

The Necessary Awakening

*Cultural Policy Studies and the Professional Development of Cultural Administration in
Central and Eastern European Countries*

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Since the fall of communism sixteen years ago, few issues regarding the development and orientation of European cultural policy have achieved consensus among informed analysts. However, most accept the idea that 1990 marked not only the end of post-WWII division between Eastern and Western Europe, but also a radical, tangible shift in the ways European public administrations approach involvement with cultural affairs.

Cultural mediators, scholars, and international pundits immediately acknowledged this change and the fact that the process engaged was of irreversible character. It became apparent, however, that agents of change constantly encountered significant degrees of institutional “thickness” in their efforts to facilitate and accommodate shifting contexts. This thickness permeated not only the structures of cultural organizations consolidated between the 1950s and the 1990s, but the qualifications and capabilities of human resources whose education and training reflected the demands and limited resources of the previous fifty years. The winds of change blowing through the European cultural establishment encountered endless manifestations of institutional impediment, despite the great cooperation, goodwill, and desire for change shared among decision makers.

At first glance, the policy break from so-called “traditional” approaches to cultural and artistic administration seemed to be a synthesis of elements salvaged from the freshly-dismantled Cold War environment and supplemented by abruptly-emerging opportunities and cooperation channels with Central and Eastern Europeans freshly unfettered from ideological dogma. The old communist order, with its heavily centralized state, oppressive administration and overbearing, inflexible cultural bureaucracy had ensured a dead end for any truly free artistic and creative action for decades. This led to the rash conclusion in all former communist states that the full state support of culture, in

any circumstances, might have dubious connotations and negative consequences for creativity.

The fall of communism was not the only critical ingredient triggering change. A closer look reveals that the 1990s were years ripe for steady readjustments. The breaking down of the communist order coincided with situations in Western Europe, where traditional cultural policies had smoothly entered a new spin-cycle since the late 1980s. While experiencing the growth of the leisure industry, with its communication technology and media explosions¹, cultural establishments had observed the public's attraction to new horizons of virtual and popular entertainment. Culture, historically a state-provided commodity, could no longer trigger the same degree of passionate participation in younger generations, whose lengthy exposure to the dynamics of cultural democratization had rendered them into spoiled consumers². The era of the demiurgic state, the state as architect and providential provider of cultural goods, was over. The "new" public administrators of culture had to learn how to function as enabling and facilitating stakeholders in the arts, in astute cohabitation with international, liberally oriented markets, offering humbly to pay for incentive pieces, and not the whole cake.

Hence, a crucial question emerged regarding the need to redefine the philosophy of public affairs for the European cultural institutional system, as well as a need to define the role of the state as provider for artistic and cultural activities. In addition, challenges appeared to reconsider, under these circumstances, the responsibility of public cultural administrators as public servants and as critical actors in the appropriate allocation of the state's decreasing investments toward cultural endeavors. As new definitions appear for functions and roles, so does the need to modify training and information channels, to re-design the complex battery of existing educational programs, or to invent new ones that match competence-building *proposals* with the present *needs* within cultural management. Policies can only be successful if appropriately administrated, and this

¹ Suteu, C., 2005.

² Bennett, O., 2003.

interdependence is even more obvious in regions like Central and Eastern Europe, where new administrations are completely under construction.

The scope of the present article will examine:

1.) The necessity to develop cultural policy studies that deal immediately with the redefined landscape in providing a knowledge base adapted to the future public administration of culture within the Central and Eastern European region. The choice of this regional perspective is warranted by the fact that administrative systems there provide a challenging focus for critical insight regarding what a cultural public administrator should know in order to ensure that his or her activities are best suited to their position within the decision-making system; it is also necessary because, as already demonstrated by analysts³, the competence gap between the public sector in culture and the non-profit, non-governmental sector in the region presently serves as evidence detrimental to the rehabilitation of the concept that state support for culture should be reconsidered, that state administration can act as a facilitator rather than as a burden, and that an "intelligent state" is an invaluable regulator of the free market and its dynamics of cultural consumption.

2.) The need to build and advocate educational programs that not only respond to specific, regional Central and Eastern European paradigms and contexts in administering cultural affairs, but offer an approach prioritized in accordance to philosophical and ethical answers regarding the meaning of state support for arts and culture, and, only secondarily, the tools and instrumental know-how needed to channel and implement this support. Both scholars and professionals from the region are concerned with the values accompanying cultural administrations in Central and Eastern Europe and their survival through transitions and turbulent environments⁴. On the other hand, given that the public administration apparatus is still extremely "thick," the issues of retraining and repositioning the public administrator as a modern public servant capable of responsive

³ Dragicevic-Sesic, M. and Sanjin Dragojevic, 2005.

⁴ *Arts, Politics, and Change*, 2005, articles by Copic, Dragojevic, Katunaric, Zlatar, Smithuijsen, Suteu, Weeda.

interaction with the emerging participative policy-making processes need to be addressed with specific educational programs⁵.

3.) Cultural policy studies are inherently interdisciplinary; one must determine the knowledge base that a public cultural administrator would ideally possess upon completing them. Should their education promote legislative and procedural concerns, or stress meaningful, visionary and value-oriented principles? Would the ideal future public administrator be, primarily, an informed and quality-oriented policymaker, or a skilled professional implementer and facilitator of the growing body of extemporized, tremendously diverse cultural happenings? In the latter case, who would make the choices for him/her?

Identifying and summarizing the common traits linking the Central and Eastern European region under a shared experience regarding the public administration for the arts during the last decade yields a balance of contrasts. On the one hand, there are similar struggles in overcoming the over-centralization of communist administration and the ideological contamination of arts and humanities; on the other hand, there is a stringent need to prepare the cultural operator to comprehend free-market logic, to enter the subtle sphere of governance, not government, and to quickly learn how to effectively negotiate a place for the arts within an environment driven by media and consumerism.

PART 1: ISSUES TO ADDRESS

There are at least three important and subtly interdependent questions to address in order to map the relationship between the existing provisions for cultural policy studies and the professional development of cultural administration in the region.

The making of meaningful choices

⁵ *Arts Politics and Change*, 2005, articles by Varbanova, Mucica, Radu, Dietachmair.

The first question addresses how cultural administrators and decision-makers can become educated and otherwise prepared to make informed and substantive choices, as implied in Mark Schuster's plea on behalf of "art funding with a purpose?"⁶.

Answering this question entails the determination of educational prerequisites and effective provisions towards a knowledge base capable of teaching future cultural policy makers at all levels of decision in Central and Eastern European countries to prioritize not only procedure but also substance. Cultural administrators must find the right balance between stimulating content-oriented projects and those relevant within their national or local contexts.

Such issues are easily to see but difficult to address practically, and precedents are not at hand. Notwithstanding the existing documentation and its availability to the region's scholarly and political circles, generic notions about the foundation and development of democratic cultural policies, as exemplified during the last fifty years in countries like France, Germany, and Great Britain, can hardly form the basis for any serious university curriculum. Therefore, most cultural administrators at local and national levels in Central and Eastern European countries ignore concepts from these access-oriented and participatory or accountability-driven cultural policies. Instead, they endeavor to reinvent and promote new strategies, without the benefit of knowledge they could glean from countries with experiences with this or that situation or procedure and ensuing results, which could be efficiently evaluated today.

Ignorance about documents and other information lavishly produced and distributed through the Council of Europe or UNESCO channels is exacerbated by an even more endangering phenomenon; namely, that cultural administrators⁷ in Central and Eastern European countries miss opportunities to understand not only the post-war principles that guided and determined generous investments in cultural development at the institutional level, but the nearly-obsessive focus with which Western governments during the 1960s

⁶ Schuster, M., 2001.

⁷ We use this notion in the generic sense here; it implies the broad range of cultural policy implementers: legislators, operators, etc.

and 1970s forged cultural cooperation throughout Europe. The effective study of these dynamics could enhance the comprehension of present contextual shifts throughout Europe and beyond and would provide regional cultural administrations with solid arguments in favour of the reinstatement of state support for specific and significant artistic and cultural endeavours.

Another similarly neglected resource is regional comparison. The majority of cultural administrators in Central and Eastern Europe have a patchy, inconsistent knowledge about their own regional contexts. Many who are familiar with the various policies of Western European countries have limited curiosity regarding those of their neighbouring nations. Hence, the capacity to ensure better strategies for cultural development and to produce an articulated, competitive regional dynamic is generally weak. Traditionally, the countries of former Yugoslavia are familiar with one another, as are those of the Baltic region, as are bilateral areas such as Bulgaria and Romania and Romania and Hungary. Also, at higher bureaucratic levels of decision making (cultural ministers, state secretaries), knowledge is, from direct experience, better, but the dissemination of this knowledge into subordinate levels of implementation is weak or non-existent. There is no systematic, comparative method of study dedicated to the encouragement of productive developments, except for those stimulated by external partners: Council of Europe, UNESCO, cultural networks, European cultural foundations, international forums, etc.⁸

Another concern in regard to personnel capacities for informed choices is the difficulty in training many of those belonging to generations of experienced cultural administrators to shift from fixed mentalities to consistent strategic thinking. Younger generations, conversely, are reluctant to shift from impromptu choices to strategic ones. In both cases, it seems that education that is “meaning inclusive” and eschews purely procedural criteria is necessary for all categories of cultural administrators.

⁸ From this point of view, the successful outcome of Policies for Culture was to advocate comparative possibilities and the transfer of expertise from one country to another. However, PFC acted primarily in SEE countries from a comparative cultural policy perspective.

There are issues regarding the artistic sensitivity and knowledge that a cultural administrator would ideally possess, his or her genuine passion and curiosity for the cultural domain, and his or her ability to translate this passion into objective judgement and balanced policy choices. Should such attributes be considered within the prerequisites enabling a professional administrator to enhance his or her set of evaluation criteria for making informed choices?

All of these concerns are difficult to tackle systematically. Central and Eastern European countries have few cultural observatories and research laboratories for cultural matters⁹, and few established capacity-building organizations dedicated to training within the existing cultural administration at local and national levels. Thus, existing cultural policy studies in Central and Eastern European countries lack a critical means for building a cultural mapping exercise that could provide cultural administrators with a knowledge base for their further activities as cultural planners¹⁰, and enhance their capabilities for making meaningful decisions.

Ethical and philosophical factors and the necessity for state support for cultural activities

The second question regards the “governability of culture,” or the relationship between the state and the cultural domain and the evolution of it within the countries in the region. These issues are critical, as they unveil a reality rarely voiced in post-communist countries: the fact that, with few exceptions, Central and Eastern European countries have legacies of foreign rule and the lingering influence of the administrative patterns imposed

⁹ There are some observatories: in Hungary, The Budapest Observatory; in Croatia, the Institute for International Relations, which hosts observatory functions; in Romania, the Romanian Ministry of Culture’s recently-established Center for Cultural Studies. However, except for the IMO and, to some extent, the Budapest Observatory, the systematic output of their activities fails to approach regional demands for observation and research.

¹⁰ Mercer, C., 2003; see also ECUMEST online results about party debate regarding cultural policies before the 2004 parliamentary elections, as well as the results of the study, commissioned by AFAA and conducted by an ECUMEST team, regarding independent structures in Eastern Europe (2005), www.ecumest.ro.

upon them. This inheritance of Austro-Hungarian, Slavic and Ottoman administrative mentality and procedure, supplemented by the soviet policies of the recent past, has resulted in profoundly contradictory and fractured perspectives in regard to principles historically supporting state participation within the cultural sphere. This in turn blurs the informed understanding of ethical aspects regarding any necessary redistribution of public resources in favor of artistic and cultural endeavors.

Debates between think-tank organizations and cultural ministries in Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, Poland, which intensified between 1996 and 2002, reveal the inconsistency or absence, at the political level, of socio-cultural philosophies supporting efforts towards cultural policy design and implementation. Even in the best cases, politicians who address cultural matters enumerate *what* they do, but not *why* they do it. This situation greatly inhibits any initiative to enhance the quality of education for future cultural administrators and policymakers. It propagates a no-man's land for cultural activity, lacking established precedents and values, inclined to accept and encourage that which is secure; i.e., the traditional folkloric dimensions of mass culture or the arbitrary tastes of certain politicians in power at particular moments.

This situation also revitalizes and strongly encourages predominating procedural tendencies to implement policy through impromptu action rather than meaningful processes. Central and Eastern European cultural administrations must consider objectives in cognizance of both the inherited, legitimated and accepted past and aspirations for future significance. Otherwise, they will tend to conceal the weaknesses within their established value systems behind a bureaucratic mask of procedures, ranging from template forms to independent commissions of experts eager to facilitate the newly acquired "democratic objectivity" of choices.

Among Central and Eastern European countries, the bureaucratic masking of cultural policy choices stems from limited experience with autonomous, self-determined national investment in favor of the arts, and lingering ideological blueprints of communist

ensorship¹¹. The need to revise thinking patterns before enacting new administrative practices, however obvious, is difficult to address strategically at national levels. Innovative administrative planning is especially needed in former totalitarian countries (Romania, Albania) and those of significant scale (Poland, Romania), where ideological policies were particularly pervasive and powerful.

The democratic procedures of Western European countries are the long-term achievement of informed, meaningful cultural policies and practices developed through continuous, time consuming, and openly debated efforts to determine the most effective ways to entrench and conduct selection and evaluation processes. Nothing was provided from without or spontaneously created without previous efforts, but evolved over time.

The accountability of cultural administrators to the public

To educate administrators means to prepare them to be accountable. The issue of accountability is crucial to the entire, complex process of post-communist social reconstruction and the emergence of healthy mechanisms promoting rights and responsibility for individuals and communities. The shaping of post-communist societies is greatly affected by how outlooks are refreshed and democratic principles enacted, and the arts and humanities provide major vehicles for this transformation. Thus, the degree of responsibility that cultural administrators assume in the installation and implementation of policies in response to newly defined contexts is very important.

However, who can evaluate if an action is successful or not? According to what criteria? Who can diagnose failures or successes as they emerge during this process? Where along the chain of decision-making will the individual administrator express his or her competencies, if required? Who will evaluate the administrator, and according to what criteria?

Recruitment as a key

¹¹ Important differences exist in this regard between the countries of the region; Romania, Albania, Poland, Bulgaria and Slovakia were less democratic institutionally than the former Yugoslav countries, Hungary, the Czech Republic, or East Germany.

In summary, the enhanced education and training of cultural administrators in the Central and Eastern European region should encourage value-oriented, meaningful choices driven by quantifiable criteria and the development of accountability awareness.

Because of the lack of objective measuring tools, the scarcity of relevant data, and the patchy and, at times, contradictory historical legacies of administrative procedures, the personal talent and dedication of individual cultural administrators is a crucial determinant of competent action. Hence, recruitment procedures are of crucial importance in efforts to increase the numbers of future cultural administrators who will succeed as agents both of change and, in turbulent times, of stabilization. When considering an individual's potential as a cultural administrator in Central and Eastern Europe, a question such as "are you truly able to accomplish anything that makes a difference, or are you simply an old habit..."¹² is crucial. Cultural policy studies must demonstrate a commitment to innovative action and the belief that such action yields public benefit.

PART 2: Existing cultural policy studies – an overview

An exploratory mapping exercise conducted during 2004-2005 by the European Cultural Foundation (CEPF)¹³ demonstrates the relative emphases within existing cultural policy studies in the Central and Eastern European region¹⁴. The curriculum descriptions of today's top programs address managerial, administrative and cultural relevance with varying urgency. Bibliographies reflect a dearth of authoritative sources, with generic and haphazard arrays of references: generic studies related to cultural policy evaluation produced by the Council of Europe, mainstream sociological and philosophical authors from the 20th century (Weber, Bourdieu, Adorno, Foucault, Derrida, Levi-Strauss), researchers and business management thinkers (Mayo, Drucker and Fayol) and European regional authors (Fischer, Mercer, Dragicevic, Dragojevic, Varbanova). One may conclude

¹² Schuster, M, 2001.

¹³ see www.cepf.org.

¹⁴ Some of the programs are not titled as "cultural policy studies", but, more generically, as "cultural management". See Suteu, C., CEPF Study, 2003.

from this that there is little clear “modulability” in the field of cultural policy, with little distinction yet between issues of management and those of policy.

Those countries with a sound tradition of cultural studies (Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland) tend to feature humanities-based orientations and curricula, while those with a history of enacting policies focused on their own potential for successful implementation (Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Baltic states) feature stronger administrative components focusing on economic, logistic, and legal issues.

International programs in comparative cultural policy, like Ecumest (ended in 2001, University of Theatre and Film, Bucharest/ Business School of Dijon, France) or the MA in Cultural Policy in the Balkans (University of Arts in Belgrade/ University of Grenoble, France, begun 2003) are exceptions which continue to act as academic triggers for the region, but limited resources do not allow such programs to consolidate laboratories, publish reviews, or otherwise facilitate improvements within the field.

Assessment of needs

Many concerned institutions, international analysis groups, and regional bureaus initiated “evaluation of needs” phases. During the following decade and a half, however, empirical assessment became an increasingly delicate exercise, as the institutional practices of Central and Eastern European cultural entities increased in diversity.

Assessing the needs within cultural policy education is rendered difficult by the complexity of pertinent internal and external indicators; overviews of international practices of Southern and Eastern European¹⁵ countries, as realized by IETM in 2004 (Every step has an echo), the more comprehensive volume *Arts, Politics and Change*¹⁶, and the conclusions of the Comparative Study on the Emergence of Independent Cultural Structures in Central and East European Countries¹⁷ stand in evidence.

Some Central and Eastern European countries have joined the European Union, while some have not; some have followed a more consistent policy of cultural privatization

¹⁵ IETM, Ilic, M. and M.A. De Vlieg, 2004.

¹⁶ *Arts, Politics and Change*, 2005.

¹⁷ ECUMEST study on independent structures, commissioned by AFAA, 2005.

than others; some have a stronger cultural civil society system than others. Addressing common needs within cultural policy studies requires close examination within specific national and local contexts and effective application of results within the larger contexts of the European Union and the globe. The instruments for this exercise are not yet ready; as those in the West and internationally perceive some of their Central and Eastern European counterparts to be even more “different” than they really are, assessment exercises with old tools should be renewed with new methodologies created in accordance to present contexts.

As I stated in a 2005 training policy document addressed to Slovakia:

“For CEE Europe, the evaluation of needs is very often realized starting from external and stereotype types of needs defined, as imagined by an ‘ideal’ cultural context. What should be done, in the Slovak context, is to realize an evaluation that takes into account as much ground solid data as possible (like the low density of general urban settlements in Slovakia, the unfinished decentralization process in Romania, the uneven regional development in Poland, the difficulty of implementing laws in the long term in all former communist countries) and conceives training needs adapted to this kind of reality and develops skills and a solid knowledge base to counteract the identified weaknesses of the existing system. This is where the foreign expertise, instead of being used in a ‘teach us how to do’ kind of way, should be better put into the service of the local cultural human resource in order to ‘accompany’ the design of an adapted map of training needs”¹⁸.

A second aspect of “needs evaluation” focuses on the genuine interest shown by Central and Eastern Europe academic institutions in regard to the sustainable development of cultural policy studies. CPEG exploratory mapping revealed a number of interesting facts:

¹⁸ Suteu, C., Matra, Slovakia, 2005.

1.) Universities developing MA studies in cultural policy do not offer equivalent studies at the BA level. This contributes to the ad-hoc presence of specialized academics in addition to the absence of appropriate conditions for the establishment of hard-core research laboratories for cultural policy studies.

2.) As is the case with all emerging disciplines, university leaders offer more resistance to the establishment of departments of cultural policy than to those in scientific, economical, juridical or humanistic disciplines traditionally accepted by University charts.

3.) There is lack of specialized academics providing courses tailored to the cultural policy domain.

How to engineer educational programs in cultural policy

Is it possible, then, to engineer effective education with meaningful results for the given global and European reality? Is there an essential, common body of knowledge, absolute and prerequisite, for cultural policy studies in Europe?

There is, and it derives from the core studies in humanities and culture within university systems: history, history of European cultures, history of European arts, anthropology, political science and sociology. This core is an important foundation for shared philosophical perspectives and approaches to cultural policies, but ignores the pragmatic dimension of effective policy implementation. Thus, unavoidable conflicts emerge between a given administrative apparatus and its capacity to channel the strategic vision of a cultivated policymaker. Expertise implies both the capability to *know* and the capacity to *know how to do it*. Very few academic programs can ensure this; also, very few provide effective mentoring programs or sets of criteria for effective policy evaluation.

Whom should we educate?

The answer to this question depends on whether the effectiveness of the training process is considered in the short, medium or long term. Decision-makers change often in

post-communist administrations. Hence, the continuity of professional processes depends upon the constant preparation of a critical mass of administrators. On the other hand, civil personnel access training more easily, and their continuing education and training would enable a cross-fertilization of practices and productive dialogue between the many stakeholders within the policy chain. Shifting from hierarchical approaches towards grass roots, participative, liberally oriented models of policy implementation requires a recycling of recruitment methods and the cultivation of personnel charged with the administration of public money dedicated to the cultural domain. Therefore, Central and Eastern Europeans must determine the extent to which cultural administrators and public money managers should determine matters of cultural policy.

Careful examination of issues of concern to industrial cultures, such as those of emerging businesses, the technological explosion and the delocalization of important Western societies towards the eastern part of the continent, testifies to the growing importance of new stakeholders to the cultural production cycle. Those who develop and enact cultural policy will have to contend more and more with sweeping, qualitative changes, not only within the scope of cultural output and circulation, but in public demand and consumption. Cultural policies can indirectly influence a public flooded with leisure opportunities and consumer goods by defining a role for state investment within the arts and by initiating awareness of the strength and significance of the Europe's legacy of state support for the arts in comparison to the American model, for example.

Validating cultural policy studies as a 'competence field'

Educational programs for future administrators and managers in the field of public culture must provide opportunities to observe professionals working effectively within many levels of decision-making. Initiatives and recognition for efforts at local levels must counteract managerial obsessions with "graduating" to capital cities. Ensuring that local

and national needs are fulfilled while remaining aware of global trends in the cultural field is a tool for the validation and enhancement of a new consciousness of cultural policy competence within both the geographical and developmental dimensions. Encouraging present and future cultural managers to “think globally, act locally” can increase their interest in and commitment to the acquisition of skills and the application of them within their immediate environment, while ensuring their connection to the broader picture and sense of belonging to a specialized, international field.

Dealing with diversity and transnational policies

Do any universal patterns exist among models for cultural policy, or do comparative studies provide better frameworks for analysis?

Today it appears that neither the heavily state-supported and access-oriented approach of the French, nor the participatory and accountability-and-assessment-driven, arms-length model of the British are of practical use any longer in their initial formats. In addition, the philosophical differences between these administrative systems of support for the cultural and artistic domain were less significant than they seemed. Both France and Britain developed cultural policies prioritizing the protection and survival of a national inheritance of cultural goods and its perpetration as a definitive model of European culture in general.

Today, the opportunities for international dialogue and connection presented by culture and the arts must be acknowledged and administrated with awareness of global markets, new technologies and advancements in communication and the media unimaginable fifty years ago. European societies are increasingly fragmented and cultural policies are adapted impulsively in order to address transnational and intercultural issues. In the same way today’s technological environment is the playground of its users rather than a revolutionary elite of isolated, iconoclastic gurus, cultural policies are increasingly determined by consumers rather than policy makers.

Today, culture results in connecting intelligence, and any locality can simultaneously reflect global reality. Instead of focusing on the protection of the *given* past, today's cultural policy measures should have both immediate relevance and a potential to enhance the *possible* future. Cultural policy studies in Central and Eastern Europe today could assume a pioneering role in developing essential protocol for determining such measures. Administrative practices and personnel are changing, and this provides unique opportunities to reconsider and enhance established models of French, German or British inspiration for arts administration and funding with new strategies.

As in all regions of the world today, the issue of managing cultural activities within a multicultural environment is vital to the establishment and development of cultural policy in Europe. At national and local levels, urgent attention to this issue is even more critical, as existing policies in regard to minority sectors often fail to reflect population changes effected by post-colonial, post-communist, and post-global phenomena.

Many cultural projects today feature multi-national or multi-cultural organization teams focused upon reaching diverse audiences. Such projects and similar endeavors to discern and address minority issues provide not only a fundamental means of ensuring philosophical and ethical significance in the development of Central and Eastern European cultural policy, but can provide the public as a whole with great insight into the conditions and opportunities present within increasingly heterogeneous societies. During the coming years, cultural management within the context of cultural diversity will prove to be not only one of the most challenging policy issues on the agenda in Europe and elsewhere, but a strong catalyst for emancipation within the cultural field.

PART 3 – CONCLUSION

The education of future cultural policy specialists must encourage action in accordance with specific needs rather than inherited legacies; it must facilitate strategic thinking and choices based in philosophical and ethical principles and not in improvised, publicity-driven, or political considerations. Cultural policy studies should have fundamental grounding in societal principles to be fostered the future, such as the

empowerment of democratic behavior, the providing of flexible frameworks for equal opportunity, and the establishment of sustainable criteria for positive critical dialogue between the providers and the beneficiaries of cultural policy. Today's studies should teach future specialists how to engineer participative systems instead of constricting, bureaucratic pyramids, and how to avoid pervading cultural patterns capable of constantly taming and, thus, politically standardizing the artistic and cultural domain. Cultural policy studies in Central and Eastern European countries present a unique possibility for these countries, with their still-germinating systems, to transform the experiential handicaps of radical administrative overhaul into future benefits. By introducing cultural policy studies as an important component of the newly-designed public policy curricula of universities and academies of administration, communities can actively and effectively participate in restoring dynamics of social trust and enhance the influence of the future's "soft power:" the minds and souls of Central and Eastern European citizens whose human accomplishments are as important, surely, as the capacity to handle a bank account and fill in tax forms. Sound and solid academic authority in the field of cultural policy studies in Central and Eastern Europe can attest to the capacity for these countries to overcome post-totalitarian problems and react to the global environment by closing a time gap of forty years and splicing "that cursed spite" back into joint.

-----*Laura Semilian, editorial consultant*

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