect the cultural changes now taking place in our societies. Here, there is a need to delve into reformulations of participation and to go even further in coming up with new formulas and tools for achieving this goal. In doing so, one needs to fully integrate concepts such as inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility, not only in managing our organisations, programmes, and cultural facilities but also in their governance. Transparency and accountability are vital to confer greater legitimacy on and support for cultural policies and actions. While one should not make light of the artistic and formal hurdles involved, these should spur us to overcome the technological and economic challenge posed by today's 'post-crisis' scene. Such circumstances call for inventiveness, daring, and decisiveness. If we do make mistakes along the way, why not start again, this time on a smaller scale — the local one? As Víctor Lapuente[5] would say, instead of setting up a large macro-scale lab, we should run a host of small labs in which to test 21st Century cultural models through trial-and-error.

5 We refer to the main thesis in his book El retorno de los Chamanes, Ed. Península, 2015.

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