

THEORETICAL STRATEGIES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL POLICY FORMATION: THE CASE OF THE NEA

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This paper reviews various theoretical approaches to cultural policy, specifically, the National Endowments for the Arts (NEA), a federal arts funding program in the United States. Marxist, organizational, state-centered, and cultural approaches are reviewed regarding their relevance to the question of how and arts, which had been considered private in the past, become a public good with the advent of the NEA? I synthesize state-centered and cultural approaches to explain the NEA development. Following state-centered approach, I argue that the state initiated the NEA through its structural capability to lead the policy formation and guide action within the policy domain. However, following a cultural approach, I argue that the NEA is effective to the extent the policy frame resonates with broader cultural systems cutting across the state-society boundaries. In this process, the policy domain invites a variety of interests and identities by which the state hegemony in defining arts as a public good is contested and reformulated.

Key Words: *Cultural policy, Cultural systems, State-society relation, Policy domain, Policy formation*

INTRODUCTION

The historical development of cultural policy in the United States hardly took the form of linear evolution. It was in the late nineteenth century that the distinction between popular culture and high culture developed (DiMaggio, 1982). However, the growth of the art world was a local, rather than national, phenomenon, concentrated on major cities like Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Also, the earlier dominant model for arts organizations was private proprietorship based on income through ticket sales and individual donations. Under these earlier conditions, a full-fledged national cultural policy treating arts as a public good did not emerge.

The first large-scale government support for the arts took place in the 1930s. During the New Deal period, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) art Projects began in 1935 as a part of the federal government planning to create new job chances and income for unemployed artists who were suffering in the midst of Great Depression. However, a part of that program, the Federal Theater Project (FTP) that produced theatrical plays as employment opportunities for artists, resulted in serious controversies.

Whereas artists “dedicated to the principle that the theater was both a vehicle for entertainment and a means of social enlightenment” (Mankin, 1995: 84), government officials who concentrated on solving unemployment problems could not bear the political and social criticisms the FTP plays contained. The project ended in 1943 with a heritage of deep distrust between artists and politicians, which prevented the formation of wide-scale public support for the arts for decades.

In 1965, Congress passed a bill to establish a National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities. The crucial part of this program was the National Endowments for the Arts (NEA) designed to provide artists and arts organizations with public support. However, the NEA defined the problems within a broader context where the arts became a public matter. The NEA’s goal was the promotion of the quality of public life through supporting the arts. Furthermore, in comparison with the past, the NEA enjoyed significant bipartisan supports until the late 1980s. “In the 1930s, it took courage for a politician to speak out in defense of Federal One; in the 1970s, it takes no courage at all for a politician to praise NEA” (Netzer, 1980: 62). On the other, most arts organizations before the 1960s were private enterprises rooted in localities. Being uncomfortable with the state interference in the arts, they originally resisted the government’s attempt to transform the arts into public matters.¹ Yet, once the NEA was implemented, a dramatic change occurred in their attitude. Although the percentage of the NEA budget in total federal spending remained small, the budget increase and its legitimizing effect significantly influenced the art worlds both symbolically and realistically. The level of competition and dependency on public funds among arts groups increased since the inception of the NEA.²

The NEA was sharply distinguishable from the past policies in the sense that both governmental and non-governmental groups could get benefits and achieve authority only by actively participating in the policymaking process. Drawing on the discontinuity between the past cultural policies and the NEA, we can raise the following questions. How did which had been private activities, become a unique object deserving special public

¹ This was well exemplified by the opposition of 91 percent of the board chairmen of the nation’s five symphony orchestras to public subsidy of the arts in 1953 (Cummings, 1995: 110).

² Plus, the expansion of the arts world, part of which is due to the increasing public funds, made the competition more intense. According to a report submitted by the Presidential Task Force on the arts and Humanities in 1981, since the NEA was founded, the number of professional arts organizations has grown by almost 700 percent. “Professional orchestras have increased from 58 to 145; professional opera companies from 31 to 109; professional dance companies from 35 to 250; professional theater companies from 40 to 500” cited from Mulchay (1987: 327).

attentions and governmental treatment? How could the past antagonistic relationship between the arts and the government disappear and the new national cultural policy, in which regularized interactions between governmental and non-governmental groups take place, appear? The answers to these empirical questions entail the general issues raised by policymaking process. First, to understand the change of the manner in which the arts are perceived by policymakers, we must consider social forces that make possible the shift of the policy framework by which certain sets of problems are detected and solutions to the problems are proposed in a specific manner. Secondly, to understand the change in relationships between the government and the arts, we should take into account the formation of the system of the policy domain, which consists of social relations and practices that put the policy framework into action. Given that cultural policy occupies both a unique dimension and part of general state-formation, this paper will investigate both the strengths and weaknesses of existing approaches to public policies in their application to the study of cultural policy. In next parts, this paper will review four approaches: Marxist, organizational, state-centered, and cultural approaches.

MARXIST APPROACHES

In orthodox Marxist narrative, the state is regarded as “a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie” (Marx, 1986: 226) State policy is functional for existing social order in such a way that the policy is fundamentally shaped by capitalists’ pressure on policymaking. Gramsci (1994) argues that the modern state reproduces the existing social order not by mere domination but by hegemony through which the state induces people to accept the capitalist social order as morally right. Here, cultural policy can be seen as a hegemonic apparatus to force the dominated class to internalize the conformist values through the inculcation of high culture: government’s cultural program pacifies social tensions (Berman, 1979) and preserves social order by creating national identity (Becker, 1984: 181)

Criticizing the instrumentalist approaches, Neo-Marxists define the state as independent of economic arena. Poulantzas (1973) argues that state policy is not directly controlled by capitalists’ interests but by the functionalist logic of systems. The state is understood as “the factor of cohesion of a social formation and the factor of reproduction of the conditions of production of a system.” (Poulantzas, 1973: 246). Thus, the state equipped with its own staffs and projects is able to maintain the capitalist system and, thus,

exercise so called, "relative autonomy", which allows the specific dynamics within each policy. Recent cultural policy studies emphasize the specific form of politics peculiar to cultural technologies adopted by the state. Then, cultural policy is a specific governmental technology aiming to improve certain "mental or behavioral attributes of the general population-usually as parts of programs of citizen formation (Bennett, 1992: 28). Indeed, the governmental support for artistic activities is often justified by the premise that "people of all classes and backgrounds desire and respond to the opportunity to experience the arts" as well as health and education (Arian, 1992: 62).

Criticizing Poulantza as functionalist, Skocpol argues that state policies are not necessarily "functional for the system maintenance". On the contrary, "political struggles and state actions in capitalist democracies can actually stimulate or accelerate challenges to capitalist prerogatives from below." (Skocpol, 1980: 178) She takes the example of "the National Industrial Recovery Act" (NIRA) during the New Deal period, which consequently empowered industrial labor unions and intensified conflicts among workers, businessmen, and politicians. According to her, Poulantzian approach is seen as tautological as with Marxist approaches in that the direction of policy is to be determined, in the final instance, by the demand of the capitalist interests. Hence, Marxist approaches hardly give cultural policy its own dimension because the overall policy direction is determined by the overarching capitalist interest or system demand for equilibrium rather than by its internal dynamics and logic. It should be noted that state policies interlock with social forces outside the state, which in turn complicate the dynamics and modify the logic of policymaking. This is the issue the next part investigates.

ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES

Traditional liberal-pluralist approaches allow for the analysis of state policies' interlocking with social forces outside the state. Social groups create organizations to pursue their interests, which in turn stimulate others to create their own organizations (Truman, 1951). These groups make policies favorable to their interests by activities like lobbying, picketing, mailing, etc. Thus, pluralist approaches shed a light on complex and contradictory characteristics of policymaking, which depend on the nature of various social groups' interests and goals.

However, these approaches tend to assume that the marginal costs of political participation are evenly distributed across different actors. Because of the differences in resources and access to power, individuals have differ-

ent chances of forming organizations and thus influencing policymaking process (Olson, 1965). Opposing the traditional pluralist view, recent researches emphasize role of the state that directs interest group activities and render resources for the maintenance of the organizations (Scholzman and Tierney, 1983; Walker, 1983). Here, the centrality is given to the state activities such as legislation and policies that provide interest groups with chances to reduce the transaction cost. Lauman and Knoke (1987) criticize that the pluralist approach focuses too much on "the more formalized aspects of legislation" neglecting the causal mechanisms of organizational participation, that is, "how interest groups pursue their policy objectives." Instead of focusing on isolated conditional factors that affect interests, Lauman and Knoke attribute the cause of interest group activities to "network structures among organized interest groups for the exchange of timely policy information and politically useful material resources essential to coalition-formation, influence mobilization, and bargaining-negotiation processes that ultimately create state policies." (Laumann and Knoke, 1987: 7) This attention to network structures leads to the emphasis on the specificity of the policy domain. Suggesting that network structures vary across policy domains, Lauman and Knoke argue that it is the policy-specific forces that condition policy processes, not general society-wide forces such as ideologies and class structure.

According to organizational approaches, the uniqueness of cultural policy is given by its unique configuration of social networks in the cultural policy domain, not from the unique characteristics of the policy object, that is, the arts or culture. For organizational approaches, the object of cultural policy, the arts or culture is absorbed into the abstract organizational activities like the pursuit of interests, exchange of information and resources. In so doing, they attribute the policy framework to the closed system of the policy domain at a given moment, and, thus, do not account for how a new framework can emerge in the first place and continue to restructure the system of the policy domain. According to Knoke (1990: 21), only by "[situating] the normative processes in concrete entities and ongoing relationships among social actor", the analysts can "capture the dynamics among purposive political actors who are constrained to accept, reject, and innovate new norms of behavior." However, actors do not enter the policy domain with bare hands. Actors can be equipped with "pre-understanding" of the situation, which itself often motivates actors to participate in the policy domain. Therefore, the conceptual framework that provides cognitive guidelines for actors can be prior to the policy domain.

STATE-CENTERED APPROACHES

According to organizational approaches, the state can acquire the power only by embedding itself within the policy domain giving out information and resources to other actors within the network (Knoke, 1990; 1985: 21). However, proposing a more institutional view on the state, Skocpol argues that “[S]tates matter ... because their organizational configurations, along with their overall patterns of activity, affect political culture, encourage some kinds of group formation and collective political actions (but not others), and make possible the raising of certain political issues (but not others).”

Here, the state not as a powerful actor but as a rule-binding institution plays a constitutive role in constructing and influencing the organizational network as a whole. Given that policymaking is part of state-formation that involves the overall reproduction of the state structure and the state-society relation, the specific policy should be positioned within the configuration of the state activities in general. State-centered approaches articulate the genetic logic of policymaking in terms of the effects of the state activities on the development of the policy domain. Yet, state-centered institutional approaches cannot fully account for what conditions made possible the creation of policy in the first place. A stronger state-centered argument may provide the answer by giving a centrality to the state with respect to policy-making process. It would assume that the state as a capable organization has initiatives not only for policymaking process but also for the creation of the policy itself (DeViney, 1983; Field and Higley, 1980; Skocpol, 1985). According to Skocpol, “extranational orientations of states, the challenges they may face in maintaining domestic order, and the organizational resources that collectivities of state officials may be able to draw on and deploy [are] ... features of the state [which] help to explain autonomous state action” (p. 9)

Based on its capability as a bureaucratic organization equipped with efficient means, the state has the structural capacity to formulate the policy framework that defines the problems and prescribes solutions. In this context, cultural policy can be seen as the state’s conscious project that bears on the issues of the arts, which is planned to serve to the goal of the state. For example, Zukin (1982) argues that the governmental support for the arts is derived from the state’s political and economic goal to create political constituencies, to make propaganda for the American way of life, and to benefit from the development of an arts infrastructure, etc.

However, this raises another question about the sources of the policy framework from which the state formulate ideas. The explanation of the sources is given by the notion of "policy legacies" whereby policymakers derive their action templates from previous policy (Hecló, 1974; Weir and Skocpol, 1985). Yet, overemphasizing "continuity" (Weir and Skocpol, 1985: 125), the notion of "policy legacies" cannot account for how policymakers come up with a new framework that modifies policymaking in a fresh manner. Why should the solution to the problem be no other than the arts or culture in the first place? The weakness of the notion of policy legacies lies in its inability to reveal the threshold around which the focus of the issues shifts.

CULTURAL APPROACHES

State-centered approaches associate the policy framework mainly with the state autonomy. However, according to Hall (1993), the shift from Keynesian to monetarist modes of policymaking in Britain during the 1970s and early 1980s took place "not as a result of autonomous action, but in response to an evolving societal debate that soon became bound up with electoral competition." (Hall, 1993: 288) He emphasizes the role of political parties and media that stand at "the intersection between the state and society" in diffusing new models and drawing broader participation. By referring only to "ideas", "the subjectivity of the state officials", state-centered approaches cannot account for the goal changes (Steinmetz, 1999). According to state-centered approaches, new policy comes only from the state official's ideas because they hardly "[resort] to any "societal" factors to help state actions" (Friedland and Alford, 1991: 236). Here, cultural systems, "systems of meaning and the practices in which [state officials] are embedded" (Steinmetz, 1999: 7), can be a main source of ideas cutting across the state-society boundary. Steinmetz argues that state-centered approaches "reject or marginalize the role of cultural determination of the state..., because most of what we call culture in the anthropological sense is located on the "society" side" (Steinmetz, 1999: 17).³ As a result, state-centered approaches ignore broader, impersonal cultural systems that are not organized as formal bodies of technocratic thought adopted by the state via

³ According to Steinmetz, state-centered approaches do consider the role of culture in linking the state and society yet in quite a limited sense. He argues that "[t]here was some interest in what Skocpol called the "Tocquevillian" problem of the state's "patterning of social conflict". But here again culture is figured primarily as an effect and not a determinant of the state." (Steinmetz, 1999: 17)

“means-end frameworks”.

Cultural approaches argue that the cultural systems institutionalized in broader contexts define the role of the state and specific logic of policy domain because “social practices and objects such as states or state officials have to be situated in specific historical and cultural settings” (Dobbin, 1993; Friedland and Alford, 1991; Steinmetz, 1999: 23). Consequently, the policy-making process is rooted in “the institutional structure of society which shapes the rule by which resources are accumulated, transformed into capacities for action, and made available as motives by which that action is made meaningful” (Friedland and Alford, 1991: 238). Thus, in the analysis of cultural policy, we should trace the historical development of specific cultural assumptions that mold the policymaking process at a given moment. The activation of national cultural policy is based on the belief that “government has a say in the shape of a country’s culture and that nations are valued and identified by their cultural characteristics” (Dominguez, 2000: 23). What underlies this belief is the assumption that culture is not private and local phenomenon but public and national property. In short, it is not until the emergence and institutionalization of specific cultural systems that ultimately make the arts a public matter, the state can initiate cultural policy to promote the nation’s cultural life.

On the other hand, the broad cultural systems, which give the policy framework meaning, inevitably constrain and shape the mode of the state autonomy. According to Habermas, “the state cannot simply take over the cultural system and [...] in fact, the expansion of areas for state planning creates problems for things that are culturally taken for granted.” (Habermas, 1989: 277). In democratic society, the public value of the arts inevitably entails the logic of cultural democracy assuming that people of all classes desire and respond to the opportunity to experience the arts. Then, the arts become a crucial element that constitutes citizenship in terms of rights. Indeed, new social movements can emerge armed with the logic of cultural democracy demanding equal access and freedom of expression in the area of the arts as shown in the growth of minority cultural organizations since the 1960s.

State-centered approaches often neglect this ironic aspect of the state intervention since they over-emphasize the strength of the state defined mostly in non-cultural terms. Since the state is equipped with bureaucratic rationality, the state can exercise significant effects on the formation of the policy domain. However, cultural approaches argue that the extent and mode of the state autonomy is conditioned by cultural systems outside the state. Hence, the policymaking process and the formation of the policy

domain are hardly dictated by the state only. Cultural systems both enable and constrain policymaking in the sense that they provide discourses for both legitimation and politicization for actors within and without the state at a given moment.

THE NEA

Although this paper focused on cultural policy formation, it can be argued that the theoretical effectiveness of specific theoretical approaches in explaining the policy formation in general depends on the configuration of the state-society relationships, mediated by the policy framework pertaining to the policy-making process in question. Each policy formation is characterized by particular relationships between the initiative of the state, the clarity of goal definition, and the organizational strength of the participant groups, which over-determine the state-society relations within the policy domain and the legitimacy of policy framework guiding the policy-making process. Which theory better explains the policy formation depends on the relationships of the various factors: the state can over-power the participant groups and lead the whole policy-making process, which makes state-centered approaches relevant; the interests of social groups and their relations can override the state authority, which makes organizational approaches relevant; the capitalist interest can permeate overall policy-making process, which makes Marxist approaches relevant; the hegemonic symbol systems can define the discursive contents of policy framework, which makes cultural approaches relevant.

This paper argues that the cultural and state-centered approaches are better equipped with theoretical tools than Marxist and organizational approaches in explaining the formation of cultural policy in the United States. Cultural policy formation is understood as sociohistorical processes that involve complex development of state-society relations. Therefore, the dimension of time must be incorporated into the explanatory frame. Yet, for Marxist approaches, the direction of cultural policy is relatively constant in terms of its function for the reproduction of the capitalist order, and the system of the policy domain reflects class relations. However, as I will argue below, the cultural policy frameworks of the NEA have changed over time as the policy domain itself has been structured by the shifting relationships between social groups and government agencies, which were hardly reducible to larger class relations. Although organizational approaches can shed a light on the dynamics of the network structure in the policy domain at a given moment, they tend to consider the nature of systems too pluralist

and fragmented to pinpoint the causal mechanisms across time and space that shape the social relations and the interests of participants in the cultural policy domain. In the case of the NEA, the network structure in the cultural policy domain was not pre-given, but initially coordinated by the state initiative and furthered as the sake regarding the arts increased along with policy development. Now, I turn to the application of state-centered and cultural approaches to articulate the historical development of the NEA.

As mentioned earlier, the NEA was created in 1965 during the Johnson administration. As state-centered approaches argue, a few elitist groups who consciously maneuvered around the governmental institutions such as the White House and Congress created the NEA. The NEA was possible by the commitment of vanguards mostly comprised by the President himself, a few Congressmen, and a small number of arts organizations that spearheaded the creation of national cultural policy. The rationalization of state action was based on the "problem-solving" framework. It was often argued that cultural policy was necessary for economic survival of arts organizations at the time of crisis: as deficits outran the ability of private patrons to cover them, the government stepped in to make up the difference (Baumol and Bowen, 1966). As a capable actor, the state could lead other actors in cultural policy-making process by providing the sets of definition of problems and proper solutions.

Also, the characteristic of the state structure was illustrative in the early period when the public arts-funding program was in the womb of time (Cummings, 1995). During the early period of the Kennedy administration, the attempt to create a federal art-funding program initiated by a few art supporters in Congress, individual artists and arts organizations. However, a bill to establish a Federal Advisory Council on the arts was blocked in 1961 and 1962. Naturally, the supporters for the program focused more on the president's side, which consequently made possible the creation of "Special Consultant to the President for the arts". Finally, they succeeded in forcing the president to issue the executive order to create the Advisory Council.

The state's initiative for cultural policy-making is also well shown along the development of the system of the policy domain. Indeed, there was hardly a collective force outside the state that pushed the foundation of cultural policy in their pursuit of interests. Although the number of arts organizations in the 1960s was increasing at high rate, they were not well-organized interest groups at all. The support for the NEA from the art worlds was far from univocal in the early period regarding the foundation of national cultural policy. It was the NEA itself that helped the development

of political mobilization and networks of interaction among arts organizations that would consequently strengthen the system of the cultural policy domain (Wyszomirski, 1995). Especially under the leadership of Nancy Hanks as Chairman of the NEA (1969-1977), who recognized the initial weakness of the arts policy system, the NEA started to "develop the weak and divided art community into a coordinated and politically effective constituency" (Wyszomirski, 1995: 54). Starting in 1970, the NEA promoted the organizational strength of the art worlds by supporting arts service organizations and national association of arts organizations like OPERA America. This action also entailed the expansion of governmental sub-units in charge of public art funding like the National Assembly of States Arts Agencies. Before the foundation of the NEA, only four states had art-funding agencies. However, by 1980, all states had founded art agencies owing to the NEA's block grants that had allocated certain amount of grants to states. "This snowball of state and federal art funding, in turn led to the formation of more than 3,000 local art councils, a quarter of which were organized as units of local government while the remaining three quarters were formed as nonprofits organizations, often with some formal link to local government." (Kreidler, 2000: 152) This formation of sub-government units contributed to the expansion of public art-funding programs to local levels and, thus, made the NEA a truly national cultural policy.

This development of the NEA not only gathered social groups into the policy domain. The development of the NEA's art-funding program did spur the formation of social networks, which prompted exchanges of information, formed reputation, and distributed common ideology among arts organizations in an effort to secure resources centralized around the state (DiMaggio, 1983; Meyer and Scott, 1992). Also on the part of politicians, as a result of the NEA's expansion, the arts could become to be perceived as "politically saleable", and, thus, came to enjoy a significant extent of congressional support. In this process, so called, "cozy iron triangles", which consisted of congressional subcommittee, art agencies, and arts organizations, emerged within the cultural policy domain during the 1970s. However, the system of the policy domain is hardly static over time. Rather, it is open to change depending on the shift of policy characteristics, which is often led by the government. For example, in the 1980s, the cozy iron triangle system exploded into the field of intense competition due to the Reagan administration's threat of a cut in the NEA's budget, which changed the policy into more redistributive one. (Wyszomirski, 1995: 60-72). Although the actual budget cut was smaller than expected, as a result of the rally of the alliance of congressional supporters, arts organizations, and the art agencies

to protect the NEA, the NEA could no longer expect as high increases as in the past. With the increased number of arts organization and their high dependency on the NEA, this change intensified competition among arts organizations, which decreased the relative proportion of federal funding in the art support system. On the other hand, the government itself could not be free of conflicts. Conflicts within the government have emerged alongside the development of the sub-governmental organizations, that is, state and local art agencies, whose interests were in the allocation of resources and power in cultural policy-making process. During the 1970s, "the state agencies grew in size, experience, and managerial capacity" and, by 1975, they "challenged [the NEA] vigorously, demanding more flexible guidelines for the funds they regranted, more influence in developing guidelines, and symbolic acceptance as partners, rather than subordinates, in the policy process" (DiMaggio, 1991: 219). In this sense, it can be argued that the NEA not only made possible the formation of social groups but also influenced the manner in which they interact with one another through so called "Topcquevillian effects" of the state.

As argued so far, the state approaches provide theoretical tools for analyzing the initial conditions for the creation of the NEA and the development of the system of the cultural policy domain. However, state-centered approaches tend to neglect broad sociocultural contexts in which policy-making process is embedded. Focusing exclusively on the problem-solving capacity of the state, state-centered approaches are unable to articulate the whole sets of the framework of the cultural policy that goes beyond the issue of financial difficulty or arts organizations. Financial difficulties always existed and, in fact, the difficulties like increases in labor costs were prompted by the availability of institutional funding rather than by economic pressure, which were already operating in the 1960s (Netzer, 1980). Even if this story is true, why "the cost disease should have required wholesale public assistance in the 1960s" is not explained (DiMaggio, 1987: 202-3). It must be noted that there was another principle that rationalized the NEA based on the notion of "art for art". Here, the usefulness of the arts refers to the benefit that the arts provide for the public as a distinct object that concerns the cultural life of the country. Compared to the past policy experiences like WPA projects where the arts were regarded as one of economic problems caused by Great Depression this principle went beyond the problem-solving frame in a technical sense. Furthermore, the past antagonistic relation between the arts world and the state caused by the government's direct intervention in the arts provided a negative reference for the new program. From the beginning, policymakers endeavored to separate the politics

from the decision-making process of the NEA. The National Foundation on the arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 actually states that "in the administration of this act no department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States shall exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the policy determination, personnel, curriculum, or the administration or operation of any school or non-Federal agency, institution, organization, or association."

This separation was institutionally possible by the advisory panel system of the NEA, whose tasks were "to review applicants submitted under established guidelines and categories; to recommend alterations within the established guidelines and categories from year to year; to recommend shifts in funding between categories; and to recommend shifts in programs in the light of experience and the developing needs of the arts" (Straight, 1979: 77). Most of the panel advisors consisted of the prestigious members of the arts world because it was assumed that the value of the arts was to be judged most correctly by the professionals. So the principle was "let the professional judge not bureaucrats or politicians". Although the NEA has functioned as the paramount agency that exercised significant influence on the art world, it hardly took the form of a unified bureaucracy like a ministry of culture: the NEA claimed itself as a "program" that was supposedly run by professional judgments, and not by political commands. As such, the policy-making process was insulated from political pressure and, thus, clashes between artists and the state officials and politicians that had happened in the past could be avoided in advance.

In short, "respect for the arts" was the critical rationale that constituted the rule of the NEA program. Indeed, this was a new policy framework which inherited no legacies from the past policies. Whereas the notion of "policy legacies" assumes continuity between the past and the present, the NEA case shows a case whereby the past experience channels the efforts of policymakers to the alternative by adopting the new policy framework and, thus, avoiding the problems in the previous policies. Although state-centered approaches can reveal the structural features that condition the initiation of the policy framework and the development of the policy domain, putting emphasis exclusively on the state autonomy, they tend to isolate policymaking process from broad social contexts. As a result, without resorting to the state officials' "idea", state-centered approaches cannot account for the origin of the policy framework, which molds the extent and mode of the state autonomy in policymaking process at a given moment. What we need here is a story that illustrates the sociocultural process through which the arts become to be perceived by the state in a specific manner as a policy object.

Cultural approaches argue that the emergence of the policy framework is possible due to the historically specific cultural systems by which policy-makers are enabled to define the problems and solutions. In the case of the NEA, the question is how specific perspective toward the arts, not as one among many economic activities but as the arts *sui generis*, emerged through sociohistorical process and was consequently adopted in policy-making process. Therefore, first we need to understand what had happened before the NEA

Until the establishment of the NEA, organized, direct and on-going public support for the arts did not exist in the United States. As mentioned earlier, it was due to the fact that the artistic activities took place in private and local settings. However, this did not mean that the operation of art business was based on purely market-oriented enterprises. The financial difficulty of arts organizations was an almost permanent phenomenon in the American art scene. The only solutions that offset the difficulties were private philanthropy from art lovers and artists' acceptance of discounted compensation for their labor (Kreidler, 2000). They regarded the arts as worthy of their commitment regardless of the short-term economic reward they could get from their investment into the arts. In short, for them, the arts were cultural capital, "knowledge and familiarity with styles and genres that are socially valued and that confer prestige upon those who have mastered them" (Bourdieu, 1984; DiMaggio, 1982: 43). Due to the institutionalization of cultural capital in social structure, the arts were not seen simply as a political tool that fixed social hierarchy by excluding the lower class from the table of "good taste". The core principle that managed arts organizations was the myth of "the glorification of the arts", which legitimized hegemonic social order dominated by moral and cultural superiority of urban elites over the others. Within this sociocultural setting, the perception that there is such a thing as "high culture", something superior to other profane area of life was established.

Although the glorification of the arts originated in local scenes, it extended to the national level by the 1930s. According to DiMaggio (2000), this process involved three aspects: (1) the systematic construction of national organizational fields such as the national networks of art professionals e.g. the American Association of Museums, which established and diffused the national standard of high culture; (2) the incorporation of the arts into educational institutions, which played a key role in validating and disseminating high cultural canons; and (3) the role of commercial cultural industries such as radio broadcasting, which provided a secular contrast to the sacred offerings of the arts and, at the same time, exposed to broader publics high

culture. Therefore, it is not surprising that even before the 1960s, the 1920s and the 1930s witnessed a sharp increase in the number of art professionals, audiences, both middle- and upper-class, and arts organizations (DiMaggio, 2000: 45). As a result, at the national level, the arts became a thing of value that behooved people to invoke arts to prove their cultural excellence. The glorification of the arts convinced more people, especially an emerging middle class that invest into the arts could be rewarding. By the 1950s, the development of nonprofit arts activities that replaced the high art proprietorships showed the peak of the national institutionalization of cultural capital. Indeed, it was not strongly bounded urban elites but the middle-class, who appeared to the front due to the destruction of family capitalism that had maintained the nonprofit arts organizations in the form of expanded personal contribution and trustees (DiMaggio, 2000).

Interestingly, the glorification of the arts did not fade away from the change in class structure, that is, the replacement of urban elites by “a national elite, detached from loyalty of place, whose authority rests on bureaucratic command rather than on kinship; club life, or [local] culture.” (DiMaggio, 2000: 48) DiMaggio argues that due to these changes in social structure “the high culture system has been eroding, and with it the strong classification between a sacred high culture and its profane popular counterpart.” However, in the 1960s, the national institutionalization of cultural capital forced the public to participate in more intensive symbolic struggles than ever before. As Meyer and Strang argue (1993), the more societies were organized as nation-states, and not as aggregation of local groups but as sum of free individuals, the more cultural categories, in this case, the glorification of the arts, diffused among and within them. With the universalized myth of the arts, the construction of the self as a unique being became a project on which the middle-class consumers constantly work. Therefore, the change in social structure merely opened for the broad public more chances of claiming the cultural superiority through the engagement in the arts.

By the 1960s, it was the national expansion of the glorification of the arts that incorporated the arts into the public life as a crucial arena and readied them for the public agenda. The institutionalization of cultural capital at the national level reinforced and disseminated the perception that the arts embody the area of cultural life and, thus, needs public supports beyond market revenue. Hence, the establishment of the NEA would not be possible without the cultural assumptions and discursive structures institutionalized in cultural systems at a given moment, which eventually transformed the arts into a public matter. Furthermore, the logic of cultural democracy that constituted the policy framework of the NEA can be understood in this

historical context. In the 1960s', monopolization that had dominated the past American art scene apparently weakened due to the structural change. Yet, hegemony was still working, this time not for urban elites but for national elites — well-educated middle-and upper-classes, art professionals, and institutional supporters for the arts such as the government and corporate foundations — which would appropriate high culture in a universalist term like "for nation and the public". Therefore, it can be argued that, ironically, the logic of cultural democracy that assumed all citizens' equal right in appropriating and expressing creativity was derived from the need of hegemony on the part of national elites who had the leading voice in this transformation. New social hierarchy was to be sustained only by universalist cultural idioms, of which contradiction was reflected in the principle of the NEA policy — the emphasis on both access, the logic of cultural democracy, and "excellence", the superiority of high culture or the arts.

On the other hand, the explanation of the state's motivation is possible by incorporating cultural policy into the general process of state-formation, specifically the expansion of the American state, which started in the 1930s. Indeed, one aspect of cultural policy was based on the state's attempt of problem solving, that is, the correction of the market mechanisms, as seen in the past WPA project. However, WPA project failed since consequently it was a financial help for small groups of professionals who eventually turned their back on the government. Therefore, the other aspect, which entailed the legitimate framework of communication for the participants in policymaking process, was needed for cultural policy to be activated effectively. Even in the NEA's case, public subsidy for financially suffering artists and arts organizations was the fundamental motivation on the part of the state. Yet, the very legitimation aspect was what made the NEA possible and effective. The NEA policy goals consisted of the logic of cultural democracy — intended to expand public access to, and benefit from, cultural opportunities — which were in the process of institutionalization in socio-cultural hegemonic order at a given moment, and, therefore, provided the legitimate framework for the state's intervention in culture.

Yet, this legitimation aspect of the policy framework seldom stabilizes cultural policymaking process. According to cultural approaches, only because the NEA mobilized discourses rooted in cultural systems to rationalize its action, it inevitably spurred society-wide concerns about policymaking process. Therefore, the legitimate policy framework not only enables but also constrains the system of cultural policy. By mobilizing the logic of cultural policy, the NEA, along its development, articulated and politicized the cultural area of public life and stimulated more claims of cul-

tural rights from various segments of the population, especially from those who had been alienated from the past sociocultural hegemonic order.

In fact, in the early period of the NEA, the logic of cultural democracy was largely a “rhetorical facade” with emphasis going to the “excellence” aspect. Existing major arts organizations such as orchestras, museums, and theaters — who had mostly elite clients — were often given priority because allegedly they were the ones who had been keeping the cultural heritage of the country. Furthermore, this bias was institutionalized in the judging system: the advisory panels, which decided the allocation of grants, consisted of members related directly or indirectly to major arts organizations. However, as the NEA grew in size during the 1970s and its funding turned into “an official seal of approval”, it was followed by the criticism that “[the NEA]’s devolution to the arts disciplines (through the advisory panels) came to look like a “closed circle of cultural cognoscente” practicing “cronyism” in the distribution of the “cultural pork barrel.” (Mulchay, 1995: 211) On the other, in the regular reauthorization processes in Congress, Congressmen who were naturally conscious of their constituencies continuously raised “access” issues. Eventually both policymakers and arts organizations put the access principle into action and, thus, the logic of cultural democracy did contribute to the efforts to balance the NEA’s allocation of grants. As part of these efforts, in 1973 the NEA established “expansion art program” to support culturally disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups and small arts organizations rooted in local communities.

This tension between “access” and “excellence” exploded in the public debates in the late 1980s and early 1990s. NEA was caught in the middle of fierce, broad public debates when it funded works by Andres Serrano and an exhibition of photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe judged by critics as anti-Christian and pornographic. The crucial axis of the debate was again about “whether NEA grants should be awarded on the basis of artistic excellence alone, as defined by the professional the art world or whether NEA grants should seek to develop the social and political values of cultural democratization, greater access by people of different cultures, ethnicities, and greater accessibility in all geographic locations” (Mulchay, 1995: 175). Encompassing various issues of obscenity and censorship, public accountability and artistic freedom, and access and excellence, this event challenged the previous dominance of the major arts organizations and their ideology of professionalism in favor of “access, education, and public responsibility”. As a result, previously marginal actors like state or local art agencies and small local arts organizations came to be empowered and, thus, act more actively in the cultural policy domain.

Thus, cultural policy does not guarantee the system maintenance as Marxist approaches argue. Cultural policy once activated can encourage various parties to participate and stimulates public disputes over arts and culture. Since the early 1980s when welfare policies were under attack by monetarist policy paradigms, it was the very legitimation aspect of the NEA that was continually questioned. The problem was whether or not money was used for right causes rather than whether or not money was used efficiently. As the logic of cultural democracy has expanded, arts organizations have been attempting to establish their roots in the communities "by expanding their traditional audience base, then by inserting the arts into a variety of social and civic contexts well beyond the aesthetic realm to which the arts community has traditionally confined itself." (Larson, 1997: 81) In this process, the "arts for arts" principle has lost its appeal and the nonprofit art sector has been dominated by the need to translate the value of the arts into more general civic, social, and educational terms that will be more readily understood, by the general public and by their elected officials alike." (p.81) As such, the NEA prompted the replacement of old cultural categories by new ones, and furthered and complicated the logic of cultural democracy, which accentuated wide cultural struggles across state-society boundaries.

DISCUSSION

The arts groups were not organized and the stake regarding the distribution of resources was low at the time when the NEA was launched, which naturally gave the state the initial leverage to lead the policy-making process. The state, at the same time, drew on a hegemonic cultural system that defined arts as deserving public attention and investment, which stimulated a rapid growth of participation along the cultural policy formation. Thus, the construction of cultural policy was a product of the state activity, which regulated and mobilized the interaction among social groups in its dealing with the problems raised by the arts. On the other, the state activity was enabled and constrained by the policy framework of which legitimacy was given by cultural systems rooted in society at a given historical moment.

The initiation of the NEA in the 1960s was solely neither a problem-solving rational reaction to the financial difficulties of arts organizations nor a growing government intervention to exercise control over population based on the state elite's intellectual blueprint. Rather, it was both an intervention in and a reaction to the emerging arts system. First, cultural policy was an

intervention in that the state, “makes a decisive contribution to the production and reproduction of the instruments of construction of social reality”, in this case, “the arts as national cultural capital” (Bourdieu, 1999: 68). According to him, “through the framing it imposes upon practices, the state establishes and inculcates common forms and categories of perception and appreciation, social frameworks of perceptions, of understanding or of memory, in short *state forms of classification*. It thereby creates the conditions for a kind of immediate orchestration of habituses which is itself the foundation of a consensus over this set of shared evidences constitutive of (national) common sense” (Bourdieu, 1999: 68). In this sense, the NEA made the arts a public issue by diffusing the popular belief that arts were the crucial part of the nation’s life.

On the other hand, the NEA was a response to cultural systems that provided the definition of the arts as a distinctive cultural aspect of public life in which the government should engage. The state power of symbolic classification does not stem from its organizational strength alone. In order for the state to act not only efficiently but also meaningfully, it must resort to broader cultural systems instituted in society. “State policies are not only technical solutions to material problems of control or resource extraction; they are rooted in changing conceptions of what the state is, what it can and should do ... State power is rooted not only in the technologies of coercion and control, but in its symbolic organization” (Friedland and Alford, 1991: 237-8). Here, state-formation inevitably involves the dimension of meaning. To become a capable actor, the state must resort to the definition of capability, which is to be shared and represented by actors both within and without the state.

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